

UNIVERSITY OF WESTERN CAPE

The Common Link Theory in Hadith:

A comparison between Orientalists and Muslim scholars

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Declaration

I declare that “The Common Link Theory in Hadith: *A comparison between Orientalist and Muslim scholars*” is original and my own work. It is submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Art in Department of Foreign Languages (Arabic), University of the Western Cape. It has not been submitted for any degree or examination at any other university. All references and sources of information to my knowledge are accurately reported.



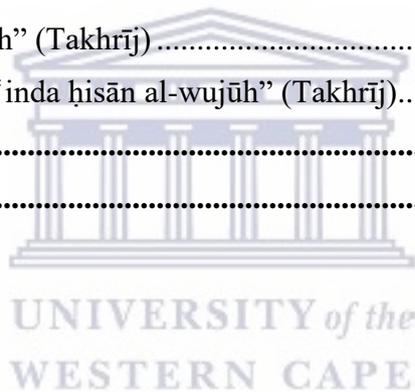


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Transliteration Note

The problem of transliteration arises in reproducing names, words, terms and even phrases from non-English languages which are written in scripts other than the Latin alphabet. I have followed the standard system of transliteration for Arabic, as shown in the chart below. However, here are some variations:

Arabic nouns or words that have become part of English vocabulary, or are known to the majority of English speakers, are written with English spellings without following its sound and transliteration rules. For example, instead of ‘Muhammad’ with a dot under ‘h’, the ‘h’ is left without a dot as ‘Muhammad’, and hadith, instead of ‘ḥadīth’.

Names which begin with the definitive article ‘*al*’ have been used uniformly without any distinction between the *shamsī* and *qamarī* categories of letters, such as ‘*al-Nasā’ī*’ and ‘*al-Tirmidhī*’ instead of ‘*an-Nasā’ī*’ and ‘*at-Tirmidhī*’

Names of places that have been anglicized, such as Syria (for Suriyā), have not been transliterated unless in the original Arabic sentence or phrase.

The round ‘*ṣ*’ also known as *tā marbūṭah* is changed into (h) sound if it is at the end of a word. The exception is, occasionally, when it is the last letter of the first word of *iḍāfah* (possessive) construction, then ‘*t*’ is maintained most of the time to keep the reading perfect to its origin as it ought to be. As in:

- *muqaddimah*
- *silsilat al-dhahab*
- *Tadhkirat al-ḥuffāz*

The noun ‘*عبد الله*’ is transliterated as ‘*Abd Allah*’ at all times, no matter what the end casing of the first noun is. However, it is suggested that English readers always read the whole combination as ‘*AbduLlah*’ unless indicated in the sentence otherwise.

Transliteration Table

English	Arabic	English	Arabic	English	Arabic
Q	ق	Z	ز	'	ء أ
K	ك	S	س	B	ب
L	ل	sh	ش	T	ت
M	م	ṣ	ص	th	ث
N	ن	ḍ	ض	J	ج
W	و	ṭ	ط	ḥ	ح
H	هـ	ẓ	ظ	kh	خ
Y	ي	ʿ	ع	D	د
a i u	اَ اِ اُ	gh	غ	dh	ذ
		F	ف	R	ر
ū	وُ	ī	يِ	ā	اَ (ا)

(Prolonged sound)

an, in, un اَ اِ اُ

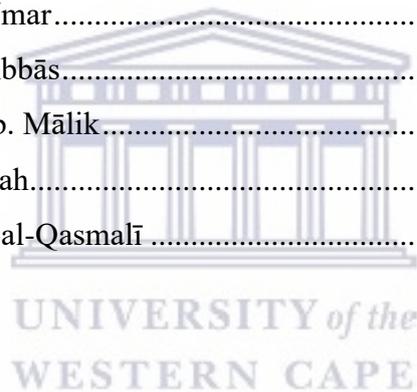
(Sometimes typed in a very small size above the text line)

Arabic words are italicized except in three cases:

- A proper noun
- Oft used in English
- Part of a chapter heading

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¹ I am saddened by the fact that Muftī Taha Karaan did not see the final product of this Thesis. He passed on to the Mercy of Allah on the 11th June 2021. May Allah elevate his status in Jannah.

Abstract:

Joseph Schacht's (d. 1969) Common-link Theory, together with its generalized conclusions, is a key theoretical framework used by most Western and some modern Muslim scholars of Islamic history. The theory proposes that a figure sitting as a common link in the chain of transmitters (*isnād*) is the one responsible for forging the names from him to the Prophet. In addition, the common link is responsible for bringing the particular hadith text (*matn*) and its *isnād* into existence. Thus, names prior to the common link until the Prophet are all fictitious. Muslim hadith critics as far back as the second century of Islam acknowledged the existence of common links in the *isnād*; however, their attitude towards it and their conclusion concerning it differed from Western hadith scholars' interpretations. Schacht and other orientalists interpret a common-link as a forger of that particular hadith, whereas Muslim hadith critics did not necessarily consider the common-link the forger of that particular hadith. The main question that I answer in this thesis is *How did Muslim hadith critics deal with transmitters that are common links in a hadith?* Did they presume the common link to be responsible for bringing that particular hadith into existence? Did they accept any hadith that has a common link, even if the common link transmitter had doubtful integrity? Or did they have an elaborated system to investigate each hadith? This study seeks to address the above questions using *tafarrud* and *madār al-isnād* analysis. The study will show how Muslim hadith critics approached the common links in hadith. It will also make the argument that the Common-link Theory proposed by Schacht and his followers is far too general as a theory to be the sole basis of dating a hadith. By providing examples, I show that early hadith scholars used the common link in hadith analysis as one aspect of many ways they verified a hadith.

Keywords: hadith, Joseph Schacht, common link, *madār al-isnād*, *tafarrud*, *isnād*, dating hadith, Companion, Successor

Chapter One

Introduction

The topic of Hadith and its related studies is important in the circle of Muslim and non-Muslim academics because it constitutes the teachings of the Prophet and early Muslim communities. It also equips us with an understanding of the social and legal frameworks that operated at the time of the development of Islamic society. Hadith also is considered one of the fundamental and principal sources of Islamic ethics and law. For Muslims, when a hadith is assessed to be authentic, it is used to interpret the Qur'ān to provide ethical and spiritual guidance from the Prophet.

In the Orientalist and Religious departments in Western universities, the study of hadith is approached from a different angle. Though remarkable and serious studies have been conducted on the hadith literature, I contend that the intellectual assumption of Western superiority originating from a colonial mindset for the studies of hadith has led them to undermine the efforts of early Islamic scholarship and its developments. The Common Link Theory, introduced by the German scholar Joseph Schacht (1902 – 1969), is evident in this regard. This theory is generally about dating hadith. According to Schacht, the transmitter of hadith upon whom all transmitters converge as their sources for a particular hadith can be identified as a person responsible for the invention and circulation of a given hadith. This theory of the common link serves as one of the key theories in modern-day hadith studies in Western academic university departments. Schacht (1979) applied it to legal traditions, which he studied and generalized the conclusions related to those legal traditions that he interrogated to the entire genre of hadith literature. This meant that he considered most hadith to be spurious. The theory was later developed further by Western hadith scholars. Gautier Juynboll (1993) was probably the leading proponent of the Schachtian school, who adopted and elaborated upon the Common Link Theory.

One should not presume, however, that early classical scholars were not aware of the common links in *isnāds*. Early hadith critics knew the occurrences of the common links in the *isnāds*. It was one of the factors by which they were able to distinguish sound hadiths from unsound ones. Nevertheless, this was not their only criterion for the rejection of a hadith; rather, they investigated the integrity and memory of the transmitter as well before making a final judgment

on the hadith. At times, they also looked at where a transmitter contradicted other reliable transmitters.

The researcher contends that Schacht's Common Link Theory omits important facets of the traditional *isnād* system of authenticating traditions without sufficient justification. Historical prominent figures are denied existence. Later, Juynboll, for example, rejects all *fulāns*² that appear before a common link in a single strand for reasons of, according to him, "overwhelming historical improbability" (Juynboll, 1993, p.212). However, this statement by Juynboll is unscholarly. The sheer number of traditions and the religious, psychological, and social motivations to adhere to Islam indicate that Muslims were engaged in transmitting hadith in the early days of Islam.

This study will critique Schacht's thesis and highlight traditional hadith critics' approaches to dealing with common links in traditions.

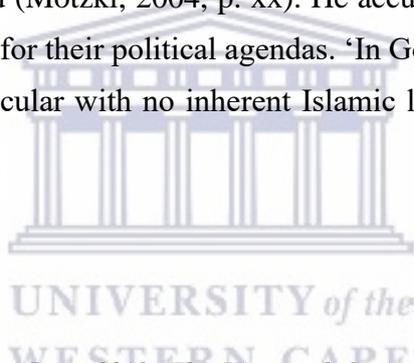
The common link was part of the *isnād* system through which Muslim hadith critics have sought to authenticate and date hadith. Every informant's character, which forms part of the chain of authorities, was rigorously investigated before his or her report could be accepted. To this end, Muslim hadith critics vigorously developed various systematic methods to date and authenticate hadith, particularly the *isnād* or chain of transmitters. This study will illustrate how Muslim critics dealt with the phenomena of common links in hadith, which passed through different generations of hadith transmitters. In addition, the thesis will also confirm that traditional scholars' approach to hadith was rational and epistemically sound. Muslim hadith critics were meticulous in sifting out the sound hadiths, as they regard it as a primary source for interpreting the Qur'ān and developing Islamic legal and ethical teachings.

² *Fulān* in Juynboll's context means a transmitter who is neither a common link nor a partial common link (Juynboll, 1993).

Literature Review

The question of dating a hadith has been one of the main discussions of hadith scholarship in Western criticism of early hadith scholarship. In response to this, many theories, ranging from the application of the Historical Critical Method³ to *isnād-cum-matn*,⁴ have been introduced.

Ignaz Goldziher (1850-1921)⁵, for example, used European Historical Methods to date a hadith (Brown, 2010, p. 205). In 1890, Goldziher published the second volume of his book *Muhammadische studien*⁶ in which he focused on hadith and made the dubitable claim that a widespread fabrication of hadith took place in the early period. His conclusions relating to hadith had a great impact on Western studies of Islam (Motzki, 2004, p. xix). Goldziher generally used the *matn*-based approach to determine when and why a hadith was forged (Brown, 2010, p. 210). Goldziher assumed that *isnāds* are not reliable and are, therefore, useless for dating purposes (Motzki, 2004, p. xlv). Goldziher's methodological principle was that hadith, in general, must be considered false in the sense that it does not go back to the authority to whom it is ascribed (Motzki, 2004, p. xx). He accused the Umayyad dynasty of bringing hadith into circulation for their political agendas. 'In Goldziher's opinion, Umayyad rule from Syria was entirely secular with no inherent Islamic legitimacy' (Brown, 2010, p. 206).



³ On Historical Critical Methods, see, Law, 2012, *The Historical Critical Methods*; Brown, 2010, *Ḥadīth Muhammad legacy in the Medieval and Modern World*, pp. 200-224

⁴ *Isnād-cum-matn* is a sophisticated analysis of hadith that combines *isnād* scrutiny with analysis of the *matn*. *Isnād-cum-matn* analysis investigates *asānīd* (sing. *isnād/sanad*) and *mutūn* (sing. *matn*) starting from the sources in which the transmissions are found and proceeding backwards, focusing on whether the *matn* variants correlate with *asānīd*. See: Motzki, (2012), Introduction. *Islamic Law. & Society*, 19, 1.

⁵ Ignaz Goldziher was a Hungarian Orientalist of Jewish origin. He was born on 22nd June 1850 in Sthulweissen. He studied under two of the foremost leading Orientalists of the time; the French, de Sacy and the German, Fleischer. Goldziher travelled to various Arab countries such as Egypt, Syria, and Palestine. In 1873, he was admitted as the first European to study at al-Azhar in Cairo where he attended many lectures by the Sheikhs of al-Azhar University. He produced many scholarly investigations on Islamic traditions, and he was hailed as a founder of the modern scholarship of Arabic-Islamic studies in the West. Goldziher died on 13th November 1921. See, Raphael P., (1987) *Ignaz Goldziher and His Oriental Diary: A Translation and Psychological Portrait* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press).

⁶ Goldziher's *Muhammadische studien* was later translated into English by C. R. Barber and S. M. Stern under the title '*Muslim Studies*' in 1967.

Goldziher's sceptical approach to hadith literature was embraced by German scholar Joseph Schacht.⁷ Schacht built further Orientalist hadith criticism on Goldziher's methodology (cf. Brown, 2010).

Schacht's book '*The Origins of Muhammadan Jurisprudence*', published in 1950, became the primary source of inspiration for hadith research in subsequent Western scholarship (Kamaruddin, 2005, p. 120). There is, however, a significant difference between Goldziher and Schacht in the area of focus and approach. Goldziher, as indicated above, focused on political and sectarian agendas, whereas Schacht focused specifically on the function of hadith in Islamic law. Goldziher utilized the *matn* to question the authenticity of a particular hadith, and Schacht examined the *isnāds*. Schacht also developed premises and methods to improve the dating of hadith texts by studying the evidence of how they were handed down (Motzki, 2010, p. 48). He studied legal hadiths from selected sources like the *Muwatta'* of Imam Mālik and *Kitāb al-Umm* of Imam al-Shāfi'ī. Schacht included *isnāds* as a basis to value the source (Schacht, 1979). In his studies, he noticed that, in some instances, there was a process of backward growth of *isnāds*, and he tried to provide an explanation for this phenomenon. He concluded that earlier schools, like Malik and others, were not so rigid on the Prophetic traditions but rather on the common practice of the society. He thus concluded that Sunnah was not necessarily reflecting a Prophetic life, but rather it reflected the 'living traditions' of ancient schools (Schacht, 1979, p. 58).

Based on this theory, Schacht's research was along the lines of the following question:

'When did this particular hadith come into existence?' Schacht sought to answer the above question by investigating whether any previous generations of legal scholars used that

⁷ Joseph Schacht was born on 15th March 1902 in Ratibor, Poland. Joseph Schacht acquired his early education in his birth town. It was in the high school of this town where he acquired his first interest in oriental languages. Later, he studied classical and then oriental philology at the Universities of Breslau and Leipzig. In 1925, he received his first academic appointment at the University of Freiburg in Breisgau, and in 1929 was appointed full professor of Oriental Languages at the unprecedented age of 27. Between 1926 and 1933, Schacht travelled extensively throughout the Middle East and North Africa, and in 1930 served as a visiting professor at what was then known as the Egyptian University in Cairo. In 1946, he was appointed to a teaching post at the University of Oxford, and the first field of study to which Schacht gave his attention was that of Islamic law and it remained one of his principal concerns till the end of his days in U.S.A. He died in 1967. See, Bernard Lewis, (1970) "Obituary: Joseph Schacht," *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies*, 33: 378-381.

particular hadith in any of their debates. He assumed that if in an academic discussion or debate, none of the lawyers provided a tradition from the earlier authorities, i.e. the Prophet (peace be upon him), at a time when it was necessary to do so, then it simply means that that particular tradition did not exist at that time. He argued that if it were in existence, at least one of them could have mentioned it as evidence for his opinion or as a counter argument against his antagonists (Schacht, 1979, p. 140). This kind of conclusion is known as *argumentum e silentio* or argument from silence.⁸ Therefore, Schacht demanded that the assumption that there existed an authentic core of information going back to the time of the Prophet should be abandoned (Schacht, 1949, pp. 146-147). According to Schacht, if we find a tradition in a later collection, say any of the six canonical collections, that goes back to earlier authorities, we must believe that it came into existence in a period between the second half of the second and third century of the Islamic calendar. For Schacht, the argument is that if the tradition had existed at that time, then surely it would have been used in the academic debates (Schacht, 1979, p. 140). For Schacht, this is the best way of proving that a hadith did not exist at a certain time (Schacht, 1979, p. 140).

Using the *e silentio* argument, Schacht made a broad generalization and concluded that traditions attributed to the earlier authorities say the Prophet (peace be upon him) or his Companions were less authentic than those traditions attributed to the later authorities, simply because the common link is the only verifiable point.⁹

If hadiths were falsely attributed to the Prophet (peace be upon him) at a large-scale, in Schacht's view, then who was responsible for bringing a particular hadith into existence? Schacht used the Common Link Theory as an explanation of how a particular hadith came into circulation. Schacht conceives a narrator sitting as a common link in the *sanad* to have brought the hadith into circulation provided he [i.e., the common link] was not a first-century figure (Schacht, 1979, pp. 171-179). According to Schacht, the existence of a common link in all or most *isnāds* of a

⁸ <http://www.oxfordreference.com/abstract/10.1093/acref/9780199891573.001.0001/acref-9780199891573-e-366?rskey=vqimUp&result=9> *The Oxford Essential Dictionary of Foreign Terms in English*. Ed. Jennifer Speake. [Berkley Books](http://www.berkleybooks.com), 1999. Published online 2002

⁹ In his review on Juynboll's *Encyclopaedia of Canonical Hadith*, Dr. Jonathan Brown comments: "For Juynboll, then, the only historically verifiable 'moment' in the transmission of a hadith occurs with a Common Link." Brown, (review article on Juynboll's *Encyclopaedia of Canonical Ḥadīth*. Leiden: Brill, 2007.). *Journal of Islamic Studies* 19:3 (2008), 391–97.

given hadith is a strong indication of it having originated in the time of the common link (Schacht, 1979, p. 172, Kamaruddin, 2005, p. 120).

Schacht's concepts were further developed and refined by Gautier, H. A. Juynboll and other scholars. Juynboll (d. 2010) was a proponent of the Schachtian School. Not only did he accept Schacht's Common Link Theory, but he developed and elaborated most of Schacht's methods of dating hadiths (Juynboll, 1983). Like Schacht, Juynboll (1983) argued that the hadiths and the *qiṣaṣ* (stories) were transmitted within the early Muslim community in a haphazard fashion, if at all, and mostly anonymously. When *isnāds* became widely used, and the situation required the *isnād*, then names of well-known historical personalities and fictitious people were chosen to fill the gaps in the *isnād* (Juynboll, 1983, p. 5). Even though he differed from Schacht in several significant points, he gave the Schachtian Common Link Theory a new perspective. Like Schacht and those who follow the Schachtian School, 'he is not inclined to ascribe a particular *hadith* to the Prophet (peace be upon him) merely because it is found in the so-called canonical collections' (Kamaruddin, 2005, p. 125).

In dating a given hadith, Juynboll (1983) addressed three key questions:

1. Where did a certain hadith originate?
2. In which era did the hadith originate?
3. Who may be held responsible for bringing a certain hadith into circulation?

To answer these questions, one must, first of all, identify a common link of a given hadith. Juynboll, like Schacht, is of the opinion that the common link is the one responsible for both the text of a particular hadith and the strand of transmitters connecting the common link to the Prophet (Juynboll, 1993, p. 210). Otherwise, how does one explain that oftentimes, we find that the transmission from the Prophet (peace be upon him) to the common link, who in most cases belongs to the third or fourth generation, is a single strand, and it is only after the common link that the transmission begins to fan out? Juynboll describes this phenomenon as a common link feature of hadith texts (Juynboll, 1993, p. 222).

Though Schacht's Common Link Theory had an impact on the succeeding generation of Orientalists, some scholars did not accept it fully. They felt that Schacht's evidence did not

warrant him to make such broad conclusions. Thus, some hadith scholars criticized his theories and academic generalisations.

Among the critics of Schacht's theory of Common Link is Norman Calder. Calder (1950 -1998), a British historian whose interest was in Islamic Jurisprudence, had a different interpretation for the occurrence of the common link. He denied that the common link has any relevance for dating traditions or the *matn* (Calder, 1993, p. 237). Calder's explanation of the appearance of a common link in the *isnād* is that it resulted from competition among groups in and after the second half of the third century (Calder, 1993). According to Calder, when a text of hadith reached a certain level of acceptance in several groups, each group embraced that particular *matn* with an *isnād* reflecting their scholarly perspective. Since nearly all groups recognized the common heroes of the age of the Prophet, it tends to be at about the level of the Successors that *isnād* start converging. Calder contends that "it can be shown that when there is competition between groups, they engage in a mutual process of *isnād* criticism, which, again because they share a common respect for the generation of the Companions and the Successors, they tend to focus on ousting a hadith by destroying the third and fourth link" (Calder, 1993, pp. 236 – 237). A common link in the *isnād*, therefore, is not always responsible for bringing the hadith into circulation in Calder's view. A hadith, which has a common link in the *isnād* was not the result of fabrication by the common link himself, but rather, as a feature of hadith, it relates to a method of *isnād* criticism current amongst jurists and others in the second half of the third century (Kamaruddin, 2005, p. 123). Calder demonstrates his explanation of a common link by analyzing the hadith of *mass al-dhakar* from al-Ṭahāwī's *Ma'āni al-Āthār*. In this hadith, he identified Urwah as a common link. The presence of 'Urwah in all these *isnāds*, however, does not prove that he invented or propagated this hadith. 'Urwah is a common link because the link after him became a focus of dispute (Calder, 1993, p. 240). Thus, unlike Schacht, who regarded the common link as responsible for fabricating the *matn*, Calder considered the common link as the figure that became the focus of dispute in mutual *isnād* criticism (Kamaruddin, 2005, p. 124). One might conclude that, according to Calder (1993), the common link is the victim and not necessarily the criminal.

Another scholar who criticized the Common Link Theory and its implications is the British scholar of Islamic history, Michael Allan Cook. Cook (1981) is sceptical of the value of the Common Link Theory and the historical information it may convey. Cook did not accept that

the common link could even be the one responsible for bringing a particular hadith into existence. He ‘argues that even a key concession they had made – that a Common link was a historically reliable moment in transmission – was wrong’ (Cook (1981) cited in Brown, 2006, p. 223). Cook provided new arguments and explanations for the proliferation of *isnāds*, of which the common link is also fabricated. In his *Early Muslim Dogma*, Cook criticized the phenomenon of the common link by showing how, based on his analysis, hadith transmitters other than the common link could have been the source of the multiple *isnāds* in one hadith (Cook, 1981, pp. 107 – 116).

According to Cook, as pointed out by Kamaruddin (2005), the proliferation of *isnāds* might have occurred in various ways:

1. Firstly, by omitting a contemporary transmitter.
2. Secondly, a common link may also appear by ascribing the saying to a different teacher.
3. Thirdly, by obviating the “isolated” hadith. “Because a well-attested hadith carries more weight, there would be a strong motivation to discover other *isnāds* (Kamaruddin, 2005, pp.121-123).

These methods of creating *isnāds*, according to Cook (1981), yield the appearance of a common link. Yet it is the result of forgery. The appearance of a common link, therefore, cannot provide a fixed historical point of hadith transmission. Thus, he doubts not only the transmission of single strands but also those with common links (Kamaruddin, 2005, p. 123). For Cook, a common link in the *sanad* is not always the one responsible for forging a hadith. Transmitters after the common link can also create a common link to substantiate their forged tradition. He saw the role that *tadlīs* played in creating a common link since, in traditional Islam, originality was not as important as authority. “In a traditional culture,” Cook explains, “the relevant value is not originality but authority: sharp practice consists in falsely *ascribing* my view to a greater authority than myself” (Cook, 1981, p. 107 - 108).

Juynboll (1983), while admitting that the theory advanced by Cook may have actually occurred, reluctantly accepts it to have been practised by transmitters. Applying *e silentio* argument, he argued that ‘to picture this as having practiced simultaneously by sizable numbers of contemporary transmitters without it having left telling testimonies in the *rijāl* sources stretches our credulity to breaking point’ (Juynboll, 1983 pp. 354-355).

In his *Eschatology and the Dating of Traditions*, Cook puts to test Schacht’s method by selecting a field in which, according to Cook, traditions can be dated on external grounds.

Cook, recognised that there could be benefits to his method. He says that “[t]he great merit of the method in the abstract is that it can give us dating independent of either the Muslim chain of authorities or the Orientalist reconstruction of the evolution of Muslim eschatology” (Cook, 1992, p. 26). Cook argued that eschatological traditions emerged later than the common link (Cook, 1992, pp. 23-47). On the three traditions he selected in an attempt to test the validity of Schacht’s method, Cook asserts that ‘the results are less encouraging’ (Cook, 1992, p. 33). “Finally,” concludes Cook, “the common link method does not perform well” (*ibid*; cf. Brown, 2010, p. 224).

Persuasive criticism of Schacht's theories came from Nabia Abbott (d. 1981). In her book ‘*Studies in Arabic Literary Papyri II: Qur’anic Commentary and Tradition*’ published in 1967, she studied a selection of early Arabic papyrus documents from the second half of the eighth and the early ninth centuries (Brown, 2010, pp. 217-218). She disagreed with Schacht’s general conclusions on the growth of *isnāds*. She offered a different explanation. The growth of *isnāds* was not necessarily because of widespread forgery. Rather, papyrus and parchment were extremely expensive, and scholars could only use them to record the most basic information about their hadiths, such as the *matn* with perhaps one *isnād*. With the arrival of cheap paper in the Middle East at the end of the eighth century, scholars could afford to write down every hadith narration they came across. As the science of hadith collection and criticism developed in the mid-eighth century, a ‘hadith’ became identified with its *isnād*, not with its *matn*. As ninth-century scholars obsessively collected all the various transmissions (each called a ‘hadith’) of one tradition, the number of ‘hadiths’ multiplied rapidly. Aḥmad b. Hanbal, (164 – 241/ 780 – 855) for example, tried to include an average of seven narrations for every tradition he listed in his famous *Musnad* (Abbott, 1967, p. 71; cf Brown, 2010, p. 218). As *isnāds* developed through the natural process of multiple lines of scholars and became interlaced, this number increased even more, while the actual number of Prophetic traditions remained relatively small (Abbott, 1967, pp. 66, 71-72).

Another influential challenge came from Muhammad Mustafa Azami (d. 2017). In his *Studies in Early Hadith Literature* (1992), Azami refuted the methods and conclusions of both Goldziher and Schacht (Azami, 1992). With the discovery of numerous early Arabic manuscripts, Azami demanded and demonstrated that many of the theories and conclusions of Goldziher should be changed or modified (Azami, p. xvii; cf. Brown, 2010, pp. 219-210).

Azami's principal objection to Schacht was his reliance on a small number of sources to make broad generalizations. Azami (1992) pointed out that Schacht only relied on a limited number of sources. Schacht studied *Muwatta'* of Mālik and *Kitāb al-Umm* of al-Shāfi'ī and generalized the results thereof on the entire corpus of hadith literature.

On why Schacht's results led him to propose the theory of the common link, Azami laid the blame on Schacht for not having done a "thorough investigation of *isnāds* of a considerable part of legal traditions necessary to put forward a theory" (Azami, 1992, p. 235).

Azami (1992) complained that Schacht's evidence was marshalled in a deceitful manner since when he used the term 'common occurrence' it was actually just a few examples of minimal sources that suited Schacht's theory. It is a common sense that a theory of such common application is unacceptable on such meagre evidence. Azami noticed that Schacht had two kinds of measurements for his research. To formulate a theory, says Azami, Schacht uses the term 'common occurrences' basing his research on a few examples that suit his theory, and if there were cases which cover 99% of the subject that refuted his theory, then he used the word 'occasionally' to minimize their effect (Azami, 1992, p. 235).

Another scholar who discussed the common link and challenged Juynboll's understanding of common links is Halit Ozkan. In his '*The Common Link and Its relation to the Madār*' Ozkan examined the term *madār* in the Muslim hadith literature to reassess Juynboll's claim that it is equivalent to the Muslims' use of common link. He argued that there are significant differences between the understanding and the use of the term *madār* by Muslim scholars, on the one hand, and Juynboll's notion of the common link (Ozkan, 2004).

Ozkan raised very pertinent questions on dating early *madārs*. He emphasized that identifying the date of the first *madār* will give a better understanding and will help us to determine how Muslim scholars used the term on the one hand, and the understanding of the common link (Ozkan, 2004, p. 51).

In response to Juynboll's findings that no Companion served as a common link (or *madār*) Ozkan showed several examples of the transmitters who were described as the *madārs* of the isnads and these *madārs* were Companions (Ozkan, 2004, pp. 51-52).

Unlike Juynboll's notion of common link that suggests that it is only one common link in a single bundle of isnad, Ozkan was able to challenge this notion by showing that scholars of hadith sometimes identified more than one *madār* in one hadith. Ozkan was able, through many

examples, to differentiate between the term *madār* and the common link. He then insisted that this signifies that the term *madār* is not always identical to the term common link. If we ascribe the wording of a particular hadith to the *madār*, as Juynboll does for the common link, then which of the two or three *madārs* formulated the wording of the hadith? In addition, how do we explain Muslim scholars' recognition of the existence of transmitters other than the *madār* on the same level as *madār* without identifying him as such? (Ozkan, 2004, p. 60).

Ozkan's findings confirm the finding of Juynboll in his early writing that Muslim scholars did not recognise the existence of the term *madār* in their discussion about hadith (Ozkan, 2004, p. 75).

While Ozkan's criticism against Juynboll's notion of common links is well-researched, however, denying the similarities between the common links and *madārs* poses many questions. The term *madār* should always be qualified with either '*al-isnād*' or '*al-hadith*' to avoid incorrect conclusions. It appears that Juynboll did not clarify whether he meant *madār al-isnād* or *madār al-hadith* in his discussion on common links. It is because of this confusion that Ozkan argued that the term *madār* is different from common links. On the other hand, Ozkan also did not clarify that there is a difference between the term *madār* qualified with *al-isnād* and *al-hadith*. Instead, he denied the similarities between *madār* and common link. I have argued in my thesis that there the term *madār* qualified with '*al-isnād*', i.e., '*madār al-isnād*' is similar to the term '*common link*' inasmuch as the description is concerned. However, where we censure Schacht, Juynboll, and other Western scholars is their misappropriation of the *madār al-isnād*, or its equivalent term 'Common Link', for they introduced a theory around it that is not supported by overwhelming evidence. To make matters worse, they have applied the theory in completely wrong genres of hadiths. It is on this point my thesis attempts to rectify the misinterpretations of the Orientalists about common links.

Ozkan, however, was correct in his assertion that through his exercise, the understanding of the common link phenomenon required serious modification (Ozkan, 2004, p. 76).

Probably the most extensive discourse on the Common Link is that of Fahad A. Alhomoudi.¹⁰ In his PhD dissertation titled 'On the Common-Link Theory', Alhomoudi challenged the

¹⁰ Wael B. Hallaq, the Islamic legal theorist also critiqued Schacht's Theories. In his '*The Authenticity of Prophetic Hadith: A Pseudo Problem*', he discussed Schacht and other scholars on the question of hadith authenticity. He argued that traditional Muslim scholars have already solved the problem. Therefore, the scholarly output

accuracy of Schacht's founding theory of the Common Link. He elucidated the formation of Schacht's Common Link Theory and demonstrated how it is related to the other theories.

Alhomoudi first presented Schacht's perspective on the Common Link Theory and then delved into the differences in understanding this theory that separate Schachtians from other contemporary scholars (Alhomoudi, 2006, p. 5).

He argued against Schacht's and Juynboll's findings which call for a total rejection of hadith based on the Common Link Theory. Alhomoudi discussed Schacht's arguments related to the following issues:

- Sunnah
- Family isnād
- *E silentio* argument
- Backward-growth of the isnād

Alhomoudi discussed the issue of a common link theory from the traditional Muslim point of view. He brought to our attention that Muslim hadith scholars have long acknowledged the existence and debated the importance of a common link, as evidenced by most works on hadith terminology. However, there is a disparity in understanding between Schacht and his followers on the one hand, and the Muslim hadith scholars on the other. This disparity lies in their respective interpretations of the effects of this theory on the authority of the *isnād* (Alhomoudi, 2006, p. 2).

To fully understand the Common Link Theory, according to *muhaddithūn*, Alhomoudi calls for an in-depth study of its complex history, taking into account the diverse and evolving terms, ideas and positions (Alhomoudi, 2006, p. 92). According to Alhomoudi, *tafarrud* is a comparable term used by Muslim hadith critics to describe the Common Link (Alhomoudi,

concerned with the authenticity of hadith is largely, if not totally, pointless" (Hallaq, 1999, p. 77). However, his argument from an epistemological point of view led him to conflate the concepts of certainty and probability understood by theoreticians, on one hand, and that of the hadith scholars on the other. Because majority of hadiths are *āḥād* hadiths, which engenders probability, and very few, if any are *mutawātir* hadiths. Therefore, according to the epistemological worldview of theorists, very few hadiths can be said with certainty that they are true statements of the Prophet. However, Jonathan Brown, has shown that there is a difference between early hadith scholars and theoreticians in their understanding of certainty and probability. See Brown, 2009, Did the Prophet Say It or Not? The Literal, Historical, and Effective Truth of Hadiths in Early Sunnism. *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, 259 - 285.

2006, p. 92). Thus, he discussed *tafarrud*, and some essential topics derived and related to *tafarrud* from three perspectives:

- a. The effect of *tafarrud* on the transmitter's credibility.
- b. The effect of *tafarrud* on the hadith itself; and
- c. The difference between hadith that has *tafarrud* yet is narrated by a reliable transmitter and one transmitted by a weak transmitter.

Alhomoudi pointed out four primary reasons why Schacht failed to produce an acceptable theory for a common link:

- a. Unfamiliarity with *rijāl* works (or biographical literature)
- b. Misapprehending *muṣṭalaḥ al-hadith* (or hadith terminologies)
- c. The distinction between a *matn* and *isnād*
- d. Flaws in Schacht's methodology (Alhomoudi, 2006, pp. 127-139)

It is the researcher's contention that Alhomoudi was thorough in his critique of Schacht's Common Link Theory and succeeded in refuting Schacht and those who followed his arguments. However, it is the opinion of the researcher that Alhomoudi (2006) erred in a few pertinent issues when presenting the traditional approach to common links in hadith. In his depiction of the different types of *fard*, he indicated that a *fard muṭlaq* (absolutely) hadith by a Transmitter *without opposing hadith*¹¹ is weak regardless of whether or not the transmitter was strong in terms of reliability and knowledge (Alhomoudi, 2006, p. 109). However, as we will see below, the critics did not just give this blank judgement on this type of *fard*. They took into consideration the reliability of the transmitter in addition to other considerations before declaring that particular hadith weak or rejected. *Fard muṭlaq* is one sub-category of the *gharīb* hadith, yet not all *gharīb* hadiths are rejected. The first and last hadiths of the collection of the *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī* are *fard muṭlaq* hadiths, yet scholars of hadith accepted them to be authentic.

In addition to the above, it appears that Alhomoudi conflated the concepts of *munfarid* and *wuḥdān* on the one hand and *madār al-isnād* or common link on the other hand. There is a significant difference between the above terms. *Munfarid* or *wuḥdān*, refers to a hadith transmitter who had only one student (‘Itr, 1997, p. 136), whereas the common link or *madār al-isnād* refers to a transmitter from whom the *isnad* of a particular hadith fans out. ‘Amr b. Taghlib (died after 40 A.H.), Wahb b. Khanbash al-Ṭā’ī are identified as *wuḥdān* because both had only one student transmitting from each. Al-Ḥasan is the only student of ‘Amr b. Taghlib.

¹¹ Emphasis mine

Though ‘Amr b. Taghlib had only one student transmitting all his hadiths from him, those hadiths were also transmitted by contemporaries of ‘Amr. ‘Amr b. Taghlib transmitted hadiths speaking about the signs of the Hour, and only al-Ḥasan transmits from him. Yet the same hadith was transmitted by Abū Hurayrah (*Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, hadith: 2928), Abū Sa‘īd al-Khudrī (*Ibn Mājah*, hadith: 4099; *Musnad Aḥmad*, hadith: 11261). Similarly, with regards to Wahb b. Khanbash only ‘Āmir b. Sharāḥīl al-Sha‘bī transmitted his hadiths. Those hadiths, however, were also transmitted by other individuals besides Wahb. On the hadith “*One ‘Umrah in the month of Ramaḍān equals a ḥajj pilgrimage*” only al-Sha‘bī transmitted it from Wahb. However, the same hadith was transmitted by Ibn ‘Abbās (*Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, hadith: 1256), Umm Ma‘qil, (*Sunan al-Tirmidhī*, hadith: 939), Abū Ma‘qil, (*Sunan ibn Mājah*, hadith: 2993) and Jābir (*Musnad Aḥmad*, hadith: 14795). One might argue that the names mentioned above are all Companions, hence has no bearing on Alhomoudui’s conclusion since he declared that “[it] be authentic”. However, the concept of *wuḥdān* is not confined to Companions only. Al-Nasā‘ī’s book *al-Munfaridāt* includes all generations of transmitters. Therefore, one may conclude that not all *wuḥdān* and *munfaridāt* are *madār al-isnād* or common links. At the same time, not all common links are *wuḥdān*. In short, there is no relationship between the concepts of *wuḥdān* and common links in hadith.

Another important point that Alhomoudui ignored in his research is the issue of *ṭabaqāt* to which a common link belonged. After establishing the reliability of the transmitter, scholars also looked at the *ṭabaqah* in which the said common link belonged. Judging the common link transmitter according to his *ṭabaqah*, in addition to his scholarly status in transmitting hadith, was crucial according to critics of hadith. The *ṭabaqāt* of transmitters are ignored by many academic researchers on Common Link Theory.

Another point observed in Alhomoudui, though it does not affect his thesis immediately, is his misspelling and misidentification of the names of scholars or hadith transmitters. For example, he used the book *al-Muntakhab min gharā‘ib Malik* as a practical case of *tafarrud*. As the title suggests, it is a selection of a few hadiths that Malik transmitted from al-Zuhrī, which no other students of al-Zuhrī transmitted. The author is Abū Bakr Muhammad b. Ibrāhīm b. ‘Alī b. ‘Āṣim b. Zādhān b. *al-Muqri’* al-Aṣḥānī. Alhomoudui, however, constantly calls him *al-Miqqarī* though out his thesis. He makes this mistake despite al-Sam‘ānī in his *al-Ansāb* listed him under the entry *al-Muqri’* (al-Sam‘ānī, 1988, vol. 5 p.367). Another example of the above case appears in his depiction of the hadith of ‘Ishā prayer’, also taken from the above *al-*

Muntakhab of Ibn al-Muqri'. His 8th diagram on page 122 shows that the teacher of Muslim is Ibn Numayr who in turn transmitted the hadith from his father. It seems as if Alhomoudi thought that since Ibn Numayr is transmitting from his father so his father should automatically be Numayr. This might be an indication of his unfamiliarity with the *rijāl* genre. The name of Muslim's teacher is Muhammad b. 'Abd Allah b. Numayr. He often transmits from his father though in some cases, he also transmits from other than his father. However, the point here is that both the son, Muhammad, and the father, 'Abd Allah, are most of the time referred to as ibn Numayr. The difference is that the son and the father belong to different generations or *ṭabaqāt*. Hence, if the chain passes through Muhammad, the son, then he would say *ḥaddathanā Abī* (my father informed me). Numayr, the grandfather of Muhammad is not known for hadith transmission. From the six canonical hadith collection he only appears once transmitting the hadith '*al-Ghanīmah al-bāridah al-ṣiyām fī al-shitā'* (al-Tirmidhī: hadith: 797) from 'Āmir b. Mas'ūd. Therefore, Alhmomoudī was supposed to indicate in the diagram that the teacher of ibn Numayr is his father, 'Abd Allah b. Numayr and not Numayr, the grandfather.

Rationale of the study

My interest in studies of hadith conducted by scholars based in European and American University departments of Islamic studies, religious studies and Orientalist studies goes back to my student days at Dār al-'Ulūm al-'Arabiyyah al-Islāmiyyah, Strand (Cape Town). It was in my fourth year when we were introduced to some findings of Orientalists scholars who studied hadith. At that time, the course material assigned to hadith studies was *al-Sunnah wamākānatuha al-tashrī' al-islāmī*, by Dr Muṣṭafā al-Sibā'ī. Dr al-Sibā'ī outlined the main conclusions that were arrived at by Goldziher in his studies on hadith and Islamic history. Further inspirations that promoted my zeal to learn more about Western scholars of Islam and their views on hadith came when we were introduced to the writings of Dr Muhammad Muṣṭafā al-A'zamī in the modules of our fifth year of '*Ālim/Fāḍil*' course in the same institute. His *Manhaj al-naqd 'inda al-muḥaddithīn* was ground-breaking because he compared the methodologies of early hadith critics with other proclaimed positivistic methodologies of past and present schools of Orientalist thought that focused on verifying the authenticity of hadith reports.

However, al-Sibā'ī and Azami concentrated mainly on the studies of Ignaz Goldziher and Joseph Schacht. Though these two scholars were the leading Orientalist scholars of Islam of

the late nineteenth and first half of the twentieth centuries, the post-Schachtian period also witnessed another wave of works on hadith by scholars who either accepted Schachtian theories in hadith or criticised him for his generalised conclusions. This motivated me to read further about Orientalist writings in hadith.

Another motivation for this study is that most hadith students within the broader traditional Muslim institutions in South Africa tend to shun discussing pertinent issues of Orientalism and hadith. Probably, the source of this fear is that the issues are not adequately addressed in the syllabi of these institutions. In addition, students are constantly warned against the writings of Orientalists and the like. If the subject was appropriately taught, then students would have learnt that Orientalists' arguments are not new and can be adequately addressed. Traditional Muslim hadith critics developed a robust hadith methodology for dealing with hadith reports of the past and present.

My primary intention in this thesis is to assess and compare the worldview of Orientalist scholars and those who follow their methods with the worldview of the traditional Muslim hadith critics. In addition, it is part of my intention to show that wherever erroneous conclusions the Orientalist and Revisionist scholars had, it was due to the presuppositions they held about Islam, in general, and hadith in particular.

Objectives

Some modern scholars, like Juynboll, have accepted Schacht's Common Link Theory uncritically and applied it in all fields of the hadith genre. On the other hand, other scholars like Michael Cook, and Norman Calder, to mention but few, have been reluctant to accept or reject Schacht's theory, whereas a third group have discarded the theory completely. The third group are presented by the writings of Nabia Abbot (1897-1981), Fuat Sezgin (1924- 2018), and Muhammad Mustāfa Azami (1932 – 2017).

The objectives of this research were to explore how classical hadith critics dealt with links that were common in the chain of transmitters. In addition, the study engaged the debate about the interpretations of Orientalists and Revisionists concerning the common links in the isnād. Also, the objective of this study is to demonstrate that early traditional hadith critics recognized the existence of a common link in an isnād and thus, it is by no means Schacht's invention. It is also to show that while in western academic circles, the common link is a key theory, it is by no means that scholars of hadith were ignorant of it. Indeed they were

circumspect in the way they dealt with common links. Traditional hadith critics discussed the common links from different perspectives. The following terms *Madār al-hadith*, *Madār al-isnād*, *gharabah*, *tafarrud*, *lā yutaba' alayh* are all terms that connote the concept of a common link. The existence of a common link, however, was not the default criterion for rejecting or dating a hadith among classical hadith scholars. There were other mitigating circumstances that were taken into consideration. If a common link was suspected of having any dubious characteristics, his narration was discarded. On the other hand, if a common link's integrity and accuracy were known and accepted, generally, his hadith was accepted, provided the hadith (whether the text or the chain of transmitters) fulfilled all other criteria (such as the fact that the narrators lived in the same time) for acceptance. In dealing with common links in hadith, traditional hadith critics took into consideration many aspects surrounding the common link, such as his generation, his other narrations, the teachers he is transmitting from etc. All the above matters critics took into consideration before accepting or rejecting the hadith of a common link. The common link was not considered the sole criterion for establishing the authenticity of hadith transmission.

In this research study, I used the *madār al-isnād* and *tafarrud* analysis to put the common link in hadith in its Muslim hadith critics' perspective. A balanced and objective study of how the common link was investigated by traditional hadith scholars is presented and contrasted with the opinions of some of the main Orientalist scholars who were proponents of the common link theory.

Thus, my research objectives are:

1. To explore the worldview of Orientalist and Revisionist scholars on hadith.
2. To explore the worldview of Traditional Muslim Hadith critics regarding the development of hadith and related subjects.
3. To present and debate the views of Orientalist and Revisionist scholars concerning the dating of hadith.
4. To present the Hadith critics' account of the history of hadith criticism, especially in dating hadith.
5. To analyse the key arguments of Schacht and Revisionists regarding the common link transmitters.
6. To use the development of hadith criticism during the first three centuries of Islam as a point of departure for critiquing the understanding of Schacht and Revisionist scholars about the common links in hadith.

7. To explain how traditional hadith critics viewed transmitters who were common links in *isnād* by analysing selected hadiths within the generations of transmitters using the *madār al-isnād* and *tafarrud* analysis.

Research questions

To achieve the above objectives, this research study seeks to answer the following questions:

- What is the worldview of Orientalist and revisionist scholars on Islamic traditions and hadith?
- What is the worldview of Traditional Muslim scholars on the development of hadith and related subjects?
- What are the Orientalist and Revisionist scholars' approaches to dating hadith?
- What was the traditional Muslim account of the history of hadith criticism, especially in dating hadith?
- What are the key arguments of Schacht and Orientalists regarding the common link transmitters?
- How did early traditional hadith critics approach common links of different generations in hadith having different qualities of integrity and probity?
- How traditional hadith critics viewed transmitters that sit as common links in isnad?

Scope and limitations

A general survey of the collection of articles of hadith in Motzki's '*Hadith: Origins and Developments*', one would easily gain the impression that there has been a large amount of work produced by Western scholars on hadith. Therefore, this research will only focus on some Western scholars who have discussed the issue of common links found in *isnād* from its introduction by Schacht to the works of succeeding generations after him. The fact that this study is confined to critiquing the common link theories in no way undermines positive and significant contributions by Western scholars to the field of hadith literature. This study will also be confined to using transmitters who are reliable according to the standard of the majority of Sunni Islam. The transmitters that are not reliable are not discussed for obvious reasons that the general hadith critics' ruling regarding their transmissions is that these are not reliable and are thus rejected.

Methodology:

From the outset, it should be noted that since this study dealt mainly with historical figures or reports, hence it is a library-based study of information. The material studied and sources used are mainly books, academic articles, and online materials. Content analysis is the main method used to analyse data, and English and Arabic materials are used as sources for the study. In so doing, a comparative analysis study of Western scholars' approach to the Common Link and traditional Muslim scholars' *madār al-isnād* approach has been conducted to reach the intended goals of the research. It, therefore, goes without saying that this research is primarily a study of common links in the *isnāds* as viewed by classical hadith critics and how it differs from the views of Orientalist scholars.

Examples of common links in hadith are discussed from different generations, covering mainly the first three hundred years of Islam. Wherever details of transmitters are needed, biographical works of Sunni sources and books of prosopography are consulted, in which preference is given to the earliest source possible. Classical and contemporary works of *muṣṭalah al-hadith*, or hadith nomenclature, are consulted as well, for they give clarity on many issues related to the topic.

Through the *madār al-isnād* analysis, this study will show that classical hadith scholars used comprehensive analysis techniques in which the common link played a prominent role without being the sole criteria for judging the authenticity of a hadith text, which provides a challenge to the Common Link Theory introduced by Schacht and advocated by later Western scholars of hadith.

Finally, attention should also be drawn to other methodological points, viz:

1. The term Prophet, unless explained or in direct quotation, refers to the Prophet Muhammad. According to Muslim traditions, whenever the name Muhammad, or any of his titles, is used, then Muslims are required to say, loudly or silently, the prayer: “*sallaLlah alayh wa sallam*” or any equivalent expression that renders the meaning “Peace be upon him”. In this work, the name Muhammad is often omitted unless in direct quotation. The prayer that follows his name is also omitted in writing for the sake of brevity, yet Muslims are required to say it still whenever possible.

2. The capitalised term ‘Companions’ refers to the Companions of the Prophet. Again, when the name of a Companion is mentioned, Muslims are recommended to pray for him with the expression such as “*raḍiyaLlah ‘anhu*” for one¹², “*raḍiyaLlah ‘anhumā*” for two Companions, and “*raḍiyaLlah ‘anhum*” for three or more. The prayer basically means, “*May Allah be pleased with him – them*”. Like the prayer for the Prophet, here the prayer is also omitted from writing, but uttered by myself for the sake of brevity.

3. And the capitalised term ‘Successors’ refers to the disciples of the Companions of the Prophet. For any scholar that came after the generation Companions, the general prayer after mentioning the name of the Successor or any notable scholar who already passed on is “*RaḥimahuLlah, or RaḥmatuLlah ‘alayh*” meaning “*May Allah have mercy on him*”; and *ḥafīzahuLlah* “*May Allah protect him*” if he is still alive. Again, the prayer, here, is omitted for the same reason explained above.

Structure of the study

This study consists of seven chapters. Chapter one is dedicated to an introduction in which the aims and objectives of the research, literature review and research methodology are explained. Chapter two discusses the views of Orientalists concerning early sources of Islamic history. Chapter three discusses the Muslim perspective on the development of the hadith from the time of the Prophet to the tenth century. It also touches on the impact of hadith transmission on the emergence of the science of hadith criticism. Chapter four expounds on the theories of Western scholars regarding common links in hadith. Joseph Schacht and Juynboll are critically discussed, followed by other Western scholars who criticised Schacht's understanding of common links occurrences in hadith. Chapter five elaborates on the traditional Muslim view of common links. In this chapter, it has been shown how important to know the status of a hadith transmitter and his generation to properly judge his hadith when he sits as a common link. Chapter six is the case study wherein two hadiths are studied. One hadith has a common link at the level of Successors and the second hadith has multiple chains of narrators leading up to the Companions. The outcomes of the study of the first hadith confirmed that many a time a hadith was already known to the traditional hadith scholars

¹² The pronouns here only refer to masculine gender. For feminine gender, the prayer would be “*raḍiyaLlah ‘anha*”, “*raḍiyaLlah ‘anhumā*” and “*raḍiyaLlah ‘anhunna*” respectively.

before a transmitter became a common link. The study of the second hadith emphasised that Muslim hadith critics had a comprehensive method of hadith criticism that, despite having multiple isnads, hadith critics still rejected the hadith for it did not fulfil the criteria of acceptance. The last chapter is the conclusion and recommendation. It provides the main intellectual outcomes of my study and suggestions for further research.



Chapter Two: Orientalist scholars' approach to hadith

Introduction

Since Orientalist scholars ventured to fathom the origins of Islam, they have been confronted with questions of the degree to which Prophetic Traditions are historically accurate (Motzki, 2003, p. 211). While early Western scholars accepted the Prophetic Traditions, the later scholars of the 19th century were sceptical about it (Motzki, 2003, p. 211). The debate that developed in Western scholarship on the reliability of Muslim traditions was dominated by sceptics, including Goldziher (d. 1921), Schacht, Wansbrough (1928 - 2002), Patricia Crone, Michael Cook and Norman Calder (1950 – 1998). Their contributions had a lasting influence on the authenticity debates (Motzki, 2003, p. 211). Ignaz Goldziher (1971) accused Muslim hadith critics of being unable to notice “the crudest anachronism” in the text if the isnād is uninterrupted. He judged the origins of hadiths in parallel with the formative stages of the Islamic community (Kizl, 2015, p. 11). Goldziher was sceptical about the authenticity of hadith in the first two centuries because of fabrication. However, he did acknowledge the authenticity of some of the hadith literature. (Kizl, 2015, p. 11). He mainly used biographical traditions to make historical statements about individuals of the first century (Motzki, 2003, p. 213). In one work, he mentioned hadiths about *diyah*, i.e. blood money – the money paid as a fine for killing the foetus – as an example of “the earliest elements of legal hadith”. However, in another work, he declared that the *marfū'* version of hadith concerning the *zakāh* rates (*farā'id sadaqah*) was reliable together with other early traditions related to the subject (Goldziher, 1981, p. 32). This seems contradictory for the traditional scholar of hadith, for he accepted some hadiths and rejected most.

Orientalist scholarship and Western scholars do not have a monolithic approach to hadith and do not represent a unified camp. Researchers have reviewed the Islamic and hadith scholarship approaches of Western scholars and categorised them into different groups based on various criteria. Thus, Western scholars have been classified into different groups by different scholars based on the approach of their scholarship. The section below is an example of categories of Western scholars' outlook on Islam and its early sources.

Categories of Western scholarship on Islam

Fred M. Donner's classification:

In his introduction to *"Narrative of Islamic Origins: The beginnings of Historical Writings"*, Fred M. Donner addressed the different approaches of Western scholarship on Islam (Donner, 1998, pp. 1-31). The main objective of the book is to create an insight into "Islamic origins". By "Islamic origins", Donner means the first half-century of Islamic history – from about 610 to about 660 CE – in which it is believed that the formative events in the life of the Islamic community occurred (Donner, 1998, p. 1). The difficulty that Donner faces, like many other researchers, is that because most Western scholars have an epistemological bias towards written sources when they make an attempt to reconstruct the Islamic history of the formative period, they find that there are little detailed written sources from the first century. The sources that were truly contemporary documents, like archaeological and epigraphic information, are exceedingly scarce and most important events and figures in the story of Islamic origins are undocumented (Donner, 1998, p. 3) in manuscript form since the Arabs had a culture of orality.

After exploring the varying perceptions about the sources on Islamic origins, Donner asserts that modern scholarship treats the raw material in a variety of ways. According to Donner, at least four distinctive approaches can be discerned based on different historiographical assumptions (Donner, 1998, p. 3): first, the Descriptive Approach; second, the Source-Critical Approach; third, the Tradition-Critical Approach; fourth, the Skeptical Approach.

The first approach (Descriptive Approach) is basically the approach taken by the early Western scholars who simply accepted the traditional picture of Islamic origins presented by Muslim sources (Donner, 1998, p. 5). Donner summed up three main assumptions upon which this approach was found. The first assumption is that the text of the Qur'ān had virtually documentary value for the life and teachings of the Prophet Muhammad. The second assumption is that the copious reports making up the narratives about Islamic origins found in Muslim chronicles were basically reliable for the reconstruction of "what actually happened." The third assumption is that many hadiths attributed to the Prophet Muhammad were considered religious literature and were quite distinct from the historical reports offered by chronicles, hence were not directly relevant to the task of reconstructing early Islamic history (Donner, 1998, p. 6). Donner suggests that early Western scholars probably took the

descriptive approach, for they had limited access to Muslim traditional sources. In the late nineteenth century, more important sources were published and became easily accessible. As a result, the succeeding generation of Western scholars found themselves confronted with a plethora of source materials. This wealth of new sources, with its complexities, raised doubts about the veracity of the traditional narratives in the minds of some scholars who did not want to take the trouble of learning how to reconcile the seemingly contradictory accounts in the Muslim traditional sources. Thus, this perception of the complexity of the Islamic narratives, which the descriptive approach failed to explain, was instrumental in generating another approach to early Islamic history (Donner, 1998, p. 9).

The second approach (the Source-Critical Approach) began roughly in the middle of the nineteenth century. This approach was the outcome of the challenges faced by the previous Western scholars of Islam, especially about contradictions in sources. So, the Source-Critical approach was the development of new approaches to explain the existence of divergent accounts and to determine which of the several divergent accounts should be deemed most trustworthy (Donner, 1998, p. 9). There are four fundamental underlying assumptions upon which the Source-Critical approach was based. First, the existing source materials of narratives included much accurate early historical information. However, the reliable material was intermixed with unreliable sources. Second, non-Muslim sources especially Christian sources in Syriac and Greek provided independent sources of evidence against which one could compare particular accounts in the Muslim narratives to see whether the accounts were reliable. Donner combined the third and fourth assumptions and noted that these assumptions are not peculiar to the Source-Critical approach; rather, they were shared with the descriptive approach. In a nutshell, the hadith materials were of less importance in reconstructing Islamic history, for they are essentially non-historical rather than religious concerns. Furthermore, the view regarding the Qur'anic text was that it had not fully been documented in the first century (Donner, 1998, p. 10).

The third approach, the Traditional-Critical Approach, to the sources of early Islamic history came on account of an awareness of the complexities of the oral tradition. It was inaugurated by the publication in 1890 of Ignaz Goldziher's epochal study of hadith (Donner, 1998). This work marks the beginning of Western scholarship viewing the hadith in the context of conflicting political, religious, and social interests in early Muslim communities. Goldziher demonstrated that many hadiths could only be understood as reflections of later political interests despite the fact that each hadith was equipped with a chain of narrators. According

to Donner, Goldziher's work had a more direct impact on the study of the development of Islamic law and theology than on the study of early Islamic history. Hence it had an impact on scholars' assumptions about hadith since, unlike historical counts, Prophetic hadiths served as the main source of Islamic law (Donner, 1998, p. 14).

The fourth approach, the Skeptical Approach,¹³ also represented an outgrowth of Goldziher's work. Like the tradition-critics, the sceptics accept the idea that there are traditions about Islamic origins that are the products of long and partly oral evolution. However, the sceptics deny that there is any recoverable kernel of historical fact that can tell us what actually happened in the early Islamic period (Donner, 1998, p. 20). In this approach, Donner discussed the contributions of scholars such as the Jesuit scholar Henri Lammens (1862-1937), Theodor Nöldeke (1836-1930), Carl Heinrich Becker (d 1876-1933), to mention but a few. Of specific note, Donner pointed out that both Nöldeke and Becker, the two contemporaries of Lammens, challenged some of Lammens' methodological assumptions (Donner, 1998, p. 21). Probably the first scholar to articulate the sceptical position explicitly is Joseph Schacht. Schacht, however, applied it only to Islamic law when he tried to understand how Islamic law evolved during the first four centuries of Islam. Robert Brunschvig (d. 1901- 1990) is counted among the most important early contributors with more direct implications for the study of the history of Islamic origins (Donner, 1998, p. 22). Despite decisive efforts to refute the sceptical positions about the narrative sources of Islamic history, particularly from Muslim scholars such as M. M. Azami, the mid-1970s saw several new advocates for the sceptical position. Donner lists scholars like John Wansbrough (1928-2002), Patricia Crone, Michael Cook, and Norman Calder *et al.* among the advocates of the sceptical approach within the decades of the second half of the twentieth century. The underlying assumptions of that wave of scepticism can be summarised in the following points: 1) The Qur'an was only codified much later than assumed by Muslims and some Western scholars. Hence, the Qur'ānic text itself cannot be used as evidence for the origins of Islam. 2) The narratives of Islamic origins are all to be viewed as salvation history, idealised visions of the past actually originating in a later period. There is no kernel of historical information. If there was such information, then it was either

¹³ Fred Donner makes it clear that even though every historian must be skeptical to his source, here he only refers to the scholars who exhibit a radical skepticism towards the whole received picture of Islamic origins. Donner, *Narratives of Islamic origins*, p. 20 note 47

not conveyed or it was entangled with later interpolations. 3) The narratives about the life of the Prophet are largely exegetical in nature and do not represent a body of evidence about Islamic origins independent of Qur'anic text itself or of later tradition (Donner, 1998, p. 23). Donner reviewed the arguments of the radical sceptics and exposed their weaknesses. Donner (1998) goes on to say that the notion that the whole tradition was completely reshaped by later dogma seems unlikely, *a priori*, for several reasons. 1) As early as 35 AH (i.e. since the First Civil War), there has not been a time that the Islamic community has been free of religious, political, and social tensions and disagreement. There existed several competing political and theological points of view by Khārijī, Shī'ī, Umayyads, Murji'ī. Despite all these groups adopting different theological and political views, these different sects show marked agreement on most central features of the traditional origins, a fact that the sceptical school never addresses. 2) There existed in the community of Believers no "authorities" who had the power to impose a uniform dogmatic view. Sceptics speak loosely of extensive redaction of the tradition, but they seldom bother to identify the people who are supposed to have implemented this redaction or exactly what purposes were served by doing so. Yet, the thesis of a comprehensive redaction of the tradition, as a whole, into a unified form remains merely an abstraction with no visible historical support. 3) The sceptical school asks us to believe that these unnamed "authorities," could have tracked down every book and tradition contained in every manuscript in the whole Islamic community so that no view dissenting from the standard orthodox position was allowed to survive. Given the nature of society and the state of communications in the early Islamic world, such comprehensive control is simply unbelievable. The early Islamic community was not integrated into a knit hierarchical structure, but consisted rather of small sub-communities and sub-sects. Each of these preserved its own traditions, which sometimes included divergent views, even on matters deemed by the orthodox to be most theologically central and politically sensitive. Therefore, there is little reason to think that significant opinions and debates relating to Islamic origins have died out so completely that no echo of them can be identified in the sources. Donner brings to our attention that in the recent century, a vast number of new sources of every variety have been recovered from manuscripts and published. The new debates or opinions that have come to light appear to be not so much ones that reveal dangerous opinions suppressed by "authorities" but, rather, marginal positions that simply died out for lack of sufficient interest to sustain them in the community. For this reason, according to Donner (1998) it seems

plausible to assert that the traditional Islamic material, as a whole, contains sufficient material to reconstruct at least the main issues debated by Believers in the early Islamic period and the basic attitudes of the main parties to those debates (Donner, 1998, pp. 25-29).

Herbert Berg's classification

Another important scholar that analysed Western approaches to Islamic scholarship is Herbert Berg. In his “*The Development of Exegesis in Early Islam*”,¹⁴ Berg studied the exegetical traditions that have been allegedly ascribed to Ibn ‘Abbās. He used the hadiths used by al-Ṭabarī in his *Tafsīr*. His main objective for this study was to find out whether they are really derived from Ibn ‘Abbās. Berg, however, made it clear from the inception that “generalising from exegetical hadiths to other genres of hadiths is not likely to be convincing to all scholars (Berg, *The Development of Exegesis in Islam: The Authenticity of Muslim Literature from the Formative Period*, 2000, p. 3). The book has two sections. In the first section, which is about half of the book, Berg discussed the views of various scholars on legal and exegetical traditions. Berg’s study is primarily a critical review and analysis of scholarly evaluation of approaches to hadith criticism. In his survey, he noted that the focal point of the debate is the reliability of *isnāds* (Berg, 2000, p. 1). On this, he classified the Western scholars of hadith into three categories based on their approach to hadith in general and isnād in particular: first, the “skeptical”, second the “sanguine”, and the third, the “middle ground”.¹⁵

In the category of “skeptical”, Berg discussed at length scholars like Gustav Weil (1808 – 1889), Aloys Sprenger (1813 – 1893), Ignaz Goldziher (1850 – 1921), Joseph Schacht, and Eckart Stetter as examples of early Western scholars who evoked scepticism against Islamic historical sources (Berg, 2000, pp. 8-9). In his other work, Berg (2003) mentioned that these

¹⁴ Berg H., (2000), *The Development of Exegesis in Early Islam: The Authenticity of Muslim Literature from the Formative Period*, Curzon. Berg’s “*The Development Exegesis in Early Islam*” was received by Western scholars with either complete acceptance or criticism. Thus, it led to a series of writings especially between Berg and Harald Motzki. The latter outlined some shortcomings in the former’s classification and his description of different positions that scholars hold on the reliability of hadith (Motzki, 2010, p. 212).

¹⁵ Berg preferred using the “skeptical” and “sanguine” instead of “revisionists” and “traditionists” as Judith Koren and Yehuda D. Nevo did in their “*Methodological Approaches to Islamic Studies*”. He argued that these terms are better because the focus on the approaches themselves not the results of the approaches, whereas the former terms (revisionists and traditionists) focus on the results of the studies (Berg, 2003, p. 261).

sceptical scholars have radical approaches to Islam and its history. Since they consider historiographical existence of the seventh-century Hejaz as entirely a creation of Muslim and Orientalists scholarship, we can never know what really happened, but only what later Muslims thought, wanted to believe, or wanted others to believe, had happened (Berg, 2003, p. 275). This radical sceptical approach is not compatible with the source materials at our disposal.

After his analysis of the Qur’ān 15: 89-91 according to the sceptical approach, Berg observed that “these conclusions about the origin of the elements in the extant hadith suggest that both the *matns* and their *isnāds* cannot be used to glean any historical information” (Berg, 2003, p. 281).

In the second category, “the sanguine”, Berg discussed scholars who actively reacted to the views of the skeptics. In this category, Berg concentrated on scholars such as Nabia Abbott (d. 1981) Fuat Sezgin (1924 - 2018) and Muṣṭafā Azami. They stand in direct opposition to Goldziherian and Schachtian schools of hadith. Their position was based largely on the assumption that *isnāds* are historically reliable. The method used by these scholars for examining hadiths was one of ascription (Berg, 2000, p. 48). This is an unfair description of these scholars by Berg, for these scholars were also critical in their scholarship.

Berg also made an attempt to classify some scholars as middle ground. In this category, he mentioned Gautier H.A Juynboll Fazlur Raḥman (1918 – 1988) Gregor Schoeler and Harald Motzki (d. 2019), among others. Despite this attempt to find the middle ground, he concluded that there are only two positions. On one side are “those who are most sceptical, like Goldziher, tend to assume that only the *matn* has useful historical information and the *isnād* is of very limited historical value”; and on the other side are the “Muslim scholars and the less sceptical Western scholars who view the *isnād* as historically useful” (Berg, 2000, p. 49). In other words, Berg suggested a dichotomy between Goldziher, followed by Schacht, Cook, Calder on the one hand, and Sezgin, followed by Nabia Abbott, M.M. Azami, Motzki, Horovits and Fück on the other hand.

In his *Competing Paradigm*, however, Berg concluded that the results of each of the two approaches are mutually exclusive and one of them, or perhaps both, must be incorrect. The sanguine approach, because it deals with dates and names, appears to be methodologically rigorous, and the skeptical approach seems more theoretically (as opposed to

methodologically) rigorous. Scholars of both approaches share so few of the same assumptions that meaningful communication may not always be possible (Berg, 2003, pp. 287-90). Every researcher's position has an effect on his/her conclusions, and these conclusions are, in turn, adduced to justify the presuppositions (Kizil, 2017, p. 17). Berg's emphasis is always on the circular nature of the argumentations (Berg, 2000, p. 50). Thus, according to Berg, the argument of Muslims and Western scholars will convince only those who share their presuppositions; consequently, the problem will not likely be resolved.

Jonathan Brown's classification:

Another extensive classification has been made by Jonathan A. C. Brown in his '*Hadith: Muhammad's Legacy*'. Brown classified four different approaches in Western studies of early Islam and the question of authenticity (Brown, 2010, pp. 204 – 235). Most of these approaches are outlined in accordance with their chronological order of appearance and correspond to the modern Western study of history, commonly referred to as the Historical-Critical Method (HCM):¹⁶

- i. The Orientalist Approach
- ii. The Philo-Islamic Approach
- iii. The Revisionist Approach
- iv. The Western Revaluation Approach



A. *The Orientalist Approach:*

On the Orientalist Approach, Brown first discusses some early Orientalists who applied the Historical-Critical Method (hereinafter HCM) to early Islamic history and traditions that dealt with legal issues. Names of these early Orientalists include William Muir (d. 1905) and Ignaz Goldziher. Brown discussed Muir and his book '*The life of Mohamed*' in which he applied the principle of Dissimilarity in HCM).¹⁷ Muir felt that at least half of the traditions in *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī* must be rejected though he admitted that some traditions could be considered reliable (Brown, 2010, p. 205).

¹⁶ The Historical Critical Method is an approach to the path that emerged from Renaissance humanism and the critical approach to the sources of history and religion that subsequently developed in Germany in the 18th and 19th centuries.

¹⁷ The principle of dissimilarity: a principle discussed by Bart Ehrman, suggests that if something appears in a text that goes against the writer's interest, it's probably accurate.

Brown paid special attention to the writings of Ignaz Goldziher and discussed him at a considerable length. Goldziher applied the HCM on a larger scale and with more academic rigour. In his studies of the history of early Islam, he used anachronism¹⁸ and the Principle of Analogy¹⁹ to reach his conclusions (Brown, 2010, p. 205). Brown also discussed later scholars of hadith like Joseph Schacht and Gautier A. H. Juynboll.

B. The Philo-Islamic Approach:

According to Brown, this is a reactionary approach of Muslims, and some non-Muslim scholars, who responded to some of the arguments of the Orientalists. In this category, Brown discussed how Orientalist criticism of hadith swiftly evoked responses from Muslim scholars (Brown, 2010, pp. 217-220). Brown takes a specific interest in the writing of Sir Sayyid Ahmad Khan (d. 1898), the Indian Islamic modernist. Khan countered that Muir was engaged in deliberate misrepresentation, which stemmed from his anti-Muslim bias (Brown, 2010, p. 217). Brown also noticed that detailed responses came after the 1st half of the 20th century by scholars of either Muslim or Eastern background. In this regard, he discussed scholars such as Nabia Abbott (d. 1981) and Muhammad Mustafa Azami. These scholars rigorously attacked the works of Goldziher, Schacht and those who relied upon their conclusions (Brown, 2010, p. 219), pointing out the glaring errors in their approaches.

C. The Revisionist Approach:

From the outset, Brown brings to our attention that even though Orientalists such as Goldziher, Schacht and Juynboll questioned the authenticity of individual traditions and established a skeptic²⁰ outlook of hadith literature, they did not doubt the overall narrative of

¹⁸ An anachronism is a chronological inconsistency in some arrangement, especially a juxtaposition of persons, events, objects, language terms and customs from different time periods. <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Anachronism>. This Principle is used as a tool when analysing a text, to show that it's made up.

¹⁹ This principle basically suggests that human society is always essentially the same.

²⁰ Though in many cases wherein there are differences in spelling certain words, this author prefers the British spellings over American, sometimes the word is left according to the computer automated correction. However,

the Prophet's life and Islamic origins (Brown, 2010, pp. 220-221). The Revisionist approach demanded that the Historical-Critical Method be applied comprehensively and consistently to early Islamic history.

Patricia Crone and Michael Cook represent the mainstream of this approach, for they proposed the rewriting of early Islamic history using the earliest best written sources on Islam if historians were supposed to adopt a sceptical attitude towards biased sources. They asked: why had Western historians believed the grand Muslim narrative of Islam's origins when after all, there were no surviving written textual sources from before the mid-700s, a full century after the Prophet's death? (Brown, 2010, p. 221). However, the revisionist position has been heavily criticised and largely discredited by Muslim and non-Muslim scholars, especially as early Qur'anic parchment fragments from the first century have recently been uncovered.

D. The Western Revaluation

This approach mainly defended the overall integrity of the hadith tradition. In so doing, they have defended the vision of early Islamic history on which generations of Western scholars had relied (Brown, 2010, p. 224). So, the fundamental doubts that Revisionist scholarship raised about early Islamic history prompted an unprecedented defence of the traditional narrative of hadiths and Islamic origins on the part of certain Western scholars (Brown, 2010, p. 224). Brown noted that these scholars challenged the two main aspects of Orientalist and Revisionist criticism of hadith:

- i. They have argued that many of the basic assumptions made by these two groups are inherently inaccurate.
- ii. They have demonstrated that earlier Western criticism did not take into account the massive breadth and complexity of the Islamic hadith tradition.

When hadith and its related issues are looked at from this perspective, many of the arguments advanced by Orientalists and Revisionists lose their efficacy (Brown, 2010, p. 224). As mentioned somewhere in this paper, the Orientalists and Revisionists are overwhelmed with extreme scepticism and massive generalised conclusions.

the spelling for scepticism, both the British and American spellings are used interchangeably unless it's a quotation then it is left according to the original author's preference.

The revaluation scholars speak more of ‘dating’ a hadith. In other words, they concentrated on finding out when exactly that specific hadith came into existence or circulation. So, instead of deeming a hadith to be forged or identifying who the forger is, they concentrated on the question of when the hadith was put into circulation.

Among the scholars of Western Revaluation that Jonathan Brown discussed is Harald Motzki, the German scholar of hadith. Brown describes him as “the first Western scholar to treat the hadith with the ‘same’ respect as Muslim hadith masters did” (Brown, 2010, p. 226). His works proffer three main criticisms of previous Western scholarship. First, he argued that the argument *e silentio* relied upon by Schacht, Juynboll and Crone is invalid. Second, he demonstrated that common links are much earlier than previously thought, dating some to the time of the Companions in the second half of the seventh century. Finally, Motzki argues that, rather than being consummate forgers of hadiths, major hadith transmitters such as al-Zuhrī and Ibn Jurayj were, in general, reliably passing on reports from the previous generation (Brown, 2010, p. 226).

Although the Revaluation scholars realised that Islamic hadith scholarship was more developed than previously assumed, Brown reminds us that this does not necessarily mean that the revaluation scholars have accepted the Sunni vision of hadiths and their authenticity outright (Brown, 2010, p. 226). They also have theories that do not necessarily concur with all the traditional Muslim notions of Islamic hadith scholarship. Their tone, however, is less combative than earlier generations (Brown, 2010, p. 224). Perhaps the revaluation scholars are free from the biased colonial approach to Islamic traditions which characterised previous approaches.

Summary

From the above datum, one comes to the realisation that Western scholars do not constitute a coherent group. They can rather be classified into different groups depending on their presuppositions and epistemological assumptions. It appears that after Schacht made a major impact with his monumental work, ‘*The Origins of Muhammadan Jurisprudence*’ there are three groups embracing either a skeptical, revisionist or middle-ground position (Kizl, 2013). Few of them move in between these groups in their individual findings. Therefore, according

to western scholarship that takes the approach and presuppositions of these sceptical and revisionist schools, as Hallaq observed, the core and kernel of Islam has never been, and will never be, truly Islamic. Islam is, at best, a variation on a Western theme, and, at worst, a replica thereof (Hallaq, 2003, p. 14).

As a researcher who has read most of the arguments, I conclude that even though there is no extensive source of physical materials, such as parchments of written documents in the first century of Islam, there are enough secondary sources that one can rely on to understand and reconstruct the history of early Islam in terms of hadith, history and all other branches of Islamic science.

It is astounding to see that the skeptic school of thought takes the extant materials and sources of Islam to reconstruct early Islam and then rejects the very same issues the material seeks to establish.



Chapter Three: Traditional Muslim scholars' approach to hadith

Introduction

Early Traditional Muslim scholars of hadith had a unique and rational approach to hadith. There is no other comprehensive approach that gives such extensive historical information about reporters of historical events than the approach of scholars of hadith.

Hadith in Sunnī Islam is believed to be second to the Qur'ān as a source of law, guidance, moral conduct, and all issues related to aspects of life (Kamaruddin, 2005, p. 256). The importance of hadith in the early Muslim community was not confined to scholars only. Every Muslim needed hadith for most of their daily life. For an individual to be a practising Muslim, he/she had to follow the teachings of the Prophet. These teachings were encapsulated in the sayings, actions, and tacit approval of the Prophet. For this reason, it was necessary for the believers to search for hadiths, learn and teach them to others. It was also necessary for scholars to devise methods of preserving these hadiths in its purest form. Early sources tell us that initially, early Muslims had no reason to doubt what they related to each other as the first generation of the Muslim community trusted each other (al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī). Ibn Sīrīn (d. 110/728) also informs us about the attitude of his predecessors saying, “they did not bother to ask who their informants were, but when the Civil War²¹ occurred then only they said: ‘Mention to us your informants’. If the informant was from the people of the truth, they would accept the report, and if he is from the people of whims and desires, they would not accept the report” (*Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim, Muqaddimah, Bāb al-isnād min al-dīn*). The spread of spurious traditions and unreliable narrators after the Civil War was the cause for the development of the proto science of hadith criticism. (*Muqaddimah Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*). The recent matters of late 2019 and 2020 are probably the best example to explain the early Muslims' approach to hadith. With the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic, people initially trusted social media and news agencies about the information they provided to the general public. However, as time passed, and with the spread of fake news, people started critiquing the information that was passed on to the public. They questioned information and adopted a critical approach to the

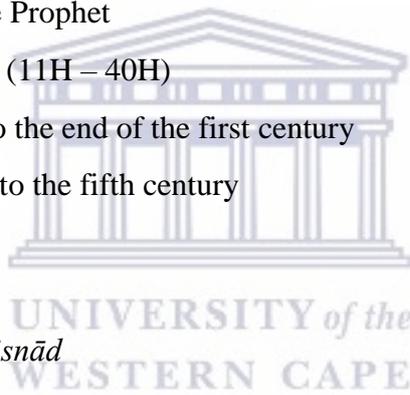
²¹ On Civil War see Azami, *Studies in Early Hadith Literature*, p. 213.

information they received about the virus from the authorities. So to rephrase Ibn Sīrīn's statement in our modern terms, one might say: *They did not question the information about the pandemic. However, when fake news started creeping into mainstream social media platforms, people became sceptical about the information about the virus. So they ask, what are your sources?*

Historically, hadith transmission and acceptance thereof underwent different phases, and accordingly, hadith critics approached it depending on the period and new challenges of the society.

What follows is the transitional phases through which the study and transmission of hadith passed and the different approaches the critics of hadith had when dealing with the challenges of their epoch. For the sake of brevity, my discussion on hadith and its development will be as follows:

- Hadith at the time of the Prophet
- Hadith after the Prophet (11H – 40H)
- Hadith during the mid to the end of the first century
- Hadith from the second to the fifth century
 - _ the problem of forgery
 - _ the *isnād* system
 - _ institutionalised use of *isnād*
 - _ transmitter evaluation
 - '*adālah*
 - dabt*
 - _ *matn* criticism
 - _ Compilation and classification of hadith genre
- Hadith from the fifth to the tenth century



Hadith at the time of the Prophet

The Prophet is the central figure in Islamic religious and legal tradition. The Qur'ān is explicit that the Prophet is the key figure whose life every Muslim should emulate (Qur'ān 3: 31; 33:21). The Companions were eager to know what their Prophet said, did or commanded. They were so enthusiastic to be in the company of their Prophet so much so that if they missed him or didn't see him for a day, they would feel anxiety (al-Ṭabarānī, 1985, hadith: 52). Abū Hurayrah informs us how the Companions yearned to see the Prophet and be in his presence at all the times (Muslim, hadith: 147). They strived to learn matters of their religion from the Prophet, so much so that if they missed any of his lectures, they would make an effort to learn from other Companions who were present for the lecture or wait for an opportunity to meet him (Aḥmad, 2005, vol. 1, p. 262, hadith: 222). This is no surprise for the people who loved and held their Prophet close to their hearts. In our own daily lives, we experience and observe the same with regard to people who are fanatical about celebrities, like movie or sports stars. People follow their loved ones so much that they imitate their lives, from their hairstyle to their footwear. The Prophet, to Muslims in general, and Companions in particular, was more than just a celebrity. Their love for him was so immense that they sacrificed their wealth, time and energy and their lives (al-Ḥākim al-Naysābūrī, 1990, hadith: 4268). When one Companion was captured and was about to be sentenced to death, Abū Sufyān, the then leader of Meccan disbelievers, asked him if he would like Muhammad to be in his position of being killed? He replied that he would not like even a thorn to prick Muhammad while he was having time with his family (Ibn Sa'd, 1968, vol. 2 p. 56). Some of the Companions who lived a little far from Madinah, would come and spend days with the Prophet, learn matters of their religion, then go back to their people and pass on whatever they had learnt. A group of young Companions came to the Prophet and stayed with him for about twenty nights. The Prophet was always considerate of his followers. He felt that these young individuals might be missing their families and that their families were probably missing them too. He, therefore, instructed them to go back to their home villages. He also instructed them to teach others what they had learnt during their stay with the Prophet. "Pray as you have seen me praying; when it is time to pray, then one of you should call the *adhān*²², and the oldest of you should lead the prayer" was the departing advice to these young men (*Ṣāḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, hadith: 631; Ibn Ḥibbān,

²² A Muslim call to an obligatory prayer

1988, hadith: 1658). The Prophet, because of his kindness and approachability, made it easy for his Companions to inquire about rulings related to matters concerning their religion as well as their lives.

Since hadith is defined as the sayings, actions, and tacit approval of the Prophet (‘Itr, 1997, p. 26), it was presented in different forms. The following are but a few examples:

From the outset, we all know that the Prophet’s duty is to deliver the message from Allah to guide people to live righteous lives. Depending on the situation, the Prophet would explain a ruling according to the circumstances. This ruling could be that which is mentioned in the Qur’ān or not (al-Shāfi’ī, 2004, pp. 29-31). In certain cases, incidents happened to the Prophet himself then the Prophet would pronounce the ruling or comment on the matter. For example, once, the Prophet was strolling in the marketplace and found a man trading in foodstuff. The Prophet asked him about his business. The man explained to the Prophet how he did his business. Thereafter, the Prophet put his hand under the heap of the foodstuff and found it moist. The Prophet reprimanded him and said: “He is not of us he who deceives us” (Aḥmad, 2005, hadith: 7290).²³ This could happen at any time, sometimes at home, like in the case of a *mujādilāh* woman (Qur’ān 58: 1-4), and sometimes even while on a journey (Muslim, hadith: 13).

Sometimes, something happened to a Companion in the presence or absence of the Prophet, but he would come to know about it later. The Prophet would pass a ruling (on the incident) which would either be related to him only or to other companions as well. The Prophet would explain the ruling in detail. For example, a man came to the Prophet’s mosque and performed ablution for prayer. However, a small portion of his foot was still dry as the water did not reach that portion. The Prophet instructed him to repeat the ablution. The person went and repeated the ablution and prayed (Aḥmad, 2005, hadith: 134).

Sometimes a hadith emerged when the Prophet taught a particular ruling to a particular Companion. When he sent Mu‘ādh b. Jabal to Yemen, the Prophet asked him, how will you judge if a matter is brought before you? Mu‘adh said that he would first check the ruling in

²³ Here, the Prophet witnessed himself the potential deceit that this salesman might have intended by hiding the defected food. At the same time, he might be genuine that he did not know about the moisture in the food or had no intention to deceive. In either case, the Prophet had to explain the ruling for others to take a lesson that will eventually be transmitted to others or later generations in the form of hadith.

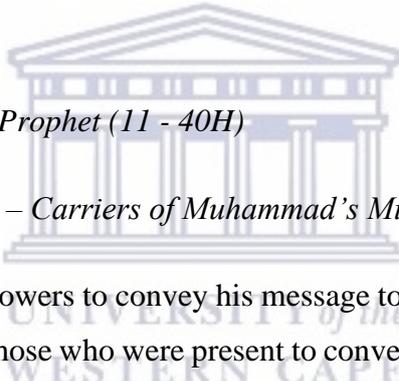
the Book of Allah. If he didn't find the ruling in the Book of Allah, he would search for it in the teachings of Allah's Prophet. If these two sources had no direct solution, then he would exert himself until he found a solution. On hearing that, the Prophet gladly praised Allah for having guided his Companion (*Sunan Abī Dāwūd*, 1988, hadith: 3592).

People would travel from far distances and come to Madīnah to learn from the Prophet, especially after the conquest of Makkah. Sometimes people met the Prophet on the dusty roads of Madīnah. At every opportunity available, they would learn from the Prophet. On one occasion, a Bedouin met the Prophet on the road and held the halters of the camel of the Prophet. He asked a few questions, and the Prophet provided him with the answers (Muslim, 1998, hadith: 13).

Most of the hadiths are related to issues that have to do with aspects of daily life like eating, drinking, praying, good conduct etc. As said earlier, the Companions were eager to be in the company of the Prophet and learn directly from him. Those who witnessed or heard the Prophet saying these hadiths would also try to inform others or revise as many times as they could and commit those hadiths to memory. Anas b. Mālik (d. ca. 92 or 93), the young Companion who served the Prophet for ten years, said: "Many a time, we would be in the company of the Prophet and hear a hadith. When we departed from him, we would revise his hadiths until we memorise them (al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī, 1403). When 'Ā'ishah (d. 57), the mother of the believers, heard anything of which she had no knowledge of, she would inquire about more details and request further explanations (Ibn al-Mubārak, p. 464).²⁴ All the above made it easy for the Companions to transmit the hadiths of the Prophet to others even after his demise. Any person who is eagerly following news that hits the headlines in the present day is able to give considerable details of that particular story. In the South African context, for example, the events that took place during the Apartheid era and led to the formation of the current government are issues that draw many people's attention. Many people who lived in the struggle against Apartheid can easily provide considerable details, for they witnessed many of the events that took place during that particular period, even now after almost three

²⁴ Once 'Ā'ishah heard the Prophet saying, "Whoever his account is questioned about, he shall be ruined." She enquired: O Messenger of Allah! Isn't Allah the [the Most High] said: "As for him who shall be given his Record in his right hand, he surely will receive an easy reckoning." The Prophet said: "That is the presentation." (*Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, hadith: 6537).

decades post-Apartheid. His or her narration of the story would definitely be different from the tale of someone who was born after the struggle or was at a very young age when Nelson Mandela was released from prison. The latter is dependent on the available sources to him or her, and when narrating this particular part of history, might not have the same details as the one who experienced or witnessed it himself or herself. The Companions lived with the Prophet, walked with him, and ate with him. The experience they had from him was ingrained in their hearts and minds. Therefore, for them to transmit the details of events they heard, saw, or experienced with the Prophet is not surprising. Added to the preservation of the Prophet's teachings was not confined to his statements and his actions; rather, anything that was attributed to him was also preserved. The existence of Prophetic artefacts to the present day, like his sword, turban etc.,²⁵ are evidence that his followers and early Muslim communities made concerted efforts to preserve issues related to their religion, in general, and the Prophet in particular.



Hadith After the Prophet (11 - 40H)

The Companions of the Prophet – Carriers of Muhammad's Mission

The Prophet encouraged his followers to convey his message to future generations. In his last sermon, the Prophet instructed those who were present to convey his message to those absent. He encouraged the spread of his message by supplicating for all who spread his teachings, even if it were one single verse (al-Ṭayālīsī, 1999, hadith: 618; al-Dārimī, 2013, hadith: 581; Ibn Abī Ḥātim al-Rāzī, p. 8). After the demise of the Prophet, his Companions scattered throughout the length and breadth of the Arabian Peninsula and beyond, spreading the message of their Prophet. Most of them settled in the newly conquered lands of Egypt, the Levant and the surrounding regions of Iraq. Every Companion taught and passed on most, if not all, what he/she remembered hearing from the Prophet. Each Companion fulfilled his duty of conveying the hadiths of the Prophet according to his/her capacity.

²⁵ Some of these Prophetic artifacts are preserved in Topkapi Museum, Turkey.

As said earlier, the hadith is the sayings, actions, and tacit approval of the Prophet. These sayings or actions include legal edicts. At the time of the Prophet, it was easy to inquire about a legal edict as the Prophet was still alive. When the Prophet passed away, the Companions faced new challenges that required much attention. If any new matter would arise, where would they find its legal edict? Who will they ask for guidance? The Companions knew that Allah commanded them to obey Him and obey His Prophet (Qur'ān, 4: 59). At the same time, they also knew that the Prophet had left enough guidance through his teachings.

Therefore, it is only appropriate to assume that they would gather his sayings and legal edicts. Al-'Irbād b. Sāriyah, one of the Companions of the Prophet, said: "Once the Prophet gave us such a lecture that our hearts were extremely fearful, our eyes shed tears until we said: O the Messenger of Allah! As if this is a farewell address of the one departing, so give us advice. The Prophet said: "My advice to you is that you should fear Allah and to listen and obey your leaders even if your leader is an Abyssinian slave. For surely, those who live (after my demise) will see many differences. Therefore, adhere to my teachings and the teachings of the rightly guided Caliphs. Hold unto it tightly. Stay away from innovation [in *dīn*] for verily, every innovation is misguidance" (al-Tirmidhi, 1999, hadith: 2676). While he was alive, the Prophet already gave them guidance on how to deal with new challenges. So, for any challenge they faced, they first sort its solution in the book of Allah (Qur'ān) and secondly in the teachings of their Prophet, as we have seen in his conversation with Mu'ādh above.

However, when they had to resort to the teachings of the Prophet, they had to be careful as one might transmit the Prophet's teachings incorrectly because of one's weak memory. Abū Bakr (d. 13) was one of the first to implement the cautious methods of accepting the hadith regarding legal edicts. A grandmother came to Abū Bakr when he was the leader of the believers and demanded her share of inheritance. Abū Bakr looked for a verdict in the Qur'ān as it is the first source of law. However, he could find no verse related to her case, nor did he find it in the teachings of the Prophet that he was familiar with. He, therefore, said to her: "I do not find any ruling about your portion in the book of Allah, nor do I find one in the teachings of the Prophet". Thereafter, Abū Bakr inquired from other Companions if anyone knew about her ruling from the Prophet's teachings. Al-Mughīrah said: I heard the Prophet say that her portion is one-sixth. Abū Bakr asked al-Mughīrah if he had anyone to back him up on his statement. Muhammad b. Maslamah testified for him. Only then did Abū Bakr give

her portion of inheritance (Mālik, p. 513). This method of verifying sources was not confined to legal edicts only, rather, this was applied to all aspects of transmission when the Prophet was cited. ‘Umar used the same method of verifying the traditions before accepting them. Once Abū Mūsā al-Ash‘arī came to ‘Umar and knocked at the door three times, but there was no response. Abū Mūsā returned. When ‘Umar came out and found that Abū Mūsā had left, he called him and asked him why he left. Abū Mūsā replied that he heard the Prophet saying: “Seek permission to enter into someone’s house only three times. If permission is granted to you, then enter. Otherwise, leave.” On hearing the report from the Prophet ‘Umar asked: “Who else knows this?” If you don’t bring someone who knows about this, I will, certainly do something to you.” Abū Mūsā left and came to the mosque in a place wherein the *anṣār* used to get together. He related the story to them and requested if anyone knew about the hadith so that that person could accompany him and testify in front of ‘Umar. The Companions sent Abū Sa‘īd al-Khudrī, the youngest in the gathering, to testify (Mālik, p. 964) that the hadith quoted by Abū Mūsā was correct. This serves as an example of hadith criticism in the post Prophetic period. Both leaders and hadith sleuths set a tone for hadith criticism. Due to their rigorous approach to accepting and transmitting hadith, the hadiths of the Prophet were preserved in their pristine form. I do not suggest, however, that some treacherous individuals did not make any attempts to falsely ascribe traditions to the Prophet. As we will see later, they made such attempts, especially in the third quarter of the first century. However, those false traditions did not go unnoticed. Also, Companions rectified each other where necessary, as can be seen by the example of Aishah (Muslim, *Kitāb al-Janā‘iz*, hadith: 931).

The Companions continued revising what they heard from the Prophet even after his demise. ‘Uthmān b. ‘Affān (d. 35H), the third Muslim Caliph, would sometimes come to the gathering of the Companions in the mosque and make *wuḍū* openly. After completing his ablution (*wuḍū*), he would stand up and say: “This is how I saw the Prophet making his *wuḍū*.” Then he would ask those around him: “Is it not so?” all the Companions that were present would confirm that his demonstration was correct (Aḥmad, 2005). Another Companion, Abū Ḥumayd al-Sā‘idī, once stood in front of ten great Companions and challenged them, saying that he was the most knowledgeable about the prayer of the Prophet. The Companions were surprised by his challenging statement. They said: “How so, you were not one of his early Companions, nor did you accompany him a lot?” He replied that “[yes] I know that, but still I know perfectly how the Prophet performed *ṣalah*. He then performed *ṣalah* from the

beginning till the end as a demonstration. After completing his *ṣalah*, all the Companions present confirmed that the *ṣalah* of the Prophet was, indeed, like that (al-Dārimī, 2013, p. 345).

A point that needs to be clarified here also is that though some Companions, like Abū Bakr and ‘Umar, sometimes asked for corroboration, they did so not because they doubted the integrity of each other, but rather it was a matter of setting a precedent for the succeeding generations that people should not take the hadith of the Prophet lightly. Caution should always be maintained in narrating and accepting the hadith of the Prophet.

The generation of the Companions was different from all other succeeding generations because most of them witnessed and heard hadith directly from the Prophet himself. And because they were well-mannered and trustworthy in every sense of the word, having endured great hardship for following the Prophet, there was not much of a need to question one another’s integrity. When ‘Umar asked Abū Mūsā to bring another Companion that would corroborate his hadith from the Prophet, he made it clear to him afterwards that “behold, I did not ask for extra evidence because I did not trust you or believed that you lied, instead, it was my fear that people will start fabricating hadith of the Messenger of Allah” (Mālik, p. 964). However, even when they transmitted to each other, they still exercised caution and transmitted only when there was a need to do so and only to deserving students. And when they heard someone narrating a hadith that they were not familiar with, they would respectfully inquire for extra evidence or corroboration (*Jāmi‘ Ma‘mar b. Rāshid*, hadith: 19423). This system of transmitting reports and naming the sources would eventually be known as *isnād*. The elder generation of the Companions did not transmit much hadith, for they were engaged in political and /or administrative duties for the nascent Islamic state. Those who lived long or were not involved in overwhelming administrative duties transmitted a significant number of narrations. For example, Anas, Ibn ‘Umar, Ibn ‘Abbās etc. It can also be seen from the earlier examples that they transmitted hadith from one another, and thus did not all hear directly all the hadith that they transmitted directly from the Prophet (al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī, 2013, p. 548).

Hadith from the mid-first century to the mid-second century

Successor: Inheritors of the Companions' legacy

The Companions faithfully accomplished their duty of spreading Islam to the succeeding generations as they received it from the Prophet. The Companions of the Prophet, adhering to the commands of the Prophet of spreading his message to others whilst safeguarding against ascribing incorrect narrations to him, imparted what they learnt from the Prophet to the Successors. The Successors are those Muslims who learnt directly from the Companions (Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ, 2006, p. 302).

With passion and endless effort, the Successors learned hadith from the Companions. They used the same methods of learning and inquiry from the Companions. Yazīd b. Abī Ḥabīb (d. 128H), the great hadith scholar of Egypt, said: “If you hear about a hadith, you should search for it the way you search for a lost camel. If it is known [then that is a sign of authenticity] otherwise leave it” (ibn Abī Ḥātim al-Rāzī, vol. 2, p. 19).

Abū Ṣāliḥ Dhakwān al-Sammān (d. 101) said: “Once Ibn ‘Abbās taught us a hadith, but we did not memorize it. We [after the class] revised it amongst ourselves until we memorized it (al-Ḥākim al-Naysābūrī, 1986, p. 141). The learning and transmission of hadith were not only limited to the menfolk. Women also were involved in learning and teaching the Prophetic traditions. ‘Amrah bint ‘Abd al-Raḥmān (d. 106), for example, was a prominent female scholar who learnt from ‘Āishah the beloved wife of the Prophet who is designated by the Qur’ān as the mother of the believers.²⁶

The Problem of Forgery in Hadith

The hadith of Muhammad was faithfully transmitted with care in the early decades of Islam until the Muslim community started forming political sects. The political difference between the fourth Caliph ‘Alī and Mu‘āwiyah was probably one factor that gave rise to the formation of sects. After the political differences between ‘Alī and Mu‘āwiyah, and the appearance of sects thereafter, the forging of hadith started to appear. Supporters of these sects started forging hadith either confirming the virtues of their leader or defaming their opponents (Ibn

²⁶ For ‘Amrah bint ‘Abd al-Raḥmān scholarly status as a hadith transmitter, see Biswas’s *‘Amrah b. ‘Abd al-Raḥmān – a model of female scholarship in the first century*, Baitul Hamd Institute.

Abi al-Ḥadīd, *Sharḥ nahj al-Balāghah*, vol. 3 p. 26; cf. al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī, 1997, p. 446). However, despite the political differences between ‘Alī and Mu‘āwiyah, it is not likely that the Companions and the faithful Successors would have intentionally forged hadith. Be that as it may, history shows and all the Islamic authorities agree that an enormous amount of forgery was committed in the hadith literature (Siddiqi, 1993, p. 31). Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal (d. 242) said that narrations in Sīrah and narrations about Qur’ān exegesis (*tafsīr*) had been more affected by forgery than any other branch of Islamic literature (Siddiqi, 1993, pp. 31-32). This is so because hadith critics paid so much attention to hadith dealing specifically with legal and creedal issues more than any other genres of traditions. They were rigorous in determining the authenticity of creedal and legal traditions, for these had a direct impact on them and the community’s daily religious life. Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal, and many other notable scholars, are reported to have stated that if they narrated hadith dealing with legal issues, they applied stringent measures for its authenticity. On the other hand, if they narrated hadith dealing with virtues and that which did not produce legal rulings, they were lenient (al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī, 2013, p. 151).

Some scholars date the beginning of forgery in hadith to the time of the Prophet himself, for he must have had a reason to utter the famous tradition “Whoever attributes a lie to me let him prepare his aboard in Hellfire.”²⁷ On the other hand, many reports show that being cautious

²⁷ This hadith is the oft cited hadith as an example of hadith *mutawātir* (a hadith transmitted from such a large number of transmitters that it is inconceivable that all of them could have lied). Mullā ‘Alī al-Qārī (d. 1014H) collected up to 102 sources. Some scholars, such as Abū Ja‘far al-Ṭaḥāwī (d. 321), from the early scholars, and Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn al-Idlibī and Jonathan Brown, from the modern scholars have alluded to the reason why the Prophet Muhammad uttered this warning to the story of ‘a man claiming to be the Prophet’s representative established himself as the mayor of a small town in Arabia until the Prophet uncovered his hoax and punished him’. However, this narration does not have the requisite evidence to be considered authentic. Ṣāliḥ b. Ḥayyān al-Qurashī al-Kūfī, who is the common link for the story was judged as unreliable by hadith critics. According to hadith critics, however, the hadith was said as a matter of setting parameters for other hadiths in which the Prophet encouraged his Companions to transmit what they have learnt from him to others. On the text of the hadith, see, al-Ṭaḥāwī, *Sharḥ mushkil al-āthār*, vol. 1, p. 352; Ibn al-Jawzī, *Kitāb al-Mawḍū‘āt*, vol. 1, pp. 55, Mullā ‘Alī al-Qārī, *al-Asrār al-marfū‘ah fi al-akḥbār al-mawḍū‘ah*, pp. 40-67; Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn al-Idlibī, *Naqd al-matn*, pp. 50-51; Brown, 2010, p. 69. On the problem of Ṣāliḥ b. Ḥayyān al-Qurashī as a transmitter, see al-Dhahabī, *Mīzān al-i‘tidāl*, vol. 2, pp.292-3; Fullātah, *al-Waḍ‘u fi al-hadith*, pp. 185-188. For the rebuttal of the above claim, see al-Sibā‘ī, *al-Sunnah wamakānatuha fi al-tashrī‘ al-Islāmī*, pp. 238-241. For further discussion on the *tawātur* nature of this hadith, see Mullā Khāṭir, *al-Hadith al-mutawātir*, esp. pp. 51-55 and 59 ff.

and suspicious about hadith transmitters started on a small scale towards the end of the generation of the Companions. As said earlier, it is inconceivable that the Companions could forge hadith in the name of the Prophet when many a time they would shiver just even hearing his name (Ibn Abī Shaybah, hadith: 26746; Aḥmad, 2005, hadith: 4321). It is inconceivable for many reasons. Here it is sufficient to note that these are the people who sacrificed their lives and wealth out of love for their Prophet. In addition, they heard the Prophet's warning: "Attributing false statements to me is not equal to attributing false statements to anyone else (Muslim, 1998, *Introduction*).

The conflicts in Muslim communities that occurred a few decades after the demise of the Prophet and led to the killing of 'Uthmān, the third Caliph; the clash between Ali, the then fourth Caliph and his opponent Mu'āwiyah b. Abī Sufyān, are all events that led unscrupulous people to take advantage of the situation to motivate their different agendas. Brown (2010) also noted that since the Prophet is the single most dominant figure in Islamic religious and legal traditions, some treacherous people found it attractive and quicker to influence the masses if they passed off their ideas in the form of hadith. Al-Mukhtār b. Abī 'Ubayd al-Thaqafī (d. 67), and other political leaders, knew that the hadith was a central resource of the Muslim community's thinking and behaviour and had a significant influence on the Muslim community, so they used this to their advantage even if it meant fabricating it. On one occasion, Al-Mukhtār al-Thaqafī requested a scholar of hadith to forge hadith in the name of the Prophet, supporting his political leadership, and on return, he will reward him with ten thousand Dirham, a piece of honorary garment, conveyance, and a servant. The man said: choose any name of a Companion you wish; I will use his name and will also drop the amount for its compensation. Al-Mukhtār said: it will sound more emphatic if it comes from the Prophet. The scholar of hadith replied that the punishment for lying about the Prophet was more severe (al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī, 1403, vol. 1, p. 156, Ibn al-Jawzī, 1999, vol. 1, 39, Fullātah, 1981, vol. 1, p. 213). On another occasion, al-Mukhtār al-Thaqafī killed Muhammad b. 'Ammār b. Yāsir because he refused to forge hadith on the authority of his father 'Ammār (Ibn Abī Ḥātim al-Rāzī, vol. 8, p. 43). The above incidents show that even morally corrupt and ordinary people knew the enormity of forging hadiths.

Decades passed, and the further the people were away from the time of the Prophet, the more the number of careless and insincere students and teachers of hadiths increased. Some people didn't care much about the authenticity of what they were narrating. Scholars of hadith, both

Companions and Successors, also started noticing various political parties, the heretics, and even sincere and devout Muslims made contributions to the growing number of false hadiths. Thus, they took a careful and a wary approach to accepting hadith. Bushayr b. Ka'ab al-'Adawī once narrated hadiths in the presence of Ibn 'Abbās. Ibn 'Abbās (d. 68H), the cousin of the Prophet, but he did not pay much attention to his narrations. Bushayr said: "Why is it that I don't see you paying attention to my narrations?" Ibn 'Abbās said: "There was a time when we heard someone narrating a hadith of the Messenger of Allah, our eyes would look up to him, we would lend him our ears. But since people followed all courses of action, commendable as well as reprehensible, we no longer accepted hadiths from people except what we already know (Muslim, 1998, *Introduction*). In another version, Ibn 'Abbās demanded a repeat of a certain hadith. Bushayr repeated it and continued narrating. After a while, he said: "I am not sure whether you recognized all the hadiths besides the ones you asked, or you only recognized the ones you asked me to repeat." Ibn 'Abbās said: "We used to [freely] report and accept the Prophet's hadiths as no one was attributing lies to him. Nonetheless, when people became careless about their statements and deeds, we abandoned the practice of reporting his hadiths" (Muslim, 1998, *Introduction*). This revised attitude is what Ibn Sīrīn described above when he said that prior to the civil strife, people did not ask about the source of information (*isnad*), but afterwards, they did.

By the mid-second century, when fabrication increased in number, scholars of hadith started warning people against these treacherous narrators. It is reported from many Companions and Successors that said: "Indeed this knowledge is part of the *dīn*; therefore, be careful from whom you take matters of your *dīn*" (al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī, 2013, p. 121). Ḥammād b. Zayd (d. 179) remarked that the heretics (*zanādiqah*) fabricated about fourteen thousand hadiths in the name of the Prophet (al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī, 2013, p. 60; al-'Uqaylī, 1984, vol. 1, p. 14; Ibn al-Jawzī, 1998, vol. 1, p. 19).

Some of these treacherous forgers confessed their ill activities of making up hadiths. al-Mahdī, the Abbasid Caliph (ruled between 158-169H), said: "A man from *zanādiqah* or heretic confessed by me that he had forged four hundred hadiths which are still circulating in people's hands (Ibn al-Jawzī, 1998, p. 19). Not all forgers had ill intentions when fabricating the hadiths. Some of them had good intentions and were outwardly pious. Maysarah b. 'Abd Rabbih, for example, when he was asked about the reason why he forged hadiths concerning the virtues of certain chapters of Qur'ān, he replied that he forged them to encourage people

(*waḍa 'tuhā uraghghib al-nās fīhā*) (Ibn al-Jawzī, 1998, vol. 1, p. 23). When al-Nuhāwandī asked Ghulām Khalīl why he forged hadiths, he replied that he forged the hadiths in order to make the hearts of people tender and soft (*waḍa 'nāhah linuraqqiqa bihā qulūb al- 'āmmah*) (Ibn al-Jawzī, 1998, vol. 1, p. 22). Nūḥ b. Abī Maryam, the law student of both Abū Ḥanīfah and Ibn Abī Laylah for which he was given the title *al-jāmi'*, related hadiths describing the virtues of the various chapters of the Qur'an. When he was pressed to name the authorities from whom he had received these hadiths, he confessed that he forged them for the sake of Allah and to attract people to His book (Siddiqi, 1993, p. 35).

Despite all that, scholars of hadith were vigilant and, thanks to their rigour and precision in preserving hadith. Due to their endless effort, the vital core of the hadith literature was preserved intact. Though there was deliberate tampering with either the content or the isnāds of hadiths that may have passed unnoticed by ordinary transmitters, but not by the aggregate of the over-watchful, basically honest, and aggressively outspoken hadith masters and critics (Abbott, 1967, p. 132). This is exactly what Ibn al-Mubarak prophesied when someone concernedly complained about forged hadiths. He said: "Experts will live to [deal with] it" meaning that the hadith experts will pay attention to it and discern authentic hadith (Ibn Abī Ḥātim al-Rāzī, vol. 1, p. 18). Here we see Ibn al-Mubarak observing what is happening and explaining to us the scholarly conditions. He assured people that whatever forgeries were circulated, hadith critics would deal with it.

The Isnād System

Citing sources and the development of the isnād system:

As early as the first century of Islam, Muslim hadith scholars devised different measures to preserve hadiths in their pristine form and to distinguish authentic hadiths from non-authentic ones. As the Muslim community grew, political sects and dishonest scholars of hadith also increased. Now it became necessary to know who transmits hadiths and his sources. Hence, naming one's sources became one of the core measures of authenticating traditions. Just as an investigator of an important case must verify and mention the sources of his information, early scholars, too, mentioned their references in the form of naming their teachers etc. This system of mentioning names of individuals who stand as a source of information is what came to be known as *isnād*. Isnād is defined as a chain of narrators who transmit a hadith – one to the other - to the authority who uttered it (i.e. the text of hadith) (‘Itr, 1997, p. 344).

For traditional hadith critics, through the isnād, one can know whether the hadith is authentic. Certainly, mentioning the sources of any particular tale was not introduced by hadith scholars. The Arabs of the pre-Islamic era used it to some extent when transmitting their pre-Islamic poetry (Azami, 1977, p. 32). However, hadith scholars and critics developed the isnād system to the level of a widespread and effective method of authenticating transmitted information. Its importance culminated to such an extent that it was counted as part of the religion (Azami, 1977, p. 32).²⁸ The Companions of the Prophet occasionally used to cite their sources even during the lifetime of the Prophet. Reports show that the Companions would sometimes take turns attending the lectures of the Prophet. ‘Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb (d. 23), for example, would alternate a day to be in the company of the Prophet with his *Ansārī* neighbour (Aḥmad, 2005, p. 262, *hadith*: 222). It is clear that ‘Umar would use his *Ansārī* neighbour as his source for some of the information he received about the Prophet. ‘Abd Allah b. ‘Umar (d. ca. 73-4) was very eager to learn and memorize what he saw and heard from the Prophet. When he was absent, he would enquire from those who were present in the company of the Prophet about what the Prophet had said or done in his absence (al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī, 2001, vol. 1, p. 521).

Obviously, on return from his gatherings, when relating whatever they heard and learnt from the Prophet, they would use statements like ‘the Prophet said’, ‘I heard the Prophet saying’

²⁸ The importance of isnād as part of religion is reiterated in ibn Mubārak’s statement: ‘*al-Isnād min al-dīn, walawla al-isnād laqāla man shā’ mā shā’*’ “The isnād is part of religion; were it not for the isnād, whoever wishes would say what he wanted” (Muslim, *Muqaddimah, bāb al-isnād min al-dīn*).

etc. On some occasions, to be certain about what his colleague has related, a Companion would go to the Prophet and confirm what he heard from his colleague. Ḍimām b. Tha‘labah came to the Prophet and said: O Muhammad! your messenger came to us and told us ...” (Azami, 1977, p. 33). This report, and many more, confirms that a method of authenticating information received from the Prophet was used at the time of the Prophet. This type of authentication by naming one’s source of information later became known as the isnād.

This was, however, a rudimentary beginning of the isnād system. Thus, during this period and the few decades that followed, there were various ways in which attempts were made to authenticate Prophetic narrations. Mentioning the names of sources was not yet a universal method of passing knowledge. Sometimes, they mentioned their sources, and sometimes, they did not. Al-Barā‘ b. ‘Āzib (d. ca. 71) said: “Not all of us heard [all] the hadiths of the Messenger of Allah. Some of us had farms to work on and other activities. But people of that time did not lie to each other, so the one present would inform the one absent” (al-Khaṭīb al-Baghḍādī, 2013, p. 548). Anas b. Mālīk (d. 92/93), the Companion who served the Prophet for ten years when he was young, said: “Not all that which we are relating to you from the Prophet we heard it directly from him! Rather, our colleagues informed us. And our generation was such that people would not lie to each other” (al-Khaṭīb al-Baghḍādī, 2013, p. 548).

The above-mentioned cases are evidence for narrations of the Companions directly from the Prophet or other Companions.

Formalisation of the Use of the Isnād System

What is meant by the isnād system here is the naming of one’s informant for the sake of checking the source’s integrity and accuracy. It has become clear by now that citing sources was a practice of hadith scholars from the time of the Prophet and the Companions. However, the strict use of the isnād system was a process that emerged through time and circumstances. The statement of Muhammad b. Sīrīn, the student of the famous Companion of the Prophet, Anas b. Mālīk, gives us more or less the period when scholars of hadith became strict on naming one’s sources when transmitting the Prophetic hadith. The statement reads: “*Lam yakūnū yas ‘alūna ‘an al-isnād, falam mā waqa ‘at al-ḥitnah, qālū sammū lanā rijālakum*” ‘In the early period, no one would ask about the *isnād*, but when the civil strife began they would

say ‘Name to us your sources’ so that the people of the Sunnah (*ahl al-sunnah*) could be looked at and their hadiths accepted, and the people of Heresy (*ahl al-bid‘ah*) could be looked at and their hadiths ignored’ (Muslim, 1998, *Muqaddimah*). It is clear here that Ibn Sīrīn used the word *isnād* in his statement to mean naming the sources. His statement also indicates that before the *Fitnah*²⁹, scholars of hadith named their source, even though they were not so rigid.

The further the people were from the first and second generations of Islam, and when narrators could not be trusted anymore, hadith critics would take even more strict measures to ensure that the sources were reliable and trustworthy. Thus, towards the end of the first century and early second century, we find that some of the critics would not suffice on requesting the *isnād* or sources only, but they would go the extra mile to make sure the authenticity of the hadith and/or the source is reliable. Shu‘bah b. al-Ḥajjāj (d.160), for example, asked one of his teachers to take an oath if he really heard that particular hadith from his informant. On the hadith of selling one’s *walā*, for example, Shu‘bah asked his teacher, ‘Abd Allah b. Dīnār to take an oath if he heard from Ibn ‘Umar. ‘Abd Allah took an oath confirming that he heard it from Ibn ‘Umar (Ibn Abī Ḥātim al-Rāzī, 1952, p. 170; Fullātah, 1981, vol. 2, p. 25). Shu‘bah was so rigid with some of his teachers who, despite being trustworthy, omitted their sources or practised obscurantism. For example, he would watch the movements of Qatādah’s lips while attending his hadith lectures to discriminate between his first and second-hand information (al-Ḥākim, al-Naysābūrī, 2003, p. 46; al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī, 2013, p. 389; Azami, 1977, p. 33). ‘Abd al-Raḥmān b. Maḥdī said: “Once, I was with Sufyān in the presence of ‘Ikrimah. Whenever ‘Ikrimah transmitted a hadith, Sufyān would stop him and ask if he actually heard the hadith himself” (Ibn Abī Ḥātim al-Rāzī, p. 169).

Nevertheless, in some cases when students were satisfied with their teachers’ integrity and accuracy they would only ask if the teachers had sources or not. They didn’t bother with the identification of the sources.³⁰ ‘Urwah b. al-Zubayr (d. 94) narrated a hadith to ‘Umar b. ‘Abd al-‘Azīz (d. 101) from the Prophet that “Whoever cultivates a land, that person deserves the ownership of it” (*man aḥyā arḍan maytat^{am} fahiya lahu*). ‘Umar asked him, do you bear witness that the Prophet really said that? ‘Urwah said: Yes, reliable and satisfactory (*al-‘adl*

²⁹ On the identification of the *fitnah* that sparked the questioning of the sources, see appendix 1

³⁰ This is what eventually came to be known as *irsāl* or *inqiṭā‘* according to scholars of hadith. For more details on *al-Hadith al-Mursal*, see Hītū, *al-Hadith al-Mursal, Ḥujjiyyatuh wa atharuh fi al-fiqh al-Islāmī*, (Jāmi‘ at Kuwayt).

al-riḍā) person informed me that [hadith]” (Fullātah, 1981, vol. 2 p. 24). Here, ‘Umar b ‘Abd al-Azīz, when he heard that ‘Urwah was informed by trustworthy individuals, he did not ask further questions. On one occasion, students of Sufyān ibn ‘Uyaynah informed him that Shu‘bah asked ‘Abdullah b. Dīnār to take an oath if he heard the hadith on *walā* directly from Ibn ‘Umar. Sufyān replied that “we didn’t ask him to take an oath; nonetheless, we heard the hadith several times (Ibn Abī Ḥātim, p. 164; Ibn Ḥajar, 2004, vol. 12, p. 50).

When hadith critics became strict on hadith transmitters who did not mention sources in their narrations, general scholars of hadith also realised the importance of isnād. They also took the matter of isnād on a more serious scale. By then, students of hadith also did not find it difficult to mention their sources. The stringent use of *isnād* by critics led the lay people also to understand the importance of *isnād* especially, after doubts and suspicions about transmitters prevailed. When al-Zuhrī gathered the people of the Levant (*Shām*) to deliver a lecture on hadith, he heard them quoting the hadiths directly from the Prophet without mentioning the sources. He reprimanded them and said: “O people of *Shām*! Why is it that I see your hadith having no nose-ring and halter? Al-Walīd b. Muslim, holding his fist firmly, said: “From that day our people started taking issues of isnād more seriously ‘*tamassaka aṣḥābunā bi al-asānīd min yawma`idhⁱⁿ*” (Ibn ‘Asākir, 1995, vol. 55, p. 333).

From the above details, it is clear that the usage of *isnād* existed before hadith transmission. However, it was only taken seriously with the transmission of the Prophet’s hadith, though at the time of the Prophet, it was not used in its strict sense. After the demise of the Prophet, the system started becoming more decisive. Some Companions would not accept the hadith unless one’s source is disclosed. As mentioned earlier, Abū Bakr is said to be the one who took the first initiative of being cautious in accepting hadiths (al-Dhahabī, 1998, vol. 1, p. 2). However, since most of the narrators were Companions who knew the warnings against lying about their Prophet, sometimes they would not bother mentioning names of their informants for they were trustworthy and did not lie. Concerning this, Anas b. Mālik, the young Companion of the Prophet said: “Not all the hadiths we narrate to you, we heard them directly from the Prophet himself. [Some of the narrations] our companions and colleagues informed us. But we are people who do not lie to each other” (al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī, 2013, p. 548). al-Barā’ b. ‘Āzib also voiced the same compliment. He said: “Not all of us heard [all] the hadiths of the Messenger of Allah. We had farms to work on and other activities. But people of that

time did not lie to each other, so the one present would inform the one absent” (al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī, 2013, p. 548).

However, as mentioned earlier, towards the end of the generation of the Companions, and with the increase of civil dissension, some narrators started fabricating hadith. On account of the rise of hadith fabrication, the Companions started taking stricter measures for accepting hadith. Ibn ‘Abbās said: “Before when we heard someone narrating hadiths related to the Prophet, our eyes would look up to him. Nonetheless, when people started climbing bridles and halters – that is – camels; we only take what we know” (Muslim, 1998). In other words, when people became careless about their sources of hadiths and its transmission, the Companions also exercised caution in accepting hadiths.

If some hadith transmitters forged hadith with *isnāds*, how did the Traditional hadith scholars manage to identify authentic hadith from false hadiths? Moreover, merely requiring their informants to provide a source for a hadith they cited did not tell whether that source was reliable or not. This question is not a recent question. The same questions bothered the minds of some scholars of the third and fourth centuries of Islam. Ibn Abī Ḥātim (d. 327) tells us about the narrative of his father, Abu Ḥātim al-Rāzī (d. 277), engaging a scholar from the anti-hadith school. This scholar brought a document which contained hadiths to Abu Ḥātim al-Rāzī. When al-Rāzī inspected the document, he realised that there were some mistakes in some hadiths in the documents. Al-Rāzī pointed out those mistakes and notified the scholar that these hadiths contained mistakes. The narrator had mixed up this hadith with that hadith which now made it a spurious hadith. Some of these hadiths were *munkar* (lit. unfamiliar), and the rest of the hadiths were acceptable. On hearing that, the scholar asked al-Rāzī if he knew the author of the documents and if the author had indicated to him what hadiths were erroneous? Abū Ḥātim responded to him saying that he did not know who the transmitter of the document was. What he knew for sure was that there were some mistakes in the hadiths listed in the document. The scholar of *ra’y* accused Abū Ḥātim al-Rāzī of claiming knowledge of the unseen. Abū Ḥātim al-Rāzī, however, clarified to him that it is not a matter of claiming the knowledge of the unseen, rather, when one deals with hadiths on a daily basis, one is able to notice errors in hadiths easily, just like how the jeweller is able to identify the true precious stones from the fake ones (Ibn Abī Ḥātim al-Rāzī, 1952, p. 349).

The hadith transmitter

At the turn of the first century, with the proliferation of narrators of hadiths, every student of hadith now was faced with the issue of knowing the status of hadith narrators. By now, most of the transmitters have already passed on. If, in the middle of the first century, a student of hadith would still find some Companions available transmitting the hadith from the Prophet or find the students of the Companions. In the second half of the first century, if a Successor wanted to know something that relates to hadith, to whom should he go? He would resort to the Companions of the Prophet who were still alive. The selection of the Companions as his hadith teachers is obvious for the reason that they possessed the knowledge of hadith, which they heard directly from the Prophet himself or other Companions. When Ma'bad al-Juhānī (d. 80) started the qadrite *fitnah* in Basra, Yaḥyā b. Ya'mur (d. 129) and Ḥumayd b. 'Abd al-Raḥmān al-Ḥimyarī (d. ca. 91) wished to meet a Companion of the Prophet during their pilgrimage so that they could ask him questions regarding the views of the Ma'bad and his followers on Predestination. They met 'Abd Allah b. 'Umar and asked him those questions for which he narrated to them the Jibrīl hadith (Muslim, 1998, hadith: 1).

In the absence of the Companion, and a person wished to learn hadith, he would now go to the early generation of the Successors who were direct disciples of the Companions like 'Aṭā b. Abī Rabāḥ, Sa'īd b. al-Musayyib etc., and learn hadith from them.

The central role of the hadith narrator in the authentication system of the hadith critics

Traditional Muslim scholars of hadith investigated two major issues to establish the authenticity of any particular hadith: first, the hadith transmitter, and second, the content of his narration.

This happened towards the end of the first century. Because of the importance of the hadith in the Muslim community, this was necessary to ensure the credibility of the transmitted sources. Imagine a young scholar wanting to learn hadith, the first people he would approach would be the scholars who are known for their specialisation in the science of hadith for he would be confident in their scholarship on the disciplines he wants to study. But for the hadith transmitters who are not known, he would have to first investigate their qualification. Therefore, a hadith transmitter, in the early centuries of Islam, was first evaluated before his hadith was accepted. The evaluation concentrated mainly on two criteria:

- *‘adālah*
- *ḍabt*

‘Adālah (integrity of the transmitter)

For any information to be accepted and to be taken seriously, the informant should also be trustworthy. If a person hears any information from any source, he first tries to find out if the source is trustworthy. He uses any means that will help him reach a conclusion on how trustworthy a person is. Al-Shāfi‘ī explained the description of the transmitter whose hadith should be accepted. In his *Risālah*, he states:

He who relates hadith must be reliable in his religion, known to be truthful in his speech, mindful of what he transmits, aware of any wording that might change the meanings of the hadith, capable of transmitting the hadith word for word as he heard, not merely transmitting its meaning [in his own words], for if he transmits only the meaning and is unaware of what might alter its sense, he might unknowingly transmute the lawful into the unlawful and vice-versa. So, if he transmits word for word, there remains no ground for fearing a change of the meaning. Furthermore, he should have learned the hadith well by heart if he relates it from memory; and he should know the text [of the hadith] well if he relates it from a written source. If he relates a hadith that people of knowledge also transmit, his hadith should conform with their transmission. He should be free from the habit of *tadlīs*, that is, he attributes to someone he met a hadith which he did not hear directly from him. He should [not] attribute to the Prophet different from that which reliable authorities relate from him (al-Shāfi‘ī, 2004, pp. 170-171).

Brown (2010) succinctly explains how the early hadith critics employed criticism by showing a simile of modern-day journalists. If he or she has a major story to write, the editor will ask him or her two major questions: who is your source, and is your source corroborated?

Investigating a transmitter’s *‘adālah*, (literary integrity) started after the first major civil strife and emergence of deviant sects. As time progressed and more sects appeared, people used hadith as a vehicle to popularise their ideologies, the investigation into transmitters’ integrity became intense because hadith scholars treated hadith as matters of religion, it is inevitable that they would only accept a narration from someone who had a religious character and was

trustworthy. Thus, hadith critics investigated the narrator's personality, character, correct belief, and level of piety to establish a narrator's *'adālah*. Rules were put in place to make sure the *'adālah* of a particular narrator was established (Brown, 2010, p. 80).

The identification of a narrator and his sources were, thus, crucial for the acceptance of any particular hadith. It was necessary that the critics affirm his religious behaviour. Scholars were so rigid in enquiring about the character of a hadith transmitter to such an extent that people would even ask questions such as: Do you want to marry him [to someone]? (al-Khaṭīb al-Baghḍādī, 2013, p. 108). Al-Mughīrah reported from Ibrahim [al-Nakha'ī] (d. 96) saying, "When we intended to learn anything from any scholars, we would inquire about the manner of his eating, drinking, how he enters and comes out of a house. If all these are confirmed to be right, then only would we learn from him, otherwise we wouldn't attend his lectures (Ibn 'Adī, 1997, vol. 1, p. 156). This was the initial stage of investigating transmitters' integrity. The process developed to the more formalized method with critics like Shu'bah b. al-Ḥajjāj (d. 160), Mālik b. Anas (d. 179) Yaḥyā b. Sa'īd al-Qaṭṭān (d. 198), 'Abd al-Raḥmān b. Maḥdī (d. 198) and the generation that followed them, like Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal.

When scholars discussed narrators, they sometimes would do so in relation to a specific hadith or his general collection. Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal was asked about the identity of Abū Najīḥ who narrated from 'Abd Allah b. 'Amr a hadith about rentals on the houses of Makkah. Aḥmad said: he is Abū 'Abd Allah b. Abī Najīḥ (al-Athram, 2004).

The critics did not just identify the narrators, rather, they disclosed dishonesty and warned others about such an attitude of knavery. Ibn Ḥibbān, for example, commented about Ḥammād b. al-Walīd al-Azdī that "*yasriq al-hadīth, wa yalziq bi al-thiqāt mā laysa minhum min aḥādīthihim, lā yajūz al-ihtijāj bihī biḥāl*" he steals hadith, he ascribes hadith to the reliable transmitters what is not theirs. It is not permitted at all to use him (i.e., his narration) as proof (Ibn Ḥibbān, 1402, p. 255). Further on, Ibn Ḥibbān commented on one hadith narrated by the above narrator that³¹ "Abd al-Karīm stole this hadith from him, and he narrated it also from Muhammad b. Sūqah, as for al-Thawri, surely never ever narrated it. This Ḥammād stole it from 'Alī b. 'Āṣim and attributed it to al-Thawrī and replaced the name al-Aswad with 'Alqamah". On Walīd b. Salamah, Ibn Ḥibbān commented on one of his hadith: "*wahādhā*

³¹ The hadith reads: "*Man 'azzā muṣāb^{an} kāna lahū mithl ajrih*" "Whoever gives condolences to afflicted person will get similar reward".

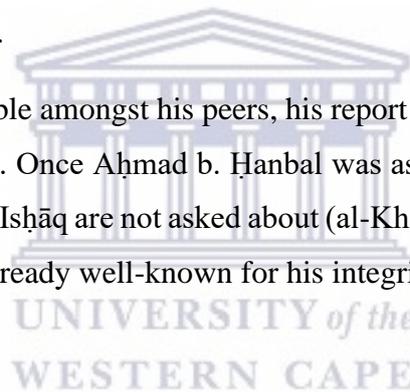
khobar^{um} lā aṣla lahū, wa qad rawā ‘an ‘Ubayd Allah al-Walīd b. Salamah, wa al-Walīd yasriq al-hadith “There is no basis for this hadith. al-Walīd b. Salam has narrations from ‘Ubayd Allah. Walīd, however, steals hadiths” (Ibn Ḥibbān, 1402, p. 255).

Some of the scholars would sometimes dedicate a full day to discussing the status of narrators. Abū Zayd al-Anṣarī tells us that he went to Shu‘bah on a rainy-day for hadith lectures. Shu‘bah informed them that today was not a day of hadith lessons, rather, “it is a day of backbiting. Come let’s backbite on those who lie in hadith” (al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī, 2013, p. 56).

How did early critics establish ‘adālah or the integrity of the reporter?

The way to establish whether the hadith transmitter is reliable or not is to investigate what the reporter’s peers and contemporaries have said about him. The peers are in a better position to appraise his real characteristics.

Thus, if he is known to be reliable amongst his peers, his report will be readily accepted if all other requirements are fulfilled. Once Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal was asked about Ishāq b. Rāhwayh (d. 238), he replied. People like Ishāq are not asked about (al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī, 2013). Here Aḥmad meant that Ishāq was already well-known for his integrity and vast knowledge.



Ḍabt (The strength of the transmitter’s memory and precision)

Knowing the character and integrity of a transmitter was not sufficient to declare the transmitter’s tradition authentic, for a pious person can also err. Thus, it was necessary to investigate the transmitter’s precision when he transmits. The second criterion of ascertaining whether the hadith was transmitted accurately was, therefore, to investigate the transmitter’s *Ḍabt*. *Ḍabt*, (linguistically translated as exactness, perfection) is the capacity of a transmitter to transmit exactly how his teacher taught him (Zakariyyā al-Anṣārī, 1999, p. 46), i.e., the transmitter’s precision and accuracy. To ascertain transmitters’ precision and accuracy, scholars began the process of collecting transmitters’ hadiths and comparing them to the same materials transmitted by others to ascertain the accuracy of transmitters’ renditions and also to ascertain the correct version of the hadith text. Sometimes they compared the narrator’s own hadith at different times. Ismā‘īl b. ‘Ulayyah (d. 193) ask Yaḥyā b. Ma‘īn (d. 233) about

the status of his hadiths if they are sound. Yaḥyā b. Maʿīn confirmed that his hadiths were fine. Ismāʿīl asked: “How do you know?” Yaḥyā said: “We compared them with the hadiths of other people (Ibn Maʿīn, 1985). Yaḥyā compared the hadith to find out if the hadiths were correctly transmitted and the correct wording. For sometimes, a change in a word changed the entire meaning of hadith.

This method of examining the narrator’s precision did not start with the critics of the second century, rather, it was used even by the Companions. ʿĀʾishah (d. 57), for example, is amongst the Companions who compared the narrations of other Companions at different times (Muslim, 1998, hadith: 2673). Marwān b. al-Ḥakam (d. 65) compared the narrations of Abū Hurayrah (d. ca. 58) (Azami, 1990, p. 69). By the end of the first century, this method of testing the narrator’s memory to determine his precision and accuracy was already widespread and known to both hadith teachers and students. Ibn Shihāb al-Zuhrī (d. 125) narrated the hadith of ʿĀʾishah from ʿUrwah b. al-Zubayr, Saʿīd b. al-Musayyib, ʿAlqamah b. Waqqāṣ, ʿUbayd Allah b. ʿAbd Allah. Al-Zuhrī, while transmitting the hadith commented that the hadith of each compliments the hadith of the other (*Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, hadiths: 2637, 2661, 4141, 4750). Ayyūb al-Sakhtiyānī (d. 131) advice to hadith students was: “If you want to discover the mistakes of your teacher, then attend the lectures of another (al-Dārimī, 2013, p. 211). ʿAbd Allah b. al-Mubārak said: “If you want hadith to be *ṣaḥīḥ*, (sound) then compare them to each other (al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī, 1403, vol. 2, p. 295).

The act of comparison as a means of ascertaining the accuracy of narrations was important, for if it was found that all transmitted versions of a single narration converged on a similar wording, then this indicated the reliability of the transmitter’s ability to transmit accurately. If the narrator was corroborated by other hadith narrators in most of his narrations, it was a sign that he was a reliable narrator. If he was not corroborated in most of his narrations and he narrated hadith that was not known to critics, his credibility was questioned. This is what al-Shāfiʿī emphasized and elaborated on concerning the criteria for a reliable transmitter: “... *idhā sharak ahl al-ḥifẓ fī hadith wāfaqa ḥadīthahum ...*, that is ‘his hadith concurs with the hadith of people of notable memory’” (al-Shāfiʿī, 2004, p. 171). Having an isnād did not guarantee the reliability of the transmitter, for “a forger could still simply take an isnād of a respected transmitter and attach it to a freshly concocted hadith” (Brown, 2010, p. 92).

Shuʿbah said that a person’s narrations would be dismissed when it was found that he narrates from famous scholars that which is not known to regular hadith scholars ...; “*Idhā ḥaddatha*

‘an al-ma rūfīn mālā ya rīfuh al-ma rūfūn ...’ (Ibn Abī Ḥātim al-Rāzī, vol. 1, p. 32). Al-Shāfi‘ī said: “If a hadith scholar has so many errors and has no correct original source (book), we can’t accept his hadith” (*Man kathura ghalatuh mina al-muḥaddithīn wa lam yakun lahū aṣl kitābin ṣaḥīḥ lam naqbal hadithah*) (al-Shāfi‘ī, 2004, p. 360).

Muslim b. al-Ḥajjāj (1998) described the signs of a weak transmitter as someone who, when his narrations were compared with those people known for their accuracy in the transmission of hadith and have upright character, and his narrations do not concur with their narrations or do so only rarely. If, the majority of his hadiths are like that, then he is rejected and not used in hadith. Thus, if any report “is not corroborated at any level of the isnād, then the reliability of that transmitter’s narration from his source is dubious” (Brown, 2010, p. 94). Sometime, even the hadiths of the most outstanding transmitters were rejected if they contradicted a number of reliable transmitters. In his *Kitāb al-tamyīz* Muslim tells us about a mistake Mālik made in mentioning one of the transmitters, ‘Abbād b. Ziyād. Mālik identified him as a progeny of al-Mughīrah (Muslim, 1990, pp. 219-220).

It was important for critics to also investigate how the transmitter narrates his hadith. The words he uses to indicate whether he actually heard from the sources he is mentioning or via someone. During the second century, when critics became strict on the criteria for hadith acceptance, some transmitters started hiding their informants, for if they revealed their sources, hadith scholars might not accept their transmissions. If a critic could not be sure who is dropped in the isnād, then evaluating a hadith was of little use (Brown, 2010). If one transmitter had never actually met the person from whom he quoted the hadith, or if it was known that he had not heard that hadith from his source, then who is the intermediary? Abū Ishāq Ibrāhīm b. ‘Īsā al-Ṭālaqānī³² (d. 215) asked ‘Abd Allah [ibn al-Mubārak] about the

³² al-Ṭālaqānī, a person who comes from a place known as Ṭālaqān. There are two cities that are known with this name. 1). A city in Khurāsān that falls between Marw warrūdh and Balkh. This city is in modern day Afghanistan known as Taleqan or تالقان. 2). Another city known with the same name is a city in Iran. There are differences amongst the scholars on the pronunciation of this name. al-Sam‘ānī (d. 562) in his *al-Ansāb* pronounced it as *al-Ṭalaqān* with a *sukūn* on alif. This pronunciation was followed by all the scholars who worked on his work *al-Ansāb* such as ‘Izz al-Dīn Ibn al-Athīr (d. 630) and al-Suyūṭī (d. 911). On the other hand, al-Ḥamawī (d. 626) gave the pronunciation of alif after (ا) and a *fathah* on (ا). Hence it should be pronounced as Ṭālaqān/ Ṭālaqānī. Imam al-Nawawī followed this pronunciation in his commentary on *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*. For details see: al-Sam‘ānī, 1988, vol. 4, p. 29; Ibn al-Athīr, 1994, vol. 2, p. 269; al-Ḥamawī, 1997, vol. 6, p. 239; al-Suyūṭī, 1991, vol. 2, p. 84.

hadith: “*It is of virtue to pray for your parents with your prayers, you fast for them with your fast*”. Ibn al-Mubāarak asked Abū Ishāq who transmitted the hadith? Abū Ishāq said: “This is the hadith of Shihāb b. Khirāsh. He is *thiqah* (reliable), Ibn al-Mubāarak commented. [But] from who? He asked. From al-Ḥajjāj b. Dīnār, Abū Ishāq, responded. Ibn al-Mubāarak said: he is *thiqah*, from who? Abū Ishāq said: from the Messenger of Allah, (pbuh). Ibn al-Mubāarak said: O Abū Ishāq! Between al-Ḥajjāj b. Dīnār and the Prophet there’s a long distance” (“*Inna bayn al-Ḥajjāj wa bayn al-Nabiyy sallaLlahu ‘alayh wasallam maḥāwiz tanqaṭi ‘u fihā a ‘nāq al-maṭiyy*”). However, there is no dispute on the virtues of fasting (*Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim, Muqaddimah: Bāb al-isnād min al-dīn*). Ibn al-Mubāarak criticized Abū Ishāq on this hadith because al-Ḥajjāj b. Dīnār is from the generation after the Successors. Being of that generation, it is clear that there are some missing links in the *isnād* between him and the Prophet; at best, two, a Companion and a Successor. With no way to guarantee the intermediary’s reliability, there are endless possibilities for what sort of deviation or forgery could have occurred. In this case, it did not matter to critics whether the one dropping transmitters or transmitting from unnamed transmitters was reliable or not. Some hadith scholars transmitted from al-Zuhrī < ‘Urwah < ‘Āishah that she and Ḥafṣah were given food while they were fasting.³³ Ibn Jurayj inquired from al-Zuhrī if he really heard this hadith from ‘Urwah. Al-Zuhrī answered that he did not hear it from ‘Urwah; rather, he heard it from some people who transmitted from the people who asked ‘Āishah. Through Ibn Jurayj’s courage to ask his teacher, it became clear that two links were missing. Al-Zuhrī’s teacher and his teacher’s source who transmitted it from ‘Āishah (Muslim, 1990, p. 217). It was, thus, crucial from as early as the second half of the first century to establish that a hadith had been transmitted by a contiguous, unbroken *isnād* from the Prophet after evaluating the hadith transmitters (Brown, 2010, p. 89). If it could not be established that the people in the *sanad* had heard from one another, then the hadith critics considered the chain of transmission broken (*munqaṭi*) and thus unreliable. Hadith scholars developed technical terms, such as *irsāl*, *inqiṭā*, *tadlīs* etc., that indicated whether there was a missing link in the chain of transmitters or not.

³³ See details of the hadith in *Sunan al-Tirmidhī*, hadith: 735

As scholars collected the people's hadiths and investigated the narrators as a step toward ascertaining their authenticity, they began rating the hadith narrators and the science of assessment of narrators (*ilm al-rijāl* or *al-Jarh wa al-ta'dīl*) was developed. Suitable technical terms were invented, indicating the status of the transmitter. It is said that Mālik was one of the first hadith scholars known to engage in hadith criticism and develop its technical vocabulary (Lucas, 2004, p. 145). The evaluation of narrators by the generations of scholars such as Mālik, Shu'bah, Sufyān al-Thawrī were studied and added to by their students, especially the two great Basran critics 'Abd al-Raḥmān b. Maḥdī and Yaḥyā b. Sa'īd al-Qaṭṭān (Ibn Ḥibbān, 1988, vol. 1, p. 52). Great students of each generation took the critical methods and opinions of their teachers further, refined them and passed it on to the next generation. The critical method of 'Abd al-Raḥmān b. Maḥdī and Yaḥyā b. Sa'īd al-Qaṭṭān, for example, was passed on to their most respected students, Yaḥyā b. Ma'īn, 'Alī b. Maḍīnī (d. 234) and Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal (Ibn Ḥibbān, 1988, vol. 1, p. 54). The critics of the late third century took hadith criticism into its most exact and lasting form. The list of these scholars includes al-Bukhārī, Muslim, Abū Zur'ah al-Rāzi (d. 264) and his friend Abū Ḥātim al-Rāzi (d. 277). The 300's saw several generations of critics who reviewed and reassessed the judgements of these earlier scholars and continued to evaluate those involved in the ongoing transmission. Abū Ḥātim al-Rāzi's son 'Abd al-Raḥmān b. Muhammad, famously known as Ibn Abī Ḥātim (d. 354), Abu al-Ḥasan 'Alī al-Dāraqūṭnī and al-Ḥākim al-Naysābūrī (d. 405) continued the task of hadith criticism (Brown, 2010, p. 81). Although hadith criticism and transmitter evaluation never really ended until the ninth century and after, the period between the second to the fourth century of Islam was the apex and most active period of hadith criticism. However, later scholars' assessments of the early narrators had little to do with any personal experience with the narrators' character because they were dependent mainly on the positive comments of the narrators' peers to establish the narrator's character and integrity (Azami, 1990, p. 42). Later scholars also relied on analysis of the collection of narrator's transmissions for corroboration that determined their accuracy (*ḍabt*) and, thus, their hadith status (Brown, 2010, p. 81). As said earlier, there is no other system that can better verify any historical reports than the isnād system. Thus, how vagarious is the generalization of Professor Schacht when he calls the isnād "the most arbitrary part of tradition" (Schacht, 1979, p. 163 ff.).

With the above details of *isnād* and hadith transmission, one can adduce that *isnād* passed through three phases:

1. *The infancy of isnād*: at the time of the Prophet

2. The period immediately after the death of the Prophet till the end of the generation of the Companions and/or Successors, when forgery started creeping into the society, hadith critics demanded and insisted on *isnād*
3. Most narrators were now known and were evaluated through narrator evaluation, and hadith were ruled authentic or not, mainly through the *isnād* system.

Therefore, the remarks of Caetan (d. 1935) on *isnād* are unjustifiable when he claimed that the great part of the *isnād* was put together and created by the traditionists of the end of the second century, and sometimes also in the third century (Robson, 1953, p. 18).

Content (Matn) Criticism

As indicated earlier, demanding an *isnād* on its own could not deter a determined forger from making up a text of hadith or ascribing texts to notable figures. Producing an *isnād* was not the only criterion for determining the credibility of the hadith transmission. An *isnād* could be made up, or inauthentic material could be equipped with *isnād* and then get circulated (Brown, 2010, p. 80). Storytellers were famous for forging *isnāds* for their stories. One storyteller forged a hadith with the names of Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal and Yaḥyā b. Maʿīn as his informants (Ibn Ḥibbān, 1402, vol. 1, p. 85).

Thus, the idea that the *isnād* does not always guarantee the genuineness of traditions is not a view wholly due to the Western critical approach. Muslim traditionists were not misled by *isnāds* that seemed to be sound. Together with checking the integrity of the transmitter, they also investigated and scrutinised the content of the text for its validity. Al-Ḥākim (d. 405) gives some examples of hadith whose narrators were all trustworthy but points out that the hadiths attached are inaccurate (al-Ḥākim al-Naysābūrī, 1986, pp. 113-119). He quoted another hadith with the *isnad*, Mālik from al-Zuhrī from ʿUrwah from ʿĀishah, and says that although the hadith seems to have been handed down by imams and trustworthy men, it is false so far as Mālik's traditions are concerned (Robson, 1953, pp. 25-26). According to al-Ḥākim, Muhammad b. Muhammad b. Ḥayyān al-Baṣrī (d. ca. 281) is the one who mixed up this *isnād* with the attached text (al-Ḥākim al-Naysābūrī, 1986, p. 59). Hadith critics investigated the soundness of the content of the text to be sure whether a particular hadith did really originate from the Prophet (or the authority mentioned) or not. It was due to this fact that hadith critics always advise: "The soundness of *isnād* does not always guarantee the authenticity of hadith" (*Ṣiḥḥāt al-isnād lā yastalzīm ṣiḥḥat al-hadīth*). In his *Tadrīb al-rāwī*,

Suyūṭī said that many a time, a hadith is weak while the isnād looks authentic for it is forged (al-Suyūṭī, 1972, vol. 1, p. 148). al-Khalīlī (d. 446) said: “*wa idhā usnida laka al-hadith ‘an al-Zuhrī aw ‘an ghayrih min al-‘immah falā taḥkum bi ṣiḥḥatih bi mujarrad al-isnād, faqad yukhṭī ‘al-thiqah*” (when a hadith is presented to you with the isnād from al-Zuhrī or any of the notable scholars of hadith, you should not hasten to pass the judgment of authenticity merely looking at the [superficial] isnād, for a reliable transmitter also errs) (al-Khalīlī, 1993, vol. 1, p. 202).

Thus, in addition to the reliability of the transmitters, content criticism (*naqd al-matn*) was required to establish the authenticity of a hadith (Kamaruddin, 2005, p. 52). The content or *matn* criticism is as early as the *isnād* criticism. In fact, as a question of authenticity, it pre-existed the *isnād* criticism. The critical attitude of the Companions like ‘Ā’ishah, ‘Umar, Ibn ‘Abbās etc., is evident that they applied *matn* criticism. As mentioned earlier, isnād became an official means of authenticating reports only after treacherous storytellers started fabricating reports. When the Companions criticized each other’s hadith, it was not a question of not trusting the integrity of other Companions,³⁴ rather, they criticized because it was possible that the Companions might have misunderstood the Prophet or forgot the exact wording. ‘Ā’ishah, for example, criticized ‘Umar’s (d. 25) transmission of the hadith that the dead is tortured due to the weeping of his family members. She explained that ‘Umar might have misunderstood the Prophet when he articulated the said hadith. She justified her explanation by comparing the hadith with the Qur’ānic verse: “... and no bearer of burden shall bear the burden of another” (*Musnad al-Ḥumaydī*, hadith: 222; Muslim, hadith: 929).

Matn criticism took shape in the form of corroboration either by comparing it to the clear text of the Qur’an, as the above hadith of ‘Ā’ishah or already established hadiths. *Matn* criticism is also evident in the conditions that qualify a hadith to be sound (*ṣaḥīḥ*). According to critics, both isnād and *matn* must be free from *shudhūd* (anomaly) and ‘illah (defect).

As mentioned above, some unscrupulous storytellers forged the *mutūn* and gave them a sound *isnād*. Al-Ḥākim al-Naysābūrī, in his *kitāb ma‘rifat ‘ulūm al-hadith*, mentioned several weak hadith of which its isnāds were regarded by critics as reliable (al-Ḥākim al-Naysābūrī, 1996, p. 58).

³⁴ The mainstream Sunni Muslims maintain that all Companions are trustworthy, and their integrity was already established by Allah.

In other words, the soundness of isnād is not conclusive proof of the genuineness of the hadith until the *matn* is also scrutinized. This is due to some *mutūn* cannot be ascribed to the Prophet, though isnād might seem to be reliable (Kamaruddin, 2005, p. 52).

It is important to investigate whether or not the *matn* fits the character of the Prophet, whether or not it fits common sense, if it argues rationally, if it violated the basic rules of Arabic grammar, if it is compatible with the historical facts, etc., (Kamaruddin, 2005, p. 54). Imām al-Bukhārī rejected the hadith that states that “The Prophet forbade breaking apart of Muslim coins in circulation” on the basis of its anachronistic nature. He noted that there were no Muslim coins during the time of the Prophet. Ḥajjāj b. Yūsuf (d. ca 95) was the one responsible for minting the coins (... *wa’innamā ḍaraba al-sikkah Ḥajjāj b. Yūsuf. Lam yakun fī ‘ahd al-Nabiyy ṣallaLlah ‘alayh wasallam*) (al-Bukhārī, 1977, p. 145). Imam Muslim also rejected some hadith based on *matn* criticism. He rejected the hadith of Salamah b. Wardān that “There are five chapters of the Qur‘ān each of them equals a quarter of the Qur‘an” (Muslim, 1990, p. 195).

Scholars of hadith introduced principles by which one is able to judge whether the text is sound or not.³⁵ They all echoed the rule that “if you encounter a hadith contrary to reason, or to what has been established as correctly reported, or against the accepted principles, then you should know that it is forged.” (Siddiqi, 1993, p. 113). However, since Muslims hold their Prophet in high esteem, for they believe that Allah told him of things of the distant past and even to come, therefore he knows things that an average man could not know. Therefore, Muslim scholars and hadith critics were careful where to use reason in the process of content criticism. Not all hadiths that contradict one’s reason are the result of forgery, therefore, not sound. Only qualified hadith critics, through their long and continuous study of hadiths are able to faithfully make judgments on hadith through *matn* criticism.

Though most cases wherein *matn* criticism was employed and suspicious hadiths were rejected, *matn* criticism was used sparingly to discover the knavery of the transmitters, for even a reliable transmitter can also err. This is not to say that early hadith critics did not practise content criticism. We have seen above how al-Bukhārī rejected the hadith of breaking

³⁵ See, for example, Ibn al-Qayyim, 1403, *al-Manār al-munīf, fī al-ṣaḥīḥ wa al-ḍa‘īf*, ed. ‘Abd al-Fattāḥ Abū Ghuddah, *Maktabah Maṭbū‘āt al-Islāmiyyah*

Muslim coins. However, when they came across a hadith whose meaning they found unacceptable, they first examined its isnād to find how the error occurred. Once the transmitter responsible for the error was identified, they would list this erroneous hadith in his biography as evidence of his weakness (Brown, 2010, p. 98). This is evident in the biographical dictionaries that list weak narrators like Ibn ‘Adī’s *al-Kāmil fī du‘afā’ al-Rijāl* and its critically revised version by the eighth-century hadith critic al-Dhahabī’s *Mīzān al-i‘tidāl*.

With the above details, it is clear that Muslim critics, while they paid more attention to the isnād to establish whether the hadith is authentic or not, the *matn* was not neglected completely. Rather, both isnād and *matn* criticism were used hand in hand even though isnād criticism appears to have gained much momentum in hadith criticism. Relying on *matn* criticism alone might lead to accepting a so-called hadith if it contains good meanings or ascribing to the Prophet a statement that could have possibly originated from other figures.

Journeys in search of knowledge and the spread of hadith

Hadith transmission and its preservation could not have reached its apex without the efforts of hadith scholars. The transmission and preservation of hadith were closely connected to the search for knowledge. The search for knowledge started long before the advent of Islam. The Qur‘ān makes reference to the story of Mūsā setting out on his journey to meet Khīḍar and gain what Allah has bestowed upon him in the form of knowledge (Qur‘ān 18: 60-82). The Prophet also emphasized the need for travelling in search of knowledge (Aḥmad, 2005, hadith: 8299 *et a.l*). The Companions also understood their duty of conveying the knowledge to others. In his last ceremony, the Prophet instructed those present to convey the message to those absent (*Sunan al-Dārimī*, hadith: 2076). Towards the end of the Prophet’s life, delegations came to Madinah to embrace and learn about Islam.³⁶

The companion scattered all over the conquered lands spreading the religion of God and the traditions of the Prophet. It is clear that the Companions were not on the same level of memory and knowledge and collection of hadith. Due to different situations, they were also different in the number of hadith they would transmit. Some had only one hadith, and some had two. On the other hand, other companions had numerous hadiths. As mentioned earlier, the Prophet

³⁶ One of the famous delegations that came to the Prophet to learn about Islam was the delegation of ‘Abd al-Qays. See *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhār* and *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim, Kitāb al-īmān* in their respective books.

addressed some people with advice he did not preach to others. Some incidents happened in front of some people. Masrūq (d. 62), who was a successor, said: “I have been in the company of the Companions; I have found them to be equated to a well. One well would suffice one person; another well would suffice two or three people. Some wells suffice a lot of people. On the other hand, some wells are such that if all people had to come to it, it would suffice all of them” (al-Madīnī, 1980, p. 42; Ibn Sa'd, 1990, vol. 2, p. 343). The hadiths spread in different regions as a result of the Companions having lived in those regions. If there was a scholar that required a hadith and there was no hadith in that specific region, then the solution would be to travel to the region where they could find the hadith. This is exactly what the Companions, Successors and their Followers did. Some Companions lived far but frequently came to the Prophet and asked him what they needed to know about the matters of their religion. ‘Uqbah b. al-Ḥārith travelled from Makkah to the Prophet in Madinah to enquire about the status of his marriage after a lady claimed that she wet-nursed him and the woman he married (Ibn Abī Shaybah). Even after the demise of the Prophet, the Companions continued travelling in search of knowledge of hadith. Abū Ayyūb al-Anṣārī travelled from Madinah to Egypt to meet ‘Uqbah b. ‘Āmir to ask him a hadith which only he and Abū Ayyūb were left from the people who heard from the Prophet (al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī, 1395). Jābir b. ‘Abd Allah heard a hadith that was transmitted from one of the Companions of the Prophet that lived in Shām. Jābir longed to travel to meet the man and hear the hadith directly from him. He, therefore, bought a camel and set on a journey that took him a month. When he reached Shām he met ‘Abd Allah b. Unays al-Anṣārī and introduced himself. After greeting each other, Jābir said: “I came for the hadith about oppression which you heard from the Prophet which I did not hear from him...” (al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī, 1395, p. 170). Sa‘īd b. al-Musayyab said: “I used to travel for days and nights in search for one hadith” (al-Ḥākim al-Naysābūrī, 1986, pp. 7, 8). al-Sha‘bī said to one listener after completing narrating a hadith to him that he should take the hadith with a full heart, for a man before would travel from a long distance to Madinah for a hadith that seemed of less value than the one he transmitted (*Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukharī*, hadith: 5083). Al-Rāmahurmuzī (1984) mentioned five categories of scholars who travelled to different regions in search of hadith.

The effect of *riḥlah* was such that now we find cross-hadith transmission between regions. An Egyptian scholar of hadith would have access to hadith scholars from other regions like Baghdad and Hejaz. Instead of being confined to the hadith of ‘Abd Allah b. ‘Amr b. al-‘Āṣ, now he has at his disposal the hadith of Mu‘ādh b. Jabal who lived in Yemen for most of his

life, the hadith of Ibn ‘Abbās, who lived in Madinah and Makkah for most of his life, and so on. This is the result of travelling in search of hadith.³⁷ In addition, it is not surprising that we see scholars who travelled extensively that many hadith revolve around their names (Āl Kulayb, 2001).

The outcomes of this period

Compilations and classification of hadith genre

The first three centuries of Islam brought huge and significant contributions to the field of hadith. Not only was it related to abstract discussions, but also practical methods which laid down foundations and principles of assessing the authenticity of hadith. Some Companions recorded the hadiths they heard from the Prophet. However, these compilations were for personal use, though many of them passed it on to the next generations of their families. Some of the names of the Companions and Successors who had scribed the hadiths include:

- *Ṣaḥīfah* of ‘Abd Allah b. ‘Amr b. al-‘Āṣ (d. 63)
- *Ṣaḥīfah* of Sa‘īd b. Jubayr, a student of Ibn Abbās
- *Ṣaḥīfah* of Mujāhid b. Jabar (d. between 101 and 104), who was a student of Ibn ‘Abbās. Abū Yaḥyā al-Kinnāsī is reported to have copied Mujāhid’s books (al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī, *Taqyīd al-‘Ilm*, p. 105).
- Abu al-Zubayr al-Makkī (d. 126) had a booklet in which he collected the hadiths of his teacher Jābir b. ‘Abd Allah (d. *after* 70).
- *Ṣaḥīfah* of Zayd b. Abī Unaysah al-Ruhawī (al-Zahrānī, 1426, p. 75).
- *Ṣaḥīfah* of Abū Qilābah (d. 104) which he bequeathed to Ayyūb al-Sikhtiyānī (d. 131)
- *Ṣaḥīfah* of Hishām b. ‘Urwah.

The compilation of hadith was done on a big scale at the end of the first century when the Umayyad Caliph ‘Umar b. ‘Abd al-‘Azīz instructed some leading scholars, such as al-Zuhrī and Abū Bakr b. ‘Abd al-Raḥmān, to collect and document all hadiths available to them (al-Bukhārī: Ch. 34). By the mid-second century, most of the hadiths were documented, and

³⁷ For more details on scholars’ journey for the search of knowledge, see al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī, 1395 *al-Riḥlah fī ṭalab al-‘ilm*, ed. Nūr al-Dīn ‘Itr, Dār al-Kutub al-‘Ilmiyyah

books were authored. The hadith scholars of the second century who compiled comprehensive hadith books include:

Ma‘mar b. Rāshid (d. 154) compiled *al-Jāmi‘*. Sufyān b. Sa‘īd al-Thawrī (d. 161) compiled *al-Jāmi‘*. Ḥammād b. Salamah (d. 167) compiled *Muṣannaḥ*. Sufyān b. ‘Uyaynah (d. 198) also compiled *al-Jāmi‘*. Mālik b. Anas compiled his *Muwāṭṭa’*. The Yemenite hadith scholar ‘Abd al-Razzāq al-Ṣan‘ānī (d. 211) compiled his *Muṣannaḥ*. The most profound hadith compilation, however, was Mālik’s *Muwāṭṭa’*. Many hadith scholars adopted his style, and thus, there were many other hadith compilations with the title *Muwāṭṭa’* (‘Itr, 1997).

The compilations of this period, however, were so inclusive that the authors included not only the hadith of the Prophet, but traditions of the Companions and legal rulings of the Successors.

The third century was the epic of Islamic disciplines, including hadith. Most hadith classifications and exclusive compilations came to light with scholars such as Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal, Abū Ḥātim (d. 271) and his colleague Abū Zur‘ah (d. 264), the two Razian hadith critics, and the generation of their students such as Muhammad b. Ismā‘īl al-Bukhārī and Muslim b. Ḥajjāj. Different genres of hadith were compiled. *Masānīd*, genre of hadith arranged according to the Companion, *Ṣiḥāḥ* genre, exclusive for only sound and authentic hadith *Sunan* and some books on biographical dictionaries of hadith transmitters, all were compiled in this period.

Hadith after 400 H to 900 H

In the previous section, we have discussed the most crucial and apex period of hadith development. The further developments that happened in hadith literature were the outcomes of the first three and half centuries of Islam. Now, most hadiths have been collected and documented in the form of *ṣiḥāḥ*, *masānīd*, *sunan*, *ajzā'*, etc. To a large extent, most hadiths have been categorized, and their authenticity has already been established. The details required for any given transmitter have also been recorded. This made it easy for the succeeding generations to recollect and record the hadiths further. On the other hand, the strict criterion for acceptance of hadith dropped drastically. This marks a crucial difference between early hadith critics and those who came after the fourth century.

This latitudinarian approach to accepting hadith is vivid in many aspects related to hadith.

The following are features of this period.

Laxity in accepting hadith (Tasāhul)

This is the period that depended mostly on the books compiled by early scholars. Books became more important than the transmitter himself because all that was required to be transmitted was now recorded in written materials. This is so obvious, for the actual hadith transmitters of early generations are by now already gone. This also obviated that they should have a latitudinarian approach even on the qualifications for a transmitter to be reliable.

Qualification of a reliable narrator

The previous generations, as we have noticed, were rigorous in accepting a narration of any particular narrator. It was necessary in that period, as we have seen, that he has at least two major characteristics, namely, '*adālah* and *ḍabt*'. After the 400s, however, scholars started experiencing a drop in the standards of hadith transmitters. Because most of the hadiths have been already documented, scholars of hadith transmitted those hadiths directly from written materials. What qualified a narrator to be labelled a *thiqah* (reliable) was no longer dependent so much on the extent of his knowledge and how strong his memory was, for most scholars relied much on the writing materials. Now what was required from a narrator for his hadith to be accepted was that the hadith he transmitted should come from recognized sources (*an*

yakūna samā'uh ṣaḥīḥ^{an}). Al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī said about Abu Bakr b. Khallād (d. 356): “He had no knowledge, however, his *samā'* is correct (*Innahu mā kān ya'rif shay'an minal ilm, ghayr anna samā'ahu ṣaḥīḥ* (al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī, 2001, vol. 5, p. 43). And in the biography of Aḥmad b. Yūsuf b. Aḥmad b. Khallād, al-Khaṭīb praised him that he was reliable. He was a wonderful and reliable transmitter; however, he knew not hadith (*wakāna thiqa^{tan} maḍā amriḥ 'alā jamīlⁱⁿ wa lam yakun ya'rif al-hadith*) (al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī, 2001, vol. 5, p. 220). He made similar comments about Ibrahim b. Aḥmad b. Bishrān (al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī, 2001, vol. 6, p. 18).

Al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī said about Abu Nu'aym al-'Aṣfahānī (d. 430): I have noticed in Abū Nu'aym that he takes it lightly (*yatasāhalu fihā*). Some of those issues are to say [*ana* أنا] for *ijāzah*, without clarifying it. (Ibn al-Dimyāṭī, *al-Mustafādah min dhaly Tārīkh Baghdād*, vol. 1, p. 37).

The age of starting to learn hadith

We know for sure that some prolific narrators of the Companion generation were considerably young at the time when the Prophet departed from this world. His own grandsons, al-Ḥasan and al-Ḥusayn, were not even ten when he passed away. Anas b. Mālīk was about ten when the Prophet came to Madinah, yet he served him for almost ten years. Ibn 'Abbās and other Companions were all young at the time when the Prophet passed away. Maḥmūd b. al-Rabī' narrates that he can still remember that when he was five, the Prophet spat on his face from the well that was in their vicinity. So, in the first century of Islam, no age minimum was applied in the learning and transmission of the Prophet at any age. However, in the second and third centuries, because of the nature of the society and the spread of unscrupulous narrators, one was only allowed to officially learn hadith that people could rely on when he transmitted it at a little older age. One had to be mature enough or at least must have reached the age of 15, then only could he really be called a student of hadith and be trusted with what he learnt. Unlike after the 300s, reaching the age of puberty or *sinn al-tamyīz* (the age of distinguishing) was not enough for one to learn and transmit hadith. Many scholars were weakened in their traditions from certain teachers on the ground of their youth at the time when they wrote down from them. 'Amri b. Hāshim al-Bayrūtī is weak when he transmits from al-Awzā'ī because he was young when he recorded from him (Azami, 1992, p. 198). Abū 'Abd Allah Al-Zubayrī (d. ca. 320) recommended that one should only start writing

hadith at the age of twenty, for this is the age when a person is completely matured (al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī, 2013, p. 68). Sufyān b. Sa‘īd al-Thawrī said: [In the past] when a person wanted to learn hadith, he would first indulge in matters of worship for twenty years (al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī, 2013, p. 54). Abū al-Aḥwaṣ is also reported to have said the same thing (al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī, 2013, p. 54). Ibn Jurayj (d. around 150H) said to Wakī‘ b. al-Jarrāḥ that he was early for his age to acquire hadith. Wakī‘ at that moment was eighteen years old (al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī, 2013, p. 54). Sufyan b. Uyaynah, for example, started learning hadith from al-Zuhrī only at the age of 15, even though al-Zuhrī still considered him to be too young (al-Rāmāhurmuzī, 1984, p. 185). When Musa b. Ishāq was asked why he didn’t learn from Abū Nu‘aym (d. 430). He replied: People in Kūfah did not send their children to learn hadith until they reached the age of twenty (al-Rāmāhurmuzī, 1984, p. 186). Mūsā b. Hārūn said: People of Basra only started learning [and writing] hadith at the age of ten, people of Kūfah at the age of twenty and people of Shām at the age of thirty. (al-Rāmāhurmuzī, 1984, p. 185). Al-Rāmāhurmuzī comments that by saying: The statement of Zuhrī to Sufyan “I haven’t seen a seeker of knowledge younger than ibn ‘Uyaynah” appears that at the time of the Successors’ students it was around the age of twenty (al-Rāmāhurmuzī, 1984, p. 186).

After the 300s, however, a boy as young as six could still be considered a student of hadith (Azami, 1990, p. 9) and transmit hadith at a later stage. It appears that al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī, in his influential treatise on the discipline of hadith of the transmission and criticism, argued vehemently for allowing children as long as they have *tamyīz* and pay attention (... *al-samā‘ yaṣīhh biḥuṣūl al-tamyīz wa al-iṣghā’ ḥasb*). He, in fact, listed one of his chapters as ‘*bāb ṣiḥḥat samā‘ al-ṣaghīr*’ (The chapter on the validity of a child’s *samā‘*) (al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī, 2013, p. 54). Abū Nu‘am al-Aṣfahānī was only eight when his father brought him to the lectures of ‘Abd Allah b. Ja‘far b. Fāris (d. 346) in the year 344H despite that he transmitted reports directly from him (al-Dhahabī, 1985, vol. 15, p. 553). The later scholars only made a distinction between *samā‘* and *ḥuḍūr* for the lectures. If the child was present at a scholar’s lecture and he was under five, then they would say in his license to transmit hadith *ḥaḍara* or *uḥḍira* (he was present or he was brought to the lecture). If he was five or above, then they would say *sami‘a* (he heard...) (Ibn Ṣalāḥ, 2006, p. 130).

Omitting asānīd:

It should be noted that around the 5th and 6th centuries, there was a transition from the phase of *isnād*-centric study of hadith to the *dirāyah*-based learning of hadith. By now, all sayings of the Prophet have been captured and recorded in the works of the 3rd and 4th-century scholars. By the mid-5th century, the Shāfi'ī hadith scholar al-Bayhaqī (d. 458) 'declared that all the hadith could reliably be attributed to the Prophet had been documented and thus any previously unrecorded attributions to the Prophet should be considered *de facto forgeries*' (Ibn Ṣalāḥ, 2006, p. 121). As such, scholars of hadith after the 5th century did not consider the isnād as much as the scholars of the previous generations who used the isnād as a tool of authentication. This was so because most hadiths had been compiled already by authorities. So, though some scholars continued to record hadiths with *isnāds*, many of the living *isnāds* were only to existing books. This is clear in the writing of Abu Bakr al-Bayhaqī (d. 458), al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī and sometimes even in the writings of Abū Nu'aym al-Aṣḫānī (d. 430). Because the living isnād was no longer for authenticating hadiths but only a link to existing books, scholars of the fifth century started omitting isnāds when compiling books that contained already documented hadiths. Imam al-Baghawī (436-510), the exegete and Shāfi'ī jurist of Baghshour,³⁸ omitted *asānīd* in his *Maṣābīḥ al-Sunnah*. In his introduction to *Maṣābīḥ al-Sunnah*, he clarified the reason for his omission of *asānīd*. He said: "I omitted the *asānīd* to avoid lengthening the book upon them and also relying on the transmission of scholars" (*Muqaddimah Masābīḥ al-Sunah*).

Ibn al-Athīr (d. 606), in his *Jāmi' al-Uṣūl fī Aḥādīth al-Rasūl*, also omitted the *asānīd* except for the names of the Companions if the hadith is raised to the Prophet or the name of the narrator if the hadith is the saying of the Companion. This is not to say that scholars stopped narrating hadith with isnād completely. There were some hadith legends that continued compiling books of hadith with their own isnāds. According to Brown (2010), the last large hadith book to include full isnāds for every hadith was *al-Aḥādīth al-Mukhtārah* (Selected Hadiths) of Ḍīyā' al-Dīn al-Maqdisī (d. 643). But even this book did not include previously unrecorded hadiths. The author's *isnāds* for his hadiths consist of his *isnāds* to earlier hadith

³⁸ A City between Herat and Merv

collections, which then continued from the author of those collections back to the Prophet (Brown, 2010, p. 45).

Generalization of concepts:

Early critics, as we have seen above, accepted reports only after examining the totality of its existing narrations. The reliability of the narrator was one of many checkboxes to be ticked off for acceptance and not the only one. Thus, early scholars did not have one fixed rule that if the narrator is *thiqah*, then the hadith must always be accepted. The later scholars, however, were more inclined to treat certain incidental rules as set rules. Later scholars' judgments were based on the generalization of incidental rules rather than on the total examination of all circumstantial evidence. Probably, the main reason that led to these different approaches is that the early scholars dealt with immediate sources and living isnāds. Due to the extensive *rihlahs* (journeys in search of hadith knowledge), early scholars engaged the narrators on personal levels. Their primary duty was to investigate the authenticity of hadiths. Thus, they investigated the conditions of each narrator and passed suitable judgment on him. Their primary objective was the defence of /and preservation of Sunnah in the form of hadith. The later scholars, on the other hand, depended on the judgements of early scholars. Thus, the later scholars' main concern was the preservation of the books and statements of early scholars, for, by now, all hadiths have been documented and recorded. To achieve that, they generalized some concepts which early critics used but sparingly and occasionally. An example of this is the concept of *ziyadat al-thiqah* (additions by reliable transmitters). Are all additions in the text provided by a reliable transmitter to be accepted at face value, or does each addition have to be treated according to/ with surrounding evidence? Most of the later scholars appear to accept all additions by a reliable transmitter.

General acceptance of 'additions by a thiqah'

Ziyādah (additions) in hadith may take different forms.³⁹ The additions can either be in the *isnād* by adding a narrator or raising the hadith to the Prophet when the source is someone lower, the Companion of the Successor. The additions also could occur in the actual text.

³⁹ On different types of Additions in hadith, see Jonathan Brown, *Critical Rigor vs. Juridical Pragmatism*, pp. 11-15

Sometimes, these additions were contradictory to the version transmitted by others and sometimes were not necessarily contradictory.

It needs to be noted from the outset that additions in hadith supplied by unreliable transmitters are rejected by all hadith scholars. They are rejected not because they are additions but because the hadith of unreliable transmitters is generally rejected.

According to early critics, acceptance and rejection of additions by a reliable transmitter were dependent on the circumstances that surrounded it. When it was rejected then, it fell under the broader categories of *'illah* (defect), *shudhūdh* (anomaly), *munkar* (unfamiliar), *mudraj* (inserted) etc.

Though in normal circumstances, the hadith of a reliable transmitter is generally accepted, it is on the condition that the narrator does not contradict other reliable transmitters. The *mutaqaddimūn* did not just haphazardly pass a general ruling that whenever a reliable narrator transmitted an addition, then that addition should be accepted categorically. Rather they investigated the surrounding circumstances. If the evidence suggested that this reliable narrator made a mistake, they rejected his transmission. On the other hand, if the evidence suggested that he did not make a mistake, they would accept that addition; in fact, they considered that as separate and independent hadith (al-Munāwī, 1999, vol. 1, pp. 410, 411). The later scholars, however, did not follow the early critics' approach towards the additions supplied by a *thiqah*. Theirs was a categorical acceptability of all additions provided its transmitter was reliable.⁴⁰ Probably, this confusion is the outcome of some statements of early critics that give the impression that they also accepted additions by reliable transmitters categorically.

It is said that al-Bukhārī was asked about the hadith that reads: “*lā nikāḥa illa bi waliyy*” where the common link is Abū Ishāq al-Sabī'ī. Some of the students of Abū Ishāq narrated it *mursal^{am}*. These include Shu‘abah, Sufyān al-Thawrī. Other students like Isrā’īl, the grandson of Abū Ishāq narrated it *mawṣūl^{am}*. Imam al-Bukhārī gave preference to the *mawṣūl* version, and he said: “*al-Ziyādah min al-thiqah maqbūlah*, (the addition from a reliable narrator is accepted). This is despite the fact that Isrā’īl is contradicted by two reliable narrators, Shu‘abah and Sufyān al-Thawrī. Similarly, al-Dāraquṭnī mentions in some places that the addition of a reliable (*thiqah*) is accepted. Surprisingly, al-Dāraquṭnī rejected many additions and gave

⁴⁰ On the details of the later scholars' categorical acceptance of *ziyādāh* see Jonathan Brown, *Critical rigor vs. Juridical pragmatism*, (Islamic Law and Society 14, 1)

preference to the *mursal* versions over the *musnad*. With this evidence, it shows that when the scholars said *ziyadat al-thiqah maqbūlah* they referred to specific cases, i.e. when the *thiqah* is an outstanding *hadith* scholar, [and not unconditionally] (Ibn Rajab, 1987, p. 423).

Some later scholars took that as a set rule and generalized it with the maxim ‘*ziyadah al-thiqah maqbūlah*’. It is not to say that no scholars of the past did not accept the additions of reliable transmitters unconditionally. A few scholars opted for this view. Ibn Ḥajar noted two notable scholars in his *al-Nukat*: Ibn Hibbān and al-Ḥākim. He said: “Ibn Hibbān, al-Ḥākim and others have opted for the acceptance of the additions by the *thiqah* categorically and at all times. They have accepted it, whether the place [and time] was one, or the *hadith* was delivered at different times [and places]; whether the narrators are silent [about the addition] are more [in number] or not. This is the view of a group of jurists and Islamic legal theorists. The great Shaykh Muḥy al-Dīn al-Nawawī also took this view in his works” (Ibn Ḥajar, 1984, vol. 2, p. 688).

Criticism of the unconditional acceptance of additions of later scholars by later critics

Despite the latitudinarian approach to *ziyadah al-thiqah* by the later scholars, some critics of the late centuries who followed *the school of Razi and Dāraḥṭni* criticised this unconditional acceptance of additions. One of the later *hadith* scholars who condemned the unconditional acceptance of additions is Ibn Dāqīq al-‘Īd (d. 702). In his *Tawḍīḥ al-afkār* Al-Ṣan‘ānī quoted Ibn Dāqīq al-‘Īd saying: “Whoever claims that the scholars of *hadith* or the majority of them are of the opinion that whenever there is a contradiction between a *musnad* and a *mursal* versions of *hadith*, or between *marfū‘* and *mawqūf*, or between one with less details and one with additions; that in these cases preference should be given to the one with additions unconditionally, that person is not correct in his statement. Giving preference to the additions is not a fixed rule. By checking their rulings on single cases, one comes to know the correctness of what I have said (al-Ṣan‘ānī, 1997, vol. 1, pp. 343, 344).

Another critic of the eighth century who criticised the unconditional acceptance of *ziyadah al-thiqah* was the Ḥanbalī scholar Ibn Rajab (d. 795). He condemned al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī for following the general rules of jurists and theorists on the issue of *waṣl* (literary: connected) and *irsāl*. In his *Sharḥ ‘ilal al-Tirmidhī*, he accused al-Khaṭīb of self-contradiction because he mentioned in his book different views of scholars when there is a difference in transmitting the *hadith* between *irsāl* and *waṣl*. “All the views he mentioned”, Ibn Rajab says, “are not

recognised by any of the early hadith critics. These views are taken from the books of scholars of speculative theology (*ma'khūdhātun min kutub al-Mutakallimīn*) (Ibn Rajab, 1987, vol. 2, p. 638).

On hadith that the Prophet would sometimes sleep in the state of *janabah* and *would not touch water*, Ibn Rajab mentioned that all the early critics have unanimously blamed Abū Ishāq for his addition of the phrase that '*he would not touch water*' to the hadith. Ibn Ḥajar mentioned Ismā'īl b. Abī Khālid, Shu'bah, Yazīd b. Harūn, Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal, Abū Bakr b. Abī Shaybah, Muslim b. al-Ḥajjāj, Abu Bakr b. al-Athram, al-Jūzajānī, al-Tirmidhī and al-Dāraqūṭnī that all are among the critics who put the blame on Abū Ishāq. Thereafter, Ibn Rajab said: "As for the later jurists, most looked at the reliability of its men and assumed the hadith to be authentic. These [later] scholars think that any hadith whose men are reliable then the hadith should automatically be authentic. They don't take heed of the intricacies of the science of *'ilal al-hadith*. And [unfortunately] the later hadith scholars like al-Ṭaḥāwī, al-Ḥākim and al-Bayhaqī followed suit (Ibn Rajab, 2004, vol. 1, pp. 362, 363).

Ibn Ḥajar al-'Asqalānī (d. 852) was probably the most vociferous critic of unconditional acceptance of *ziyādah al-thiqah*. In most of his writings, he rigorously refuted and criticised the later scholars who accepted all cases of *ziyādāt* without proper scrutiny of the external evidence. In his *Nukat*, Ibn Ḥajar al-'Asqalānī said that the scholars who accepted the additions from a *thiqah* unconditionally argue that generally, if the *thiqah* narrator narrates a hadith which no one else has narrated, that narration is accepted. Therefore, his additions to a hadith should also be accepted. Ibn Ḥajar rejected this argument for not all narrations that a *thiqah* narrates are accepted. If that was the case, then there won't be a difference with the *shādhah* hadith (Ibn Ḥajar, 1984, vol. 2, p. 690).

Ibn Ḥajar was aware of the argument that it is possible that one narrator might miss some details of the hadith due to different circumstances.⁴¹ Ibn Ḥajar first clarifies that the acceptance of additions from the Companions is agreed upon by all. Therefore, additions supplied by the Companions are acceptable and not questioned. Hadith scholars do not differ

⁴¹ For example, it is possible that a teacher could transmit one hadith in multiple sessions. Some students could only have been present in some of those sessions. It is possible that the teacher narrated with additions in sessions which those students missed. So, if students that were present transmit those additions, then why not accept them?

in accepting it unconditionally provided the *sanad* to them is proven authentic. The contention is when the additions came from Successors and generations after them. Ibn Ḥajar also showed a difference between a *thiqah* narrating an independent hadith which no one else has narrated and when he transmits a hadith (which is also transmitted by others), but he has additions in his version. In the first instance, there is no evidence that implies that other reliable transmitters mistakenly left it out or forgot about it. The least one can say is that he narrated it while others did not, unlike when all the other reliable transmitters narrated it without additions. Here it's all logical that their narration was given preference over his narration (Ibn Ḥajar, 1984, vol. 2, p. 691). In another place, Ibn Ḥajar made it clear that according to the hadith critics, there is no fixed rule of acceptance or rejection of additions; rather, rejection and acceptance are dependent on circumstances (Ibn Ḥajar, 1984, vol. 2, p. 687).

The statement, “*al-Ziyādah min al-thiqah maqbūlah*, (the addition by a reliable narrator is acceptable), by al-Bukhārī should not be taken as a general statement. Ibn Ḥajar explained that al-Bukhārī accepted the *mawṣūl* version of Isrā’īl despite Shu‘bah and al-Thawrī narrating it *mursal^{an}*. According to Ibn Ḥajar, al-Bukhārī’s acceptance was due to considering the circumstantial evidence and not simply because it was a *ziyadah al-thiqah*. As a rule, whenever students of Abū Ishāq al-Sabī’ī differ, then the version of Isrā’īl was given preference, for he was the most reliable transmitter who transmitted from *Abī Ishāq (athbat al-nās fī Abī Ishāq)* (Ibn Ḥajar, 2004, vol. 9, p. 210).

Among the contemporary scholars, Ḥamzah al-Malībārī, even though he agrees with Ibn Ḥajar’s inclusion of al-Ḥākim to be among the scholars who accepted the additions of a *thiqah* unconditionally, al-Malībārī pointed out that that al-Ḥākim opted for the view of critics. If circumstantial evidence supports the additions, then he accepted the additions. Otherwise, he also rejected the additions in hadiths. Al-Malībārī cited al-Ḥākim in the chapter of ‘Knowing the Sound and Non-sound [hadiths]’ (*ma’rifah al-ṣaḥīḥ wa al-saqīm*) with an example of the hadith the Prophet supposedly said: “*The prayer of the night and day is to be performed in a pair of two, whilst the witr is one raka‘ah at the end of the night*” (*ṣalāt al-layl wa al-nahār mathnā mathnā*). Al-Ḥākim commented that in this hadith, all the narrators were reliable. However, there is a mistake in adding the word ‘*al-nahār*’ (noon/day). But then al-Ḥākim excused himself from clarifying the mistake explicitly for he feared prolonging the discussion (al-Ḥākim, 2003, p. 130; al-Malībārī, 2003, p. 163). Al-Malībārī, after bringing up this

example, says: “By comparing few places of *Kitāb ma‘rifat ‘ulūm al-hadith*, it appears that al-Ḥākim is also on the side of the hadith critics, i.e., accepting the additions of a *thiqah* only if circumstantial evidence supports it (al-Malībārī, 2003, p. 164).

From the above, one may conclude that, unlike the later scholars, the early critics had a deep and precise approach to *ziyādah al-thiqah*. And, despite the majority of later scholars having had a latitudinarian approach to accepting the additions as long as it comes from a reliable transmitter, some serious scholars continued to uphold the rigorous approach of the Rāzīs and al-Dāraqutī (Brown, 2007, p. 30).

Positive developments in hadith literature after the 400s

Although we noticed a change in hadith methodology during and after the 5th century, there were other hadith genres that developed during this period. This followed the canonization wave movement on certain hadith books. The following are some of those developments:

Services to the Canon Hadith Books

The six famous hadith books (*Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, *Sunan Abī Dāwūd*, *Sunan al-Tirmidhī*, *Sunan al-Nasā‘ī*, and *Ibn Mājah*) became the central focus of hadith related studies after the 5th century. Initially, there was a difference of opinions as to which books should be included in the canon books. Some scholars, like Razīn b. Mu‘āwiyah al-Sarāqustī (d. 535)⁴² instead of Ibn Mājah counted Muwaṭṭā‘ of Mālik as the sixth of the canon book (Brown, 2010, p. 39).

⁴² Biographers differed as to when exactly was the year of Razīn b. Mu‘āwiyah’s death. Al-Dhahabī, in his encyclopaedic work on the biographies of great scholars, *Siyar a‘lām al-nubalā‘*, vol. 20, p. 204, has marked his year of demise as 535H. The author of *Shadharāt al-dhahab*, vol. 7, p. 44, also mentioned him amongst the people who died in the 535H. The editors of *Siyar a‘lām al-nubalā‘*, Shu‘ayb al-Arna‘ūt *et al*, indicated that Ibn Bashkawāl and al-Ḍabbī mentioned that he died in the year 524H; and that al-Taqiyy al-Fās is quoted to have dated his demise as 525. Jonathan Brown in his ‘*Hadith*’ and ‘*Canonization of al-Bukhārī and Muslim*’ also mentioned that he died in the year 524H. On a side note, Jonathan Brown misspelt Razīn b. Mu‘āwiyah to Ibn Razīn in one or two places in both his *Canonization*, p. 428 and *Hadīth*, p. 57.

Most scholars used these canonical books as the basis for their compilations. Some of these works include books on *Jawāmi‘*, *Zawā‘id*, *Takhrīj*, etc.⁴³ Probably the first genre of hadith compilation that rendered good service to the canon books is what Dr. Jonathan Brown calls the ‘Digest Collection’. “The emergence of the hadith canon resulted naturally in the composition of digest collections that combined and consolidated the canon’s contents into a more manageable form” (Brown, 2010, p. 57).

Jawāmi‘ collections (Books consolidation)

Some of the positive developments after the 3rd century was the genre of *jam‘*, that is, the hadith literature that combined and consolidated either the *ṣaḥīḥayn* or all the six canon hadith books.

From the fourth century on, the two *ṣaḥīḥayn* acquired widespread acceptance in the circles of hadith learning.⁴⁴ With all hadiths being recorded, now there was a need to consolidate these works into comprehensive but manageable hadith material. According to Dr. Jonathan Brown, ‘the first hadith scholar to take up this task was an Andalusian who moved to Baghdad, Muhammad b. Fatūḥ al-Ḥumaydī (d. 488). He combined the *ṣaḥīḥayn* into one book, noting any material that one of the two books featured apart from the other (Brown, 2010, p. 57). Earlier sources, however, show that before al-Ḥumaydī, some other scholars had already started the process of consolidation and a combination of the canon books. Al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī (d. 463) mentioned under the biography of his eminent teacher Abū Bakr Aḥmad b. Muhammad al-Khawārizmī al-Barqānī (d. 425) that he had compiled a *musnad* in which he consolidated *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī* and Muslim (al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī, 2001, vol. 6, p. 26). Ibn al-Athīr also noted the same thing in his *Jāmi‘ al-‘Uṣūl* (Ibn al-Athīr, 1972, vol. 1, p. 48). Both al-Ḥumaydī and al-Barqānī arranged their books according to the *masānīd* style. Razīn b. Mu‘āwiyah al-Saraqustī (d. 535) of Saragossa was probably the first one to combine all the canon books, and he named his book *Tajrīd al-ṣiḥāḥ*. According to him, however, Muwaṭṭa‘

⁴³ Also included in these works: *Aṭrāf*, (Indices) *Dictionaries of the names of narrators of these books* etc.

⁴⁴ The reasons that made these two books, and the famous four sunan, gain such status in the Muslim community is yet to be discovered to this writer. Jonathan Brown appears to have suggested two reasons. At the time, people needed manageable books that could represent the most authentic Sunnah of the Messenger. These books filled these two functions (Brown, 2010, p. 40).

of Mālik was part of the six major canon books instead of *Sunan ibn Mājah* (Ibn al-Athīr, *Jāmi‘ al-Uṣul*, vol. 1, p. 48); contrary to what became widely accepted in the later Sunni hadith literature. Muhammad b. ‘Abd al-Karīm al-Rāfi‘ī also wrote a book in which he included the hadith from al-Bukhārī, Muslim, the four *Sunan* (al-Tirmidhī, Abī Dāwūd, al-Nasā‘ī, and Ibn Mājah) and *Musnad al-Shāfi‘ī*. He named his book ‘*Hāwī al-uṣūl min akhbār al-rasūl*’ (Brown, 2007, p. 9).

Probably, the most comprehensive work that consolidated and combined the hadith of the canon collections is the work of Majd al-Dīn Ibn al-Athīr (d. 606). He named his work *Jāmi‘ al-Uṣul fī ahādīth al-Rasūl*. He based this encyclopaedic collection of hadiths mainly on Razīn of Saragossa’s (al-Sarāqustī) work referred to earlier. Ibn Athīr was so impressed with Razīn’s work compared to al-Barqānī’s and al-Ḥumaydī’s works. He, however, noticed that all these magnanimous works, including al-Sarāqustī’s one, lacked explanation and annotation. At the same time, he commended them for paving the way for the forthcoming generation (Ibn al-Athīr, 1972, vol. 1, p. 49). Ibn al-Athīr began his magnum opus with a comprehensive introduction, explaining crucial issues related to hadith sciences.

Supplemental Collections (Kutub al-Zawā‘id)

As said above, the six canonical hadith books occupied a very high status in the circles of the hadith experts as early as the 4th century. These six canon books became the central focus for hadith collectors. Most hadith compilations revolved around these books. However, these canonical books did not include all the authentic hadiths. The authors themselves made it clear that there are so many authentic hadiths which they did not include in their collections. Al-Bukhārī, for example, is reported to have said: “I included in my book al-Jāmi‘ only the authentic reports, and I left out some authentic reports for fear of prolixity” (Ibn Ṣalāḥ, 2006, p. 19).⁴⁵ Muslim also made similar remarks. When he was asked why he did not include a certain hadith despite admitting that it is authentic, he said: “Not all authentic hadiths which I possess I have placed them here [in this Ṣaḥīḥ compilation]. I have only included here [in this ṣaḥīḥ] that which people have agreed [to be authentic] (*laysa kull shay‘in ‘indī ṣaḥīḥ waḍa‘uh hā hunā, innamā waḍa‘tu hā hunā mā ajma‘ū ‘alyh*) (Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim, hadith 404).

⁴⁵ Al-Bukhārī sieved his 7,653 hadiths that he included in his Ṣaḥīḥ from the pool of six hundred thousand hadiths (Ibn Ḥajar, 1999, p. 10).

This meant that a considerable amount of authentic hadiths is to be found outside the six canon hadith books. The repositories of those hadith that are not included in the six canon books are the *masānīd*, *muṣannaḑāt*, *sunan* (besides the four constituting the canon), *ma'ājim*, etc. These would be the books that were compiled either in the generations before the canon books or after the period of the canon books. Some are compilations of the teachers of the collectors of the six canonical hadith books. Later, scholars would come and collect all the supplemental hadiths into a single collection. Depending on the intention of the collector, some would only collect the supplemental hadith of a specific collection. Of all the compilers of the supplemental collections, the three Egyptian scholars of the 8th and 9th centuries stood out with their magnanimous opus of *kutub al-zawā'id*. Abū Bakr Nūr al-Dīn al-Haythamī (d. 807), Aḥmad al-Būṣīrī (d. 840) and their great student Ibn Ḥajar al-'Asqalānī (d. 852) all produced comprehensive books on *zawā'id*. Nūr al-Dīn al-Haythamī 'listed all hadiths' in *Majma' al-zawā'id wa manba' al-fawā'id* 'from the *Musnads* of Ibn Ḥanbal, Abū Ya'lā al-Mawṣilī, and al-Bazzār as well as the three *Mu'jams* of al-Ṭabarānī that are not found in the Six Books'. Al-Haythami arranged the hadiths topically but omitted the *isnāds*. *Majma' al-zawā'id wa manba' al-fawā'id* is a recollection of his single works on the said sources. With the instructions of his eminent teacher and father-in-law, Zayn al-Dīn al-'Irāqī (d. 807), he combined all those single compilations into *Majma' al-zawā'id wa manba' al-fawā'id*. Aḥmad b. Abī Bakr al-Būṣīrī also recollected the hadiths that are not found in the Six Canon in his *Itihāf al-Khiyarah*⁴⁶ *al-Mahrah bi zawā'id al-masānīd al-'asharah* from the following ten *masānīd* collections: *Abī Dāwūd al-Ṭayālisī*, *Musaddad*, *al-Ḥumaydī*, *Ibn Abī 'Umar al-'Adanī al-Makkī*, *Ishāq b. Rāhwayh*, *Ibn Abī Shaybah*, *Aḥmad b. Manī'*, *'Abd b. Ḥumayd*, *al-Ḥārith b. Muhammad b. Abī Usāmah* and *Abu Ya'lā al-Mawṣilī*.⁴⁷ Al-Būṣīrī's service to these

⁴⁶ Some scholars spell the title as *Itihāf al-Khayyirah* ... However, the supplementary diacritics on the manuscript that is housed in Maktabah Maḥmūdiyyah in Madinah has been marked as الخيرة keeping the *kasrah* mark under خ and a fathah mark on supposedly ي

⁴⁷ Jonathan Brown in his '*Hadith*' mentioned a completely different list of al-Būṣīrī's sources. He mentioned *Muwaṭṭa'* of Mālik, the *Musnad al-Shāfi'ī*, *Sunan al-Dārimī*, *Sunan al-Dāraḑunī*, *Ṣaḥīḥ Ibn khuzaymah*, *Ṣaḥīḥ ibn Ḥibbān*, the *Muntaqā* of Ibn al-Jārūd, Abū 'Awāna's *Mustakhrāj* of *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, the *Mustadrak* of al-Ḥākim, and the *Sharḥ ma'ānī al-Āthār* of al-Ṭahāwī (Brown, 2010, p. 58). As a student of hadith, I wonder if al-Būṣīrī had another compilation that had the exact same title. Al-Būṣīrī mentioned in his own introduction the sources on which he worked on and the list is as mentioned above.

books, however, differed from that of al-Haythamī, in that he did not omit the isnāds of the authors.

Ibn Ḥajar also rendered the same service to the hadiths found in eight *masānīd* collections. In his *al-Maṭālib al-‘āliyah bī zawā’id al-masānīd al-thamāniyah* he collected the hadiths that were not included in the Seven Books. In addition to the Six Canon Books, Ibn Ḥajar added the *Musnad* of Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal. The eight *masānīd* from which Ibn Ḥajar collected those hadiths are the *Musnad* of Abī Dāwūd al-Ṭayālīsī, the *Musnad* of al-Ḥumaydī, the *Musnad* of Ibn Abī ‘Umar al-‘Adanī, the *Musnad* of Musaddad, the *Musnad* of Aḥmad b. Manī‘, the *Musnad* of Ibn Abī Shaybah, the *Musnad* of ‘Abd b. Ḥumayd, the *Musnad* of al-Ḥārith b. Abī Usāmah. Ibn Ḥajar wanted to add to these collections hadiths from other *masānīd* like *Musnad al-Bazzār*, *Musnad Abī Ya‘lā* and the three *Mu‘jams* of al-Ṭabarānī only to realize that his teacher al-Haythamī has already included them in his *Majma‘ al-zawā’id*. Therefore, out of respect for his teacher, he did not include hadiths from these collections except that which his teacher missed.

Surprisingly, all these hadith scholars who compiled the above collections on *zawā’id* are all students of one scholar, Zayn al-Dīn al-‘Iraqī. It appears that al-‘Iraqī had a great impact on his students that he left them with the love of hadith.

The supplemental collections or *zawā’id* literature are basically the collections of hadiths that are not found in the canonical hadith books (or any other specific books, depending on the intent of the author). The hadith in the *zawā’id* genre should not be found in the canonical books, or in the book from which the *zawā’id* are extracted. If it is found, then it must come from other authorities, i.e., the Companion, or it must contain an additional phrase that can potentially impact the total judgment of the hadith (al-Aḥḍab, pp. 19,20).⁴⁸

The *Zawā’id* literature has its benefits. The most important of these benefits is that it aids the researcher in finding corroborating hadiths (*mutāb‘āt*) for other hadiths, for ‘supplemental collections brought materials outside the canon within easy reach of scholars’ (Brown, 2010,

⁴⁸ Dr Aḥḍab has criticized some authors for not giving an adequate definition of the subject. According to him, most of the scholars who have given definition have defined the works on the science and not the science itself. See his introduction to the *Zawā’id tāriḫh Baghdād*, vol. 1, p. 19.

p. 57). In addition, a good number of early compilations are to date lost and nowhere to be found. Most of the hadiths found in those lost works were preserved in the *zawā'id* genre.

Takhrīj genre:

Takhrīj (lit. extracting) refers to indicating the original sources in which a hadith is found, followed by a discussion on its status (al-Taḥḥān, 1996, p. 10).

Scholars of different fields authored many books in which hadiths sometimes are also used. The later jurists, for example, made reference to hadiths on certain juristic rulings without giving reference to a specific book where the hadith is found. In the early period, there was no need for scholars to have *takhrīj* literature, for they used their references through their own sources. The later scholars, however, when they authored their works, due to a very long chain from them to the source, referenced the earlier repositories of hadith like *ṣiḥāḥ*, *sunan*, *masānīd*, *ma'ājim*, *muṣannaḥāt ajzā'* etc. As said earlier in this chapter, scholars after the fourth century omitted the *asānīd* for the sake of brevity. Some instead gave reference to the earlier compilations. al-'Irāqī said: "The habit of the early scholars is that they are silent about the hadiths which they cite in their works. They don't mention the sources nor do they state whether the hadith is *ṣaḥīḥ* or *da'īf* except rarely even if the author is a scholar of hadith until Imām al-Nawawī came and clarified it" (al-Munāwī, 1994, p. 28). Now there was a pressing need to know the sources of the many hadiths cited without their *asānīd* for validation. For this reason, hadith scholars authored books wherein references were given for those hadiths. They discussed their *asānīd*, mentioned its *ṭuruq*, variation in its texts, or *mutūn* (al-Zahrānī, 1426, pp. 210, 211). Below are a few examples of *takhrīj* books:

Takhrīj works on Tafsīr books:

- *Takhrīj aḥādīth tafsīr al-Kashshāf* by Jamāl al-Dīn al-Zayla'ī (d. 762)
- *Al-Kāf al-shāf fī takhrīj aḥādīth al-kashshāf* by Ibn Ḥajar al-'Asqalānī

Takhrīj works on Fiqh books:

- *Naṣb al-rāyah li aḥādīth al-hidāyah* by Jamāl al-Dīn al-Zayla'ī (d. 762)
- *Al-Badr al-Munīr fī takhrīj aḥādīth al-Sharḥ al-kabīr* by Ibn al-Mulaqqin (d. 804)

- *Al-Talkhīṣ al-ḥabīr fī takhrīj aḥādīth al-Rāfi ‘ī al-Kabīr*⁴⁹ by Ibn Ḥajar al-‘Asqalānī
- *Al-Dirāyah fī takhrīj aḥādīth al-hidāyah*, by Ibn Ḥajar al-‘Asqalānī
- *Al-Mughnī ‘an ḥaml al-asfār fī al-asfār fī takhrīj mā fī Iḥyā’ ‘ulūm al-dīn min al-akḥbār* by al-‘Irāqī (d. 906)
- *Irwā’ al-ghalīl fī takhrīj ahādith manār al-sabīl* by the recent Albanian hadith scholar Muhammad Nāṣir al-Dīn al-Albānī (d. 1999)

Summary

Muslims across the world, from past to present, believe in the final message of the Prophet of Islam. Early Muslims were eager to learn the words, actions and tacit approval of the Prophet. Hadith became the second source of moral guidance and law according to mainstream Sunnī Islam. Muslims of early generations tried their utmost best to preserve the teachings of the Prophet and transmit it in its pristine form. When transmitting these hadiths, early hadith transmitters sometimes mentioned their source and sometimes not, for they all trusted each other, and no one lied in his report. From the second half of the Islamic first century, some unscrupulous hadith transmitters tried to forge reports and ascribe them to earlier authorities such as the Prophet or his Companions. Scholars and critics of hadith among the Companions and Successors devised methods to combat the ill practice of hadith forgery. These methods included intensifying the demand for citing one’s source (proto-*isnad*), coining specific words used for hadith transmission etc. However, the demand to name one’s source intensified after the outbreak of the great *fitnah* that led to the assassination of the third Caliph Uthmān b. ‘Affān and its subsequent events. The further the people were from the time of the Prophet and his Companions, the more the unscrupulous hadith transmitters engaged in forgery. The political strife also aided the spread of forged hadith, for some people forged hadith in support of their leaders or agendas. Thus, naming the sources was not enough for even liars could forge names of hadith transmitters. For that reason, hadith critics also became strict in ways of accepting and transmitting hadiths. *Isnād* became a crucial part of hadith transmission in the circles of learning during the early period of Islam.

⁴⁹ This is a very famous *takhrīj* book on al-Sharḥ al-Kabīr of the famous al-Shāfi‘ī jurist of the sixth century, Imam al-Rāfi‘ī (d. ca. 624). Ibn Ḥajar summarised and reworked on his teacher’s work *al-Badr al-Munīr*. Different scholars have spelled this title differently. See *Tadwīn al-sunnah al-nabawiyyah*, p. 212.

Consequently, the critics started evaluating transmitters to ascertain whether they were reliable or not. From the outcome of their transmitter evaluation, the science of *jarḥ wa ta'dīl* emerged. This system which hadith critics developed, was comprehensive and practical.

Towards the end of the first century, scholars started travelling in search of knowledge. They recorded the hadiths they collected during their journeys. By the end of the third century, most of the hadiths were recorded in different formats. Some scholars arranged the hadiths according to the Companion transmitters, whereas others according to the chapters of Jurisprudence. Some scholars compiled only authentic Prophetic hadiths, and other scholars included in their compilations all sorts of hadiths.

The effort and depiction of early hadith scholars is well explained by the fifth-century polymath scholar Aḥmad b. al-Ḥusayn al-Bayhaqī (d. 458). In his *Manāqib al-Shāfi'ī*, he states:

Scholars initially would learn and memorise hadith directly from the verbal word of the teacher. Some people documented it out of precaution. Thereafter, a group of scholars collected the hadiths, its authorities and separated the authentic ones from the unauthentic ones. They knew exactly who of the hadith transmitters were reliable, and the mistakes made by some transmitters. They were so well versed to the extent that if a transmitter of hadith added a letter to a version of hadith or omitted from it; or a word was replaced by another, they would know it and clarify it and document it in the biography of that transmitter. In this way, the earlier generation left everything for the coming generations clean and clear (al-Bayhaqī, 1970, vol. 2. pp. 321-322).

However, after the third century, hadith compilations were centred around the six canonical hadith books. Thus, books on *rijāl*, *zawā'id* etc. were compiled.

After the hadiths were collected and compiled, hadith scholars felt that the hadiths were preserved in established books, so they did not pay much attention to observing the principles of transmitting hadiths.

Chapter Four: Orientalists, Revisionists, and the Common Links in Hadith

Introduction

In the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, there was an increased interest in Islam, its history and its legal system by Western scholars. Though Muslim scholars, throughout centuries, devoted themselves to the study of hadith for various reasons, the interest of scholars in the West has been mainly historical (Motzki, 2005, p. 204). Hadith was, therefore, one of the important sources for gaining an outsider's perspective of Islamic history (Motzki, p. 204). Scholars working mainly in European and American universities in the field of early Islam developed different methods of dating traditions to piece together for themselves what the Muslim communities were like in the first and second centuries of Islam.

In contrast, when Muslim scholars discussed the authenticity of hadith, they generally discussed it from the point of trust in the hadith transmitters, as discussed in the previous chapter. However, the investigation of the Western scholars, as external scholars to the tradition, concerning the authenticity of hadith was not based on the trust of transmitters. One of their concerns was and remained the dating of hadith. They employed different methods, generally applied in the study of history, that ranged from the Historical-Critical Methods to the *isnad-cum matn criticism* (Brown, 2010). Their discussion about the reliability of the hadith traditions was not neutral. It was influenced by an environment that was shaped by notions of European superiority and colonial thinking.

Ignaz Goldziher (1850-1921) was probably the first Western scholar who used European Historical Methods to date a hadith (Brown, 2010, p. 205). In his second volume of *Muhammadische studien*, Goldziher focused on hadith. His studies on hadith had a great impact on Western studies of Islam (Motzki, 2004, p. xix). Goldziher focused on hadith that were related or had a close connection to political and sectarian agendas. Goldziher, generally used a *matn*-based approach to determine when and why a hadith was forged (Brown, 2010, p. 210).

The discussion that follows focuses on the Common Link Theories. Common Link Theories start from the assumption that the chain of transmitters (*isnād*) is a possible way of authenticating a hadith or the provenance of tradition. While there exist possibilities of *isnād* fabrication..., the *isnād* indicates the true path of transmission (Görke, 2003, p. 179). However, theories related to the common link are multiple. Therefore, this study will not entertain the views of scholars such

as Goldziher, etc., who considered the isnād as having no use at all or having little value for verifying traditions.

Joseph Schacht, the founding father of the Common Link Theory in hadith

Joseph Schacht, born in 1902 in Upper Silesia (then Germany, now Poland), lived and studied and taught in the Middle East for several years during the interwar period. He spent much of his time in the great manuscript libraries of Istanbul and Cairo. Between 1923 and 1935, Schacht published his scholarly editions of seven hitherto unknown or little known Islamic texts. These materials provided the foundations for his publications on the origins of Islamic Law.

Building upon the works of Ignaz Goldziher (1850 – 1920) and Snouck Hurgronje (1857 – 1936), Schacht studied and analysed hadith reports related to law. The results of his research were first announced in his 1949 article: “A Revaluation of Islamic Legal Traditions”, which was followed a year later by his *Origins of Muhammadan Jurisprudence*.⁵⁰ Schacht followed Goldziher in most of his arguments and conclusions. Schacht, however, found *isnād* to be a useful tool to date hadith.

In his ‘*The Origins of Muhammadan Jurisprudence*, ’ Joseph Schacht studied traditions that dealt specifically with legal issues. He studied these legal hadiths from selected works of Mālik b. Anas, Abū Yusuf (d. 182), Muhammad b. al-Ḥasan al-Shaybān (d. 189/805), and Muhammad b. Idrīs al-Shāfi‘ī (d. 204/820). Unlike Goldziher, Schacht used isnad to date hadith. He affirmed that isnād is an important tool to value the source (Schacht, 1979). While comparing the hadiths he studied from these sources, he noticed that in some instances, there was what he thought seemed like the process of backward growth of isnāds. He tried to provide an explanation for this phenomenon. He concluded that the better the isnād, the later the origin of the tradition. In his ‘*A revaluation of Islamic Tradition*’, he states:

Isnāds have a tendency to grow backwards, that after going back say, a Successor to begin with, they are subsequently often carried back to a Companion and finally to the

⁵⁰ Jeanette Wakins, *Remembering Joseph Schacht* (1902-1969), Harvard Legal Studies Program, Occasional Publications, 4 (January 2003) 1-41 at 2-3. Cited by David S. Power (2010), Review Essay on Hallaq’s Origins of Islamic Law, in *Islamic Law and Society*, (126-157) p. 128.

Prophet himself, in general, we can say: the more perfect the isnād, the later the tradition (Schacht, 1949, p. 147).

Schacht made similar remarks in his '*Origins of Muhammadan Jurisprudence*'. He states:

[The] artificial growth of isnāds, together with material growth of traditions in the pre-literary and in the literary period, shows that it would be idle to try to reconstruct the tendencies and characteristics of the doctrine of any particular Companion from the traditions in which he appears as the final authority or of which he is the first transmitter. Wherever the sources available enable us to judge, we find that the legal traditions from the Companions are as little authentic as those from the Prophet (Schacht, 1979, p. 169).

Traditional hadith critics have, long before Schacht, noticed this tendency. They were aware that some materials were being pushed back to the Prophet. These hadith critics approached this phenomenon through different lenses. These lenses include the *raf*' versus *waqf*, *waṣl* and *inqiṭā'*. However, the lens of *ziyādah* for traditional hadith critics was and remained the most plausible explanation for this phenomenon (Brown, 2007). As we have seen in previous chapters, not all additions to hadith were accepted by hadith critics. Transmitters guilty of this practice were exposed, and discussions related to them are to be found in their biographical details in *rijāl* books. 'Alī b. Zayd b. Jud'ān (d. 131) is one of the transmitters whom the scholars said *wakāna raffā'an* (He would back project non-Prophetic traditions to the Prophet (al-Bukhārī, vol. 6, p. 275; Ibn Abī Ḥātim al-Rāzī, 1952, vol. 1, p. 147).

Schacht also concluded in his studies that earlier schools were not so rigid on the Prophetic traditions, but rather on the common practice of the society. Sunnah was not necessarily solely reflecting the Prophetic life, rather, it reflected the 'living traditions' of ancient schools (Schacht, 1979, p. 58). Schacht wondered if evidence indicates that there existed no hadiths that could be attributed to the Prophet in early societies as the *Sunnah* of the Prophet, then when and who was responsible for bringing the particular hadith into existence and or into circulation?

Schacht sought to answer the above question by investigating whether any of the previous generations of legal scholars had used that particular hadith in any of their debates. He assumed that if, in an academic discussion or debate, none of the lawyers provided a tradition from the earlier authorities, i.e., the Prophet, at a time when it was necessary to do so, then, it

simply means that that particular tradition did not exist at that time. He argues that if it were in existence, at least, one of them could have mentioned it as evidence for his opinion or as a counter argument against his antagonists (Schacht, 1979, p. 140). This kind of conclusion is known as *argumentum e silentio* or argument from silence.⁵¹ Therefore, Schacht demanded that the assumption that there existed an authentic core of information going back to the time of the Prophet should be abandoned (Schacht, 1949, pp. 146-147). According to Schacht, if we find a tradition in a later collection, say any of the six canonical collections, that goes back to earlier authorities, we must believe that it came into existence in a period between the second half of the second and third centuries of the Islamic calendar. For Schacht, the argument is that if the tradition had existed at that time, then surely it would have been used in the academic debates (Schacht, 1979, p. 140). For Schacht, this was the best way of proving that a hadith did not exist at a certain time (Schacht, 1979, p. 140).

Though Schacht used this *e silentio* argument as a process of dating a tradition, he was not consistent in following this line of argumentation. In one case, Schacht appears to have contradicted himself when he said that “in the course of polemical discussion, doctrines are frequently projected back to higher authorities: traditions from Successors become traditions from Companions, and traditions from Companions become traditions from the Prophet” (Schacht, 1979, p. 156). For this reason, he has been criticised by those opposing his assumptions for being selective in deducing his evidence (Azami, 1996).

In any case, if hadiths were falsely attributed to the Prophet at a large scale, in Schacht’s view, then who was responsible for bringing a particular hadith into existence? Schacht introduced the Common Link Theory as an explanation of how a particular hadith came into circulation and as evidence for his understanding of the spread of *isnāds*. He describes this phenomenon as follows:

“... a tradition was put into circulation by a traditionist whom we may call I N.N., or by a person who used his name, at a certain time. The tradition would normally be taken over by one or several transmitters, and the lower, real part of the isnād would branch out into several strands” (Schacht, 1979, p. 171).

⁵¹ <http://www.oxfordreference.com/abstract/10.1093/acref/9780199891573.001.0001/acref-9780199891573-e-366?rskey=vqimUp&result=9> *The Oxford Essential Dictionary of Foreign Terms in English*. Ed. Jennifer Speake. Berkley Books, 1999. Published online 2002

Schacht conceived a narrator sitting as a common link in the *sanad* to have brought the hadith into circulation provided, and he [i.e., the common link] was not a first century figure (Schacht, 1979, pp. 171-179). According to Schacht, the common link did not just put into circulation the hadith only, but the names in the *sanad* from him to the authority, be it the Companion or the Prophet, are also his products (Schacht, 1979, p. 171).

Schacht believed that hadith authorities knowingly and purposefully placed hadiths in circulation with little care to support these hadiths with satisfactory *isnāds*. He thus called for the abandonment of any idea that suggests that some information actually came from the Prophet. In his ‘*A Revaluation of Tradition*’, he states:

We must therefore abandon the gratuitous assumptions that there existed originally an authentic core of information going back to the time of the Prophet, that spurious and tendentious additions were made to it in every succeeding generation, that many of these were eliminated by the criticism of *isnāds* as practiced by Muhammadan scholars... (Schacht, 1949, p. 147).

It appears that Schacht’s Common Link Theory developed over time. However, in his early writings, he was silent on the theory (Alhomoudi, 2006, p. 7). He expounded his theories of dating hadith, especially the Common Link Theory, in his *The Origins of Muhammadan Jurisprudence*, and, admittedly, his theory was considered revolutionary and ground-breaking by many Orientalist scholars. In his processes of dating hadith, he argued that “[t]he existence of a common transmitter enables us to assign a firm date to many traditions and to the doctrines represented by them” (Schacht, 1979, p. 172). His explanation of the theory of common link is illustrated in diagram figure 1 below.

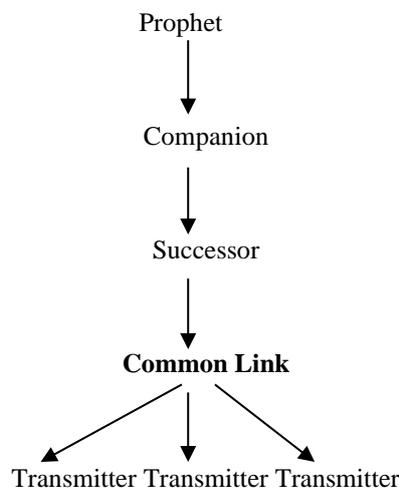


Figure 1. Schacht's Common Link Theory

However, his own explanation taken from the hadith in al-Shāfi‘ī’s *ikhtilāf al-hadith*, appears a little more different to figure 1 above.

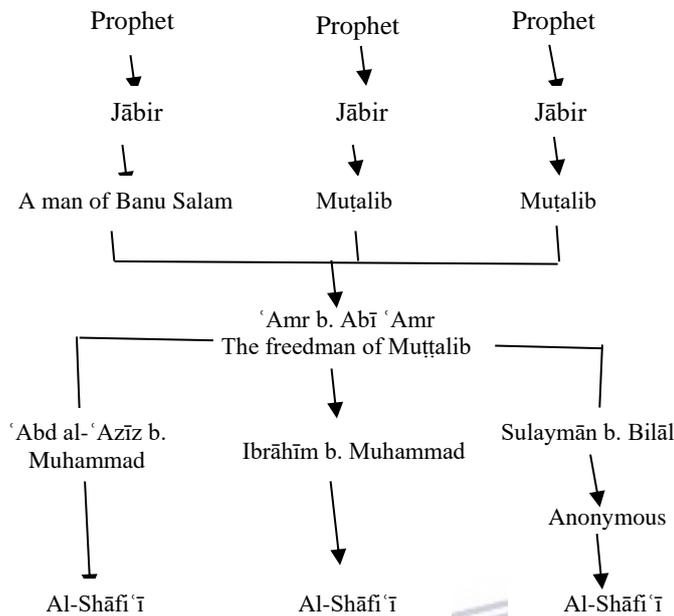


Figure 2. Source: *Origins*, p. 172

Schacht’s illustration of figure 2 has been heavily criticized by Azami. Azami first pointed out that there is only one *isnād* from the Prophet to ‘Amr, who in turn transmitted the hadith to his three students: ‘Abd al-‘Azīz b. Muhammad, Ibrāhīm b. Muhammad and Sulaymān b. Bilāl.⁵²

Schacht held his Common link theory so strongly that he even discarded other considerations and evidence, including the concept of *i‘tibār*⁵³ or corroboration, which was a key analytical tool of Muslim hadith critics. His results on the growth of *isnāds* and the Common link theory led him to envisage that a common link was also the one responsible for creating and even corroborating *isnāds*. For Schacht, the hadith created by a common link would normally be taken over by one or several transmitters, and the lower real part of the *isnād* would branch out into several strands. The original promoter, i.e., the common link (whom he calls N.N.),

⁵² See more details on the criticism about ‘Amr b. Abī ‘Amr in Azami’s *Studies in Early Hadith Literature*

⁵³ *I‘tibār*, (literally consideration) means finding and investigating a report for the sake of corroboration. For more details on corroboration see: Brown, *Hadith, Muhammad’s legacy*, p. 92. Juynboll also appears to have ignored and discarded the concept of *i‘tibār*. See his *Some Isnād-Analytical methods*, p. 350, note 13

would have provided his hadith with an *isnād* reaching back to an authority, say a Companion or the Prophet. This higher, fictitious part of the *isnād* would acquire additional branches by the creation of improvements which would take their place beside the original chain of transmitters. But the common link would remain the (lowest) common link in several strands of *isnād*, or at least in most of them, allowing for his being passed by and eliminated in additional strands of *isnād* which might have been introduced later (Schacht, 1979, p. 171).

Schacht's explanation of corroborating *isnāds* is not satisfactory in that it ignores the qualities of reliable narrators, as mentioned in previous chapters. Moreover, he wants us to draw the same conclusion when the *isnāds* of different but closely connected hadiths show a common link (Schacht, 1979, p. 172). Early hadith critics would generally accept a report if transmitted by a person whose integrity and memory are not seriously questioned (Muslim, 1998) and not often contradicted by other reliable transmitters.

Though Schacht's studies concentrated on hadiths dealing with legal issues (*fiqh*) he generalised his conclusions and believed that his method was applicable to fields of hadith at large. In his 'A Revaluation of Islamic Traditions', Schacht said: "I elaborated my method while studying the origins of Muhammadan Jurisprudence. Law is a particularly good subject on which to develop and test a method which claims to provide objective criteria for a critical approach to Islamic traditions" (Schacht, 1949, pp. 144,148).

Schacht's reading of Islamic disciplines was prejudiced, and he reached poorly and unsubstantiated general conclusions. He admitted that the problem of a common link was observed by Muslim hadith critics but accused them of not understanding its implications. For example, al-Tirmidhī (d. 279), many a time, indicates the problem of common links in the *isnāds* in the concluding chapters of his collection of traditions (Schacht, 1979, p. 172). Here, Schacht is referring to cases wherein al-Tirmidhī comments at the end of some hadiths: '*hadith (fulān) gharīb ...*' and according to Schacht, the traditions of this kind form a great part of his collection. One wonders, however, that al-Tirmidhī uses the term himself but could not understand its implications!

Early Muslim hadith critics did acknowledge that the common link transmitter was the root cause of some fictitious hadiths that were spuriously circulated, but they also noted that disingenuous transmitters were the ones who were responsible for their existence. Hadith critics warned against dishonest transmitters. Ibn Ḥibbān (d. 354), for example, mentioned the transmitter Artāt b. al-Ash'ath al-'Adawi, saying:

“*shaykhun yarwī ‘an Sulaymān al-A‘mash al-manākīr al-lati lā yutāba ‘alayha, lā yajūz al-ihtijāj bī khabarih bī ḥālin*” (He narrates from al-A‘mash unknown and uncorroborated hadiths. No one is allowed at all to use his narrations as a proof for anything (Ibn Ḥibbān, 1402, 1: 180)).

In response to the behaviour of these disingenuous transmitters, the science of *al-Jarḥ wa al-Ta‘dīl* (lit. criticism and commendation about transmitters) came into existence. Thus, ‘the Sunni hadith criticism was founded on a commitment to sifting reliable from unreliable hadiths based on criteria that examine both the source and of a report and its content’ (Brown, 2010, p. 199). The names of disingenuous transmitters are noted in the biographical dictionaries. Critics were able to identify spurious hadiths involving dishonest common links with the result that sound hadiths were finally distinguished from those deemed unsound (Cf. Alhomoudi, 2006, p. 2).



Juynboll and the Common Link Theory

Schacht's theory of Common Link was further elaborated, developed, and even criticized by scholars such as Gautiar Hendrik Albert Juynboll, Norman Calder (d. 1998), Michael Allan Cook, Andreas Görke, Harald Motzki, and others. Juynboll (1935-2010), born in Leiden, Netherlands, was a prominent Orientalist and contributed tremendously to the field of Islamic Orientalism. He is regarded as the strongest proponent of the Schachtian school of scepticism not only on the Common Link Theory but many other theories as well. He took Schacht's theory of common links in hadith in its entirety and refined it further. Even though he differs from Schacht in some significant points, Juynboll has given the Schachtian theory of Common Link a new perspective. He contributed substantially to the western academic studies of hadith. Like Schacht, Juynboll relied on the isnād, and his contributions have been defined by his efforts to develop isnād based methods for dating hadith. He elaborated much of Schacht's methods of dating hadith, adding his own technical jargon to his studies on hadith. Using Schacht's many theories, he investigated and elucidated a wide range of topics related to hadith (Brown, 2008). He developed what might be called an idiosyncratic method of uncovering the originator of a hadith – the person responsible for attributing a statement to the source, that is, the Prophet in the case of a hadith *marfū*'. In this regard, he introduced many new technical terms that are directly linked to the new methods of isnād analysis with which he has been occupied in his academic career. These terms include: 'isnad bundle', 'spider', 'dive', 'knot' etc.⁵⁴ Juynboll can be described as a true heir of Schacht's legacy, and most of his writings represent the Schachtian school of scepticism. Like Schacht, Juynboll (1983) argued that the hadiths and the *qiṣaṣ* or stories were transmitted within the early Muslim community in a haphazard fashion, if at all, and mostly anonymously. When *isnāds* became widely used, and the situation required the *isnād* then names of well-known historical personalities and fictitious people were chosen to fill the gaps in the *isnād* (Juynboll, 1983, p. 5).

In dating a given hadith, Juynboll addressed three key questions:

1. Where did a certain hadith originate?
2. In what time did certain hadith originate?

⁵⁴ For more details on his new technical terms, see his 'Some Notes on Islam's First *Fuqahā*', pp. 292 in his Collected Studies Series on Studied on the Origins and Uses of Islamic Hadith.

3. Who may be held responsible for bringing a certain hadith into circulation?

Juynboll first identifies a common link of any given hadith to answer the above questions (Juynboll (1983). Building on Schacht's Common Link theory, Juynboll asserts that the more people transmit a hadith from a scholar, the more historicity that moment has. In other words, the more people narrated a hadith from a transmitter, the more attestation there is that the hadith actually existed at the time (Juynboll, 1992, p. 352). Juynboll observed that when various strands of isnād from the Prophet to collectors are superimposed upon one another, their lower half⁵⁵ become one single strand of names and the upper halves of the strands fan out in a number of different directions (Juynboll 1993, p. 209). According to Juynboll, the only historically verifiable moment in the transmission of a hadith occurs with a common link (Juynboll, 1993, pp. 210-211).

The phenomena of hadith transmission of a hadith, with single or multiple chains of transmission, is indeed found very often in hadith literature. In their classification of hadith, traditional Muslim scholars discussed this phenomenon of hadith from the viewpoint of how many transmitters were found in each generation (*ṭabaqāh*) from the time the hadith was received from its first source to the collector. When discussing *khbar wahid*, (or solitary hadith – the hadith that has not reached the level of *tawātur*, that is massively transmitted), the classical scholars of hadith divided the *khbar wāhid* into three categories. First, *Mashhūr*, if at least three transmitters are the minimum transmitters in any of its generations or *ṭabaqāt*. Second, *ʿAzīz* if the minimum transmitters are two at least in any of its *ṭabaqāt*. Third, *Gharīb* if there is one single transmitter in any of the generations or *ṭabaqāt* (Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ, 2006).

According to Juynboll, however, this phenomenon poses lots of questions, the most important of which is 'how is it possible that the Prophet selected only one Companion to deliver his message to, and in turn this Companion also selected only one person – Successor who in turn also selected only one person – a young Successor or a member of the generation following that of the Successors who likewise has only one pupil?' (Juynboll, 1993, pp. 209, 210). Therefore, according to Juynboll, it is inconceivable that a real hadith could be transmitted by only one isnād from the Prophet.

⁵⁵ This is when the diagram is structured in such a way that collectors are placed right on top of the page and the Prophet at the bottom. Most Muslim scholars turn the table putting the name of the Prophet in the diagram right on top and all names at the bottom.

It appears that Juynboll had not understood how the hadiths of the Prophet were said and transmitted. The hadiths of the Prophet are a very wide range of aspects of life covering from the belief to acts of worship and daily routine of one's life. As we explained earlier that though many a time the Prophet would lecture his hadiths to a large gathering of his Companions, however, it was not always the case that he would deliver his hadiths in such large gatherings, sometimes he addressed a large gathering, and sometimes he addressed individuals according to the content of that particular hadith and the situation. In addition, there wasn't always a need that all Companions should transmit any given hadith to others, for others either knew it or simply the situation that demanded a solution in hadith did not arise. And perhaps a need arose only in relation to one Companion, and he thus transmitted a hadith. The same can be said for the succeeding generation of Successors. From Juynboll's puzzling questions, if someone informs us about Juynboll's theories or hobbies, one should then take it as false information even before verifying it. Only if such information is told by a large number of people, then only the information about Juynboll would be accepted.

Juynboll took this argument strongly in most of his writings. In his article on *Islam's first fuqahā'* he argued that "the entire corpus of canonical traditions whose *isnād*-s are headed by Anas, only two traditions could possibly be ascribed to Anas himself, the many hundreds of others being in all probability due to transmitters in c[ommon] l[ink] positions from the generation *following that*⁵⁶ of Anas (Juynboll, 1992, p. 295). Juynboll's extreme generalization of both his theories and conclusions is illogical. Here, even though he used the name of Anas in his theory, he generalised its application to all Companions when he said: "What is stated here about Anas' tradition corpus was found to apply to that of all other Companions, without exception (Juynboll, 1992, pp. 295, 296). What could presumably seem to have coincidentally happened in many cases that only one Companion was present when the Prophet addressed an issue, Juynboll found it difficult to accept. He stated:

"Coincidences, especially the accumulation of a large number of coincidences, do not, if anything, produce workable historical data. Therefore, the ascription of a tradition to the Prophet via an *isnād* consisting of one single person, who transmitted it to one other single person, who passed it on to yet another person, who related it in his turn to yet another single person, is, to say the least, historically fragile. One *isnād* that

⁵⁶ Italic his.

wants us to believe that the Prophet conveyed a particular saying one day to *one* of his numerous Companions who, in his turn, chose to pass it on later to only *one* of his younger contemporaries who, in his turn, chose to relate it later on to only *one* younger contemporary, after which it was finally passed on to someone who, in his turn, told a *number* of other people – one such a strand is difficult to swallow” (Juynboll, 1992, pp. 296, 297).

Perhaps Juynboll perceived that the transmission of hadith took place in a classroom setting only. It seems almost impossible to Juynboll that Companions – and later generations – would sometimes relate hadiths according to the prevailing situation. Yet even our modern-day news agencies do not always require a group of reporters to broadcast news information. In addition, they only report what they consider to be important and relevant.

Juynboll asserts that the explanation of the phenomenon of hadiths transmitted in a single strand of isnād should not be in the sheer unfathomable coincidence of one man telling one man. Instead, he suggests that the explanation should be sought in the chronology of the birth of the isnād as a compulsory authentication of device, which in his view, was in the third quarter of the first century during the second *fitnah* (between 63-73 H) set in motion by ‘Abd Allah b. al-Zubayr (Juynboll, 1993, p. 210). This, however, does not explain why the common links are usually found in later generations, i.e., fourth and fifth generations. If the isnād came into force during this period, and if this was the cause of the common link phenomenon, then a high incidence of common links should be found among the Successors. The Successors flourished in the last quarter of the first Islamic century and the first twenty years of the second century (Motzki, 2010, p. 51).

After placing the names in the isnād into what he calls ‘isnad bundles’, his basic interpretation of that isnād bundle is that the more persons there are who transmit something to someone, the more easily he can lend credence to that point of transmission as possibly being historical (Juynboll, 1993, p. 211). In other words, when the hadith is sourced in hadith collections and it is attested that the *ṭuruq* of that hadith appears to run from a common link through various accompanying partial common links that transmission has a far greater claim to being considered historical (Juynboll, 1993, p. 211). He, therefore, considers the common link as the author and fabricator of the *matn* and the single isnād of alleged transmitters from him back to the Prophet (Juynboll, 1991, p. 155 and 172). Thus, Juynboll established the historicity of any given hadith by a common link, which in many cases appears in the fourth and fifth

generation of hadith transmission. He, therefore, only accepts traditions that are transmitted via several intertwined isnāds.

The outline of the isnād would be as follows:

Muhammad > One Companion > one Successor > one Successor > one later authority > the key transmitter > several pupils >> to various collections.

The key figure here is the common link who, according to Juynboll, forged the text and the name of the Companion, the Successor, the other Successor, and the later authority.

One wonders, though, how the fabrication of names from common links to the Companions took place. If the common link is the one who invented the names from him to the Prophet, then one must certainly, ask: ‘how many common links are there to have invented names of all Companions and Successors and all people who transmitted hadiths before the common links’ generations? This is the highest form of absurdity. His main argument, as alluded to before, is that people did not mention names when relating hadith prior to the civil strife of the conflict between Ibn al-Zubayr and Umayyads. This is the *e silensio argument* Schacht used. Despite the illogical nature and criticism against this type of argument, one is taken by surprise that Juynboll denied the existence of certain individuals belonging to the first century.

The isnād strands that bypass the identified common links but support the same text in its wording and ascribed to the same Companion, Juynboll called it a ‘dive’. According to Muslim hadith scholars, this is the phenomenon of *mutāba‘ah*, which literary means following or supporting. Juynboll assumes that all cases of ‘diving isnāds found in hadith collections were forged by authors of later collections in order to appear to have unique or shorter links to the Prophet for that particular hadith (Brown, 2008, p. 393). Juynboll depicted the early Muslim communities to be so dishonest to the extent that he wants us to believe that anything that early transmitters transmitted with the name of earlier authorities is nothing but forgeries. Though fabrication did occur, and though *tadlīls* (obfuscation of transmitters) allowed disingenuous forgers to attribute a hadith to earlier scholars by falsely inserting their names in the isnāds, it did not occur as wholesale as Juynboll wants us to believe. The efforts of critics of hadith are completely thrown out of the window just because, in a few cases, people forged hadith. Juynboll’s judgement on his so-called ‘diving isnads’ led him to dismiss the whole concept of corroborating transmission (*mutāba‘ah*) understood by Muslim hadith scholars. Because these chains of transmission appear independently and lack any common

link, they cannot be verified in his view and should, therefore, be assumed to have been fabricated.

Though a hadith is sometimes acquired in the way accepted by Juynboll, restricting ways of accepting traditions to that way is not congruent with how we conventionally acquire knowledge on a daily basis. In a nutshell, if we were to follow his conclusions, this would lead us to reject even his own theories and writings since they have not reached us through various sources. I, however, don't think that this is the conclusion he would like to see for his own theories. To explain the single strand is much like attending a lecture delivered by a notable speaker. Not everyone in the lecture hall tends to transmit to others all that he heard in the lecture unless there is a reason to do so. In fact, not all learners in a class turn out to be lecturers. However, Juynboll, like Schacht, is not inclined to ascribe any hadith to the Prophet merely because it is found in the canonical collections (Kamaruddin, 2005, p. 125). Due to his extreme scepticism, his operating assumption is that one should assume that all reports attributed to the Prophet are forged unless otherwise transmitted in isnād bundles.

Applying Schacht's theories, he denied the existence of many well-known figures and hadith transmitters like Nāfi', the freed slave of Ibn 'Umar (Juynboll, 1993). And on a thorough inspection and scrutiny of Juynboll's argument to substantiate his conclusions, one finds him with so many contradictions, to say the least, even in his formulated adages. For example, he assures us that "once the key figures of the bundle, the c[ommon] l[ink] and the p[atrial] c[ommon] l[ink]s are traced in the biographical lexicons, then answers can be found as to the remaining questions of when, where and under what circumstance the (various versions of that) *matn* originated". If this was really a genuine assurance that if one follows the outcome found in the biographical lexicons, why did he then come to the conclusion that Mālik created the fictitious person known as Nāfi', the freed slave of Ibn 'Umar? When the common links are checked in the biographical dictionaries, one is taken by surprise to find that common links had different teachers and pupils besides the ones provided in a particular hadith. In the case of Nāfi' al-Mizzī, in his *Tahdhīb al-Kamāl* – a book which is often ignored by Juynboll

– gives us about 28 teachers of Nāfi‘. Nāfi‘’s narrations from them appear in most of the six canonical collections.⁵⁷

Out of the 28 teachers provided by al-Mizzi; 9 teachers’ narrations by Nāfi‘ appear in Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī. Of the 9 teachers that appear in Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī, one of his teachers, ‘Ubayd Allah b. Abd Allah b. ‘Umar appears in Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī only, and the rest also appear in other five canonical collections.

12 teachers’ narrations by Nāfi‘ appear in Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim. From the 12, one teacher ‘Abd Allah b. Muhammad b. Abi Bakr al-Ṣiddīq appears only in Muslim, and the rest also appear in the rest of the five canonical collections.

8 teachers’ narrations by Nāfi‘ appear in the Sunan of Abū Dāwūd. From the 8, one teacher Masrūr – who was reported to have been appointed by ‘Umar as a caller for prayer – appears only in the Sunan of Abū Dāwūd, but the rest also appear in other five canonical collections.

6 teachers’ narrations by Nāfi‘ appear in the Sunan of al-Trimidhī. From the 6, al-Mughīrah b. Ḥakim al-Ṣan‘anī appears only in the Sunan of al-Tirmidhī, but the rest appear in the rest of the five canonical collections as well.

14 teachers’ narrations by Nāfi‘ appear in the Sunan of al-Nasā‘ī. From the 14, three appear in the Sunan of al-Nasā‘ī, but the rest appear in all other five canonical collections as well.

9 teachers’ narrations by Nāfi‘ appear in Sunan of Ibn Mājah. From the 9 one appears in the Sunan of Ibn Mājah only, but the rest appear in all other five canonical collections. Even if one has to assume that all Nāfi‘’s teachers form part of deeper diving *isnāds*, one would have then to ignore all other 138 pupils who have transmitted from Nāfi‘. Al-Mizzī listed about 138 pupils of Nāfi‘, and most of them appear in six canonical collections. According to al-Mizzī, Maymūn b. Mihrān al-Jazarī – one of the 138 individuals who transmitted from Nāfi‘ – was Nāfi‘’s own peer.

One then wonders if all 128 transmitters – besides those not mentioned by al-Mizzī – assisted Mālik in creating the personality of Nāfi‘ or were they influenced by Mālik in this regard, including Nāfi‘’s own peers. This level of scepticism is absurd.

⁵⁷ This is only if we restrict ourselves to the list provided by al-Mizzī in his *Tahdhīb al-Kamāl*. If one goes beyond this work, one will most certainly find more teachers of Nāfi‘ than one expected in the present study.

Some scholars levelled criticisms against Juynboll's theories, methods, and conclusions of his studies on hadiths. In his review of Juynboll's *Encyclopaedia of Canonical Hadith*, Jonathan Brown summarised those objections and concluded that they are centred on three main points: (1) the assumptions that he takes to be indisputable are not quite accurate, therefore, questionable; (2) the limited number of sources from which he draws his hadith evidence, and; (3) the fact that his arguments ask the reader to make leaps of faith far greater than those asked by the Muslim scholars Juynboll criticised (Brown, 2008, pp. 393, 394).

Perhaps the most problematic aspect of Juynboll's method is his extreme scepticism towards Muslim hadith tradition to such an extent that the reader is asked to believe in the existence of a web of lies, forgeries and conspiracy so elaborate that it is easier to believe that – from time to time – the Prophet might have said some of the hadiths attributed to him. For Juynboll, anything other than the well-attested isnads emanating from a Common Link is assumed to be a forged chain of transmission (Brown, 2008, p. 394). This includes all corroborating transmissions.

It is, indeed, unreasonable to assume that many hadiths attributed to the Prophet Muhammad were all fabrications. While one can certainly question the trustworthiness of some individual Muslim hadith transmitters, it is unreasonable to entertain that the volumes of pages filled with hadiths of the Prophet could all have been stuffed by Muslim hadith scholars living in a continentally separated and intentionally diverse community of pre-Modern Muslim world (Brown, 2008, p. 395).

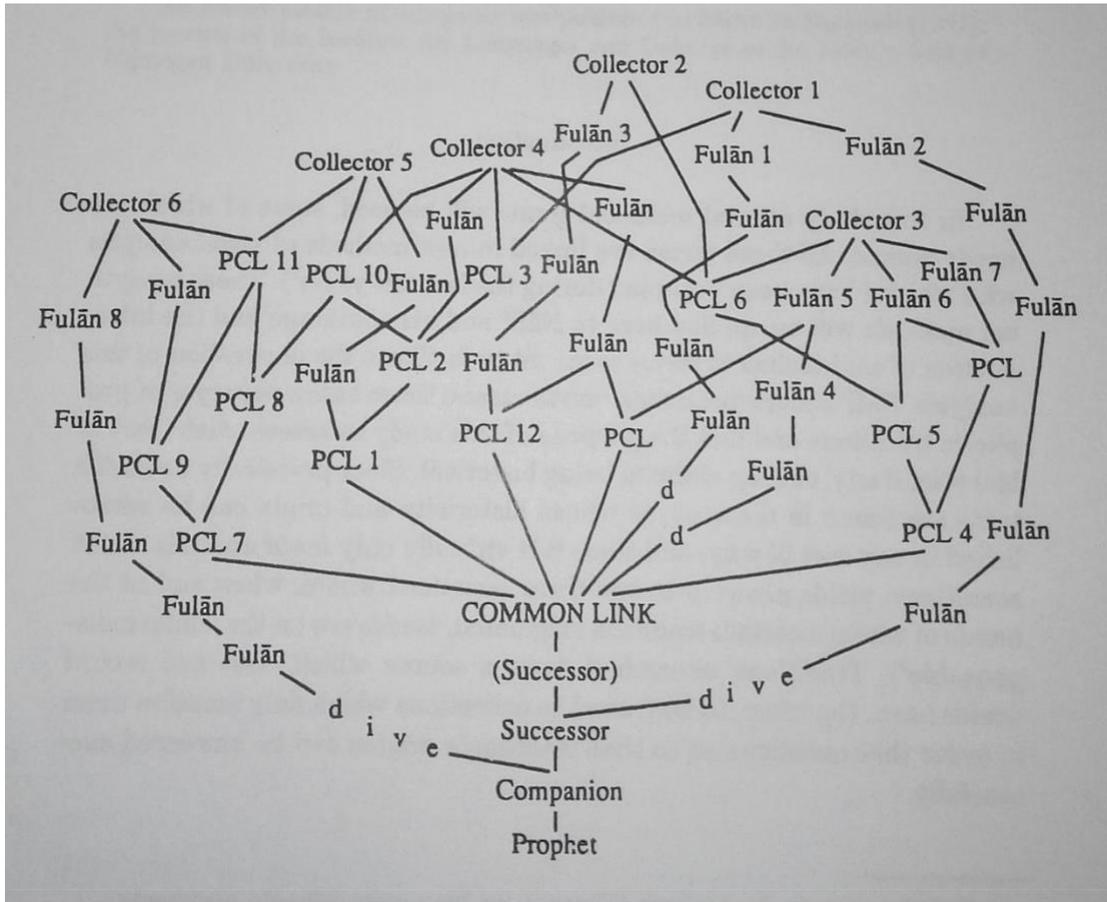


Figure 3. Juynboll's Common Link Theory



Michael Allan Cook and the Common Link Theory

Joseph Schacht's ideas and theories related to the Common Link Theory, expounded later by the findings and development of G. H. A. Juynboll, were not accepted by all Western scholars of Islam. Many scholars have re-evaluated the standing assumptions of the overall authenticity of Schacht's theory on common links in hadith. Schacht's Common Link Theory, among other theories, has drawn the attention of scholars of the second half of the past century. Among the scholars who critiqued and challenged Schacht's theory of Common Link and its implications is the British scholar of Islamic history, Michael Allan Cook, born in 1940. Cook's main interest lies in Islamic Theology. Like many other Revisionists, Cook is sceptical about the value of the Common Link Theory and the historical information it may convey and, hence, does not accept that the common link could even be the one responsible for bringing a particular hadith into existence. He argues that even a key concession they had made – that a Common link was a historically reliable moment in transmission – was wrong' (Brown, 2006, p. 223). Cook brought new arguments and explanations for the proliferation of *isnāds*, of which even the common link is also fabricated. In his *Early Muslim Dogma*, Cook criticized the phenomenon of the common link by showing how, based on his analysis, hadith transmitters multiply *isnāds* (Cook, 1981, pp. 107 – 116).

According to Cook, as pointed out by Kamaruddin (2005), the proliferation of *isnāds* might have occurred in various ways:

1. Firstly, by omitting a contemporary transmitter.
2. Secondly, a common link may also appear by ascribing the saying to a different teacher.
3. Thirdly, by obviating the "isolated" hadith. "Because a well-attested hadith carries more weight, there would be a strong motivation to discover other *isnāds* (Kamaruddin, 2005, pp.121-123).

These methods of creating *isnāds*, according to Cook (1981), yield the appearance of a common link. Yet it is the result of forgery. The appearance of a common link, therefore, cannot provide a fixed historical point of hadith transmission. Thus, he doubts not only the transmission of single strands but also those with common links (Kamaruddin, 2005, p. 123). For Cook, a common link in the *isnād* is not always the one responsible for forging a hadith. Transmitters below the common link can also create a common link to substantiate their forged tradition. He saw the role that *tadlīs* played in creating a common link since, in traditional Islam, originality was not as important as authority. "In a traditional culture," Cook

explains, “the relevant value is not originality but authority: sharp practice consists in falsely *ascribing* my view to a greater authority than myself” (Cook, 1981, p. 107 - 108). Cook explained how *tadlīs* occurred by way of illustration. To understand his theory of *tadlīs*, assume a narrator called (C₁) heard a hadith from his peer, let us call him (C₂). (C₂) heard the hadith from his teacher; let us call him (B₂). Now (C₁) does not want to transmit that particular hadith from his teacher (C₂) who in this case is also his peer. (C₁), therefore, finds another authority from an earlier generation that is the same generation of (B₂) let us call him (B₁). (C₁), thus, attributes the hadith to (B₁) who is (B₂)’s peer (Cook, 1981, p. 110).

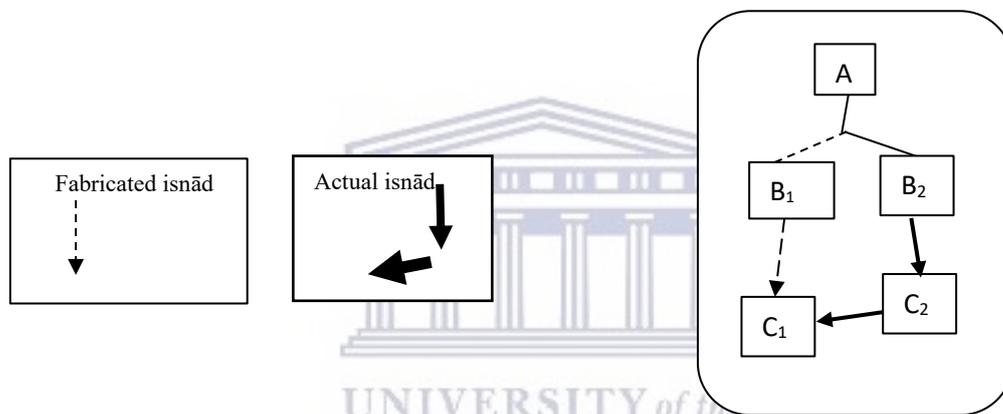


Figure 4. Cook's Theory of Common Link and Growth of isnāds

(Dotted lines indicate the fabricated *isnād*, and the thick lines indicate the actual *isnād*)

This process, according to Cook, explains the fraudulent spread of *isnāds*. Cook, however, confesses that he is not sure whether the spread of *isnād* was a process operative on a historically significant scale or just an ingenious idea of Schacht's. He admits that ‘the evidence does not lend itself to a conclusive answer to the question; and many of Schacht's own examples of the spread of *isnāds* are proof only to the concerted’ (Cook, 1981, p. 111).

In his ‘*The reliability of the traditional Science of ḥadīth*’, Amin Kamaruddin (2005) disagrees with Cook's generalization of the process of creating authorities. He states:

The process of creating authority, as described by Cook, may have occurred to a certain degree, but to imagine that it was the common feature of hadith transmission is historically untenable for at least two reasons:

- (1) Cook's description is more imaginary than based on historical facts. He does not provide his description with enough historical evidence.
- (2) It is not difficult to find in hadith literature a hadith, which has independently been transmitted by some transmitters of different regions (Juynboll terms them partial common links (pcl), who ascribe their respective transmission to a given transmitter (according to Schacht's term the common link (cl)). In such a case, though according to Juynboll's later theory, are very rare, the historicity of the transmission of the common link is difficult to deny" (Kamaruddin, 2005, p. 123).

While admitting that the theory advanced by Cook may have occurred, Juynboll reluctantly accepts it to have been practiced by transmitters. Applying *e silentio* argument, he argued that 'to picture this as having practiced simultaneously by sizable numbers of contemporary transmitters without it having left telling testimonies in the *rijāl* sources stretches our credulity to breaking point (Juynboll, 1983, pp. 354-355).

In his *Eschatology and the Dating of Traditions*, Cook puts to test Schacht's method by selecting a field in which, according to Cook, traditions can be dated on external grounds. Cook, praising his method, says that "[t]he great merit of the method in the abstract is that it can give us dating [of a tradition] independent of either the Muslim chain of authorities or the Orientalist reconstruction of the evolution of Muslim eschatology" (Cook, 1992, p. 26). Cook argued that eschatological traditions emerged later than the common link (Cook, 1992, pp. 23-47). On the three traditions he selected in an attempt to test the validity of Schacht's method, Cook asserts that 'the results are less encouraging' (Cook, 1992, p. 33). "Finally," concludes Cook, "the common link method does not perform well" (*ibid*; cf. Brown, 2010, p. 224).

Norman Calder and the Concept of the Common Links

Another scholar who treated common links in *isnāds* differently to Schacht's theory of common links is Norman Calder, a British scholar of history whose interest was vested in Islamic Jurisprudence. Calder's understanding of the concept of common links and their appearance in the *isnād* was different from that of Schacht and Juynboll. In fact, he criticized Schacht's theory and the relative information it may convey (Kamaruddin, 2005, p. 123). He denied that the common link has any relevance for dating traditions or the *matn* (Calder, 1993, p. 237) and offered a completely different explanation for the occurrence of common links in the *isnāds*. Contrary to Schacht and Juynboll, the hadith, which has a common link in its *isnād*, that hadith was not a result of fabrication by the common link (Kamaruddin, 2005, p. 123). Calder observed that the theory of Common Link has variously argued that this phenomenon either might, or can, or must be interpreted as meaning that B [the common link] invented the hadith in question. He, however, disagrees with this interpretation. From the outset, Calder admits that the system of analyzing *isnads* is a tedious business but, at the same time, it offers an added importance for academics' workings on the early history of Islam in view of the continuing lingering respect for the Common-Link Theory (Calder, 1993, p. 236). According to Calder, the common links were the results of competition among the groups of legal scholars of the third century (Calder, 1993). His explanation of the competition he refers to is that when a hadith (i.e., *matn* – text) came into existence, which was accepted by several different groups within Islam, each group embraced that particular hadith (*matn*) with an *isnād* reflecting their scholarly perspective. Hence, they engage the particular hadith from the viewpoint of *isnād* criticism. One group is trying to weaken the *isnād* of the other while other groups are trying to repair its *isnād*. For example, in his depiction of the competition in the diagram below, he asserts that one group believes the law to be such and such based on the hadith that was transmitted with *isnād* running through The Prophet – [pass on to] A – [pass on to] B – [pass on to] C – [pass on to] D. Yet another group believes the law not to be such but because they share a common respect for the generation of the Companions and the Successors, they do not criticize the actual hadith. Therefore, this group points out the fault in the C transmitter. On the other hand, another group seeing that the link B-C is identified as weak by others, they strengthen that weakness by discovering other supportive links, say B-J. Since nearly all groups recognized the common heroes, all their *isnāds* tend to converge at the level of Successor [B in the diagram] (Calder, 1993, pp. 236-237). This mutual process of *isnād* criticism tends to focus on ousting a hadith by destroying the third and fourth link”

because the isnād criticism focuses on weak links, which are characteristically the third or the fourth link in an isnād (Calder, 1993, pp. 236 – 237).

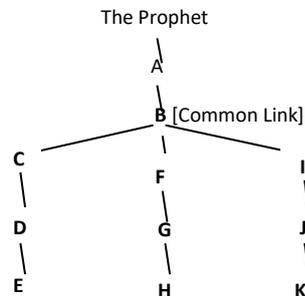


Figure 5. Calder's Common Link (Calder, 1993)

Calder, however, does not provide us with details of how and when this particular hadith came into existence. Seeing that, according to Calder, all groups focus on the weak links, which are often in the third or fourth link in an isnād, one wonders whether the hadith is a genuine statement of the Prophet or the authority to whom it is ascribed. Calder, however, insists that this competition is true even when the hadith emerged and acquired *isnāds* in the third and fourth centuries (Calder, 1993).

Calder's interpretation of the common links in the isnād does not fit well with the historical development of both hadith and Islamic Jurisprudence. On the contrary, it poses serious questions. There are many hadiths with common links wherein there is no difference of opinions on its authenticity and sometimes the implementation of its legal content. In other words, not all figures mentioned in the isnād share the same view that is reflected in the text of hadith, nor do they automatically differ. Mālik transmitted the hadith of “*al-Mutabāyi‘ān kullu wāḥidⁱⁿ minhumā bi-l khiyār ‘alā ṣāḥibih mā lam yatafarraqā* (The buyer and the seller, both have rights of continuing or terminating the contract of sale as long as they did not depart from point of sale)” (*Muwaṭṭa’ Mālik*, hadith: 2473), yet Mālik does not opt for this view.

Calder demonstrated his explanation of a common link by analysing the hadith of *mass al-dhakar* (i.e., he who touches private part, his *wuḍū* is nullified) from al-Ṭaḥāwī's *Ma‘āni al-Āthār*. In his analysis, he identified ‘Urwah as a common link of this hadith. The presence of ‘Urwah in all these *isnāds*, however, does not prove that he invented or propagated this hadith.

‘Urwah is a common link because the link after him became a focus of the dispute that took place in the second half of the third century (Calder, 1993, p. 240). What Calder noticed in all the quoted hadiths in al-Ṭaḥāwī’s discussion on the legal ruling that wuḍū breaks when one touches his private part is that all accepted ‘Urwah as a permanent transmitter of this bundle of hadith. The advocates of this view tried different early authorities. The new *isnāds*, however, also developed weak links and some *isnāds* attempted to repair the weak link between ‘Urwāh and Busrah by substituting a more acceptable figure for Busrah (Calder, 1993, p. 240). Calder’s argument is not convincing at all. If the disputes were to establish whose view on that specific legal law should be accepted, why would one then develop weak links in the first place if one wanted to convince the opponent? Calder’s scenario to explain the phenomenon of common links in isnād, as Motzki asserts, are just theoretical models and claims, not proven facts (Motzki, 2003, p. 223).

Be that as it may, unlike Schacht, and Juynboll, Calder did not believe a common link transmitter in isnād to be responsible for fabricating the *matn*. Rather, the competition of the early jurists led to the phenomenon of the common link, which reflects nothing whatsoever about the origins of the *matn* of the hadith beyond the process of isnād criticism. The common link is the figure that became the focus of dispute in mutual *isnād* criticism and competition current amongst jurists and others in the second half of the third century. In that regard, one might conclude that, according to Calder (1993), the common link is a victim and not necessarily the one forging a hadith.

Andreas Görke and the Common Link Theory

Another hadith scholar who discussed common links is Andreas Görke. Like Michael Cook, Görke's area of concentration is also the hadiths dealing with eschatology. In his *Eschatology, history, and the Common Link: A study in Methodology*, Andreas Görke first opened his discussion with the question on the value of isnād in the authenticity of hadith – “Is the chain of transmitters (*isnād*), which forms an essential part of Islamic traditions, of any value in establishing the authenticity or provenance of a tradition?”. Görke admits that this question is highly controversial in the study of early Islam. While some scholars hold that the fabrication and falsification of *asānīd* make it impossible to use *asānīd* as a means to establish the time and place of origin of any given tradition, other scholars believe that the *asānīd* can be shown to indicate the true path of transmission (Görke, 2003, p. 179). He, therefore, aimed to discuss the methodological basis on which any study of *isnāds* should be grounded. He asserts that it is argued that forged *asānīd* can be detected in a careful study of the *asānīd* and variants in the *mutūn* of the traditions in question (Görke, 2003, p. 179).

Görke studied the hadith dealing with Eschatology using the common link to date hadith. He suggests that in order to use texts dealing with eschatology as a historical source, the time and place of its origin have to be established. In some cases, it can be done by studying the events a particular text alludes to. This kind of method of studying the text and related events is known as the *matn*-based method of dating tradition. In the case of Islamic traditions, Görke noted that isnād is another means of establishing the date of a tradition, and here, his primary concern was the common link. This means of dating, that is, looking and analyzing isnād, Görke calls it *isnād*-based dating method (Görke, 2003, p. 181). Görke used both *matn*-based and *isnād*-based methods to date hadith.

Before venturing into the core discussion, Görke discussed some general considerations that need to be borne in mind when one is studying early Islamic traditions. First, one must take into consideration that changes might have occurred in the tradition especially taking into consideration that early Islam can be characterized as a combination of oral and written transmissions. Second, a large number of variants of a tradition and a large number of sources where that tradition is recorded is needed to yield relevant results. Görke notes that a large number of sources does not necessarily mean that these traditions be recorded in different sources. He asks: “Does it make a difference if, say, thirty traditions are recorded in some

twenty different sources or if they are collected in a single source? For Görke, though it might be less obvious, it does make a difference for two reasons: On the one hand, the more independent sources we have, the more unlikely it will be that certain political motives, personal preference etc., will have an effect on the overall picture of the traditions. On the other hand, a single source might be more restricted in regional terms (Görke, 2003, p. 186).

Regarding the common links, this is particularly important when we use a single source with a regional focus on Iraq because we might wrongly consider an Iraqi partial common link to be the common link of the whole tradition just because the author failed to record many of the Syrian or Egyptian traditions. Even if he managed to record a Syrian and an Egyptian isnād, these single strands might be considered to be later *dives*⁵⁸ (Görke, 2003, p. 186).

On the concepts related to common links, Görke noted that there are at least three different concepts of what the common link represents in hadith literature:

1. It is either considered to be the collector who first systematically spread the hadith. In this case, the hadith in question is older than the common link
2. He is the inventor of the hadith in question, in this case, he provides it with an isnād reaching further down, possibly to the Prophet.
3. It can be considered to be the authority to whom a tradition is ascribed by a later figure and whose authority is large enough to make other persons also ascribe to him. In this case, the common link has nothing to do with the tradition whatsoever (Görke, 2003, p. 188).

Görke asserts that using either of the above concepts of the common link paves the way for interpreting the evidence in whatever direction one wants to interpret it (Görke, 2003, p. 188). The common link is, therefore, of no use at all in establishing the date of a tradition.

Görke's above assessment agrees, to a certain extent, with the general understanding of Traditional Muslim critics of hadith about common links. Without knowing the character of the common links, and all other individuals in the isnād, one cannot be certain whether the transmitted text is genuine or not. The common link could be a hadith transmitter who spends

⁵⁸ On the term 'dive' see Juynboll, 1993, "Nāfi", the *mawlā* of Ibn 'Umar, and His Position in Muslim Hadith Literature," *Der Islam* 70, p. 213.

most of his life transmitting the hadiths he has learnt throughout his life. As we have mentioned earlier in this paper, critics would sometimes identify a hadith with the names of transmitters. Hadith critics were aware that in Baṣrā, for example, so and so are the main hadith transmitters. The same goes for all other regions, as we have seen in al-Khaṭṭabī's statement and Ibn al-ʿArabī's⁵⁹ clarification of it. However, this does not mean that a common link is the one who invented it. On the other hand, it is also possible that the common link is the one who created the text, especially if he is one of the transmitters who is guilty of forging the hadith for whatever motives he would like to achieve and ascribe it to earlier authorities. Common links invented and fabricated hadiths and ascribed them to well-known figures of Muslim authorities. They also transmitted existing materials of hadith, whether reliable or not. However, this did not bypass hadith critics. Yaḥyā b. Maʿīn, for example, learnt the hadiths from a forged copy of Maʿmar, < Abān, < Anas knowing that the hadith contained in were all forged. When he was asked, he replied that he was committing it to memory so that a person should not transmit the same traditions and change names or redact its content, hence a layperson gets attracted without knowing (Ibn Ḥajar al-ʿAsqalānī, 1991, p. 101).

In a nutshell, the common links are neutral according to Traditional Muslim scholars. If he is trustworthy, then generally, his hadith is accepted. If his integrity is questionable or his memory is weak, then his hadith will be rejected unless supported by other evidence, as explained in the previous chapter.

However, according to Görke, the question of whether a tradition was invented or merely transmitted by a common link is more difficult to answer (Görke, 2003, p. 190).

Muslim hadith critics, on the other hand, devised methods that help to identify who is the fabricator in the hadith. The transmitters' integrity and accuracy, in addition to the phenomenon of corroboration in hadith, are all steps that need to be established first before accepting any report. Like all companies that produce machinery, the machines are accompanied with user manuals. If one decides to use his own instructions and discard the instructions provided by the producing company, he runs a risk of either damaging the machine or not getting the expected results from the machine. Here, most Orientalists failed

⁵⁹ See Ibn al-ʿArabī, *ʿĀridhah al-aḥwadhī*, vol. 1, p. 15 and *The Importance of knowing the madār al-isnād* above.

to follow the instructions of early hadith critics in dealing with the science of hadith in the name of reconstructing the history of early Islam. As a result, baseless conclusions are reached.

On deducing historical probability from the common link phenomenon, Görke made it clear that if we argue on that basis, we will not need the common link at all. He, therefore, suggests that we might escape the problem if we say that the common link is the person who is responsible for the tradition in the form we have it. The common link may have used earlier material, but he is the one who gave the tradition a certain form in which it was then transmitted (Görke, 2003, p. 189). Though this exertion holds some truth in it, generalizing this conclusion is, as noted by Motzki and other hadith scholars, a problem. Some hadiths were already known before the common link. On the hadith *al-Dīn al-Naṣīḥah*, as we will see below, Sufyān b. ‘Uyaynah certainly knew the hadith long before his enquiry from Suhayl b. Abī Ṣāliḥ, as we learn from his manner of enquiry. Ibn ‘Uyaynah’s skeptical enquiry from Suhayl about ‘Abd Allah b. ‘Dīnār’s version of transmission that Suhayl’s father transmitted the said hadith from Abū Hurayrah shows that ‘Abd Allah b. ‘Dīnār mistakenly transmitted the exact same hadith with other links of transmission.

Görke also argued in terms of the place of origin of the key figures in his study of the hadith of Maḥdī. He said: “All key figures in the isnād bundle (Asim, Zā’idah, Fitri b. Khalifah, ‘Ubayd Allah b. Mūsā, Abū Nu‘aym) are Kūfan (Görke, 2003, p. 207). Görke’s conclusion might be sound for the hadith he studied; however, it fails to draw our confidence as a method for other hadiths. The hadith “*al-Dīn al-Naṣīḥah*” shows that the students of Suhayl lived in different regions of Hijaz, Kūfah Baṣrah, and Shām. At the same time, Görke is right when he admits that “the existence of traditions in which the *asānīd* are not reliable does not mean that *asānīd* cannot be trusted at all. Some patterns, namely, those of consistent traditions, can only be explained by assuming that the transmission indeed took place along the paths indicated by *asānīd*” (Görke, 2003, p. 208).

David S. Powers and the Common Link Theory

The views and interpretations of Schacht and Revisionists on common links that occur in the *isnāds* have been contended emphatically by David S. Powers. Jonathan Brown describes Powers as “an early pioneer of what can be termed the ‘large-scale’ identification of Common Links, or the notion that when one collects *all* the available transmissions of a hadith, its Common Link is much earlier than those supposed by Schacht and Juynboll” (Brown, 2010, p. 225).

In an article about wills and bequests in early Islamic law, Powers challenged Patricia Crone’s and Michael Cook’s dismissal of a famous hadith in which the Prophet tells the Companion Sa’d b. Abī Waqqāṣ that he may only specify one-third of his wealth for his daughter.⁶⁰ He collected the *isnāds* of the fifteen reports cited by Speight (d. 2011)⁶¹ for the sake of addressing the issue of the temporal origins of this report, its geographical provenance, and the identity of its fabricator. Powers contends against the scepticism of Crone that if the attribution of the one-third restriction to the Prophet is, in fact, spurious, as Crone maintains, the isnād may provide some indication as to where, when, and by whom the report was fabricated (Powers, 1989, p. 193). On the said hadith, he offered two possible approaches:

First, the approach of the supporters of Schacht’s view. This approach would presumably argue that the hadith of one-third restriction either emerged out of a previous disagreement or was invented by an older Successor who took an interest in *fiqh*, and back-projected it to the Prophet (Powers, 1989, p. 193).

Powers dismissed this approach as it raised several objections. None of the sources, contends Powers, contain conclusive evidence to suggest that the one-third restriction initially circulated as a personal opinion of, say, a Successor rather than a statement of the Prophet (Powers, 1989, p. 195). Powers also asked the question of why would the alleged fabricator of this report, living at the end of the first century, choose Sa’d b. Abī Waqqāṣ who died around 55 A.H, to play the role of a man that appears to be on the point of death in the year 10 A.H? One is reminded that there are only two common links or key figures in this hadith, as can be seen in Powers’ diagram below: Sa’d b. Abī Waqqāṣ and his son, ‘Āmir b. Sa’d. All

⁶⁰ This hadith has been recorded in many hadith collections of Sunnī Islam. See for example, *Muwatta’ Mālik*, hadith: 2995, *Musnad al-Ḥumaydī* 66, *Sunan Sa’id b. Manṣūr*, hadith: 330, *Muṣannaḥ ‘Abd al-Razzāq*, hadiths: 16357 and 16359 few places in *Musnad Aḥmad*, hadiths: 1479, 1485, 1501, etc. *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, hadiths: 1295, 2742, *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, hadith: 1628 *Sunan Abī Dāwūd*, hadith: 2864, *Sunan al-Tirmidhī*, hadith: 2116.

⁶¹ Speight R M., 1973, *The Will of Sa’d b. Abī Waqqāṣ: The growth of a Tradition*, *Der Islam* 50, pp. 249-67, Berlin.

the *isnāds* converge at Sa‘d. In other words, the hadith was transmitted from Sa‘d to seven different persons. Powers, therefore, comments that it is:

[E]ither strange or a remarkable coincidence that half a dozen Successors, living in different cities of the Umayyad empire and presumably working independently of one another, adopted the same story to illustrate the origins of the one-third restriction, tracing it back to the Prophet by means of fabricated *isnāds*, all of which converge on one and the same Companion (Powers, 1989, p. 195).

Due to these objections, Powers believes that this approach to this particular report of one-third restriction is seriously flawed.

The other approach to the report is to accept that it was Sa‘d himself who first put the report into circulation. He asserts that viewing the hadith in this manner, the *isnād* would have spread in exactly the way that Islamic tradition tells us they did (Powers, 1989, p. 195). The second approach provides a simpler and more reasonable explanation of the information in the hadith schematically represented in the figure.

Power’s argument for dating this hadith at the very latest during the time of the Companions rested on an examination of all the extant transmission of the report – something that Crone neglected. Since all the *isnāds* converge at Sa‘d b. Abī Waqqāṣ, Sa‘d b. Abī Waqqāṣ is the common link for the hadith of one-third restriction. Powers, however, admitted that trying to authenticate an *isnād* and find a Common Link is delving into the ‘realm of conjecture and speculations’. At the same time, Powers argues that it seems very unlikely that the Sa‘d b. Abī Waqqāṣ’s tradition is forged. For a Muslim traditional hadith scholar, the task of authenticating is not everyone’s job. It is a skill built on the combination of studying the science of *rijāl* and constant exercise of its application (al-Ḥākim, 1986, p. 238; Ibn Rajab, 1987, vol. 2, p. 756).

Powers strongly argued that examining the *isnāds* and *matn* of the hadith suggests that it did, in fact, originate with Sa‘d b. Abī Waqqāṣ. Thus, the default assumption is that this hadith is authentic. He, therefore, concluded that Crone’s statement that Prophetic hadiths should be assumed to be inauthentic hardly inspires much confidence.

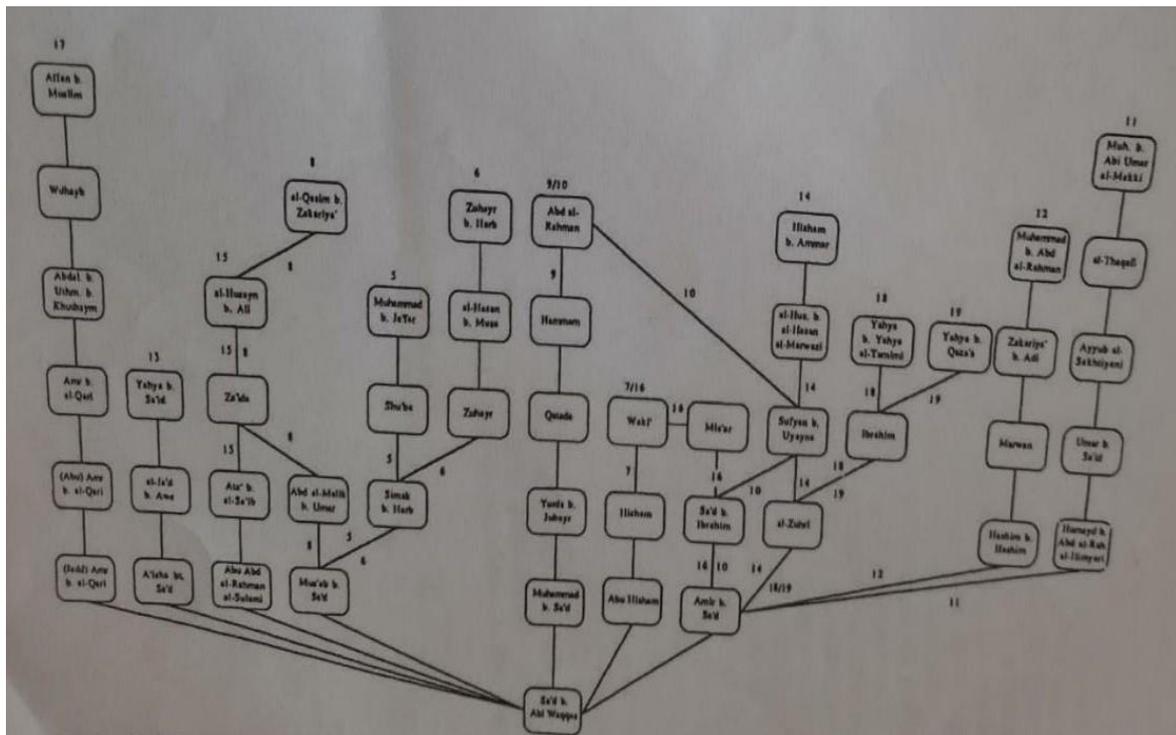
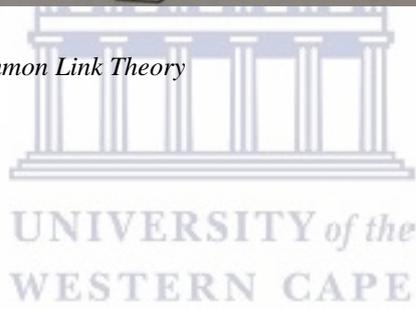


Figure 6. Powers' illustration on Common Link Theory



Harald Motzki and the Common Link Theory

Substantial criticism of Schacht's and Juynboll's assumptions and conclusions about the common link was not limited to radical skeptics like Cook and Calder. Apart from Muslim hadith scholars, Harald Motzki, the German scholar of hadith, is probably the most significant critic of Western theories about the development of hadith propounded by Goldziher and Schacht. Motzki's (d. 2019) ideas and methods of analysing traditions attract most scholars of hadith and the history of early Islam. Using early compilations, like *The Muṣannaf* of 'Abd al-Razzāq (211/ 826), as a primary source for dating hadith, Motzki argued against the tenability of some of Orientalists' and Revisionists' claims concerning the development of early Islamic Jurisprudence. Like Medieval Sunni scholars of hadith, Motzki's judgement on hadiths depends on collecting all the available narrations of the report from a diverse body of early sources and later ones such as the *Muṣannaf 'Abd al-Razzāq*, Bayhaqi's (458/1066) *Dalā'il al-Nubuwwah* (Brown, 2010, p. 228). He always reminded his fellow scholars that "it is a principle of scholarly research in general, and of historical in particular, that as much evidence should be examined as possible. Disregarding pieces of evidence raises the risk of unreliable conclusions or results" (Motzki, 2010, p. 289).

Motzki's method of dating hadith is the combination of *isnād* and *matn*, which he termed *isnād-cum-matn* analysis. Hence, the method makes use of both the text (*matn*) and the chain of transmitters (*isnad*). Basically, this analysis demands that one looks at the features found in the *isnād* and the *matn*. Motzki explained and used this method in most of his writings. In his '*The Murder of Ibn Abī Ḥuqayq*', for example, he explained that the aim of this method "is to trace the transmission of the history of a tradition by comparing their variants contained in different compilations available" (Motzki, 2000, p. 174). This method is also a perfect means of finding the common links in hadith transmission. In other words, if one wants to know whether the ascription of the *matn* to the source is authentic, one needs to collect all the names mentioned in the *isnād* before the common link to ascertain if all different transmitters and common links have the same basic *matn*. To do so one is required to analyse the elements of the different *matn* variants from all the chains of transmission that come from one common link. Thereafter, the conclusions about the common material from that common link should be compared to the *matn*

elements of other common links. According to Motzki, when a large number of related hadith is examined, the peculiarities within groups of those hadith seem to suggest that there is generally a close connection between *isnāds* and *matn*. This connection in turn, suggests that “the common link is the result of a real transmission process” (Motzki, 2001, p. 28).

Unlike Schacht (1979), Juynboll (1989) and other scholars who understood a common link transmitter as a fabricator and originator of a particular hadith, Motzki interprets the common links differently. His interpretation is that a common link is the first systematic collector of traditions, who recorded and transmitted them in regular classes of students, out of which an institutionalized system of learning developed. In some of his studies, he demonstrated that some common links are much earlier than previously thought by both Orientalists and Revisionists. Like David Powers, Motzki asserts that some of the common links are found at the level of the Companions in the second half of the first century of Islam. In his *Origins of Islamic Jurisprudence*, he discussed the hadith of Fāṭimah bint Qays’s divorce⁶² and concluded that Fāṭimah is, indeed, the common link in this preserved version of the hadith of the Prophet (Motzki, 2002, p. 165). Since Fāṭimah is a Companion of the Prophet, common links can be detected at the level of the generation of the Companions. He, therefore, argued that rather than common links being forgers of hadith, great hadith transmitters, such as al-Zuhrī and Ibn Jurayj, were, in general, reliably passing on reports from the previous generations (Motzki, 2002). With such a conclusion, he has undermined the views of skeptics, such as Juynboll, who believed that common links only occurred at the fourth or fifth level of generation. Motzki countered the argument of Juynboll that ‘if the Prophet really said the hadith why did he choose only one Companion and the Companion, in turn, chose one Successor’ by clarifying that there are plenty of reasons why a tradition should have been preserved for a while by transmission from one person to another, rather than from the many to the many. Just as

⁶² The hadith of Faṭimah bint Qays is recorded in many Sunnī hadith collections. It is recorded in Mālik, hadith: 1206; *Sunan Abī Dāwūd*, hadith: 2284; *Sunan Ibn Mājah*, hadith 2024; *Mustakhraj Abī ‘Awānah*, hadiths: 4588, 4602; *Mu‘jam al-kabīr*, hadith: 925; *Musnad al-Shāmiyyīn*, hadith: 3126; *Ṣaḥīḥ ibn Hibbān*, hadith: 925 and more.

only a small proportion of a teacher's pupils go on to become teachers themselves, so is hadith transmission. Not all those who hear a hadith turn out to be hadith transmitters (Motzki, 2010, p. 58). In addition, Motzki argued that if we only consider transmission from one person to a number of people historically reliable, then why do we have only a few transmitters from Partial Common Links? In fact, Juynboll's methodology becomes clearly unrealistic when applied generally to the transmission of actual written materials from their authors. Many works of the second and third century that are extant today, such as Mālik's *Muwaṭṭa'*, Shāfi'ī's *Kitāb al-Umm*, Ḥumayd's *Musnad*, Aḥmad's *Musnad*, are all transmitted by a single strand from their authors (Motzki, 2010, p. 60).

Motzki also contested the views of Cook and Calder views on the occurrence of the common link in *isnāds*. As said above, they perceive the common links in the *isnād* as a result of the spread of *isnād* that occurred due to competing jurists on a particular juristic view and ascribing one's view to an ideal authority, respectively. He argued that the illustration of Calder from materials of Ṭaḥāwī's *Ma'āni al-athār* is not convincing if one applies the same theory to other materials (Motzki, 1998, p. 37 note 64). He criticised Cook for limiting his test of dating traditions using *isnād* on Schacht's method only. Had he allowed for the possibility that the common link may be an early systematic collector, as Motzki has done, he would have achieved better results (Motzki, 2004, p. xli).

Motzki's view of the common links and the reason for their occurrences in the *isnād* differed from all other Western scholars of hadith. In many of his writings, he proposed that common links were "the first great collectors and professional teachers of knowledge in general, and traditions about persons living in the first century of Islam in particular" (Motzki, 2010, p. 51). Therefore, according to Motzki, "the common link should be viewed as a common source for, not originator of, the *matn*" (Berg, 2003, p. 28).

Does Motzki, therefore, believe that all *isnāds* and hadith with common links are reliable? Motzki was careful in answering questions such as this. However, he asserted that "great certainty about reliability of a common link can only be acquired by scrutinizing large bodies of the text which allegedly go back to his common link (Motzki, 2010, pp. 53-54). Motzki's method of establishing the authenticity of hadith or reconstructing early hadith transmission was ground-breaking from many perspectives. To the present, it has not met

with proper appreciation from Western hadith scholarship. In his general conclusions on the hadiths he studied, he agreed much with the views of medieval Muslim hadith critics. Brown (2010) considered him to be the first Western scholar to treat hadiths with the same respect as Muslim hadith masters did. His *isnād-cum-matn* method is appreciated as a method as far as establishing the authenticity of transmission of early hadith sources. Nonetheless, Motzki agrees that in early Islam, there was an ‘effort at forgery, in which a legal opinion was either falsely put in the mouth of a Companion of the Prophet (*main* forgery) or intended to be "supported" by a well-known contact person of this Companion (*isnād* forgery)’ (Motzki, 2002, p. 119).

Motzki, using his *isnād-cum-matn* method, succeeded in authenticating or reconstructing or dating hadith to an earlier period than what was assumed by the majority of Orientalists and Revisionists scholars. What was not yet tested through this method is to see if the method can guarantee positive outcomes to identify mistakes in a transmission or even discover forgeries in hadith.



Summary

Western scholars of Islam had different interests when studying Islam. However, the last half of the nineteenth century and the first half of the twentieth century has seen increasing interest in hadith and the history of the Islamic legal system. In learning Islam's genesis, western scholars adopted different theories to interpret sources that explain the early period of Islam. These theories range from the Historical-Critical Methods to the *isnad-cum-matn*. However, most discussions on hadith were not neutral since western scholar's starting assumptions were skeptical rather than neutral.

It was Ignas Goldziher who inspired many western scholars and shaped their worldview about hadith and early Muslim societies. Through his second volume of *Muhammadische studien*, Goldziher concentrated on hadiths there were closely related to political and sectarian agendas. Using *matn-criticism*, Goldziher concluded that some leading hadith scholars, like al-Zuhrī, fabricated some hadiths (Brown, 2010, 209).

Following Goldziher's skepticism towards hadith, Schacht studied hadith that had legal contents in Islamic jurisprudence. Unlike Goldziher, Schacht used *isnad* analysis in his studies. However, like Goldziher, he also concluded that hadith only became an independent subject for Muslims in the second century. Schacht, using theories such as the *e silentio* argument, argued that hadiths were later projected to earlier authorities such as Companions or the Prophet. To Schacht, the later the hadith in terms of its authority, the more genuine the hadith is. Schacht formulated the theory of the Common Link as the person responsible for the fabrication of hadith. Though Schacht invented this theory for legal hadith, he assured that the theory could be applied to other fields as well. Schacht's findings had a great impact on many western scholars of Islam. Some scholars, like Juynboll, accepted Schacht's theories, while others, including David S. Powers, Michael Cook, and Harald Motzki, questioned the validity of his theory. According to Schacht and Juynboll, common links can only be found in the fourth or fifth generation in the *isnad*. However, Powers proved that some Companions were common links in hadiths. He studied the hadith of Sa'd b. Abī waqqāṣ on bequest and concluded that Sa'd himself was a common link. Other scholars like Cook and Motzki suggested other explanations for common links in hadith. According to Cook, the proliferation of *isnads* after the common

link was a result of *tadlīs*⁶³. Cook further contended that early traditional scholars were more concerned about authority than originality. Therefore, rather than stating ideas as their own, they forged authorities who afterwards were identified as common links.

A devastating critique of Schacht's theory of the common link came from Harald Motzki. Through his studies on the origins of Islamic Jurisprudence, he established that most of the reports of earlier sources were historical. Unlike other western scholars of hadith, Motzki used both *isnad* and *matn* to establish the historicity of some hadiths he studied. Motzki pointed out errors in Schacht's findings claiming that Schacht used very few sources to reach his conclusions. Motzki admitted that using *isnad* and *matn*, the method that he called *isnad-cum-matn* – is indeed tedious and cumbersome. However, this is the only way for a researcher to reach sound conclusions. The major criticisms against Schacht's theory of the common link and his other related theories are that he used very little sources and he generalised his conclusions.

Though western scholars had a wide range of interpretations of common links in hadith, their interpretations were summarised by Andreas Görke in his *Eschatology*. Görke summed up the interpretations of Western scholars on common links in hadith in the following points. A common link transmitter is either:

1. the collector of hadith who first systematically spread the hadith, or;
2. he is the inventor of the hadith in question, or;
3. he is the authority to whom a tradition is ascribed by later figures and whose authority is large enough to make other persons also ascribe to him (Görke, 2003, p. 188).

In the case when a common link is believed to be the first systematic spreader of the hadith, the hadith in question is older than the common link. On the other hand, if he is believed to be the inventor of the hadith in which he appears, he provided the hadith with an *isnad* reaching further authorities, possibly to the Prophet. In the third interpretation of common links, he has nothing to do with the hadith whatsoever.

One cannot completely deny the plausibility of these concepts when analysing individual hadiths. As we mentioned earlier in this paper, Companions such as Anas b. Mālik, Ibn ʿAbbās, Abū Hurayrah, etc. and scholars such as Ibn Shihāb al-Zuhrī, Mālik were

⁶³ *Tadlīs* is when one mentions a higher authority skipping his own source.

genuinely transmitting the hadiths which they have learned from their teachers. To assume that they forged the traditions they transmitted is unlikely (Motzki, 2002).

However, it is the extreme generalisation of these concepts that made Muslim hadith critics vehemently reject these interpretations. It appears that except for a few Western scholars of Islam, the energy of most scholars in their interpretation of Islamic sources was directed at denying the authenticity of hadiths or, at best, dating the hadith to a later period than the period suggested by the available extant materials. Therefore, it is not surprising that most Western scholars' interpretations of common links allude to the transmitter who sits as a common link being either the fabricator himself or the hadith fabricated in his name.



Chapter Five: Traditional Muslims' Approach to Common Links in Hadith

Introduction

In the previous chapters, we have explored how hadith underwent different phases of development. With all the challenges in Muslim communities, Muslim hadith scholars managed to transmit the hadith. They took a comprehensive approach to protect hadith. The most effective methods of these approaches developed into what is known as *‘ilm al-‘ilal* (a science dealing with discovering hidden defects in hadiths). Muslim scholars of hadith were aware of common links in hadiths, and they were concerned about the effects it would have on the authenticity of a hadith. Many a time, the common links were looked at from the *‘illah* perspective, which calls for a deeper investigation into the authenticity of a hadith. However, not every common link determines the authenticity or inauthenticity of a hadith. The matter is much more complex than that. For this reason, the hadith critics looked at common links as well as looking at the surrounding circumstances of the transmitter before rejecting or accepting his hadith. What follows is a brief outlook of how early hadith critics treated the common links in hadiths. I will then take three examples of *tafarrudāt* in three major *tabaqāt* of the hadith transmitters. The aim is to show how hadith scholars looked at the common links in different generations and passed judgement on them.

Common Links in hadith

A hadith has two parts, *isnād* (i.e., names of authorities or transmitters) and *matn* (text of hadith). As we have seen in chapter three, hadith scholars investigated many issues before accepting any hadith. This investigation concentrated on the *isnād* and the *matn* and all matters related to it.

Muslim traditional scholars, when dealing with common links in hadiths dealt with it from a *madār al-isnād* and similar concepts like *tafarrud*, *ziyādāt* etc. perspective. Thus, in their approach to dealing with common links using *madār al-isnād* and *tafarrud*, they ask two pertinent questions to reach proper conclusions. These questions were:

- *Where did tafarrud (cl) occur?*
- *What form of tafarrud (cl) is it?*

In answering these questions, they were able to deal with common links with fair judgments regarding the transmitters and the materials that the common links transmitted. The first question helped to identify which period and the generation of the common link narrator. For *tafarrud* in different generations has different consequences for the authenticity of hadith.

The second question helps to identify the transmitter's scholarly value in hadith transmission. In the previous chapters, we have concluded that to establish the authenticity of any hadith, critics looked at the transmitter's character and his narrator status. The common link is not the sole criteria for hadith acceptance or rejection thereof. al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī, al-Nawawī, and al-Dhahabī, among others, established that once the integrity (*'adālah*) of a transmitter has been established, then the default rule is that his solitary transmission (*tafarrud*) is accepted unless external evidence suggests otherwise (al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī, 2013, p. 457; al-Nawawī, 2001, p. 152; al-Dhahabī, 1995, vol. 2, p. 85; cf. al-Dhahabī, 1412, p. 77).

This means, in the extreme case of lacking integrity and accuracy in transmission, the hadith is automatically rejected. We see this from critics rejecting the hadith of a specific transmitter, even though the same text is proven authentic through another isnād.⁶⁴ As we have indicated earlier, scholars associate texts of hadith with its transmitters and say this is the hadith of so and so, or the hadith of *fulān* is not authentic. Sunan al-Tirmidhī has ample examples of this phenomenon. In other words, that particular *isnād* or *matn* is identified with that specific individual (Abbott, 1967, p. 66).

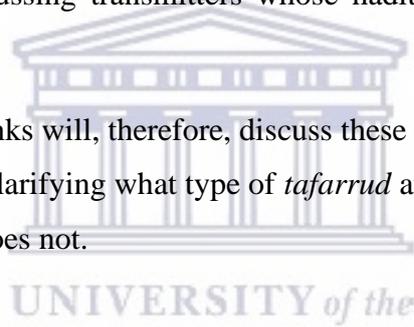
On the other hand, if the transmitter is reliable, then the default is that his transmission is accepted. However, critics do not hasten to conclude that the hadith is authentic until they thoroughly investigate the cause of his *tafarrud*. As mentioned earlier, *'adālah* and *ḍabt* are the most crucial qualitative qualifications of the transmitter in hadith. Once these two

⁶⁴ On the hadith of “*actions are judged by intentions...*” critics rejected all versions that do not go through Yahyā b. Sa’īd al-Anṣārī. See *‘Ilal Ibn Abī Ḥātim*, vol. 2, p. 264; *al-Dāwūdī*, 2011, *Manhaj al-Imām al-Dāraqūṭnī fī naqd al-hadith fī Kitāb al-‘Ilal*, vol. 1, p. 108.

qualifications are established, critics look for corroboration of his hadith from his contemporaries. Here comes the importance of the second question: *what form of tafarrud is it?* This question is extremely important when dealing with common links because, from the hadith scholars' perspectives, not all forms of *tafarrud* (or common links) are problematic. It appears that most Western scholars of hadith have missed these considerations and, therefore, erred in their conclusions on dating the hadith.

Here, it is also important to note that when a transmitter's *'adālah* and *ḍabt* are questionable, then scholars of hadith agree that his hadith is often rejected. He, therefore, belongs to the categories of weak hadith transmitters. Depending on his level of unreliability and weakness, when he is corroborated, scholars might use his hadith as auxiliary evidence for another hadith. Therefore, in this study, much attention is not given to transmitters who are rejected because of their integrity or *ḍabt*, rather, all effort is diverted completely to discussing transmitters whose hadiths are accepted or have a tolerable weakness.

Our study on the common links will, therefore, discuss these questions throughout different generations while clarifying what type of *tafarrud* affects the authenticity of hadith and which *tafarrud* does not.



Common Links throughout generations of hadith transmitters

To have a proper understanding of how hadith critics dealt with common links, one needs to know and understand the *ṭabaqah* in which a particular common link is found. From the hadith critics' perspective, neither all common links in hadiths are forgers, nor are all hadiths containing common links problematic. This is not to suggest that all hadiths transmitted by common links are to be accepted without scrutiny. Rather, Muslim hadith scholars had a comprehensive, though a complex way, of dealing with common links.

Scholars of hadith paid much attention to the science of *ṭabaqāt* or prosopography because it dealt directly with hadith transmitters. In arranging transmitters in their respective *ṭabaqāt*, scholars had different ways (Mujīr al-Khaṭīb, 2007, vol. 1, p.388). Arranging transmitters in their respective *ṭabaqāt* helps one to see and identify the common links in the isnād. Critics such as Yaḥyā b. Ma'īn, Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal, 'Alī b. al-Madīnī and the

young critic of the late third century al-Nasā'ī, had a keen interest in the field *ṭabaqāt*. Most, if not all, biographical dictionaries of hadith transmitters are arranged according to a specific order of *ṭabaqāt*. Of the early scholars, the following are some scholars who compiled *ṭabaqāt* genre:

Ibn al-Haytham al-Ṭā'ī (d. 230) compiled *Ṭabaqāt al-fuqahā' wa al-Muḥaddithīn*. Muhammad b. 'Umar al-Wāqidī (d. 207) compiled his *Ṭabaqāt*. Ibn Sa'd (d. 230) compiled his *al-Ṭabaqāt al-Kubrā*. Khalīfah b. Khayyāṭ al-Baṣrī (d. 240) compiled his *Ṭabaqāt*. Muslim b. al-Ḥajjāj (d. 261) compiled his *Ṭabaqāt* (al-Khaṭīb, 2007, vol. 1, p. 134).

Later scholars too compiled *ṭabaqāt* genre. Al-Dhahabī (d. 748), for example, arranged scholars' biographies in his books according to *ṭabaqāt*. The general classification of transmitters before the period of Canonical Books is a very broad one: the generations of Companions, Successors and Followers of the Successors. Besides the Companions' generation, it is difficult to state the exact period when a generation starts. It is even more difficult to say when generation ends. One could base the judgment on the death of the last person of the previous generation, say, a Companion, to mark the end of the generation of Companions. However, this will be the time that even some Successors have died already. For this reason, scholars also adopted different ways of classification of the scholars' *ṭabaqāt*. In some cases, transmitters might be in the same generation but have different hadith-narrator status. Some scholars consider a ten-year gap as a divider between two generations, whereas others go up to a hundred and twenty years as criteria from one generation to another. In his *Fath al-Bārī*, Ibn Ḥajar mentioned that the author of *al-Muḥkam* favoured the view that considers the gap between ten and seventy years as the right consideration. His justification for this view is that this is the general age a person lives (Ibn Ḥajar, 2004, vol. 7, p. 8).

Scholars generally look at the teachers and students of a scholar to fit him in a specific *ṭabaqah*. This necessitated that there be further sub-*ṭabaqāt* within those broader categories. It is not far-fetched to start seeing each author taking his own consideration for those sub-*ṭabaqāt* even if the transmitters belonged to one generation or region. For example, in classifying the Baṣrite scholars, Muslim (d. 261), Ibn Sa'd and Khalīfah b. Khayyāṭ (d. 240) differed in their arrangement and division. Ibn Sa'd divided them into

eight *ṭabaqāt*. Khalīfah b. Khayyāt divided them into twelve *ṭabaqāt*, Muslim divided the Successors of the Baṣrite into three *ṭabaqāt*, whereas al-Bukhāri classified them into twelve. Al-Dhahabī, in his *Tadhkirah al-ḥuffāz* categorized them into six *ṭabaqāt*, in his *Siyar a'lām al-nubalā'* into eleven *ṭabaqāt* and in his *al-Mu'īn* into seven *ṭabaqāt*. Ibn Ḥajar, in his *Taqrīb al-tahdhīb*, organized the *ṭabaqāt* of all hadith transmitters into twelve. He reserved the first *ṭabaqāt* for Companions. He divided Successors, however, into five *ṭabaqāt*. He divided the Followers of the Successors into three. And the generation after them into another three *ṭabaqāt*. Because Ibn Ḥajar is dealing with transmitters found only in the Six Canonical books and other minor books compiled by the authors of these Canonical books, the twelfth *ṭabaqah* includes the teachers of these authors or collectors. Each book on prosopography is unique in its own right. Because each author had his own reasons for arranging the transmitters into his own *ṭabaqāt*, it is extremely important when dealing with common links in hadith to carefully assess the *ṭabaqāt* to which the transmitters standing as common links belong and also according to whose classification are those *ṭabaqāt*.

Our present study discusses the common links in the broader categories of Companions, Successors and Later generations while keeping in mind the fact that in each of these *ṭabaqāt* there are several *ṭabaqāt* of hadith transmitters.

- Common links at the *ṭabaqāt* of Companions
- Common links at the *ṭabaqāt* of Successors
- Common links at the *ṭabaqāt* of later generations

Common Links at the Ṭabaqāt of Companions

Definition of a Companion

Scholars of hadith have differed regarding the definition of a *ṣaḥābī* or who qualified to be a Companion of the Prophet. Some early scholars were very strict in their definition and application of who qualified as the Companion of the Prophet. Seeing the Prophet was not enough to be declared a Companion, according to some scholars (‘Ajaj al-Khaṭīb, 1997, pp. 412-415). Sa‘īd b. al-Musayyab (d. *ca.* 100) is reported to have considered only those companions who were in the company of the Prophet for the duration of a year or more and participated at least in one of his battles (al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī, p. 63). Critics, however, question this ascription to Ibn Musayyab, for one of its sources is Muhammad b. ‘Umar al-Wāqidi, whose integrity was severely criticised by scholars.⁶⁵ It has been agreed upon by the later critics that any person who saw the Prophet whilst he was a believer and died with *īmān* then that person qualified as a Companion. Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal said: “The best people after this people [the people of Badr] are the [rest of the] Companions of the Prophet; the generation of people in whom the Prophet was sent. Any person who was in the company of the Prophet for a year, a month, a day or just a moment that person is counted amongst the Prophet’s Companions. [His status, however, is measured] in respect to the duration he accompanied the Prophet” (al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī, 2013, p. 63). Therefore, a person who accompanied the Prophet or saw him in the state of *īmān* and also died with *īmān* is a Companion (*Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī, Bāb faḍā’il al-ṣaḥābah*; ‘Ajaj al-Khaṭīb, 1997, p. 411) according to the majority of Sunni hadith scholars.

The Ṭabaqāt of Companions:

Scholars have taken different approaches in categorizing the Companions. Some scholars preferred to treat all Companions as one category. According to these scholars, none have virtue over the other, for all shared the honour of being in the company of the Prophet.

⁶⁵ Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal, Yahyā b. Ma‘īn, and al-Bukhārī – among others, all had a problem with al-Wāqidi. See al-Shakhāwī, 2001, *Faṭḥ al-mughīth*, vol. 3, p. 86. For al-Wāqidi’s biographical information, see his *tarjamah* in *Tahdhīb al-kamāl*, vol. 26, pp. 180-194.

Ibn Hibbān is one of the scholars who opted for this general categorization (Dhahabī, p. 10).

Other scholars, on the other hand, despite having agreed that all Companions were trustworthy and their narrations were to be accepted provided the isnād to them was proven authentic, have classified Companions into different categories. These scholars have considered, besides seeing the Prophet or being in his company, other aspects that necessitated their categorization. The Qur'an also alludes to different levels of virtue and dignity assigned to different individuals among the Companions (Qur'an 57:10). On the other hand, some scholars have taken into consideration how early a Companion embraced Islam and his participation in major wars against non-believers at the time of the Prophet as a criterion for preference. Ibn Sa'd, for example, categorized them into five categories:

1. Those who participated in the Battle of Badr
2. The early Muslims who had first migrated to Ḥabashah and participated in the Battle of Uḥud and so forth
3. The Companions who participated in the Battle of the trench
4. The Companions that embraced Islam at the Conquest of Makkah and after
5. Children and infants who saw the Prophet, whether they transmitted any report from the Prophet or not.

The above classification of the Companions has nothing to do with the transmission of hadith directly from the Prophet. It is just an indication of the virtues attached to them. Therefore, scholars whose concern was about the transmission of hadith classified Companions differently. Among the hadith scholars who categorized the Companions in this way is Baqī b. Makhlad (d. ca 276/889). Though his *Musnad* is tragically lost, it appears from the writings of scholars that it was a huge collection consisting of more hadiths than the number of hadiths contained in *Musnad Aḥmad*. *Musnad Aḥmad* has about 27647 hadiths.⁶⁶

⁶⁶ This is according to the edition of Shu'ayb al-Arnaūṭ *et al.* According to the edition of Aḥmad Shakir, *Musnad Aḥmad* has about 27519 hadiths.

In his *Kitāb ma'rifah 'ulūm al-ḥadīth* al-Hakim grouped the Companions into twelve categories or *ṭabaqāt* in his *Kitāb ma'rifah 'ulūm al-ḥadīth*. While the majority of hadith scholars who came after al-Ḥākīm have relied so much on his categorization, some scholars categorized the Companion beyond al-Ḥākīm's categorization. According to Abū Manṣūr 'Abd al-Qādir b. Ṭāhir al-Baghdādī, for example, they are about 17 *ṭabaqāt* of Companions (al-Dhahabī, *Maḥmūd 'adālah al-ṣaḥābah*, p. 12). Some scholars categorized them according to the number of hadiths transmitted by them. It should be emphasized here that not all Companions transmitted hadiths or that the hadiths ascribed to them are necessarily authentic. Al-Ḥākīm al-Naysābūrī gives a figure of only four thousand Companions males and females who transmitted hadiths (al-Ḥākīm al-Naysābūrī, 2003, p. 81). Four thousand is indeed a small amount in comparison to the number of Companions the Prophet left behind at the time of his demise.⁶⁷ Despite that, al-Dhahabī, disagreed with al-Ḥākīm's figure, he affirmed their number to be between 1500 and 2000 (al-Dhahabī, *Tajrīd asmā' al-ṣaḥābah*). Before al-Dhahabī, Ibn Ḥazm (d. 456), in his *Asmā' al-ṣaḥābah al-ruwāt*, mentioned only 1018 Companions who transmitted *ahādīth* from the Prophet. Depending on the number of hadiths they transmitted, Ibn Ḥazm categorized them into twenty-four categories. In the first category, he mentioned those who transmitted thousands of hadiths (*āshāb al-ulūf*), and in the last category he mentioned the Companions who transmitted only one single hadith.⁶⁸ It is believed that

⁶⁷ When the teacher of Muslim Abū Zur'ah al-Rāzī (d. 264) was asked about the number of Companions who transmitted the hadith. He replied contemptuously that who can comprehend that? In his last Pilgrimage, the Prophet was accompanied by forty thousand Companions, and about seventy thousand Companions participated in his last battle, Tabūk. When Abū Zur'ah was asked where were all those Companions? He replied: "Some in Madinah, some in Makkah, some in between. Some were Bedouin. And all these were presents at the last Ceremony of his Last Ḥajj, they heard from him at the plains of 'Arafah (Ibn Kathīr, 2003, p. 153). One need to bear in mind that not all Companions transmitted hadith. In addition, not every Companion who transmitted hadith, his hadith has reached us with an authentic chain of transmitters. For example, Abū 'Ubaydah b. al-Jarrāḥ, though he was amongst the ten who were fortunate to be given glad tidings of Paradise, there is no single authentic hadith transmitted from him.

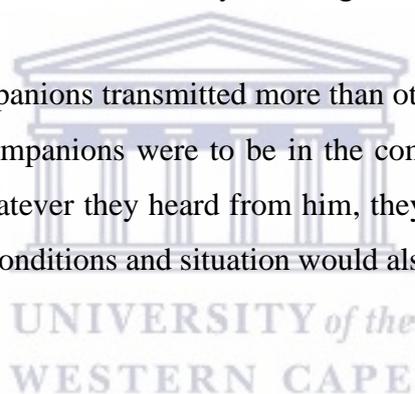
⁶⁸ Ibn Ḥazm mentioned Abū Hurayrah (d. ca 58), 'AbduLlah b. 'Umar (d. 84), Anas b. Mālik (d. ca 91) and the beloved wife of the Prophet, 'Āishah (d. 58) as the Companions who transmitted more than two thousand hadiths. After this category, he mentioned three Companions who transmitted between one thousand and two thousand hadiths, eleven Companions who transmitted more than two hundred but less than one thousand, 19 ompanions who transmitted above hundred but less than two hundred, 87 Companions who transmitted

Ibn Ḥazm used Baqī b. Makhlad's Musnad.⁶⁹ Baqī b. Makhlad's Musnad, which, tragically, has not survived, was the largest Musnad ever produced (Brown, 2010, p. 30) in the history of hadith compilation. The editor of Ibn Ḥazm's work added about ninety names of Companions from the work of Ibn al-Jawzī's *Talqīh fuhūm ahl al-athar fī aṣḥāb al-hadīth al-wāḥid* that were missed by Ibn Ḥazm.⁷⁰

Dr 'Ajāj al-Khaṭīb, amongst contemporary scholars, also categorized the Companions according to the number of hadith transmitted into six categories.

1. Those who transmitted more than 1000 hadiths – they are about 7 companions
2. Those who transmitted more than 200 hadiths – they are about 11 Companions
3. Those who transmitted more than 100 hadiths – they are about 21 Companions
4. Those who transmitted tens of hadiths – they are close to 100 Companions
5. Those who transmitted 10 or less hadiths – they are about 100 Companions
6. About 300 Companions transmitted only one single hadith ('Ajāj al-Khaṭīb, 1997, p. 430).

The reasons why some Companions transmitted more than others vary. We have already explained how eager the Companions were to be in the company of their Prophet and learn directly from him. Whatever they heard from him, they immediately committed it to memory. However, their conditions and situation would also vary. This would have an



between 20 and hundred hadiths; two Companions who transmitted 19 hadiths; 6 Companions who transmitted 18 hadiths; 3 Companions who transmitted 17 hadiths; 3 Companions who transmitted 16 hadiths; 4 Companions who transmitted 15 hadiths; 9 Companions who transmitted 14 hadiths; 7 Companions who transmitted 13 hadiths; 8 Companions who transmitted 12 hadiths; 9 Companions who transmitted 11 hadiths; 14 Companions who transmitted 10 hadiths; 12 Companions who transmitted 9 hadiths; 20 Companions who transmitted 8 hadiths; 27 Companions who transmitted 7 hadiths; 26 Companions who transmitted 6 hadiths; 28 Companions who transmitted 5 hadiths; 50 Companions who transmitted 4 hadiths; 78 Companions who transmitted 3 hadiths; 123 Companions who transmitted 2 hadiths; 463 Companions who transmitted only one hadith.

⁶⁹ Baqī b. Makhlad, an Andalusian hadith scholar, came to Baghdād to study hadith under Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal when the latter already isolated himself from the public lectures. On Baqī's insistence to study Aḥmad agreed to transmit hadith to him in the form of legal *masā'il*. See al-Dhahabī, *Siyar a'lām al-nubalā'*, vol. 13, p. 285 ff.

⁷⁰ See the appendix of *Asmā' al-Ṣaḥabah al-ruwāt*, pp. 555-558.

impact on how much each Companion knows about the Prophet's traditions. Hereunder are some of the reasons:

- Some Companions stayed in the company of the Prophet more than others. Some joined Islam so early and lived long after the Prophet's death. Some Companions, even though embraced Islam late, they did not depart from the company of the Prophet. This afforded these Companions the opportunity to learn more from the Prophet than others. For example, Companions like ibn Mas'ūd (d. *ca* 32), Abū Hurayrah (d. *ca*. 58), Jābir b. 'Abd Allah (d. *after* 70H), Anas b. Mālik (d. *ca*. 93), 'Abd Allah b. 'Umar (d. 73), 'Ā'ishah (d. 57), among others, transmitted a lot of hadiths, for they spent more time in the company of the Prophet and lived longer after his demise than other Companions. For this reason, there are few reports, if any, that were transmitted by Companions who died at the Prophet's time or a period immediately after his demise. Some of the close Companions to the Prophet did not transmit a lot of hadiths because they either died so early or they were involved in major issues of Muslim affairs. In certain cases, there was just no need to transmit his hadiths as most Companions were still alive and knew those hadiths.
- As the Islamic state expanded, there was an increasing need to transmit the hadith and the teachings of the Prophet as new issues came about that needed guidance from the prophetic teachings. New reverters also needed to learn about their new religion. For that reason, it is common sense that they would ask the Companions. The Companions were obliged to transmit the hadiths of the Prophet to the newly converted. For this reason, we find more transmissions and learning activities from the mid-first century onwards.
- Sometimes the link to the Companions suffered authenticity. For example, Abū 'Ubaydah b. al-Jarrāh who was praised by the Prophet and, in fact, was given glad tidings and surety to enter Paradise, there is no single authentic report transmitted from him (al-Ḥākim al-Naysābūrī, 1986, p. 130).

Muhammad b. 'Umar al-Aslamī made it clear that reports from senior Companions are rare because they died before there was a pressing need for hadith transmission (Ibn Sa'd, 1990, vol. 2, p. 376). There are obviously some Companions that are exceptions to this point.

‘Umar and ‘Alī, for example, transmitted many hadiths because they were in a position of leadership and matters were presented to them quite often that required them to pass judgment through their knowledge of hadith (Ibn Sa'd, 1990, vol. 2, p. 376).

Due to this, and many other reasons, we find that some Companions transmitted more hadiths than other Companions.

As we have indicated above, not all forms of *tafarrud* are problematic, according to hadith critics. All Companions of the Prophet hold high status in the Sunni Muslim majority. Sunni Islam believes that all the Companions are trustworthy, thus, all their traditions are accepted as historically authentic, provided the isnād to them is proven authentic. One should not confuse acceptance of a historical narrative with the compulsion to act upon the tradition transmitted. Not all traditions that are proven authentic are compulsory to act upon. A Companion can transmit a hadith that he was not aware that its ruling was abrogated. On the hadith of performing ablution after one has consumed food that has been heated on a fire, Abū Hurayrah did not know that this ruling was repealed by the act of the Prophet himself. Other Companions, however, knew because they saw the Prophet doing otherwise. Jābir b. ‘Abd Allah, who saw the Prophet performing prayer after consuming sheep meat without renewing his ablution, tells us that not renewing the ablution was the last action carried out by the Prophet (*al-Tirmidhī*, hadith 79, 80).

This understanding that not all authentic hadith are practiced was not missed by scholars of hadith. Authentic hadiths sometimes might seem contradictory. For this reason, scholars have devised theoretical and practical ways that sort out problems of sound hadiths that seem to contradict other sound hadiths. All scholars agree on the method, though they differ on the sequence of priority. The steps that scholars devised are *jam‘* (reconciliation between texts) *tarjīh*, (preference), *naskh* (claim for abrogation), and *iḍṭirāb* (textual irreconcilability). This approach means if two hadiths seem contradictory, scholars will follow the aforementioned steps before rejecting either report. Therefore, the *tafarrud* that occurs on the level of Companions is accepted for the reasons mentioned earlier that sometimes the Prophet would only address specific individuals. For example, the hadith that states that “the prayer of a man in a congregation is twenty-seven-fold more virtuous than the prayer performed alone”. Traditional scholars of hadith accepted it even though Ibn ‘Umar is the only Companion who transmitted it with the figure of

twenty-seven-fold in reward. All other Companions transmitted it as twenty-five-fold in reward (*Sunan al-Tirmidhī*, hadith: 215). al-Mubārakpūrī, in his commentary on *Sunan al-Tirmidhī*, quotes al-Mundhirī that Yaḥyā b. Maʿīn and Yaḥyā al-Dhuhālī (d. ca. 258) declared this hadith to be authentic (al-Mubārakpūrī, 1998, vol. 1, p. 655).

None of the classical Muslim scholars regarded the version of Ibn ʿUmar to be problematic despite the fact that he is the only one who transmitted it with the figure twenty-seven. They have rather opted for interpretation and reconciliation between the two hadiths.⁷¹ This is obviously on condition that the *sanad* was considered authentic.

As indicated earlier, many a time, the Prophet would address his Companions in specific circumstances (p. 35 ff above); this would result in his speech being transmitted by one or several Companions. Thus, one cannot deny a hadith if only one Companion is the one transmitting his speech (Mujīr al-Khaṭīb, 2007, vol. 1, p. 316).



⁷¹ See, for example, al-Nawawī, *sharh Muslim*, vol. 5, p. 151, al-Mubārakpūrī, 1998, *Tuhfah al-ahwadhī*, vol. 1, p. 656.

The hadith on the virtues of performing *ṣalah* in congregation

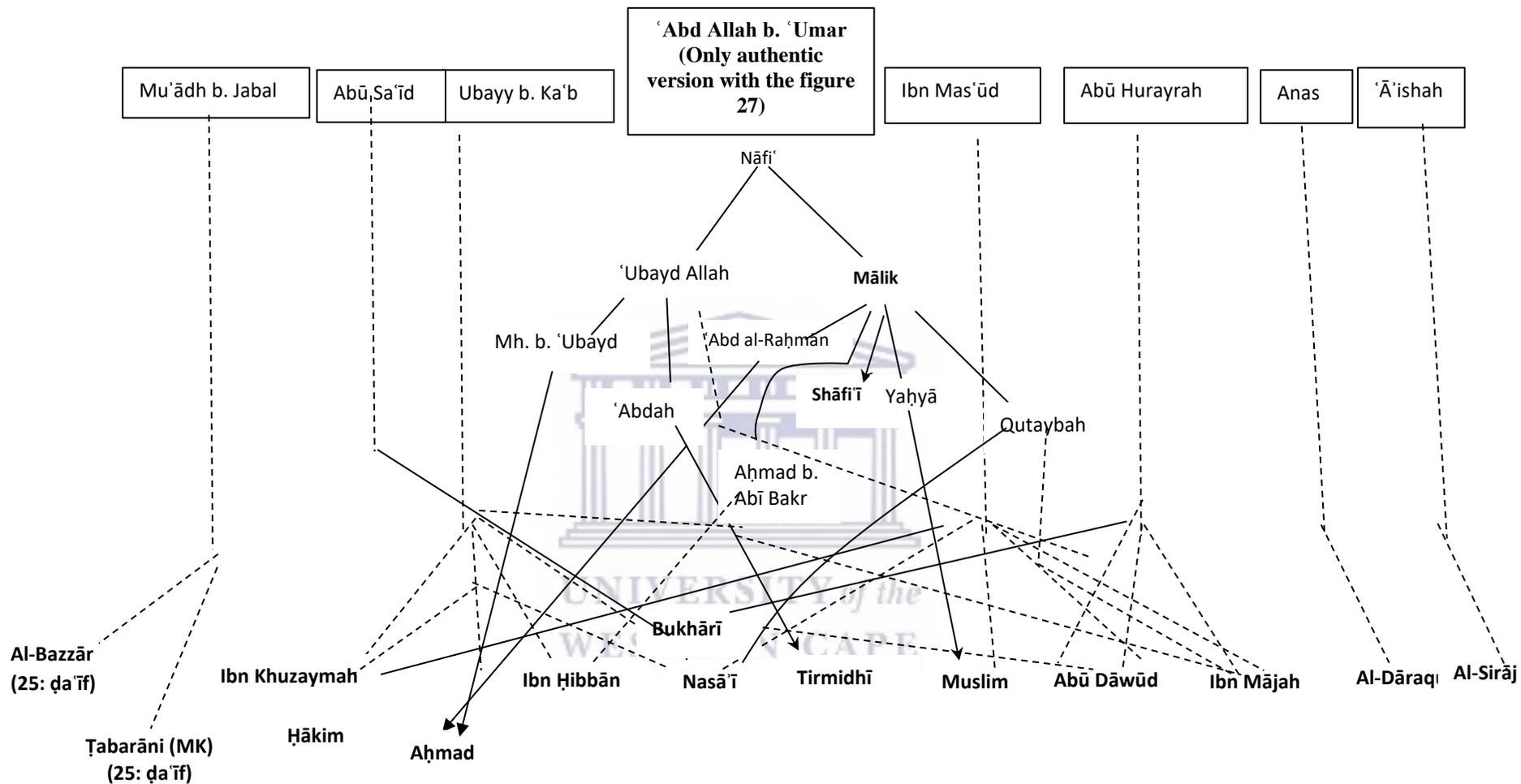


Figure 7. The hadith on the virtues of prayer in congregation

= Names omitted in the dotted lines. These names could be one person per link or more

= Some sources for the hadith of Ibn 'Umar are also omitted for the sake of brevity



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Common Links in the generations of Successors

Definition of Successors:

A *Successor* (*tābi 'ī*) is a believing person who learned directly from the Companion/s of the Prophet (Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ, 2006, p. 302). Mere meeting a Companion, without transmitting or learning from him, is also sufficient to be included in the category of Successor, according to some scholars.⁷² The generation of Successors is described as the best generation after the generation of the Companions. The virtues of the Successors, as a generation, were long established in the Qur'an and in the sayings of the Prophet Muhammad.⁷³

Common Links in the generations of Successors.

As said earlier, it is important to know the *ṭabaqah* of a transmitter for one to have a fair judgment on his hadith. In a case other than Companions, in addition to knowing the generation, it is also important to know the transmitter's qualification, especially when he is a common link for hadith.

Generations of Successors (Ṭabaqāt al-Tābi 'īn):

Scholars categorized transmitters of the generation of the Successors into different *ṭabaqāt*. According to al-Ḥakīm, there are fifteen *ṭabaqāt*, the first of which are persons who met all ten

⁷² This is probably taken from the definition of the Companions in relation to the Prophet. Critics, however, mentioned the difference between Companions as those who came after them. Merely meeting or seeing the Prophet is sufficient for one to be classified as a Companion because of the honour of the Prophet which is not shared with any other succeeding generation. In addition, hadith critics discussed Companions and Successors for the sake of transmission of hadith (al-Sakhāwī, *Fath al-mughīth*, vol. 3, pp. 123-125). Because the Majority of Sunni Muslims believe in the reputation of the Companions, the authenticity of a hadith is not impacted if a Companion transmits directly from the Prophet even if he did not personally hear the hadith from the Prophet. The most we can say here is that he omitted another Companion. The hadith in which a Companion omits his fellow Companion as source is known as *mursal al-ṣaḥābī*. According to Sunni scholars of hadith this hadith is accepted. On the other hand, if a Successor transmits from a Companion who he did not meet, the missing links affect the authenticity of that particular hadith. Therefore, it is necessary that one has to learn from the Companion for him to be included in the category of Successors.

⁷³ See for example, Qur'an 9: 100; *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, Chapter on the virtues of Companions; Muslim, *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, Chapter on the virtues of Companions

Companions that were granted surety of entering Paradise. Sa‘īd b. al-Musayyib⁷⁴ (d. 94), Qays b. Abī Ḥāzim (d. ca. 90), Abū ‘Uthmān ‘Abd al-Raḥmān b. Mull al-Nahdī (d. ca. 95), among others, are of this category.⁷⁵ The last *ṭabaqah* includes Successors who met young Companions of the Prophet, like Anas b. Mālik for Baṣrites Successors; Abd Allah b. Abī Awfā for Kufans Successors; al-Sā‘ib b. Yazīd for Madanites Successors; ‘Abd Allah b. al-Ḥārith for Egyptians Successors, and Abū Umāmah al-Bāhilī for Shāmites Successors (al-Ḥākim al-Naysābūrī, 1986, p. 42). Ibn Mandah (d. 395) categorized the transmitters after the generation of Companions and Senior Successors into three categories: (i) *ṣiḡhār al-tābi‘īn* (junior Successors), (ii) those who came after them, and (iii) the succeeding generation.

As for Ibn Ḥajar, in his *Taqrīb al-Tahdhīb*, he categorized the Successors into five categories: 1) Great and Senior generation, 2) Middle generation, 3) Close to (or following the) Middle generation, 4) Young generation, and 5) close to (or following the) young generation. Ibn Ḥajar, strategically clarified their perspective generation according to the years they died. This, in his view, was a replacement of the transmitters’ teachers with the *ṭabaqah* since his book, *Taqrīb al-Tahdhīb*, was intended for a beginner student of hadith, thus, he arranged it in a simple form. He also clarified that transmitters in the category close to the Middle generation most of their transmissions are from senior Successors. The last category of Successors is about those Successors that were contemporaries of the younger generation of Successors and may have seen one or two Companions, but there is no evidence that they learned from them.

It is also important to note that the *ṭabaqāt* of Successors also differs according to region. Some regions might have few Successors who belong to different categories and qualifications. But authors of biographical dictionaries placed them in one category because they were very little in comparison to other regions. This came about from the realization that some regions had centres for learning whereas other regions had no centres of learning because there were no Companions to disseminate knowledge of hadith.

⁷⁴ On the pronunciation of Sa‘īd’s father, المسيب, scholars have differed. al-Nawawī, in his *Sharḥ ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, mentioned that the majority of scholars pronounce it as *al-Musayyab*. Al-Nawawī calls this pronunciation common and famous amongst them. The other pronunciation is *al-Musayyib*. It is believed that Sa‘īd himself did not like to be pronounced as al-Musayyab (al-Nawawī, *Sharḥ ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, (Introduction) *Bāb al-Isnad min al-ḍin*). Throughout this paper I will use this spelling to conform with the majority.

⁷⁵ Some scholars, however, have excluded Sa‘īd b. al-Musayyab from those who met all ten Companions *mubashsharūn bi al-Jannah*, for record shows that he was born in the *khilāfah* of ‘Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb. See al-Mizzī, *Tahdhīb al-kamāl*, vol. 11, p. 67.

It must be stated from the outset that common links that are weak are not accepted at any level of the generations. Therefore, we will discuss the common links of the *ṭabaqah* of the Successors in the following class of transmitters:

- a. Senior Successors (*Kibār al-tābi 'īn*) and well-known trustworthy transmitters.
- b. Moderate reliable transmitters but not on the same level as the above
- c. Transmitters who are *ṣadūq*, *maqbul* etc.

Senior Successors that are generally accurate transmitters:

These are transmitters who were famous for collections of hadiths. They are generally considered to be the first ones who popularized travelling in search of hadith. These scholars learned their hadiths mainly from the Companion. They were great scholars of Islam. Among them are the seven great Jurists of Madinah,⁷⁶ the students of prolific Companions such as Ibn 'Umar, Zayd b. Thābit, both in Madinah, the students of 'Abd Allah b. 'Abbās in Makkah, the students of 'Abd Allah b. Mas'ūd in 'Irāq. Most scholars of this generation were reliable, for they acquired their knowledge from the Companions as mentioned above. So, though some Successors in this generation were disparaged for ill habits of forgery, and extreme mistakes like al-Ḥārith al-A'war (who died in the caliphate of Abd Allah b. al-Zubayr), most scholars, however, were reliable.

Therefore, the general rule for these Successors is that their hadith and their *tafarrudāt* (solitary and isolated hadiths) will be accepted as long as their integrity and accuracy are proven sound (al-Lāḥim, p. 14) and the *isnād* from hadith collectors to these scholars is also authentic.

Most of the chain of transmission revolves around these figures. These Successors took it upon themselves to seek and collect all the *sunan* that was possible for them to collect. They travelled far and wide collecting hadiths. Most of them documented the hadiths they collected.⁷⁷ It is

⁷⁶ The seven Jurists of Madinah are: 1) Khārijah b. Zayd b. Thābit al-Anṣārī (d. ca. 100); 2) al-Qāsim b. Muhammad b. Abī Bakr (d. 106); 3) 'Abd Allah b. al-Zubayr's brother 'Urwah b. al-Zubayr, (d. 94); 4) Sulaymān b. Yasār al-Hilālī (d. after 100); 5) 'Ubayd Allah b. 'Abd Allah b. 'Utbah b. Mas'ūd, (d. 94); 6.) Sa'īd b. al-Musayyab (d. 100). Scholars differed with regard to the seventh one. Abū Salamah b. 'Abd al-Raḥmān b. 'Awf (d. between 94 and 104), Sālim b. 'Abd Allah b. 'Umar (d. 106) and Abū Bakr b. 'Abd al-Raḥmān b. al-Ḥārith (d. 94) all are mentioned to be one of the seven Great Jurists of Madinah by scholars respectively.

⁷⁷ See *The Journeys in search of knowledge* above

obvious that they will have in their possession hadiths that other transmitters did not. For this reason, we find most of the *isnāds* revolving around these, and they became common links for those hadiths. These scholars are the repositories of hadiths and its *туруқ*. For example, al-Zuhrī was known for collecting the hadith of the Medinites, ‘Amr b. Dīnār was known for the Meccan, Abū Ishaq Al-Sabī‘ī for the Kufans, and Qatādah for Basrites etc. (Mujīr al-Khaṭīb, 2007, vol. 1, p. 415). Abū Dāwūd al-Ṭayālīsī (d. 204) said: “We found [most of] hadith by four people: al-Zuhrī, Qatādah, Abū Ishāq, and al-A‘mash (d. 147). Qatādah was the most knowledgeable on issues of *ikhṭilāf*, that is, the discourse on differences; al-Zuhrī was most knowledgeable on issues of *isnāds*; Abū Ishāq most knowledgeable on the hadith collections of ‘Alī and Ibn Mas‘ūd. All this knowledge was collected by al-A‘mash (Al-Dhahabī, 1990, vol. 5, p. 401).

Therefore, if any of these well-known reliable transmitters narrates isolated single hadith, that hadith is accepted if all other criteria are met. In his *Ṣaḥīḥ*, Muslim (d. 261) commented on the isolated single hadiths of al-Zuhrī for which other transmitters did not corroborate him, yet early critics had not taken issues with him for such hadiths. This is so because al-Zuhrī was a well-known hadith collector of his time. Muslim said: “He [al-Zuhrī] has so many uncorroborated ahadith that no one transmitted. But then what? He has transmitted about ninety hadiths with sound *isnāds* that no one else has transmitted (Muslim, 1998, hadith: 1647).

Before Muslim, critics had already established that famous hadith collectors’ single isolated reports are accepted. ‘Alī al-Madīnī made a similar observation. In his *‘Su‘ālāt*, Muhammad b. ‘Uthmān b. Abī Shaybah said: “I heard ‘Alī saying that we have observed and realized that Yahyā b. Sa‘īd transmitted from Sa‘īd b. al-Musayyab narrations that no one else transmitted, and al-Zuhrī transmitted from Sa‘īd b. al-Musayyab narrations that no one else transmitted, and Qatādah also transmitted from Sa‘īd b. al-Musayyab narrations that no one else transmits (al-Madīnī, 1404, pp. 84, 84). Dr Muhammad Mujīr al-Khaṭīb commented on the above quote that all these three students of Sa‘īd b. al-Musayyab were all Successors. However, each of them narrated hadiths that the other [two] did not narrate. This shows the greatness of Sa‘īd’s scholarship, the vastness of his narrations and the multitude (*kathrah*) of his hadiths (Mujīr al-Khaṭīb, 2007, vol. 1, p. 417).

This has continued since then. That is, some hadith transmitters would have had certain hadiths that others did not have. They, therefore, first establish the reliability of that particular prolific hadith scholar. If his integrity is established and most of his hadith are corroborated, then his isolated single transmission will be accepted, especially if the transmitter is of the early

generation of Successors before the spread of hadiths into wider regions. His solitariness would not infringe on his integrity nor take away his reputation as a hadith transmitter. The content of the hadith, however, should be such that it does not contradict the already established principles through other sources. Unless the hadith contradicts the above criteria, it would not be classified as *munkar* or rejected (Ibn Rajab, 1987, vol. 2, pp. 653, 654).

Al-Khalīlī said: “As for the solitary narrations of well-known transmitters from *ḥuffāz* and imams those solitary narrations are accepted by consensus” (al-Khalīlī, 1993, p. 167).

The above approach was also reiterated and emphasized by the fourth-century scholar Ibn Mandah. After classifying the transmitters into Companions, Senior Successors, *ṣiḡhār al-tāb‘in* (i.e., Junior Successors), and two generations after them, in terms of reliability he divided transmitters into:

- a) transmitters whose transmissions are accepted by consensus.
- b) transmitter whose transmissions are accepted only by some scholars, and,
- c) transmitters whose transmissions are completely abandoned (Ibn Mandah, 1995, p. 32).

Ibn Mandah elaborated on each of the above categories stating that the first category is the category of the scholars of *dīn* and preservers of it. They are a point of reference for the knowledge of isnād (*muntahā ‘ilm al-isnad*). When contradicted, they hold compelling evidence over their opponents. Their solitary narrations are accepted, for they are leaders and knowledgeable in their generations with respect to Prophetic traditions, the traditions of the Successors and those who followed suit in the first generations (Ibn Mandah, 1995, p. 32).

In the seventh century, the Damascene master of hadith also made the same observation. In his *‘Ulūm al-ḥadīth*, Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ said: “... if the one transmitting solitary hadith is a *ḥāfiẓ*, trusted for his *itqān* and his *ḍabt*, whatever he transmits solitarily will be accepted and his *inḡfirād* will not be of detriment to his academic career” (Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ, 2006, p. 79). Therefore, the ruling for these scholars is that their hadiths are accepted. The acceptance of *tafarrud* of these scholars is, however, on condition that no other authentic and established evidence contradicts that *tafarrud*. If they are contradicted by more authentic sources, then those solitary hadiths will be rejected. Al-Zuhrī, for example, despite being a notable hadith scholar according to Muslim critics, was criticized, at least, on two occasions; **First**, the hadith of ‘Ammār that he allegedly said that “we made *tayammum* (dry ablution) with the Prophet s.a.w up to the shoulders (*tayammamnā ma‘ al-Nabiyy ila al-mankib*). **Second**, the hadith of “*man massa ibṡayh*

falyatawaḍḍa’ (whoever touches his armpit should perform ablution)” (Mujīr al-Khaṭīb, 2007, vol. 1, p. 423).

However, if it is not contradicted by other established evidence, then the default rule of acceptance will remain (Mujīr al-Khaṭīb, 2007, vol. 1, p. 423). In his letter, which he sent to the people of Makkah describing his *Sunan*, Abū Dawud said: “*fa innahū lā yuḥtajj bi hadithⁱⁿ gharībⁱⁿ walaw kāna min riwāyat Mālik wa Yaḥyā b. Sa‘īd wa al-thiqāt min ahl al-‘ilm*” (... verily, it is not allowed to use a *hadith gharīb* as evidence even if it may be of Mālik’s hadith, Yaḥyā b. Sa‘īd’s hadith or other reliable people of knowledge).

If there is no contradiction, either with the transmissions of other reliable transmitters or already established principles, then that hadith will be accepted, provided the transmitter is trusted both for his integrity and precision. His *tafarrud* will not have a negative impact on his status as hadith transmission.

On the hadith prohibiting the sale of *walā*, only ‘Abd Allah b. Dīnār is recorded to have transmitted it from ‘Abd Allah b. ‘Umar. Traditional hadith scholars accepted it as acceptable even though ‘Abd Allah b. Dīnār is the only one transmitting it from ibn ‘Umar. Sometimes one might find *iḍṭirāb*⁷⁸ in the hadith of a common link and think that he is the problem. On further investigation, however, one finds that his students are the cause of *iḍṭirāb*. al-Dhahabī reprobated al-‘Uqayl’s inclusion of ‘Abd Allah b. Dīnār and the claim of *iḍṭirāb* in the hadith of *walā*. Al-Dhahabī assured that the *iḍṭirāb* came from his students, for he is praised by people (al-Dhahabī, 1994, vol. 8 p. 147).⁷⁹

Moderate reliable transmitters who had little hadith

These would be transmitters in the generation of scholars that came after the Senior Successors when heresy spread widely.

The common links of this category are treated differently from the category above. If a transmitter is reliable, but neither is he of the great scholars nor famous for hadith collection and transmission, then being a common link puts him in a suspicious position. Many a time

⁷⁸ *Iḍṭirāb*, literary means disruption. In hadith nomenclature is when a hadith is transmitted with so much differences in such a way that it becomes difficult to give preference to a version (See, Hussain, *The Nuzha of Ibn Ḥajar al-‘Asqalānī: translation and critical commentary*, p. 232).

⁷⁹ See further details on how hadith critics dealt with common links that are reliable, see the discussion on the hadith “*al-Dīn al-naṣīḥah*” in the Appendix 2

the cause for his *tafarrud* is due to mistakes he makes because, by this time, scholars of hadith have already travelled far and wide to collect traditions. For this reason, many a time, critics reject narrations of this nature even if the narrator is considerably reliable (Ibn Abī Ḥātim al-Rāzi, p. 10; cf. al-Dhahabī, 1412).

However, before they reject his *tafarrud* they looked at surrounding circumstances, which include:

- a. his teachers and the extent of his singularity from him,
- b. his students who are transmitting from him and how cautious they are when transmitting from transmitters
- c. the type of narrations he transmits in relation to the well-established principles of sharī‘ah; do they conform to the *uṣūl*? Or do they contradict that which is already established in Sharī‘ah?

For this, al-Dhahabī explained that a *majhūl* (lit. unknown) transmitter who is from the Senior Successors or a generation immediately after them, his hadith will be tolerated and accepted with good heart if he is not contradicted with principles and there is no *rakākāt al-lafz*, that is, weak and strange words formation (al-Dhahabī, 1968, p. 374).

If a transmitter transmits a hadith that contradicts that which is transmitted by those who are better than him in memory, then the transmission of this *rāwī* will be regarded as *shādh* and, therefore, not accepted (al-Shāfi‘ī, 2004, p. 171).

Sometimes a transmitter might transmit a hadith that all other students of a particular teacher did not transmit. In this case, critics of hadith, before rejecting it, first investigate the relationship between this common link and that teacher. Some transmitters were known to have spent more time in the company of the teacher and that he knew the teacher’s hadiths well. Ḥammād b. Salamah is said to have spent so much time with ‘Alī b. Zayd (d. 131) that he is described as “*a lam bi hadith ‘Alī likathrat riwāyatih ‘anh* (he is the most knowledgeable person about the hadiths of ‘Alī b. Zayd because of his excessive transmission from him”). Yahyā b. Ma‘īn described him as “*arwā al-nās ‘an ‘Alī b. Zayd* ‘the prolific transmitter from ‘Alī b. Zayd (Ibn al-Junayd, 1998). For this reason, Ḥammād’s transmissions from ‘Alī are accepted even though he is criticised by critics such as al-Dārāqutnī who states that Ḥammād makes mistakes when he transmits from ‘Amr b. Dīnār. The critics, therefore, maintained that Ismā‘īl b. Ja‘far should be given preference over Ḥammād when both transmit from ‘Amr b. Dīnār (al-Dārāqutnī).

If a moderate reliable transmitter did not contradict more reliable and trustworthy transmitters, then critics generally accepted his hadith even if he is the common link. Al-Dhahabī observed that the transmitters who have been criticized by the *huffāz*, were criticized because they contradicted more reliable transmitters (al-Dhahabī, 1412, p. 52).

Sometimes it was not clear whether the mistakes in hadith came from the main hadith transmitter, in our case, the common link, or from his students. For this reason, hadith critics insisted on finding corroboration to his hadiths to ascertain who was responsible for the said mistake. Yaḥyā b. Maʿīn came to ʿAffān b. Muslim (d. ca. 220) to learn the collection of Ḥammād b. Salamah. ʿAffān asked Yaḥyā if this was the first time to hear about those collections. Yaḥyā confirmed that he heard Ḥammād’s collection of hadith from about seventeen persons, and ʿAffān would be the eighteenth person. On hearing this, ʿAffān declined to transmit those collections to Yaḥyā. Yaḥyā b. Maʿīn left and went to Baṣrah where other students of Ḥammād b. Salamah were still transmitting his hadiths. He met Mūsā b. Ismāʿīl al-Tabūdhakī (d. 223) another student of Ḥammād b. Salamah. Al-Tabūdhakī asked Yaḥyā if this was the first time he would be hearing the transmission of Ḥammād b. Salamah’s books. Yaḥyā said that he heard it from seventeen students of Ḥammād and al-Tabūdhakī would be the eighteenth. Al-Tabūdhakī was stunned why he would want to have so many sources for the hadiths of Ḥammād, so he asked: what will you do with all the sources you are collecting? Yaḥyā replied that Ḥammād b. Salamah used to commit errors, so I want to make a distinction between his errors and that of others. If all his students agree on a wording of a transmission, then I will know that that error was from Ḥammād himself. On the other hand, if most of his students transmit in a particular way, and one of them transmits otherwise, then I will know that this error is from that particular student and not Ḥammād. In this way, I will be able to determine mistakes committed by Ḥammād himself and mistakes committed in his name (Ibn Ḥibbān, 1402, vol. 1, p. 32).

Ṣadūq, maqbūl and young Successors transmitters

These are transmitters that are on the lowest level of reliability. They were neither in the same categories as the above nor were they known to famous hadith critics. In addition, they lived in a period when transmission of hadith was affected due to unscrupulous transmitters forging hadiths. Thus, those transmitters that are not known to have been well transmitters of hadiths, then their solitary hadith would not be accepted. For this reason, some of the Successors have

been criticized for their transmission of unknown hadith. However, they were not criticized for transmitting uncorroborated hadith per se, rather, transmitting unknown and uncorroborated hadiths calls for suspicion of one's integrity and accuracy. On further investigation, those transmitters were found guilty of either failing to prove their integrity or they were not so mindful of what they transmitted. Thus, the final ruling of common links of such transmitters is in accordance with their status. This generally applies to the young generation of Successors who only saw one or two companions. And sometimes, these transmitters, especially young Successors, when they are disparaged, it is because of the little hadith they transmitted from the Companions. Sometimes it is because they narrated hadiths that they attributed to the famous Companions whose hadiths were known throughout the regions they resided (Mujīr al-Khaṭīb, 2007, vol. 1, p. 403), yet none of the famous students of those Companions transmitted it. Some of the transmitters, transmitted solitarily hadiths from famous transmitters that their reliable students did not transmit. Bishr b. Ḥarb al-Azdī, among others, is an example of these transmitters. Ibn Ḥibbān said about him: “*tarakahū Yahyā al-Qaṭṭān, wa kānā ibn Mahdī lā yarḍā li infirādih ‘an al-thiqāt bi mā laysa min aḥādīthihim* (Yahyā al-Qaṭṭān suspected him, hence, left him. Ibn Mahdī was not impressed with him because of his hadiths which he transmitted solitarily from notable scholars that were not of their hadiths)” (Ibn Ḥibbān, 1402, vol. 1, p. 186; Mujīr al-Khaṭīb, 2007, vol. 1, p. 403).

If a transmitter is not on a good level of memory and *itqān* (precision) in what he transmitted, then his solitary transmission would create a penumbra of suspicion that would take him out of the circles of a *ṣaḥīḥ* transmitter. Sometimes a transmitter is reliable but narrates uncorroborated hadith. This also creates suspicion against his academic status as a hadith transmitter. Al-‘Alā’ b. Abd al-Raḥmān b. Ya‘qūb al-Huraqī (d. ca. 138), for example, was criticized for transmitting the hadith *Idhantaṣafa Sha‘bān falā taṣūmū* (when half of the month of Sha‘bān has passed you should not observe any voluntary fast). Though Aḥmad made *tawthīq* of him, most of the critics had a problem with his hadith on the prohibition of fasting after mid-Sha‘bān had passed. Abū Dāwūd compared al-‘Alā’ b. ‘Abd al-Raḥmān al-Ḥuraqī with Suhayl and Suhayl was more favourable to him than al-‘Alā’. He said: “Suhayl is more preferable to us than al-‘Alā’. Critics had a problem with al-‘Alā’ (*ankarū ‘alayh*) for the hadith he transmitted on fasting in Sha‘bān, that is, ‘When half of Sha‘bān has passed then you should not fast’” (Ibn Ḥajar, 1326, vol. 8, p. 166).

This hadith (i.e., *Idhantaṣafa Sha‘bān*) is recorded in the collections of Aḥmad (hadith: 9707), al-Tirmidhī (hadith: 738), Ibn Mājah (hadith: 1651), al-Dārimī (hadith: 1740) and others. This

hadith is considered to be one of the isolated single hadiths (*mufradāt*) of al-‘Alā. Scholars of hadith have differed regarding the authenticity of this hadith. al-Tirmidhī and others have tried to interpret this version by trying to reconcile it with the hadith of Ummu Salamah about the fast of the Prophet in the month of Sha‘bān (*Sunan Abī Dāwūd*, hadith: 2336; *Sunan al-Tirmidhī*, hadith: 736). On the other hand, some scholars, however, have denounced it putting the blame on al-Aṭā for he is the only one transmitted from his father ‘Abd al-Raḥmān b. Yaḳūb al-Ḥuraqī. Al-Nasaī said: “We don’t know anyone to have narrated this hadith besides al-‘Alā,” Aḥmad said: “This hadith is not *maḥfūz*”. He further said: “I asked Ibn Maḥdī about this hadith, and he neither approved it nor did he transmit it to me. In fact, he used to avoid it (*yatawaqqāh*). Aḥmad said: ‘Alā, however, is *thiqah*. There is no *munkar* besides this one (i.e., none of his hadiths is suspicious). Abū Dāwūd said: this hadith is anomalous (al-Zayla‘ī, (1997), vol. 2, p. Ibn Ḥajar, 2004, vol. 4, p. 115; al-Munāwī, 1994, vol. 1, p. 304). The editor of *al-Madkhal ilā Kitāb al-Iklīl* p. 94 adds: Al-Khalīlī said: al-‘Alā is a Madanī. People have differed with regard to his status in hadith because he solitarily transmits uncorroborated hadiths. for example, his hadith *Idhantasafa sha‘bān falā taṣūmū*”. Muslim transmitted his hadiths from famous teachers, not *shawādh* (*Tahdhīb al-Tahdhīb*, vol. 8, p. 167).

Al-Ṭabarānī, however, noted in his *al-Mu‘jam al-awsaṭ* that Muhammad b. al-Munkadir transmitted the hadith directly from al-‘Alā’s father ‘Abd al-Raḥmān b. Ya‘qūb al-Ḥuraqī. However, he pointed out that only his son ‘Abd Allah b. Muhammad al-Munkadir transmitted it. However, it appears that critics did not pay attention to this version, probably because of not having supportive *isnād* for al-Munkadir. The point emphasized here is that al-‘Alā though he is not weak his status of reliability is not at the highest level that his isolated transmission could be tolerated. For this reason, this hadith was criticised by some critics (Ibn al-Jawzī, 1998, vol. 1, p. 33).

Diagram of the hadith: “When half of the month of Sha‘bān has passed ...”

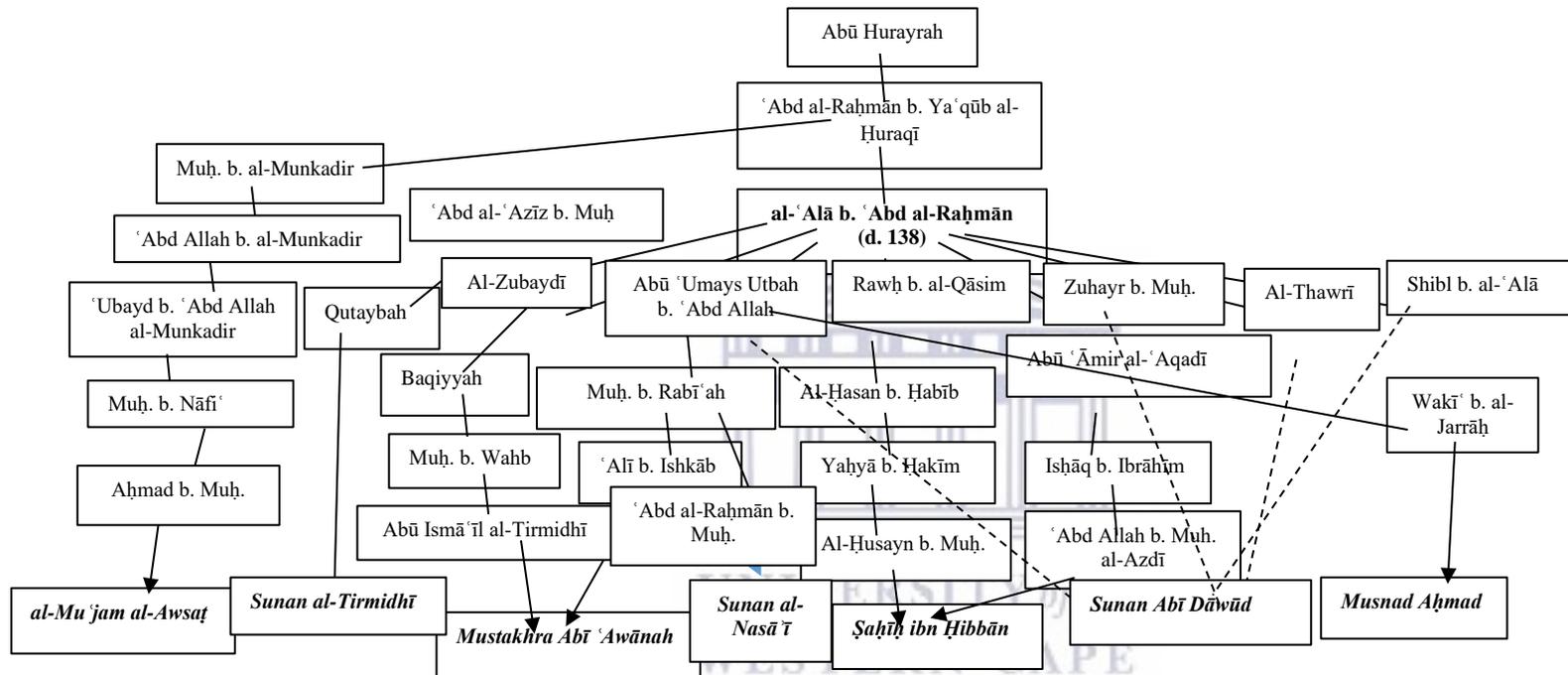


Figure 8. The hadith “Idha ntaṣafa Sha‘bān...”

Muḥ. = Muḥammad
 ----- = Links omitted



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Later generations as Common Links

Definition of followers of Successors (atbā' al-tābi'īn)

Followers of Successors (*atbā' al-tābi'īn*) are hadith transmitters who were students of the Successors (*tābi'ūn*) and lived from the end of the first century and most part of the 2nd century (Ibn Ḥajar, 1991). Some scholars are of the opinion that the last Follower of Successors lived up to around 220H (Ibn Ḥajar, 2004, vol. 7, p. 8). In his *Taqrīb al-Tahdhīb*, Ibn Ḥajar included 'Alī b. al-Ja'd b. 'Ubayd al-Jawharī al-Baghdādī (born in the year 134H and died in 230H among the young generation of Followers of the Successor (Ibn Ḥajar, 1991).

Common Links in the generations of Followers of Successors

This is the period when heresy became extremely rife. The worst form of these heretic issues was probably when the *miḥnah* of *khalq al-Qur'ān*⁸⁰ became rife (Ibn Ḥajar, 2004, vol. 7, p. 8). At the same time, by this time, travelling in search of knowledge has been the order of the day. Therefore, for the sake of brevity, generations of even the teachers of the collectors and authors of Canon hadith books are included in this discussion.

It is also important to note here that among the Followers of Successors generations (hereafter referred to as Followers) were some individuals who were great scholars of hadith and jurists in different regions. Most of these hadith transmitters compiled books for the hadiths they collected. Comprehensive authorship started appearing in this period (Mujīr al-Khaṭīb, 2007, vol. 1, p. 428). For example, Mālik b. Anas in Madinah, Awzā'ī in Shām, and Shu'bah b. al-Ḥajjāj in Wāsiṭ, a town in the region of Iraq, Sufyān b. Sa'īd al-Thawrī, and many more notable scholars of Islam are all in the generation of the Followers. By this time, as we have noted earlier, most hadiths have been collected and recorded. Since most of the hadiths have been collected by hadith scholars of this generation, we rarely find one transmitting a hadith without corroboration. For this reason, if the common

⁸⁰ The Mu'tazilite doctrine of the createdness of the Qur'ān. The doctrine started with Bishr al-Murīsī (d. 218) but imposed by the Abbasid Caliph al-Ma'mūn (reigned 198/813– 218/833).

link is from the generation of the Followers, then the critics will generally call that hadith *munkar*, especially if he is in the *ṭabaqah* of the teachers of the authors of the Canon hadith books. ‘Uthmān b. Abī Shaybah, Abū Salamah al-Tabūdhakī are examples of scholars whose hadith have been identified as *munkar* in this regard (Mujīr al-Khaṭīb, 2007, vol. 1, p. 445). However, the above rule is not without conditions. Since the theory of common link is very complicated, Muslim hadith scholars do not hasten to accept or reject the hadith of the common link, especially in this generation, except after a thorough investigation and scrutiny. Only then do they conclude whether to accept or reject it.

As mentioned previously that some scholars of Successors’ generation were great scholars, so it goes without a say that they will also have many students. They had so many hadiths on account of which they became common links as explained above. For example, al-Zuhrī, Abū Ishāq al-Sabī‘ī (d. 129), Sulaymān al-A‘mash, Qatādah b. Di‘āmah etc. these are the pioneers of hadith collections in their generations. These scholars became famous to such an extent that many hadith transmissions go through them, and they also had a lot of students. So if a student of, say, al-Zuhrī, for example, narrates something that another famous student did not narrate, that puts that narrator into suspicion. The critics will, therefore, investigate whether the narrators below⁸¹ a common link is someone who is suspicious. If the isnād leading to the common link is questionable, then obviously, the hadith is rejected on account of that particular weak individual. However, if there is no one suspicious below the common link in the isnād, the default ruling of transmission by reliable transmitters is to consider it authentic though critics will still call that particular isnād and hadith *gharīb*, (literary ‘strange’). Nevertheless, critics also investigate the common link to find out more about his status and circumstances that led him to be the common link. They, thus, ask questions such as: why is he the only one transmitting this hadith from earlier generations? Where were other students of that particular teacher when he learnt the hadith from him? What is the status of his general hadiths? Is he corroborated in his general hadiths, or he often contradicts others? Critics, therefore, insist on finding corroboration before giving a final judgement on the hadith. This is only the case when the

⁸¹ This is when we place earlier generations from the Prophet above and later generations below in the diagram. Therefore, ‘below’ here means students. Early Western scholars placed the source or the Prophet at the bottom in their depiction of the *isnād*.

common link is a reliable transmitter, for if he is not, then the hadith is rejected on account of his weakness. Al-Tirmidhī said: “Any transmitter who has been declared weak for his carelessness or makes numerous mistakes if he transmits a hadith that is not known except from him, that hadith is not taken as a legal proof” (Ibn Rajab, 1987, vol. 1, p. 371). Ibn Rajab said: if the *munfarid* (solitary transmitter) from *huffāz* is extremely weak in memory (*sayyi’ al-ḥifz*), then no attention is given to his solitary transmission. Consequently, he will be stigmatised with suspicion (Ibn Rajab, 1987, vol. 2, p. 723). Transmitters like these, critics would use qualitative statements like: *yarwī al-manākīr ‘an al-mashāhīr*, (He transmits unknown narrations from famous scholars) *falā yuḥtajj bihī illā bimā yuwāfiq al-thiqāt* (He does not stand as a proof except if he concurs with reliable transmitters). Ibn Ḥibbān in his *Kitāb al-majrūhīn* and al-‘Uqaylī in his *al-Ḍu‘afā al-kabīr* excessively use the expression *yarwī mā lā yutāba‘ ‘alayh*, (he transmits that he is not corroborated for) (See, for example, Ibn Ḥibbān, 1402, vol. 1, pp. 23, 31, 79, 106, 147, 252, 258).

‘Abd al-Raḥmān b. Abi al-Zinād (100- 174), for example, though Yaḥyā b. Ma‘īn considered him to be more reliable out of all Hisham b. ‘Urwah’s students “*athbat al-nās fī Hishām b. ‘Urwah*”, he was criticized for transmitting from his father that which his father’s famous students did not. Mālik, for example, criticized him for transmitting *kitāb al-fuqahā’ al-sab‘ah* from his father. “Where were we from this” was Mālik’s comment when he was told that ‘Abd al-Raḥmān b. Abi al-Zinād transmitted it from his father (al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī, 2001, p. 230). Ṣāliḥ b. Muhammad as well when he was asked about him, he said: “He transmitted from his father that which no one else transmitted”. This was because ‘Abd al-Raḥmān’s father was so famous and had many students. Therefore, if only ‘Abd al-Raḥmān transmits from his famous father something that none of his famous students transmit, it calls to suspicion against ‘Abd al-Raḥmān’s honesty and reliability. The 4th century critic ibn Ḥibbān also observed the above and said about him that he ascribed inverted hadiths to reliable transmitters due to his weak memory. Therefore, his hadiths are not regarded as proofs if he is the only one narrating them. If reliable transmitters corroborate his transmission then [that is a sign that he] is honest in hadith, therefore, those particular hadiths will be acceptable (*kāna min man yanfarid bi al-maqlūbāt ‘an al-athbāt, wakāna dhālik min sū’ ḥifzih wa kathrat khaṭ’ih. Falā yajūz al-iḥtijāj bikhbarihī idha nfarada. Fa’ammā fīmā wāfaqa al-thiqāt fahuwā ṣādiq fī al-riwāyāt, yuḥtajj bihi*) (Ibn Ḥibbān, 1402). Early critics like ‘Abd al-Raḥmān b. Maḥdī,

Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal, Abū Ḥātim al-Rāzī, Abū Zur‘ah al-Rāzī, and al-Nasa‘ī they all refrained from transmitting from ‘Abd al-Raḥmān b. Abi al-Zinād for he transmits from his father that others do not. On one occasion Qurrān b. Tammām transmitted a hadith from Ayman b. Nābil from Qudāmah b. al-‘Umarī. Abū Ḥātim al-Rāzī commented that no one transmitted from Ayman besides Qurrān. “I don’t think the hadith is *maḥfūz*.” “Where were the students of Ayman b. Nābil about this hadith?” (Ibn Abī Ḥatim al-Rāzī, 2006, vol. 1, p. 296). Abū Ḥātim al-Rāzī rejected a hadith which Burd b. Sinān transmitted from al-Zuhrī, arguing that none besides Burd transmitted it. According to Abū Ḥātim, “it is impossible for al-Zuhrī to have narrated that particular hadith” (Abū Ḥātim, *Ilal al-hadith*, vol. 1, p. 165). Even though Burd is reliable, his hadiths from al-Zuhrī are suspected and thus rejected because he is not from the companion students of al-Zuhrī (al-Lāḥim, *Tafarrud al-thiqah*, p. 13). This is what Muslim (d. 261) meant when he explained in his introduction to his *Ṣaḥīḥ* about whose hadith is to be accepted or not. He said: “As for the one you see intend transmitting from [great scholars] like al-Zuhrī in his grandeur and having numerous companions who are *ḥuffāz* accurate when transmitting his hadith, and the hadith of others; or he intends transmitting from Hishām b. ‘Urwah; whereas their hadiths are [well recorded and] well-known to the people of knowledge [of hadith], well explicated, their companion students have transmitted them in agreement to most of them; then an individual transmitter comes and transmits from both of them, i.e. al-Zuhrī and Hishām, or from one of the two such hadith that is not known by any of their companion students, and this individual is such that he did not participate with them in transmitting *ṣaḥīḥ* hadiths; [one] is not permitted to accept any hadith of these types of individuals. God knows best!

Therefore, if the transmitter who sits as a common link belongs to a later generation and is also not known for being a comprehensive collector of hadith, his *tafarrud* should always be checked against his contemporaries if they also transmitted the same hadith. Scholars were very strict when it came to hadith *gharīb*.

Abū Dāwūd, in his letter which he sent to the people of ‘Makkah, explaining his *Sunan* and the status of the hadith therein, remarked: “most of them are *mashāḥīr*. They are to be found by any scholar who collected hadiths. However, not everyone is able to make a distinction. What is exciting about this compilation is that the hadiths are *mashūr* (widely recognized) “*fa innahū lā yuḥtajj bi hadithⁱⁿ gharībⁱⁿ walaw kāna min riwāyat Mālik wa*

Yahyā b. Sa'īd wa al-thiqāt min ahl al-'ilm" (... Verily, it is not allowed to use a hadith gharib as evidence even if it may be of Mālik's hadith, Yahyā b. Sa'īd's hadith or other reliable people of knowledge). You will find others objurgating the use of gharib hadith as proofs. And no one uses it as a proof, if the hadith is *gharīb* and *shadhdh*. As for the hadith that is *mashhūr*, and its chain of transmission is continuous, then no one can reject that type of hadith. Ibrāhīm al-Nakha'ī used to say: Scholars of the past used to dislike the *gharīb* versions of hadiths" (Abū Dāwūd al-Sijistānī, 2003).

Thus, critics were aware of the solitary transmissions and accepted if it qualified conditions for acceptance. At the same time, they rejected solitary transmission if conditions for acceptance were not found. Ibn Ṭāhir mentioned that solitary transmissions are five different types. The first type of *fard* is when a group of Successors transmitted a particular hadith from a famous Companion. However, one reliable transmitter transmitted it differently. This hadith is only transmitted from him by one reliable Successor, and also, a reliable Follower transmits it from him. All people in the isnād are well-known for their integrity and hadith transmission (Mujīr al-Khaṭīb, 2007, vol. 1, p. 432). The other type is *fard nisbī* or related to additions in the texts. Ibn Sayyid al-Nās commented on the statement of Ibn Ṭāhir that it is necessary that the one narrating solitary hadith should be of the highest calibre of reliability and accuracy for his solitary transmission to be accepted in any of the categories. Dr. Mujīr commented on the statement of Ibn Sayyid al-Nās that this clarifies that Followers who solitarily transmit hadiths from a famous and prolific scholar whose hadith is collected are in different categories. Some of them, their solitary hadiths are accepted, and some are not. If his general hadiths do not contradict the versions of notable scholars, then in the case when he solitarily transmits a hadith from a notable transmitter, his hadith will be accepted (al-Shāfi'ī, 2004, p. 171). In his Introduction to his *Ṣaḥīḥ*, Imam Muslim b. al-Ḥajjāj clarified whose solitary hadiths will be accepted and whose solitary transmission is not accepted. He said: "The rule according to the people of knowledge and what is known about their view in accepting the *tafarrud* of a *muḥaddith* is that he [the *muḥaddith*] must have participated in the hadiths of the people of knowledge and *ḥifẓ* at least in some of his transmission and he agrees. If he is found to be of this sort and thereafter found with an extra transmission which is not found amongst the people of hadith, that extra transmission will be accepted (Muslim, 1998, *Introduction*). It is, therefore, necessary

for the transmitter who sits as a common link that his general hadiths should be corroborated. If most of his hadiths are not corroborated, his *tafarrud* will not be accepted.

After Imam Muslim, many scholars made similar remarks. Ibn Hibbān, for example, also made similar observations that among reliable narrators are those that their narrations cannot be used as evidence “*ḥujjah*”. In his *Kitāb al-majrūhīn* (The book on disparaged transmitters), Ibn Hibbān claimed that Marzūq b. Abī al-Hudhayl transmits solitarily from al-Zuhrī such unknown traditions that have no basis. Thus, only the hadiths that he conforms with reliable transmitters will be accepted (... *yanfaridu ‘an al-Zuhrī bi al-manākīr al-latī lā uṣūl lahā min hadith al-Zuhrī...fa huwā fīma nfarada bihī min al-akhbār sāqiṭ al-iḥtijāj bih, wa fīmā wāfaqa al-thiqāt ḥujjah – in shā Allah*) (Ibn Hibbān, 1402, vol. 3, p. 38).

These are narrators who sometimes make slight mistakes, either in writing – i.e., when they wrote – and they did not notice that mistake; thus, the mistake remained in their writings until old age. For example, a person makes mistakes in names, converting the hadith *mursal* into *marfū‘*. Or making *mawqūf* a hadith that is *musnad*, or mixing up hadiths. So, critics like Yaḥyā b. Sa‘īd al-Qaṭṭān, Abd al-Raḥman b. Maḥdī and after them Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal, Yaḥyā b. Ma‘īn etc, when they saw transmitters of this kind, they just passed a statement that these were not reliable narrators.

At the same time, one can expect differing views due to the complex nature of transmitters’ criticism. Ibn Hibbān, for example, disagrees with the general disparagement against those kind of narrators. For him, he does not use their hadith as *ḥujjah* when they stand as common links. Therefore, he describes them with remarks such as, “*lā yu‘jibunī al-iḥtijāj bi khabarihī idha nfarada*” ‘It does not please me to use his hadith as a legal proof when he is the only one narrating’ (Ibn Hibbān, 1402, vol. 1, p. 90).

On the other hand, if the *isnād* leading to the common link is authentic and the common link himself is reliable and famous for hadith collection, then his solitary hadith is readily accepted than rejected, as long as it neither contradicts the already established principles nor does he contradicts more reliable transmitters as mentioned above in the generation of Successors. If he is not on the level of higher reliability, then his hadith will also be accepted if he and his hadiths meet the conditions below, otherwise, it will remain rejected

even if the transmitter is reliable. Thus, for the *tafarrud* of this category to be accepted, the transmitter should satisfy the following conditions:

- (1) his *'adālah* and precision should be on such a level that he can be relied upon.
- (2) he should not frequently be guilty of *tafarrud*,
- (3) he is not known to excessively contradict his contemporaries or transmit extra pieces of information that others do not transmit; and
- (4) he should not have that isolated report from a well-known scholar who has a lot of students.

As I have explained in Chapter three, the two qualifications of the transmitter for his hadith to be accepted, *'adālah* and *ḍabṭ* are the most important issues in accepting one's hadith.

In addition to the two qualitative conditions, the third tier of corroboration is of utmost important. Therefore, in the case of common links, it is imperative that the transmitter should not be guilty of excessive *tafarrud* or uncorroborated transmissions unless he is a comprehensive hadith collector who collected so many hadiths that others did not. Sufyān b. Sa'īd al-Thawrī (d. 161/162), for example, was known for his comprehensive collection of hadith to such an extent that he was given the title *Amīr al-mu'minīn fi al-ḥadīth*, (Master and Leader of believers in hadith) (Ibn Abī Ḥātim al-Rāzi). He collected and transmitted a huge amount of hadiths. He was more reliable and more precise than transmitters who corroborated him. Therefore, in his case, his solitary hadiths show how great he was and the high-quality scholarship, hence, his *tafarrud* is accepted. For that, Yaḥyā b. Sa'īd al-Qaṭṭān said: "I haven't seen anyone more reliable (*aḥfaz min*) than Sufyān al-Thawrī. If people differ in transmission Sufyān would be the one with the correct version (al-Sulamī, 2005, vol 1, p. 124). The same comments were given by al-Dhahabī about Sulaymān al-Ṭabarānī (d. 360). In his *Mizān al-'tidāl*, al-Dhahabī praised him and said: "*lā yunkar lahu al-tafarrud fī si'at mā rawā... 'his solitary transmission cannot be denied [authenticity] on account of the huge amount of his hadith collections*", "*wa ila al-Ṭabarānī al-muntahā fī kathrat al-ḥadīth wa 'uluwwih, fainnahū 'āsha miata sanah wa sami'a wa huwa ibn thalātha 'ashrata sanah 'al-Ṭabarānī is a reference for numerous hadith and its highest link, for he lived hundred years and he started learning hadith as early as at the age thirteen*" (al-Dhahabī, 1995, vol. 3, p. 278).

Therefore, the *tafarrud* of these great scholars will be accepted even if they are the only ones transmitting from famous scholars, provided they are not contradicted by other reliable transmitters. On the hadith of the Prophet entering Makkah while having *mighfar* (that is, Arabian helmet) on his head, hadith scholars accepted it even though Mālik is the only one transmitting from al-Zuhrī, and al-Zuhrī is the only one transmitting it from Anas from the Prophet (Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ, 2006, p. 78). First of all, Anas was the Companion of the Prophet. And as explained above, all Companions of the Prophet are trustworthy. Muhammad b. Shihāb al-Zuhrī was also a reliable Successor who transmitted numerous authentic corroborated hadiths. For that reason, Muslim hadith critics accepted his solitary transmission. Mālik b. Anas was a prolific transmitter from al-Zuhrī and his integrity was long established. Therefore, his solitary transmission from al-Zuhrī is also accepted by Muslim hadith critics.

However, as mentioned about the previous generations, the acceptance of the solitary transmission is conditioned to not be contradicted by his peers who are equal to or above him in reliability. Muslim in his *Kitāb al-Tamyīz* mentioned that discovering mistakes of hadith transmitters when they differ revolves, mainly upon two points. The first one, which is not so relevant to our discussion here, is when one mixes up the names of transmitters. The second point is when a group of *huffāz* transmit a hadith from prolific transmitters like al-Zuhrī or someone else with an exact chain and text. All of them converge on the same isnād and *matn*. They don't differ in the meanings of the text. Then someone else transmits from the same teacher (al-Zuhrī), but he contradicts them in isnād. Or he changes the *matn* contrary to what the *huffāz* have transmitted. When these two versions are compared (the version of *huffāz* and that of one person), it is evident that the correct version of the two is the version of the *huffāz* not that of the solitary individual, even if he is *ḥāfiẓ* in his own right. This is what we have observed the people of knowledge judging in hadith, the like of Shu'bah, Sufyān b. 'Uyaynah, Yaḥyā b. Sa'īd, 'Abd al-Raḥmān b. Maḥdī and other people of knowledge (Muslim, 1990, pp. 124-126).

Critics, therefore, still exercised caution even when it came to the hadiths of great scholars. As the transmission of hadith became widespread, prevaricators, especially the storytellers, also continued fabricating hadith and ascribing them to the scholars upon whom most of

the asānīd revolve. They would ascribe fabricated texts to sound *isnāds* of the great scholars. Some of the *isnāds* are the most authentic ones, like the golden chain or well-known hadith critics like Ibn Ma‘īn or Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal. A storyteller related a forged hadith on the authority of Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal and Yaḥyā b. Ma‘īn in their presence. When Yaḥyā and Aḥmad contended, the liar said that he learnt hadith from seventeen different individuals whose names were all Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal and Yaḥyā b. Ma‘īn (al-Ḥākim al-Naysābūrī, 2003, p. 58; al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī, 1403, p. 167). Most of these narrators are discovered for their lies because of their solitary transmission from famous scholars or their contradiction to all other reliable transmitters. Thus, the solitary narrations of these suspicious transmitters were a sign that the hadith transmitted by them were but fabrications (Mujīr al-Khaṭīb, 2007, vol. 1, p. 452).

Abū Ya‘lā al-Khalīlī said: “After 300 years, a group of people fabricated asānīd with fabricated hadiths and attached them to great scholars” (al-Khalīlī, 1993, vol. 1, p. 409). Though the ill conduct of fabrication started as early as the last quarter of the first century and gained momentum in the 2nd century, it was only after the 3rd century that the fabrication of hadiths and ascribing them to famous and notable hadith scholars became more common. Now transmitting a hadith that no one else transmitted was a matter that called for more suspicion on that particular transmitter. For this reason, al-Bayhaqī (d. 458) insisted on the following adage: “From now on, if a person transmits a hadith that is not known to scholars of hadith, that hadith will not be accepted. To date, it is improbable that one can transmit an authentic hadith that is not known to scholars of hadith. If he is the only person who transmits a hadith no one transmitted, his narration will be judged in accordance with the transmission of others (Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ, 2006, p. 121).

Summary

In this Chapter, I have explored how the traditional hadith critics viewed and approached the transmitters that are common links in hadiths. The common link, as a phenomenon, is a common occurrence in the isnad of hadiths. Muslim hadith scholars were aware of this and acknowledged its occurrence. Hadith critics dealt with common links in hadith by looking at, in addition to the transmitter’s reliability, where the *tafarrud* occurred. Therefore, it is important to know the *ṭabaqāh* of transmitters. Scholars of hadith placed

transmitters into different *ṭabaqāt*. Each author of the *ṭabaqāt* genre had his own way of arranging the *ṭabaqāt*. Because the mainstream Sunni scholars hold Companions of the Prophet in high esteem, and as I have explained earlier that all Companions are trustworthy, the hadith of the common link from the Companion generation is accepted, provided the isnad to the Companion is authentic. The reasons why some transmitters are common links are many. For the *ṭabaqāt al-ṣahābah* (generation of the Companions), I have explained above that some Companions stayed in the company of the Prophet longer than others. I have also explained that some Companions lived long after the Prophet. For this reason, and many more, it is obvious that some Companions would have more hadiths than others.

Besides the generations of the Companions, any other generation of hadith transmitters is treated differently, and all rules of transmitter evaluation apply to them. Thus, each common link's integrity was investigated. If his general hadiths were found to have been corroborated, then his isolated hadith were accepted. This was, however, dependent on other factors. For example, if the common link was known for excessive hadith collection and his isolated single hadith did not contradict already established principles, then critics were ready to accept his *tafarrud* (Muslim, 1998, hadith: 1647). The above dictum, however, does not exclude the rare case where even the hadiths of reliable and prolific hadith collectors could be rejected. For this reason, we find scholars like al-Dāraquṭnī, and others, isolating the hadiths of Mālik, which his other contemporaries did not transmit from his famous teacher al-Zuhrī.

If the common link was of a moderate rank of reliability, then even though his normal hadith transmission was accepted in normal circumstances, his *tafarrudāt* was not always accepted. Critics were hesitant to accept his isolated single hadith. Questions like: '*why is he the only one transmitting?*'; *where were other hadith scholars when his teacher lectured this hadith to him?*' would be in the mind of many critics. Therefore, transmitting an isolated single hadith would make this moderate reliable transmitter a target for suspicion of committing an error. To avoid accepting unreliable transmission or rejecting reliable transmission, critics considered surrounding evidence which included his teacher, his students, and the content of his hadith.

On the other hand, there were other transmitters that were on the borderline. These are *ṣadūq*, *maqbul* etc. The isolated single hadiths transmitted by these transmitters were

rejected unless they were corroborated. This applied generally to the generation of young Companions who were neither known for excessive hadith collection nor hadith transmission. If they transmitted a hadith from a famous hadith transmitter that other famous students of this teacher did not transmit, hadith critics rejected that hadith. We have seen Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal rejecting the hadith transmitted by al-‘Alā b. ‘Abd al-Raḥmān al-Ḥuraqī for no one besides him transmitted it from his father, though the version of Muhammad b. al-Munkar by passed al-‘Alā, it appears that hadith critics did not pay heed to this version. Al-‘Alā b. ‘Abd al-Raḥmān, therefore, remains the solely common link.

What I have noted so far above is regarding the common links in the generation of Successors or *ṭabaqāt al-tābi‘īn*. The generation that followed the *ṭabaqāt al-tābi‘īn* – the *tābi‘ al-tābi‘īn* generation, also has to be treated differently, for most of the hadiths have been recorded by now. This generation took most of their hadith from famous hadith transmitters like al-Zuhrī, Qatādah, Sulaymān al-A‘mash *et al.* Due to extensive travelling in this generation, very rarely do we find reliable common links if so properly investigated, for their teachers had plenty of students, and most of the hadiths have been collected by many hadith scholars already.

Using *tafarrud* or *madār al-isnād* analysis; and with the above explanation and elaboration, it is clear that *Muḥaddithūn* were thorough in their studies of hadiths. The concept of common link requires an extensive study of *mutūn* and *asānid*. It requires that enough isnads of one hadith be collected and their *mutūn* compared to judge the authenticity of one hadith. As we have seen above, conclusions about the common link can not be simply one solution: he is a fabricator. There are many considerations hadith critics deliberated before they concluded whether the hadith of this common link is to be accepted or rejected.

Chapter Six: The Common Links in Hadith

A case study

I

Introduction

This thesis is centred around the fact that there is a significant difference in methodology between the Muslim hadith critics and Orientalist scholars of hadith. Orientalists and Western scholars of hadith introduced diverse methodologies to date and establish the historicity of hadith reports. As we have seen, to establish the authenticity of a certain hadith, some used the *matn* or content-based method to critique the hadith, whereas others used the *isnad- analytical* method while others combined both the *matn* and *isnad* analysis.

On the other hand, Muslim scholars of hadith had a multifaceted and comprehensive methodology that is genuine and practical. We have seen in the previous chapters that though they focused mainly on the transmitter's integrity and accuracy, they also looked at circumstantial factors to ensure and establish that what he transmitted was correct. However, if the integrity and accuracy of a transmitter were questionable, then the hadith transmitted by him was rejected. Many a time even corroboration was not sought to elevate his hadith to the level of acceptability. However, if his integrity and accuracy were satisfactory, then before accepting his hadith, other factors were investigated. Being a common link was not the sole criterion for accepting or rejecting a hadith of any transmitter. However, Muslim hadith critics did not ignore the common link. They recognized the common link and dealt with it according to the circumstantial evidence surrounding the transmitter. Hereunder is the case study of two hadiths. I argue in the first hadith that there are several reasons that make a transmitter a common link. Fabrication was not the only reason why a transmitter became a common link. In addition, despite having a common link at the level of Successor or lower, or even in the case when some transmitters mistakenly ascribed a hadith to an earlier transmitter (e.g., a Companion), critics only accepted the hadith that fulfilled the criteria of acceptance, i.e., integrity, accuracy, and circumstantial corroboration, etc.

In the second hadith, I argue that despite having multiple chains that led to making several Companions seemingly common links of one hadith, this did not guarantee acceptance by hadith critics. Orientalists would probably have accepted a hadith transmitted in this manner as their methodology would not require them to check the integrity of the transmitters. Comparing the two approaches (Traditional and Orientalist), the objective of this exercise is to establish that Muslim hadith scholars utilised a thorough and multifaceted methodology to investigate the credibility of any given hadith. It is also to emphasise that traditional hadith critics knew about common links and dealt with them according to their status and reliability as hadith transmitters.

Choosing these two hadiths has much significance. Schacht, in many of his claims, suggested that the lawyers (*fuqaha*) after al-Shāfi'ī competed in fabricating hadiths to support their legal opinions and back-projected these to earlier authorities. While I do not reject the idea that people, towards the end of the 2nd, in the 3rd, and 4th centuries and so on, fabricated hadiths, I do not believe that Schacht was accurate in his application of the common link theory. His conclusions were based on an incomplete induction and observation. In response to Schacht, I say the fabrication of hadiths was not confined to matters of law only. Additionally, it was mostly unreliable transmitters who were involved in back-projecting hadiths and intentionally or mistakenly ascribed them to the earlier authorities. In fact, by back projecting the hadith to the earlier authorities, from the hadith critics' perspective, the transmitter lost his credibility as a hadith transmitter if he was found guilty of this practice. These cases of back-projection were observed and criticised by hadith critics. Forged traditions were not missed by hadith critics. They were, rather, recorded, and unscrupulous transmitters were exposed. Hadith critics issued warning against them.

Before discussing the two hadiths, it is important to first clarify a few points about common links. The similarities and dissimilarities of both these terms must be clarified if one wants to reach a just and fair conclusion regarding the concept of the common link. The Common Link and *madār al-isnād* have a complex DNA within the broader studies of hadith. Both concepts are connected to hadith transmission. In their conceptualization of a common link, western scholars were concerned with identifying a common link as a narrator, knowing his teachers and those who transmitted from him. It was also important to know the kinds of hadith he transmitted. For Muslim hadith scholars, the

conceptualization of *madār al-hadith* has a much wider coverage than the common link in western hadith scholarship.⁸² Therefore, for a person to have a fair judgment on the historicity of hadiths with common links, one must understand the approaches of traditional Muslim scholars when dealing with transmitters and figures that sit as common links in hadiths. In addition, one also needs to understand the assumptions of Traditional Muslim scholars of hadith, Orientalists, and Revisionists. In a nutshell, traditional Muslim critics dealt with hadith transmitters using information that they gleaned either through their personal interactions with transmitters themselves or using information they received from the scholars, whom they had trust and faith in, who documented the biographical information of these transmitters.

As mentioned earlier, the Muslim scholar studied hadith to improve his moral behaviour towards his Creator. He strove to live his life as God wanted him to live. Therefore, he made every necessary effort to ensure the authenticity of hadith. On the other hand, an Orientalist or a Revisionist studies Islam, particularly hadith, and does not go beyond a literary engagement and the investigation of some historical information. How an Orientalist scholar values hadith, therefore, differs from how a traditional Muslim scholar values hadith.

However, dealing with common links, it is imperative to first define the common link and its equivalent terms in traditional hadith terminologies.

Definitions of 'Common Links' and its equivalent terms in Hadith science

In this study, compound words like common link, common links, and *madār al-isnād* have been used. These words are similar in their literal meanings but are different in their technical meanings and application. Therefore, to distinguish what meanings are intended, I have followed it up with the phrase 'theory, or theories' when the technical meanings are intended, except for the phrase *madār al-isnād*, which in view of this study already assumes the technical term. Therefore, following Amin Kamaruddin, I have defined a common link in my study as: 'The earliest transmitter from whom multiple isnad strands

⁸² For details, see Ozkan, 2004, The Common Link and its relation to the Madār, *Islamic law and society*, Vol. 11, No. 1, pp. 42-77.

begin to fan out' (Kamaruddin, 2005, p.117) or, as Motzki defined it, the earliest transmitter all traditions have in common (Voort, 2010, p. 307). A common link is, therefore, 'A point upon which all men of any particular hadith or isnād converge'. According to Orientalists and Revisionists scholars, the common link theory is a theory regarding a person from whom the hadith becomes common, and probably he is also the one responsible for creating and or circulating that particular hadith. In traditional hadith nomenclature *madār al-isnād* can be translated as a common link.⁸³ There are other terms in traditional hadith sciences that are used to identify common links from different perspectives. These terms include *marji ' al-isnād*, (Ibn Ḥajar, 1422, p. 65); *makhraj [al-hadith]*, *al-munfarid*, *al-fard*, *tafarrud al-rāwī*, etc. (al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī, 2007, vol. 1, p. 49 and 354). When defining the *hadith ḥasan*, al-Khaṭṭābī (d. 463) used the word *makhraj* to mean the central figure or the source: '... *wa al-ḥasan mā 'urifa makhrajuh washtahara rijāluh*' (a *ḥasan hadith* is that which its main figure is recognized and [also all] its transmitters are well-known) (al-Khaṭṭābī, 1932, vol. 1, p. 6). Abū Bakr ibn al-'Arabī, in clarifying al-Khaṭṭābī's statement, pointed out that in the Baṣran ḥadiths, the major hadith figure would be Qatādah (d. circa 118), in the Kūfan hadiths the major hadith figure would be Abū Ishāq al-Sabī'ī (d. 129), in the Madanite hadiths the major hadith figure would be Ibn Shihāb al-Zuhrī (d. 125), and in the Meccan hadiths the major hadith figure would be 'Aṭā (Ibn al-'Arabī, vol. 1, p. 15). These transmitters were the common links for many hadiths in their regions. Ibn Ḥajar al-'Asqalānī also clarified it in the same way Ibn al-'Arabī did. In his *al-Nukat 'alā ibn al-Ṣalāḥ*, he says: "If the Baṣran hadith comes from Qatādah then that hadith would generally be known. If it comes from someone else besides him, then that hadith would [most probably] be *shādh* (anomalous) (Ibn Ḥajar, 1984, vol. 1, p. 405). From the above statements, we infer that a

⁸³ Juynboll mentioned in some of his studies the term *madār* as also an obvious equivalent term to common link. Halit Ozkan, however, has contended that Juynboll's claim that a common link is equivalent to that of Muslim hadith scholars' *madār* is inaccurate. He argued that there is a significant difference between the understanding and the use of *madār* by Muslim hadith scholars and Juynboll's notion of common link theory. The present writer, however, despite agreeing with Ozkan's main arguments, admits that the term common link is indeed equivalent to *madār al-hadith*, though not in all aspects of its application, but rather, in identifying main figures in hadith transmission. See Juynboll, *Nāfi ' the Mawlā of Ibn 'Umar*, pp. 214-5; *Muslim Tradition*, p. 164; *Early Islamic Society as Reflected in its use of Isnād*, pp. 1-2; Ozkan, (2004), *The Common Link and Its Relation to the Madar*, *Islamic Law and Society*, vol. 11, No. 1, pp. 42-77

common link is a narrator who narrates a hadith that none of his contemporaries has narrated in the exact matter but has several students transmitting particular hadith from him. In this way, he can be a Companion, a Successor or belonging to later generations.

Scholars of hadith also used the above-mentioned terms in their discussion about *'illah*.⁸⁴ As we will see in the proceeding discussions, the term *madār* by itself does not qualify or disqualify a hadith or a transmitter for acceptance. Hadith critics have always added phrases or terms of *jarḥ* or *ta'dīl* to characterize the status of the hadith or the transmitter. Thus, we read phrases such as *madār hādha al-ḥadīth fulān wa huwa ḍa'īf* (Ozkan 2004, p. 61).

In this study, I will deal with common links in the same way traditional hadith scholars dealt with *madār al-isnad* and *tafarrud al-rāwī*.

Importance of knowing common links in the hadith

Common links in hadith play a crucial role in the study of hadith criticism. Hadith critics, after investigating many *asānīd*, use the *madār al-isnād* or common links to identify the hadith. Knowing the scholars and transmitters who served as common links was important for hadith critics. This helped them identify hadith and to clarify defects or *'ilal* in that specific hadith. Depending on the *ṭabaqah* (generation) of the *madār al-isnād* of a common link, critics sometimes used his solitariness in transmitting a hadith to judge his integrity and [or] his accuracy. The hadith of breaking ablution (*wuḍū*) because of loud laughter in ṣalah was rejected by scholars of hadith because its common link is Abu al-*'Āliyah* Rufay' b. Mihrān (d. ca. 90-93) was criticized for making *irsāl*. Ibn *'Adī* (d. 365) said: "All the transmitters who transmitted this hadith transmitted it from Abu al-*'Āliyah*. This is his hadith, and the hadith is known by him (*wa al-ḥadīth laḥū wa biḥī yu'raf*) (Ibn *'Adī*, 1997, vol. 4, p. 105). The hadith of raising hands only at the beginning of the prayer is identified by Yazīd b. Abī Ziyād (al-Ḥazimī, 1359, p. 14). On the hadith: "*idhā kānat maniyyah aḥdikum bi arḍⁱⁿ quyyiḍat lahu al-ḥājah, faya' mid ilayhā...* (When death of any of you is destined in a certain location, a need is created for him in that location and he

⁸⁴ *'Illah* (literary: cause, ailment, flaw etc.) in hadith science is a hidden defect that impugns the soundness of hadith (Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ, *Muqaddimah*, p. 90).

goes for it ...)", Ibn Abī Ḥātim identified it by 'Umar b. 'Alī b. Muqaddam. He is the only one who narrated it from Ismā'īl b. Abī Khālid. Muhammad b. Khālid al-Wahbī followed him in his transmission (... *hādha al-hadith ma'rūfūn bi 'Umar b. 'Alī b. Muqaddam. Tafarrada bihī 'an Ismā'īl b. Abī Khālid. Wa tāba 'ahū 'alā riwāyatih Muhammad b. Khālid al-Wahbī*) (Ibn Abī Ḥātim al-Rāzī, 2006, vol. 3, p. 546). In other words, though Muhammad b. Khālid al-Wahbī transmitted this hadith from Ismā'īl b. Abī Khālid, the primary transmitter from Ismā'īl is 'Umar b. 'Alī b. Muqaddam. The hadith, is, thus, known to be the hadith of 'Umar, who was initially the only transmitter from Ismā'īl b. Abī Khālid.

In many instances, hadith critics would make it clear that transmitter **A** narrated such hadith from teacher **B**. Therefore, if someone else narrates the same hadith from teacher **B**, then they consider the hadith of that particular transmitter as *munkar* (lit. unfamiliar) or *gharīb* (lit. strange). Regarding the hadith that states: "A disbeliever eats with seven stomachs whereas a believer eats with one stomach", Imam al-Tirmidhī declared *gharīb* the version that goes to Abū Mūsā. He said: "*hadhā ḥadīth^{un} gharīb^{un} min hādha al-wajh min qibal isnādih. Wa qad ruwiya min ghayr wajhⁱⁿ 'an al-Nabiyy ṣallaLlah 'alayh wa sallam. Wa innamā yustaghrab min hadith Abī Mūsā*" (Ibn Rajab, 1987, vol. 1, p. 438).

Knowing the common links has been one of the effective ways of collecting the hadith since the 2nd century of Islam. 'Abd al-Rahmān b. Mahdī has been reported that one cannot be qualified for the title of *Imām* if he transmits from everyone. One will not become *Imām* as long as he does not know the *makhraj al-hadith*, i.e. common links (al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī, 2007, vol. 1, p. 137).

Critics of hadith would attend the classes of hadith scholars even if the teachers were unreliable transmitters. Al-Ḥākim said: "The great scholars' intention was to know the (*madār al-ḥadīth*) for the hadith and whether the common links are trustworthy or not" (al-Ḥākim al-Naysābūrī, 2003, p. 40; Ibn Rajab, 1987, p. 89).

The importance of knowing *madār al-isnād* or common links becomes clear when a critic deals with the hadith with hidden defects or *'ilal*, particularly to ascertain whether the hadith contains a defect or not. To ascertain whether the hadith has a defect or not, it mostly depends on knowing the *madār al-isnad*. Without a proper assessment of the common link, one is unable to reach proper conclusions of whether it is a substantial difference in wording or is completely another hadith. Knowing and identifying a *madār*

al-isnad is a step towards approving or disproving the authenticity of a hadith as it helps, if there are contradictions, to identify the transmitter that is contradicting and how he contradicts (al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī, 2007, vol. 1, p. 253).

In addition to knowing the individuals who are the *madār al-isnād* or common links in hadiths, it is also important to know how many texts of hadiths the common links transmitted. This helps discover errors in students of the common links if a student transmits a hadith that is not part of the collections of the *madār al-isnād*. Therefore, it is also important to know individuals who transmitted from a common link. For this reason, Historians and critics of hadith paid due attention to counting and explaining how many hadiths each narrator transmitted. As we have seen above, Ibn Ḥazm counted the hadiths each Companion transmitted. If a transmitter was not of the noted scholars and he transmitted a hadith known to be part of the noted scholar's collection, that would create suspicion about his credibility, and thus, he would be declared weak. Juwaybir b. Sa'īd al-Balkhī and Rawwād b. al-Jarrāḥ, for example, were both criticized for transmitting hadiths they were not known for (al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī, 2007, vol. 1, p. 276).⁸⁵ Abū 'Iṣām Rawwād b. al-Jarāḥ was disparaged by Yahyā b. Ma'īn for transmitting from al-Thawrī from al-Zubayr b. 'Adī from Anas such hadiths that were not known to be from the collection of Sufyān (al-Junayd, 1988, pp. 299-300). For that reason, Aḥmad commented about Rawwād's transmission from Sufyān that "*ḥaddatha 'an Sufyān aḥādīth manākir*. ([Rawwād] transmitted unknown hadiths from Sufyān)" (Aḥmad, 2001, vol. 2, p. 31).

On one occasion, al-Tirmidhī transmitted a hadith from some of his teachers: Abū Kurayb, Abū Hishām al-Rifā'ī, Abu al-Sā'ib and al-Ḥusayn b. al-Aswad. Al-Tirmidhī asked several of his teachers, and they all acknowledged it to be Abū Kurayb's version. Al-Bukhārī, for example, when al-Tirmidhī informed him that several of his teachers transmitted the same hadith from Abū Usāmah, al-Bukhārī was stunned and commented

⁸⁵ Juwaybir b. Sa'īd al-Azdī al-Balkhī (d. ca 150), the scholar of *tafsīr* and famous student of al-Ḍaḥḥāk (d. ca. 105) was disparaged by Yahyā b. Sa'īd al-Qaṭṭān for transmitting hadiths beyond what he was known for. "I knew Juwaybir, said al-Qaṭṭān, with two hadiths only. Thereafter, he started transmitting other hadiths. It was for this reason that he was declared weak." Al-Bukhārī, *al-Du'afā al-kabīr*, p. 58. For Juwaybir's biography, see *Tahdhīb al-kamāl*, vol. 5, pp. 167-171.

that we know this hadith as Abū Kurayb is the only one who transmitted it. No one that I know transmitted it besides him. It appears that all who transmitted the hadith from Abū Usāmah, they all took it from Abū Kurayb and knavishly skipped him as if they got the hadith directly from Abū Usāmah. Abū Hishām, Abū al-Sā'ib, and Ḥusayn b. al-Aswad were all disparaged in one way or another (al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī, 2007, vol. 1, pp. 297, 298).

The Process of finding common links in hadith

There are many ways of finding common links in hadiths. Every scholar prefers his own method of finding a common link in a hadith. One method of getting to identify the common links in the hadith is to start with the *matn* with one Companion during the process of making *takhrīj*. Collecting all students of the said Companion of that particular *matn*, and carefully checking their identity to avoid confusion with other names, for sometimes different transmitters, share the same names and sometimes one transmitter is known with different identities. Once all students of that particular Companion are identified, one will do the same thing with regard to their students until he reaches the collectors or the author of the source one is using. Once that particular isnād is dealt with, one moves into searching for another Companion who transmitted the exact same text. One should be careful as sometimes the hadith resembles another similar hadith but is completely different from it. And many a time, words of the hadith vary from one Companion to another.

The other way of identifying a common link is to first collect the version transmitted by the first generation, i.e., the Companions. Once all Companions are identified, then search for the second generation. In other words, every Companions' students are studied thoroughly before studying their students and so on. In this study, I will be flexible in using both the above-mentioned methods. I will not restrict myself to one specific method.

After collecting the hadith from all possible sources, or selected sources, a researcher will reach one of the following conclusions:

- all the *turuq* meet up at one point, generally a famous hadith collector or well-known scholar of hadith whose reputation is established by hadith critics. This person is a

common link or *madār al-isnād* in Arabic terms. In hadith nomenclature literature, it is known as *fard muṭlaq*

- all the *ṭuruq* converge on a Companion of the Prophet, thus, that Companion is the common link or *madār al-isnād*. If one of the versions differs from the rest, then only that particular version is known as *fard nisbī*
- The hadith has several isnād from different Companions. This might be *mashhūr*, or even *mutawātir* – depending on the number of transmitters in each *ṭabaqah*

Once the common link is identified, the hadith critic is now able to thoroughly study the hadith for its authenticity. He is also able to identify the region from where the hadith became famous.⁸⁶ For this reason, scholars of hadith would sometimes identify a hadith by region. They would say this hadith is a Madinite hadith, or a Kufan hadith, or Baṣrite hadith, or Shamite hadith etc. By identifying the region where the hadith became famous, one critic is also able to discover hidden defects (*‘illah*) easily. Thus, identifying a common link in hadith is a steppingstone to knowing whether the hadith is authentic or not. The hadith critic should always ask, is the *tafarrud* of this common link acceptable or not? If the common link is not accepted, then his *tafarrud* is a sign of *‘illah* in the hadith, hence rejected. If he is reliable that generally his *tafarrud* is accepted, then questions such as ‘is this particular hadith acceptable or not’ should further be asked. Therefore, a common link can be in one of the famous chains of hadith that has been declared the most authentic isnād. He could also be in a fabricated copy of a hadith booklet (*nuskah*). Yaḥyā b. Ma‘īn memorized the hadiths in which the common link was a *kadhdhāb* so that, in future, no person should replace a *kadhdhāb* transmitter with a reliable transmitter. These hadiths were collected in a copy that was known as the *Ṣaḥīfah Ma‘mar ‘an Abān ‘an Anas* (Ibn Ḥibbān, 1402, vol. 1, pp. 31-32). Abān was declared unreliable by many hadith critics and was a common link for the hadiths contained in this copy.

⁸⁶ This does not presume, however, that the hadith was fabricated in that region or came into existence in that period.

II

The Case study: hadith 1

“al-Dīn al-Naṣīḥah...”

As indicated in the introduction to this chapter, we will see through the detailed analysis of the hadith *al-Dīn al-naṣīḥah* that sometimes a transmitter became a common link while a hadith was already in circulation. Reasons for a transmitter becoming a common link are many. The hadith below shows that the hadith was already in circulation. Suhayl b. Abi Salih only became a common link when some hadith scholars inquired from him for some clarity, for some hadith scholars confused the transmission of this hadith with another hadith.

The hadith of the Prophet “*al-Dīn al-naṣīḥah ‘Dīn (Religion) is well-wishing, advice, sincerity’. We (Companions) asked: For whom? He replied, For Allah, His Messenger and the leaders of the Muslims and their masses*”. This hadith was transmitted by several Companions and was recorded in several sources of Sunnī hadith collections. Early critics, however, did not always consider multiple isnāds as sufficient evidence of the authenticity of a hadith by itself without looking at the circumstantial evidence because this could suggest possible weaknesses.

The hadith “*al-Dīn al-Naṣīḥah*” from Tamīm al-Dārī revolves around Suhayl b. Abī Ṣāliḥ (d. between 137 and 158H). Suhayl is, therefore, a common link in this hadith. Scholars of hadith accepted this hadith, for Suhayl was reliable and known for his reliable transmission of hadith. In addition, Suhayl did not contradict any transmitter more reliable than him, at least in this hadith.

The information represented in figure 9 may be summarized as follows. The Prophetic saying was transmitted from a Companion, Tamīm b. Aws al-Dārī⁸⁷ (d. 40) and it is recorded more than 55 times in different Sunnī hadith sources. Tamīm al-Dārī transmitted this hadith to ‘Aṭā b. Yazīd al-Laythī (d. ca 105).

⁸⁷ There are many virtues recorded in favour of Tamīm al-Dārī. The hadith scholars take a keen interest when a Senior scholar transmits from the junior, a phenomenon known as *riwāyah al-akābir ‘an aṣāghir*. Tamīm is the only Companion from whom the Prophet transmitted a hadith, i.e. the hadith of *al-Jassāsah*.

According to the version of Suhayl, ‘Aṭā b. Yazīd informed Abū Ṣāliḥ, the father of Suhayl b. Abī Ṣāliḥ. But some people, however, confused the source of Abū Ṣāliḥ in this hadith with his usual teacher Abū Hurayrah. Thanks to Suhayl, who was present at the time when ‘Aṭā transmitted it to Suhayl’s father, Abū Ṣāliḥ. He, therefore, transmitted it directly from ‘Aṭā, his father’s colleague from Shām. Thus, it is evident that ‘Aṭā was supposed to be the common link in the hadith of Tamīm. However, due to Abū Ṣāliḥ’s version from Tamīm not surviving, at least so in the sources available to this writer, Suhayl – Abū Ṣāliḥ’s son happened to be the common link. So, the real common link is not always the transmitter depicted in the sources available to us. Sometimes, his version of the hadith did not survive except in passing.

As said above, traditional scholars, when dealing with common links of Successors, also investigated the credibility of the students of the common link to ascertain whether their hadiths were acceptable or not, for sometimes the problem came from lower down the isnād.⁸⁸ After investigating the hadith of “*al-Dīn al-naṣīḥah*”, one finds that more than thirteen individuals transmitted this hadith from Suhayl. Most of these individuals were not ordinary hadith transmitters; rather, they were hadith critics, ranging from the end of the first century to the second century, coming from different regions. Books on *rijāl* reveal to us that though Suhayl was not of the highest level of transmitters in terms of his memory, his integrity was well recognised. Even the critics who were reluctant about his *ḍabt*, only referred to the last part of his life (Ibn Ḥajar al-‘Asqalānī, 1991).⁸⁹ Muslim relied so much on his transmission to the extent that he used his hadith not just as auxiliary and supportive reports but also as primary reports. Al-Bukhārī, on the other hand, though he has used his hadiths in his Ṣaḥīḥ sparingly, in that he only transmitted his hadith in conjunction with, at least, one other transmitter of the same *ṭabaqah*, beyond his Ṣaḥīḥ found no problem in accepting his traditions. His hadith appears in al-Bukhārī’s *al-Adab al-mufrad*, at least thirteen times. In his *Khalq af‘āl al-‘ibād*, al-Bukhārī has two hadith. One of the two hadiths that is reported speaks about beautifying the recitation of the Qur’ān (al-Bukhārī, 1978). However, in this report, it appears that

⁸⁸ This is, of course, in light of the order we explained above that Muslim scholars arrange the diagram of isnad wherein the early authorities are placed on the top of the isnad.

⁸⁹ For more details on his reliability see, al-Mizzī, 1980, *Tahdhīb al-Kamāl*.

al-Bukhārī did not approve of its authenticity for he used *ṣīghah al-tamrīd*. The Other hadith speaks about a man that was stung by a scorpion, and the Prophet taught him words to say as protection from any harmful creatures. In this hadith, al-Bukhārī brought few *turuq* reaching Suhayl (al-Bukhārī, 1978, p. 97).

Returning to the hadith of “*al-Dīn al-naṣīḥah*”, Suhayl transmitted it to many students. In our present study, we have confined ourselves to only thirteen students of Suhayl b. Abī Ṣāliḥ. These individuals transmitted the hadith to the next generation of hadith critics.

Suhayl’s students, in this hadith, were not ordinary transmitters. They were great scholars of hadith of their time from different regions. In the region of Kūfah, Baṣrā Wāsiṭ were scholars such as Sulaymān b. Ṭarkhān al-Taymī (d. 143), Sufyān al-Thawrī, Wuhayb (d. between 165-169), Jarīr b. Ḥāzim (d. 170), Zuhayr (d. 173), Rawḥ b. al-Qāsim (d. 173), Khālīd b. ‘Abd Allah al-Waṣiṭī (d. 179/182), all transmitted this hadith from Suhayl. And in the region of Ḥijāz, Yaḥyā b. Sa‘īd al-Anṣārī (d. 143), al-Ḍaḥḥāk b. ‘Uthmān (d. 153), Mālik (d. 179), Sufyān b. ‘Uyaynah (d. 198), Muhammad b. Ja‘far b. Abī Kathīr al-Anṣārī also learned the hadith from Suhayl. In the region of Khurāsān, Ibrāhim b. Ṭahmān (d. between 158 – 168), and in the region of Shām, Ismā‘īl b. ‘Ayyāsh transmitted the same hadith from Suhayl. It would be a strange or a remarkable coincidence that all these students of Suhayl, living in these different regions and cities, acting independently of one another, transmitting the same hadith and tracing it back to the Prophet by means of fabricated isnād, all of which converge on one source. Therefore, the theory of Schacht and Juynboll, here cannot be substantiated if taken into account that Suhayl transmitted this hadith to so many students who were critics of hadith themselves. Otherwise, one has to believe that Suhayl convinced such a large group of critics who lived in different regions. Such a possibility is indeed hard to credit.

What is interesting here is that in the lower generation, we find some later transmitters ascribing the hadith to other Companions, which has been shown to be a mix up . In other words, if one asks, to whose *musnad* does this hadith belong? ‘Amr b. Dīnār transmitted it from al-Qa‘qā‘ from Suhayl’s father Abū Ṣāliḥ, who in turn transmitted the hadith from

his famous teacher and mentor Abū Hurayrah.⁹⁰ This, however, did not bypass hadith critics. Ibn ‘Uyaynah, through his investigation, managed to find out that there was a mistake in the version of ‘Amr b. Dīnār. When Sufyān b. ‘Uyaynah met Suhayl he enquired, ‘Tell us about the hadith ‘Amr is transmitting from al-Qa‘qā’ from your father. Did you hear it from your father? Suhayl said: ‘‘I heard it from the person whom my father heard. He was my father’s friend from Shām. His name was ‘Aṭā b. Yazīd al-Laythī. I heard him saying that he heard this hadith from Tamīm al-Dārī from the Messenger of Allah.

The hadith was also ascribed to different Companions besides Tamīm al-Dārī by some scholars.⁹¹ These Companions include:

Abū Hurayrah:

His version is found in eighteen places of different Sunnī sources. Most *asānīd* (sing. *isnād*) of this version is < Abū Ṣāliḥ [c] < Abū Hurayrah. Abū Ṣāliḥ is thus a common link.

Ibn ‘Umar:

His version is found at least in fifteen places of different Sunnī sources. The *asānīd* of this version are as follows: Nāfi‘ < Ibn ‘Umar. In some collections, the version of Ibn ‘Umar is corroborated by Zayd b. Aslam. Apart from the version of Ibn ‘Umar in *Musnad al-Shihāb al-Quḍā’ī*, all versions to Ibn ‘Umar were transmitted by Hishām b. Sa‘d from Nāfi‘.

Ibn ‘Abbās:

His version is found in seven places of different Sunnī sources. The *asānīd* of this version are ‘Amr b Dīnār < Ibn ‘Abbās. Though ‘Amr b. Dīnār is a reliable transmitter;

⁹⁰ On Abū Hurayrah, See, Kamaruddin, 2005, *The reliability of Ḥadīth - Transmission A Re-examination of Ḥadīth- Critical Methods*.

⁹¹ The more details on these hadiths, see the appendix ii

it is not clear whether he heard this version directly from Ibn ‘Abbās. It is reported in Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal’s version that ‘Abd al-Raḥmān said that he heard ‘Amr b. Dīnār saying, “I heard the person who heard Ibn ‘Abbās.” Similarly, the omission of a transmitter between ‘Amr b. Dīnār and Ibn ‘Abbās has been recorded in the collection of Ibn Abī Ḥātim. In his *‘Ilal al-hadith*, Ibn Abī Ḥātim asked his father about the hadith “*al-Dīn al-naṣīḥah*” through the isnād of ‘Amr b. Dīnār ‘an rajul^m ‘an Ibn ‘Abbās. His father commented that this version was an error (Ibn Abī Ḥātim al-Rāzī, 2006). As we have explained earlier, if a transmitter is not known, either due to him being omitted or due to his biographical information being unknowable, then his hadith is not accepted.

Thawbān

His version is found in four places from different sources. Similar to the version of Ibn ‘Abbās above, Abū Ḥātim al-Rāzī declared this version to be *munkar* that is weak (Ibn Abī Ḥātim al-Rāzī, 2006).

Zayd b. Aslam

Most of the versions of Zayd b. Aslam’s hadith were transmitted together with the version of Ibn ‘Umar. Hishām b. Sa’d is the transmitter from Zayd b. Aslam. Ja‘far b. ‘Awn, Abū Hammām b. al-Dallāl, Ibn Abī Fudayk, and Ḥafṣ b. Ghiyāth; all transmitted it from Hishām b. Sa’d.

Coming back to the version of Suhayl, Mālik also transmitted it from Suhayl, from his father Abū Ṣāliḥ, from Abū Hurayrah (al-Bukhārī, 1977). Hadith Critics, however, criticized Mālik and ascribed *wahm* to him for having such a version as all students of Suhayl transmitted the hadith from ‘Aṭā b. Yazīd al-Laythī. As we clarified in chapter three that, even the most reliable transmitter, if he contradicts transmitters more reliable than him, then many a time his hadith is rejected. However, other scholars would accept the hadith by the mere fact it was transmitted by a reliable scholar. This approach is significantly applied by later scholars. They, thus, authenticate both hadiths on the premises that Mālik, in the version of Abū Ṣāliḥ, and other versions besides Tamīm’s version, there still exists the possibility that transmitters got the same hadith from

different sources. This approach is mostly applied by later hadith scholars whose judicial concerns surpassed their hadith expertise. Ibn ‘Abd al-Barr, of the early-later hadith scholars and Aḥmad Shākīr of the past century, seem to have taken the later approach (Shākīr, 1995).

However, as emphasised, critics after establishing the integrity of a transmitter and accuracy in his transmission, the third tier is to find corroboration and no contradictions with other reliable transmitters. In this hadith, that was already observed by critics. al-Dāraquṭnī (d. 385) noted that all Students of Suhayl, like Sulaymān al-Taymī, Yaḥyā b. Sa‘īd al-Anṣārī, Sufyān b. ‘Uyaynah, Zuhayr b. Mu‘āwiyah, Khālīd b. ‘And Allah, Jarīr b. ‘Abd al-Ḥamīd, Muḥammad b. Ja‘far b. Abī Kathīr, Ibrāhīm b. Ṭuhmān and many others; all transmitted this hadith from Suhayl, from ‘Aṭā b. Yazīd al-Laythī from Tamīm al-Dārī (al-Dāraquṭnī, 1997, p. 112). Therefore, though Mālik is one of the highest and most esteemed hadith scholars, because here he is contradicted by more people who are all reliable, scholars of hadith did not accept Mālik’s version that attributes the hadith to Abū Hurayrah and the other versions ascribed to other than Tamīm al-Dārī. Had it been that Mālik was not contradicted by more transmitters who were reliable, hadith critics could have accepted his version from Abū Ṣāliḥ from Abū Hurayrah. The wrong version transmitted from al-Qa‘qā‘ from Suhayl from Abū Ṣāliḥ was clarified by Suhayl. Abū Ṣāliḥ was transmitting the hadith: “*inna Allah yardā lakum thalāth^{an}: yardā lakum an ta‘budūh wa lā tushrikū bihi shay^{an}, wa an ta‘taṣimū biḥabl Allah jamī^{an} wa lā tafarraqu wa an tunāṣiḥū man walla Allah amrakum.*” When Abū Ṣāliḥ narrating this hadith, his friend ‘Aṭā b. Yazīd al-Laythī listened. He then said: I heard Tamīm al-Dārī saying that he heard the Messenger of Allah saying: “*Innama al-Dīn al-Naṣīḥah...*” So, some transmitters got confused between the two hadiths.

There is one version, however, that by passes Suhaly. Ismā‘īl b. ‘Ubayd b. Abī al-Muhājir al-Qurashī (d. 131), the Damascene scholar and the teacher of ‘Abd al-Malik b. Marwān’s children transmitted the hadith directly from ‘Aṭā. In that case, he corroborated Suhayl b. Abī Ṣāliḥ (al-Aṣfahānī, 1997).

With the above *isnād* analysis, it can be concluded that a common link is not always responsible for fabricating the hadith. In addition, a common link to us could have only started to transmit the hadith that was already circulating. When Sufyān b. ‘Uyaynah

investigated the transmission of ‘Amr b. Dīnār from Abū Šāliḥ’s father, the hadith was already known to hadith critics. When ‘Aṭā b. Yazīd transmitted the hadith to his friend Abū Šāliḥ there were other people also present. But, as mentioned, not everyone who heard hadith became a hadith transmitter.

Though the hadith was transmitted by other Companions besides Tamīm al-Dārī, the hadith with the above wording was known to be the hadith of Tamīm b. Aws al-Dārī. For that reason, al-Bukhārī commented that “... *famadār hādha al-hadith kulluhū ‘alā Tamīm, wa lam yaṣihh ‘an aḥadⁱⁿ ghayr Tamīm*” (*Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, 1977, vol. 2, p. 36).



The diagram of the hadith “*al-Dīn al-Naṣīḥah*”

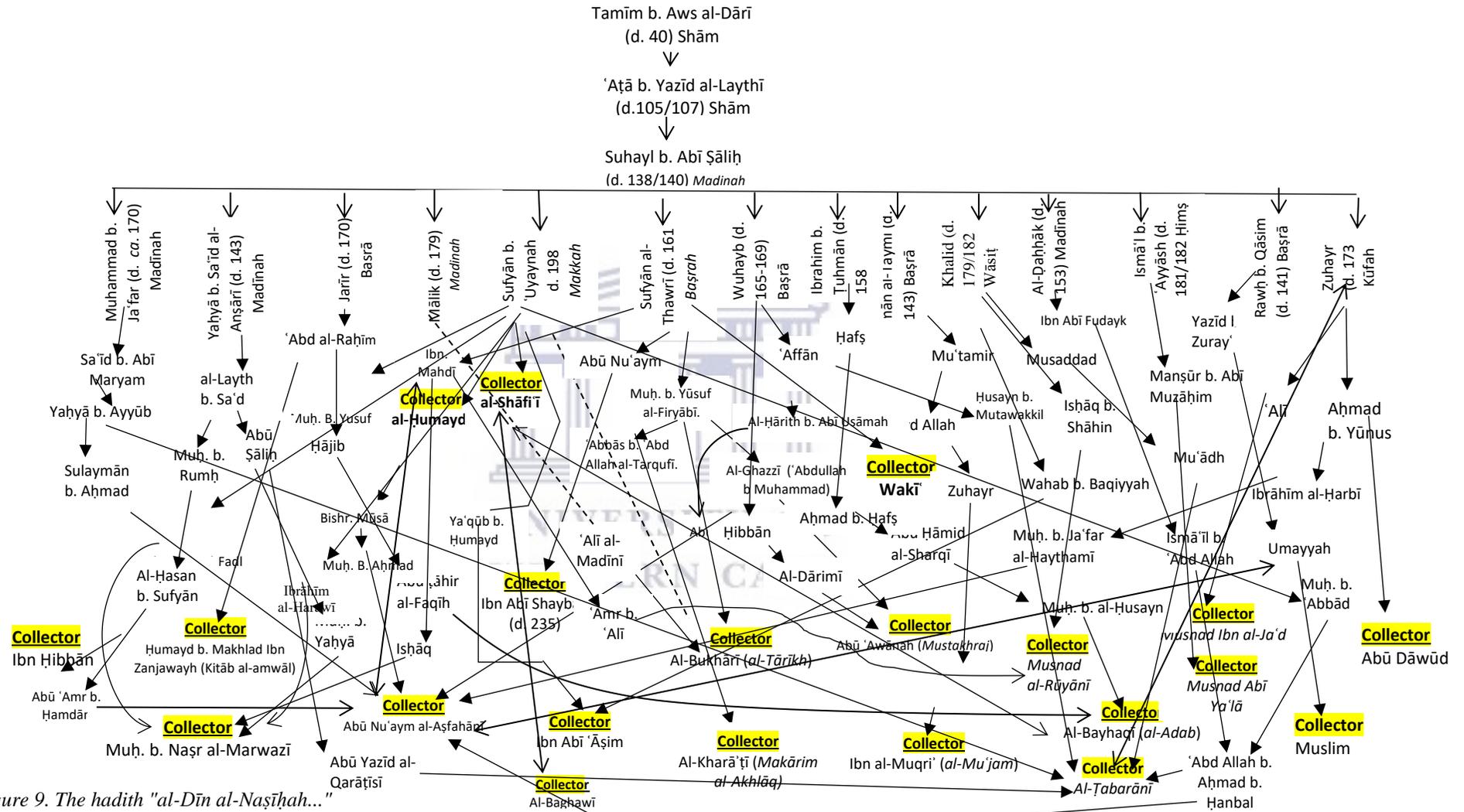


Figure 9. The hadith “*al-Dīn al-Naṣīḥah...*”

Abū Bakr Mālik

NB. Some asānīd are left out in the diagram due to space

→ : Direct link

- - - - : Broken link

↔ : Some names of the link are not mentioned in this diagram



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III

The Case study: hadith 2

‘Uṭlub al-khayra ‘inda ḥisān al-wujūh’

I argue that the common link phenomenon is clear in this second hadith example, ‘*Uṭlub al-khayra ‘inda ḥisān al-wujūh*’ (seek good by people with good and pleasant faces). I will show in the study of the common link of this hadith that hadith critics did not accept or reject a hadith solely based on the common link. As it will become clear, this hadith is recorded in many Sunnī hadith collections attributed to several Companions and Successors. I have only discussed the hadiths that are allegedly ascribed to the Prophet via the Companions. I have, therefore, left out the hadiths that are *mawqūfāt* and *maqṭū‘āt*.

This hadith is allegedly reported from Abū Hurayrah, Jābir, Ibn ‘Umar, Ibn ‘Abbās, Anas b. Mālik, Yazīd al-Qasmalī, ‘Ā’ishah, Abū Bakrah, and Abū Muṣ‘ab al- Anṣārī (Allah be pleased with them all).⁹² Hereunder, I have discussed the hadith of each Companion separately according to the methods employed by the hadith critics⁹³.

However, in dealing with a hadith, once a problematic transmitter is identified, I might not necessarily discuss all other transmitters in that specific version of the hadith, for the critics do not seek any corroboration for a hadith of a seriously problematic transmitter. If the transmitter was guilty of forging a hadith or lying, then no matter how many corroborating hadiths there are, his hadiths will not be raised to the level of acceptance.

⁹² This hadith has been transmitted with various wordings. For the sake of brevity, I have not discussed those variants here in this paper. However, as a reminder to the reader, here are some of those variations that include, but not exclusive to, wording like: اطلبوا الخير... اطلبوا حوائجكم ... ، اطلبوا الحوائج ...، التمسوا الخير etc.

⁹³ There are different ways of discussing the chain of transmitters. One may start from the top, i.e., the Companion, and then his disciple or Successor until the collector. Juynboll uses this order in most of his hadith studies. The other way is to start from the teachers of the collectors of hadith, moving up to the Companion or an alleged early authority of the tradition. It appears that Motzki prefers this order in his *isnad-cum- matn* analysis. I have not confined myself to any specific order.

The hadith “Uṭlub al-khayr ‘inda ḥisān al-wujūh”

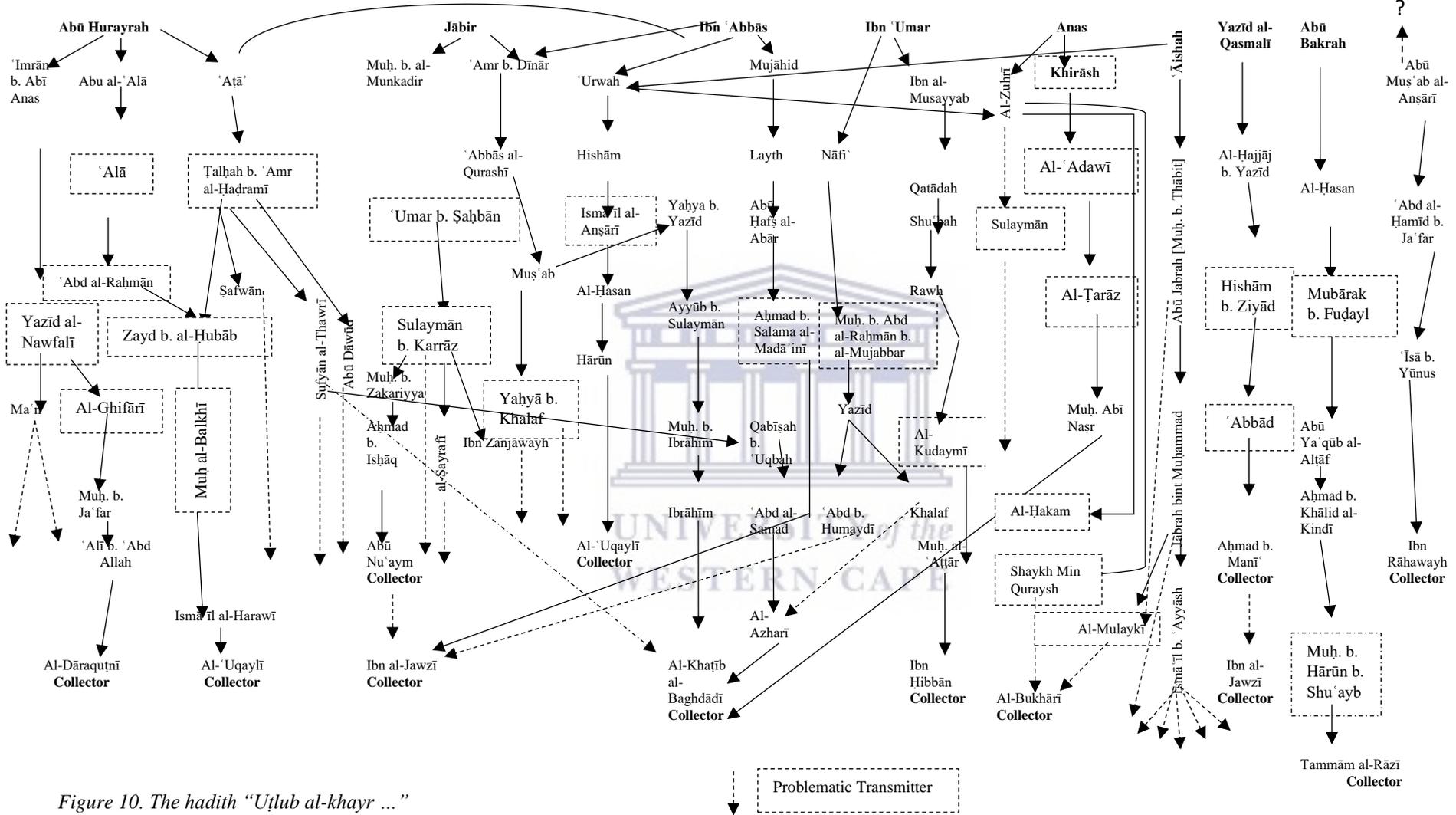


Figure 10. The hadith “Uṭlub al-khayr ...”

Critical analysis of the hadith “*Uḡlub al-khayra ‘inda ḥisān al-wujūh*”

The hadith of Abū Hurayrah

The hadith ascribed to Abū Hurayrah was recorded by Ibn Abi al-Dunyā (d. 281) in his *Qaḍā’ al-ḥājah*, p. 108, al-‘Uqaylī (d. 322) in his *al-Ḍu‘afā’ al-kabīr*, vol. 2, p. 230, al-Ṭabarānī (d. 360) in *al-Mu‘jam al-awsaṭ*, vol. 4, p. 129, Abu al-Shaykh al-Aṣḥānī (d. 369) in his *Kitāb amthāl al-hadith*, (p. 69), Tammām al-Rāzī (d. 414) in his *Fawā’id*, vol. 2, p. 298, Abū Nu‘aym al-Aṣḥānī (d. 430) in his *Tārīkh Aṣḥānī* vol. 2, p. 216.

This hadith was allegedly transmitted from Abū Hurayrah by three students:

- (1) ‘Aṭā
- (2) ‘Imrān b. Abī Anas
- (3) ‘Abd al-Raḥmān b. Ibrāhīm

(1) *The first version of the hadith of Abū Hurayrah: the hadith of ‘Aṭā*

The version of ‘Aṭā was further transmitted to Ṭalḥah b. ‘Amr al-Ḥaḍramī and from Ṭalḥah al-Ḥaḍramī it was transmitted to several hadith transmitters. At least four transmitters from Ṭalḥah have been identified:

- a. Sufyān al-Thawrī in *Fawā’id al-hadith* of Tammam al-Rāzī
- b. Zayd b. al-Ḥubāb in *Qaḍā’ al-ḥājah* of Ibn Abi al-Dunyā
- c. Abū Dāwūd al-Ṭayālīsī in *Tārīkh Aṣḥānī* of Abū Nu‘aym
- d. Ṣafwān b. ‘Isā in *al-Mu‘jam al-awsaṭ* of al-Ṭabarānī

The version of ‘Aṭā revolves around Ṭalḥah b. ‘Amr al-Ḥaḍramī, hence, Ṭalḥah is the common link. Since we found that he is the common link, our discussion will concentrate only on him. As mentioned earlier that the critics first focus on the *‘adālah* (integrity) of the hadith transmitters before accepting the hadith, so it is imperative, for our exercise here, that we first investigate Ṭalḥah b. ‘Amr’s integrity and accuracy when he transmits hadiths. For that, we must look at his biography and what scholars of hadith have said about him. Once we have established his integrity and that he was accurate in his transmission, we look at other criteria like contradictions, content criticism, and other circumstantial issues to ascertain the acceptability of his hadiths.

In his *Tārīkh al-kabīr* vol. 4, p.350, al-Bukhārī quoted ‘Aṭā saying that Ṭalḥah is *layyin* according to the hadith critics. Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal also considered him to be extremely weak “*lā shay‘, matrūk*” (Ibn Abī Ḥātim al-Rāzī, 1952, vol. 4, p. 478). Al-Nasā’ī is also reported to have reached the same conclusion that he was *matrūk* (Ibn ‘Adī, 1997, vol. 5, p. 171). Both Yaḥyā b. Ma‘īn and Abū Zur‘ah declared him weak (Ibn Abī Ḥātim al-Rāzī, vol. 4, p. 478). Even though Ibn Sa‘d commended Ṭalḥah for having plenty of hadiths, he disparaged him by stating that he is *da‘īf^{am} jiddā*, i.e., extremely weak (Ibn Sa‘d, 1990, vol. 6, p. 39). Ibn Ḥibbān was even more critical. He said: [Ṭalḥah] was amongst the people who ascribed hadiths to reliable transmitters that are not of their hadiths. One is neither permitted to copy his hadiths nor transmit from him except to express astonishment (Ibn Ḥibbān, 1988, vol. 1, p. 381). Ibn Ḥajar, like Al-Nasā’ī, also declared him *matrūk* (Ibn ‘Adī, 1997; Ibn Ḥajar al-‘Asqalānī, 1991). With the negative hadith status that Ṭalḥah b. ‘Amr al-Ḥaḍramī had, it is not surprising that none of the collectors of the six canonical hadith sources included Ṭalḥah’s hadiths in their most authentic hadith collections except Ibn Mājah. Be that as it may, from the above citations about Ṭalḥah’s hadith status, one is doubtful regarding the authenticity of the hadith that is transmitted via Ṭalḥah b. ‘Amr al-Ḥaḍramī. One would, therefore, be hesitant to accept this hadith as the statement of ‘Aṭā or Abū Hurayrah, let alone ascribe it to the Prophet, at least, not when the hadith is transmitted via Ṭalḥah b. ‘Amr al-Ḥaḍramī.

(2) *The second version of the hadith of Abū Hurayrah; the hadith of ‘Imrān b. Abī Anas*

The second version of Abū Hurayrah’s hadith was transmitted by ‘Imrān b. Abī Anas (d. 117), who transmitted it to Yazīd b. ‘Abd Malik al-Nawfalī (d. 165/167), and he transmitted it to Ma‘n [b. ‘Isā al-Qazzāz]. Two people transmitted this version from Ma‘n: (a) Mujāhid b. Mūsā in *Qaḍā’ al-ḥawā’ij* and (b) Ya‘qūb b. Ḥumayd b. Kāsib in *Kitāb amthāl al-hadith*. Ma‘n is, therefore, a partial common link in this line of transmission. It should be noted here that critics considered Ma‘n a reliable hadith transmitter. However, looking at another version cited by Ibn al-Jawzī in his *Kitāb al-mawḍū‘āt*, Yazīd had another student. He is ‘Abd Allah b. Ibrāhīm b. Abī ‘Amr al-Ghifārī. In this regard, Yazīd b. ‘Abd al-Malik al-Nawfalī appears to be the partial common link. Whether one takes Ma‘n b. ‘Isā, who is a reliable hadith transmitter as indicated above as a partial common link or Yazīd al-Nawfalī, this chain of transmission is still inauthentic for other credible reasons. All critics, besides Ibn Sa‘d, agreed that Yazīd was not reliable. There are many disparaging statements recorded against him. These statements vary from “unreliable”, “weak”, “*munkar al-hadith jidda*” i.e., extremely weak” – to “accused of lying whose hadiths deserve no consideration or attention”. All these statements indicate that

Yazīd al-Nawfalī was not reliable in hadith. In addition, ‘Abd Allah b. Ibrāhīm al-Ghifārī, the student of Yazīd in the version cited by Ibn al-Jawzī, also deserves attention. Al-‘Uqaylī (1984) observed his hadiths and commented that his hadiths are overwhelmed with mistakes “*yaghlib ‘alā ḥadīthih al-wahm*”. Ibn ‘Adī, al-Bazzār, and al-Bayhaqī, all agreed that ‘Abd Allah b. Ibrāhīm al-Ghifārī transmitted hadiths that were not supported by reliable transmitters. Abū Dāwūd calls him: *Shaykh^m munkar al-ḥadīth* (Abū Dāwūd, *al-Sunan*, hadith: 4846). Ibn Ḥibbān appeared to have believed him to be a hadith fabricator and said: “*yuḥaddith ‘an al-thiqāt bi al-maqlūbāt*, i.e., he ascribes interrupted hadiths to reliable people” (Ibn Ḥibbān, 1988). Since the hadith status of ‘Abd Allah b. Ibrāhīm and his teacher Yazīd, do not fit the criteria for accepting their hadiths as authentic; critics do not accept their hadiths. For that reason, this hadith is also rejected according to the criteria of hadith critics.

(3) *The third version of the hadith of Abū Hurayrah: the hadith of ‘Abd al-Raḥmān b. Ibrāhīm al-Qāḍī*

This version was recorded by al-‘Uqaylī in his *al-Du‘afā’ al-Kabīr*, vol. 2, p. 320. It was allegedly transmitted from Abū Hurayrah to Abu ‘Alā’ ‘Abd al-Raḥmān b. Ibrāhīm, and from him to his son al-‘Alā b. ‘Abd al-Raḥmān, and he transmitted it to ‘Abd al-Raḥmān b. Ibrāhīm. ‘Abd al-Raḥmān transmitted it to Muhammad b. al-Azhar al-Balkhī, and he, in turn, transmitted it to Ismā‘īl b. Maḥmūd al-Harawī. Al-‘Uqaylī recorded it in his *al-Du‘afā’ al-kabīr* from al-Harawī. It should be noted here that this is a single strand if looked at in solitude. However, since it is part of the broader hadiths transmitted from Abū Hurayrah, we must discuss its chain of transmitters. al-‘Alā b. ‘Abd al-Raḥmān, even though some hadith critics have a problem with him, many scholars accepted his transmission (al-Dhahabī, 1987, p. 139). However, the problem in this version is al-‘Alā’s student, ‘Abd al-Raḥmān b. Ibrāhīm al-al-Qāṣṣ al-Baṣrī. Al-Dāraquṭnī and many critics declared him weak. Abū Ḥātim, for example, said about him that he was not reliable in hadith and that he transmitted an anomalous hadith from al-‘Alā (*Laysa bi al-qawīyy, rawā ḥadīth^m munkar^m ‘an al-‘Alā*) (Ibn Abī Ḥatim al-Razī, 1952).

There is another problem in this *isnad*; that is Zayd b. al-Ḥubāb, the student of ‘Abd al-Raḥmān. Though he was considered reliable when he transmitted from well-known hadith transmitters, critics warned that when he transmitted from unknown and unreliable transmitters. Ibn Ḥibbān expressed this eloquently in his *Kitāb al-thiqāt*. He said: “*kāna min man yukḥṭī*’, *yu‘tabaru ḥadīthuh idhā rawā ‘an al-mashāhīr, wa ammā riwāyatuh ‘an al-majāhīl fa fīhā al-manākīr*”

(He used to make mistakes in hadith. His hadiths can be used for corroboration if he transmitted from known [and reliable] transmitters. However, if he transmitted from unknown transmitters then his *aḥādīth* are anomalous) (Ibn Ḥibbān, 1973). This means that all critics that praised him referred only to cases when his sources were well-known hadith transmitters. Here, unfortunately, he transmitted from ‘Abd al-Raḥmān b. Ibraḥīm al-Qāṣṣ whom al-‘Uqaylī said *laysa bi shay’* (al-Uqaylī, 1984).

In addition to all the above problems, we find the student of Zayd b. al-Ḥubāb, Muḥammad b. al-Azhar al-Balkhī yet to be another problematic transmitter. Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal warned that people should not copy any hadith from him, for he usually transmitted from liars (Ibn al-Jawzī, 1986). With all these considerations, it is concluded that all three versions of the hadith of Abū Hurayrah were not authentic and hence not acceptable. All the isnads leading to Abū Hurayrah in this hadith were weak with a strong possibility of being fabricated.

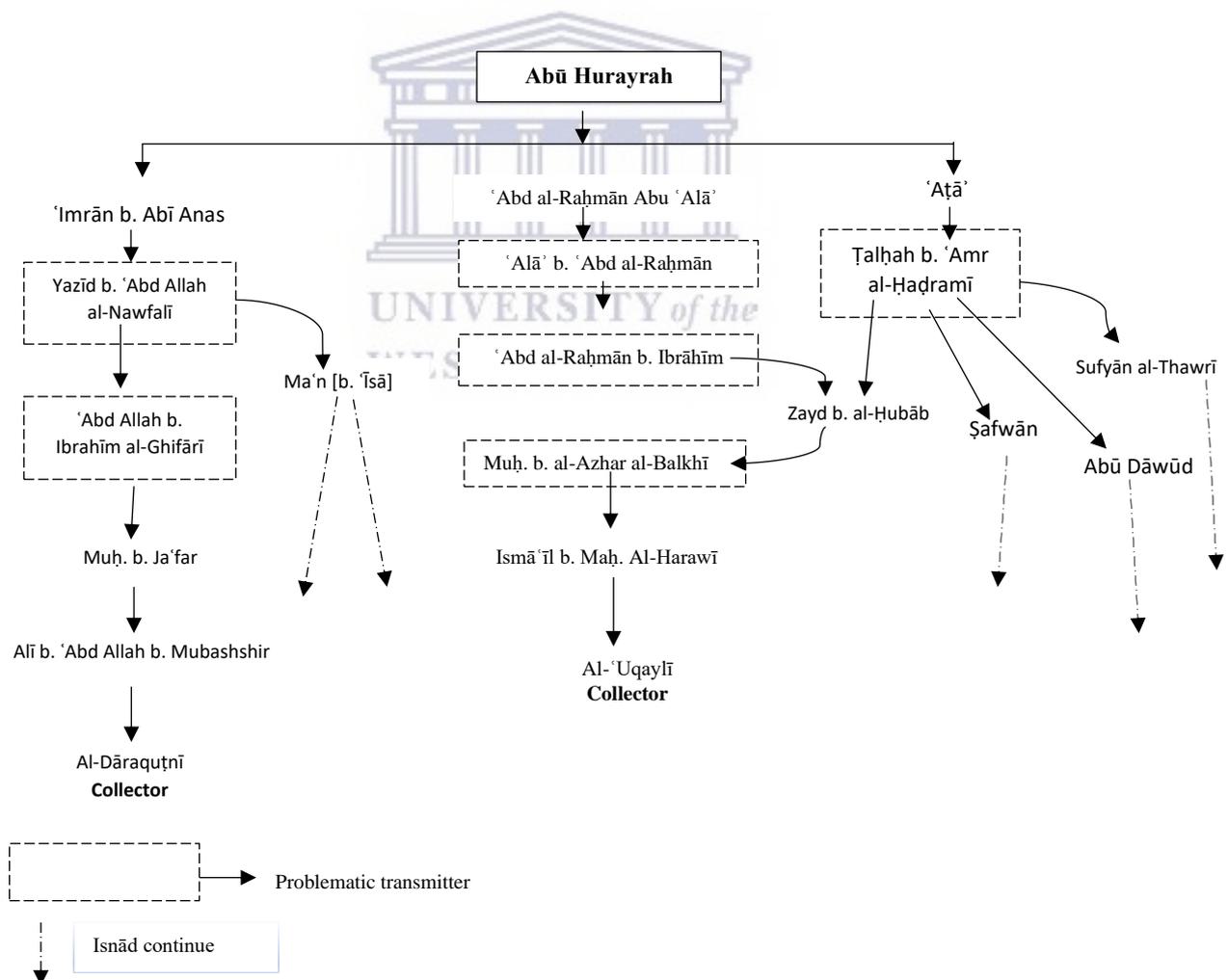


Figure 11. The hadith of Abū Hurayrah

The hadith of Jābir

The hadith of Jābir is recorded by al-‘Uqaylī in his *al-Ḍu‘afā’ al-kabīr*. vol. 2, p. 138, al-Ṭabarānī (d. 360) in *al-Mu‘jam al-awsaṭ*, vol. 6, p. 176, Abū Nu‘aym in his *Tārīkh Aṣbahān*, vol. 2, p. 188, and in his *Ḥilyah al-awliyā’*, vol. 3, p. 156, Tammām al-Rāzī in his *Fawā’id*, vol. 2, p. 187.

The hadith of Jābir is transmitted through two main *isnāds*:

- (a) The *isnad* to Muhammad b. al-Munkadir to Jābir; and,
- (b) The *isnad* to ‘Amr b. Dīnār to Jābir

The hadith of Muhammad b. al-Munkadir to Jābir:

The version of the hadith of Muhammad b. al-Munkadir is allegedly transmitted from him to ‘Umar b. Ṣuhbān al-Aslamī, and from him to Sulaymān Karrāz⁹⁴ al-Ṭufawī. From Sulaymān, the *isnad* fans out to various transmitters, viz: Muhammad b. Zakariyya, Aḥmad b. al-Aswad al-Ḥanaf, Hishām b. ‘Alī b. Hishām al-Ṣayrafī, Muḥammad b. Zanjawayh⁹⁵, and Ibrāhīm b. Muhammad. Therefore, in this version, Sulaymān serves as a common link or a partial common link. If we investigate his integrity and his *dabt*, we will find that his hadiths are not accepted by hadith critics. Al-‘Uqaylī (1984) commented about him that there are mistakes in most of his hadiths. Abū Ḥātim declared him *ḍa‘īf al-hadith* (Ibn al-Jawzī, 1986).

Besides the problem of Sulaymān b. Karrāz in this hadith, his teacher ‘Umar b. Ṣuhbān, also known as ‘Umar b. Muhammad b. Ṣuhbān al-Aslamī is another problematic transmitter in this hadith. Many critics have criticized his hadiths. Some even refrained from his transmissions. Al-Bukhārī said he was *munkar al-ḥadith* (al-Bukhārī, *al-Tārīkh al-Kabīr*, vol. 5, p. 165). Ibn Abī Ḥātim quoted his father that ‘Umar b. Ṣuhbān was *ḍa‘īf al-ḥadīth, munkar al-ḥadīth, matrūk al-ḥadīth* (Ibn Abī Ḥātim al-Razī, 1952, vol. 6, p. 116). Imam al-Nasā’ī is also reported to have declared him *matrūk* (Ibn ‘Adī, 1997). All the early critics of hadith expressed criticism

⁹⁴ There is a difference of opinions regarding the pronunciation of (كرز) Karrāz. In many sources, it said that he is Sulaymān b. Karrāz with double “z” or *mushaddadah* while some scholars have spelled it with a single “z”. On the other hand, it is recorded in other sources spelled with a (و) at the end and not a (و) as “Kurān” or “Karān”; and in some sources, it ends with an undotted (و). See al-Dāraqutnī’s *al-Mu’talaf wa al-mukhtalaf*, vol. 4, p. 1981; Ibn Ḥajar, *Lisān al-mīzān*, vol. 3, p. 401 note: 3949. Since most of the sources spelled it with ‘z’, I will maintain this spelling except when it is a quotation.

⁹⁵ Also pronounced as Zanjūyah

of ‘Umar b. Şuhbān. He would narrate strikingly odd hadiths that anyone with a fair knowledge of hadith would immediately know that these hadiths were made up. It is, therefore, necessary to refrain from his transmissions (Ibn Ḥibbān, 1988, vol. 2, p. 52). Due to the above problematic transmitters, the hadith of Jābir via the chain of Muhammad b. al-Munkadir was not accepted. This is due to the transmitters below Muhammad b. al-Munkadir did not fulfill the criteria of acceptability according to the conditions laid down by hadith critics.

The hadith of ‘Amr b. Dīnār to Jābir:

The second version of the hadith of Jābir was allegedly transmitted to ‘Amr b. Dīnār, and from him, it was allegedly transmitted to ‘Abbās b. ‘Allah al-Qurashī. Al-Qurashī transmitted it to Muş‘ab b. Sallām and Khalaf b. Yaḥyā⁹⁶ al-Qāḍī transmitted it from Sallām. Khalaf b. Yaḥyā had many students who allegedly learned this hadith from him. Hence, he is the common link for the hadith of ‘Amr b. Dīnār. Muhammad b. Ismā‘īl (Abū Nu‘aym al-Aşfahānī, 1990, vol. 2, p. 184) and ‘Alī b. ‘Abd Azīz (Abū Nu‘aym al-Aşfahānī, 1990, vol. 1, p. 363) both are the students of Khalaf b. Yaḥyā al-Qāḍī.

This Yaḥyā was declared a liar by traditional hadith critics. Abū Ḥātim al-Rāzī said about him that he was *matrūk al-hadith* and a big liar. One should neither engage him nor his hadith (Ibn Abī Ḥatim al-Razī, 1952).

Therefore, the hadith of Jābir is not accepted by hadith scholars despite having multiple chains of transmitters, as all chains contain transmitters that are not reliable, according to the hadith critics.

⁹⁶ Sources differ as to whether the proper name for the student of Muş‘ab b. Sallām is Yaḥyā b. Khalaf or Khalaf b. Yaḥyā. On one place in *Tārīkh Aşbāh*, vol. 2, p. 184, Abū Nu‘aym recorded him Yaḥyā b. Khalaf and yet in another place, vol. 1, p. 363, recorded him as Khalaf b. Yaḥyā.

The diagram of the hadith of Jābir

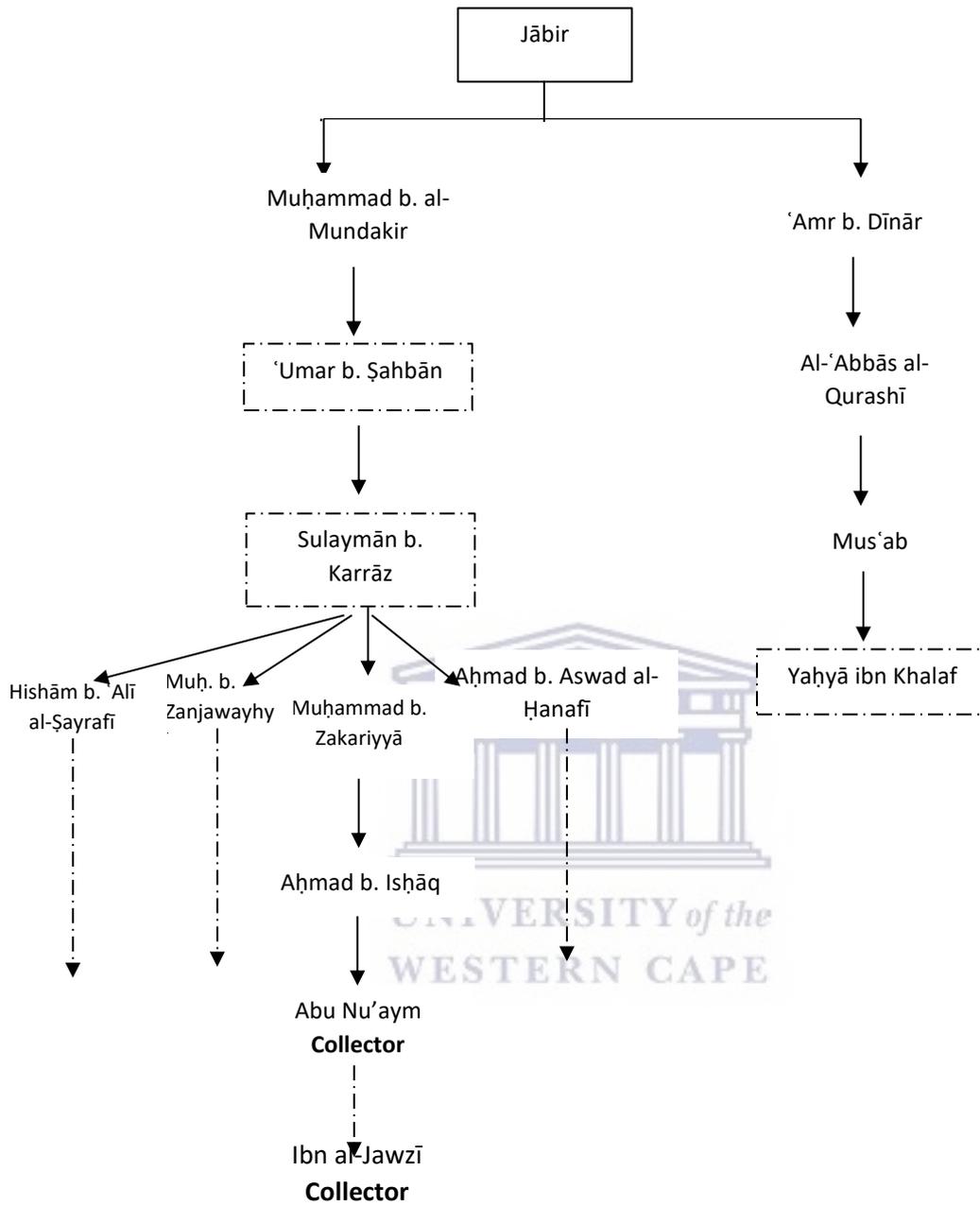


Figure 12. The hadith of Jābir

The hadith of Ibn ‘Umar

The hadith of Ibn ‘Umar is recorded by ‘Abd b. Ḥumayd (d. 249) in *al-Muntakhab*, (p. 243, hadith 751), al-‘Uqaylī in his *al-Ḍu‘āf al-kabīr*, vol. 4, p. 102, Abū al-Shaykh in his *Kitāb al-amthāl*, p. 110, al-Shihāb al-Quḍā‘ī (d. 454) in his *Musnad*, vol. 1, p. 384.

The transmitter of Ibn ‘Umar in this hadith is his famous freed slave Nāfi‘, and from him, it was transmitted to Muhammad b. ‘Abd al-Raḥmān b. al-Mujabbar. From Muhammad b. ‘Abd al-Raḥmān at least two people transmitted it from him: Ḥajjāj b. al-Minhāl in ‘Uqaylī’s *al-Ḍu‘āf al-kabīr*, vol. 4, p. 102, and in *Musnad al-shihāb al-Quḍā‘ī*. Another person who transmitted from Muhammad b. ‘Abd al-Raḥmān b. al-Mujabbar was Yazīd b. Hārūn in *Amthāl al-hadith* of Abū al-Shaykh p. 110. Therefore, Muhammad b. ‘Abd al-Raḥmān b. al-Mujabbar is the common link in the hadith of ‘Umar.

Therefore, we must investigate his reliability in hadith and what scholars say about him. While investigating his knowledge of hadith, we find that his credentials were not that wonderful. Ibn Ma‘īn said: *laysa bi shay‘in*. Ibn Ma‘īn’s statement seems to be a very mild statement of *jarḥ wa ta‘dīl*.⁹⁷ However, other critics were more critical of Ibn al-Mujabbār. Imām al-Bukhārī, for example, used the term: *‘sakatū ‘anhu’*, which in the context of his explanation means he was suspected of lies. Abū Zur‘ah calls him *‘wāh’in*. al-Nasa‘ī and other scholars were more explicit and declared him *matrūk* (Ibn Ḥajar al-‘Asqalānī, 1996).

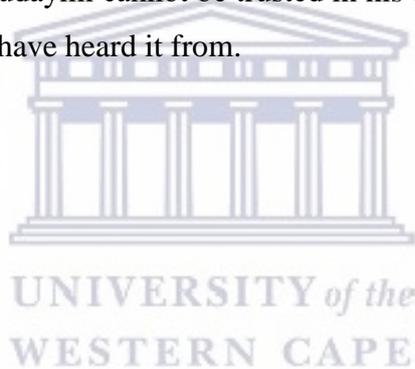
It appears that there is another version of Ibn ‘Umar that can serve as a support for Ibn al-Mujabbar. The chain of the said version runs as follows:

Ibrāhīm b. Ishāq b. Muhammad b. ‘Abd Allah al-Ḥalabī, ‘an ‘Uthmān b. Sa‘īd, ‘an Muhammad b. Muhammad al-Baghawī, ‘an Ādam b. Abī Iyās, ‘an Ibn Abī Dhi‘b, ‘an Nāfi‘, ‘an Ibn ‘Umar

Ibn Abī Dhi‘b here seems to be a supporting transmitter (*mutābi‘*) for Ibn al-Mujabbar. Al-Suyūfī has recorded this version in his *al-La‘ālī ‘al-maṣnū‘ah* citing *al-Ṭuyūriyyāt* of al-Silafī. At the time of writing this paper, I had no access to this work, hence cannot comment on the said version. However, judging from the outcome of the study done by hadith scholars, even this version is not sound, as we will learn later from the statement of Ibn Ḥajar below.

⁹⁷ When Ibn Ma‘īn uses this statement, it does not necessarily mean that there is a problem with the transmitters. However, what is confirmed is that such a transmitter had very little hadiths. See *al-Raf‘ wa al-Takmīl*, p. 212.

There is another line of transmission to Ibn ‘Umar, that is through Sa‘īd b. al-Musayyab. This hadith was recorded by Ibn Ḥibbān, who narrated it to al-Dāraqūṭnī. Ibn Musayyib transmitted it to Qatādah b. Di‘āmah, and he, in turn, transmitted it to Shu‘bah. Shu‘bah transmitted it to Rawḥ b. ‘Ubādah, and he transmitted it to Muḥammad b. Yūnus al-Kudaymī, and he, in turn, transmitted it to Muhammad b. Sa‘īd al-‘Aṭṭār. Ibn Ḥibbān recorded this version in his *Kitāb al-majrūḥīn*, vol. 2, p. 333, under the biographical entry of Muhammad b. Yūnus al-Kudaymī. Al-Dāraqūṭnī and Ibn al-Jawzi also recorded it in their respective books. This isnad is centred around Abu al-‘Abbās Muhammad b. Yūnus al-Kudaymī of Baghdād. All transmitters above him are reliable transmitters. Al-Kudaymī (d. 286), however, was criticised by critics who said that he used to fabricate hadiths. He claimed to have seen and transmitted hadiths from scholars of hadith whom he didn’t meet (Ibn ‘Adī, 1997). Ibn Ḥibbān also confirmed that al-Kudaymī used to forge hadiths and ascribe them to reliable sources. He was suspected of having fabricated about a thousand hadiths (Ibn Ḥibbān, 1988). Therefore, this line of transmission is not acceptable as well, for al-Kudaymī cannot be trusted in his claim that he heard this hadith from the sources he claimed to have heard it from.



The diagram of the hadith of Ibn 'Umar

The diagram of the hadith of Ibn 'Umar

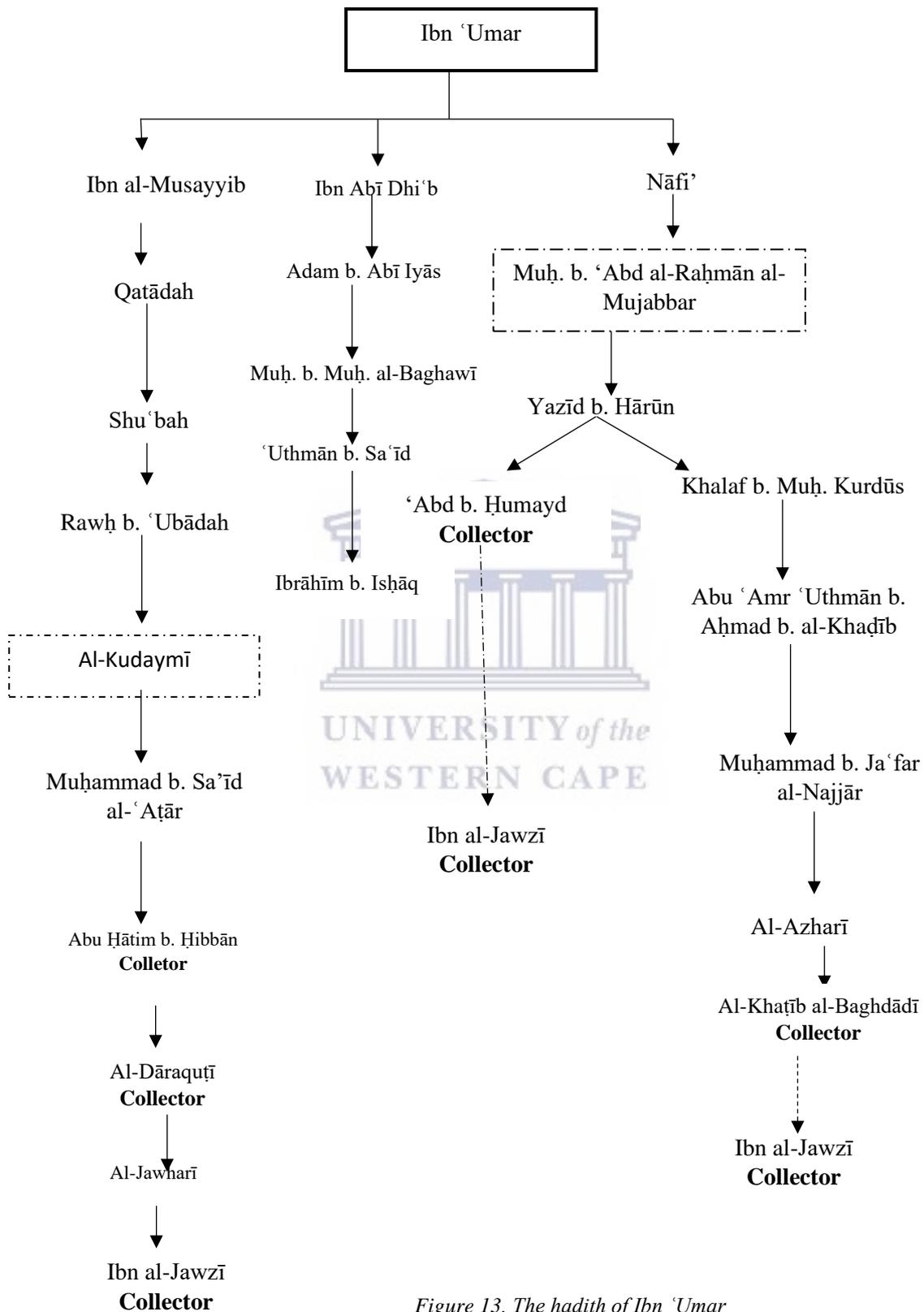


Figure 13. The hadith of Ibn 'Umar

The hadith of Ibn ‘Abbās

al-Bazzār recorded this hadith in his *Musnad*, vol. 2, p. 398, al-‘Uqaylī (d. 322) in his *al-Du‘afā’ al-kabīr*, vol. 3, p. 340, Tammām al-Rāzī in his *Fawā’id*, vol. 1, p. 340, and al-Ṭabarānī in his *al-Mu‘jam al-kabīr*, vol. 11, p. 81.

There are about four individuals who transmitted this version from Ibn ‘Abbās: (1) ‘Urwah b. al-Zubayr (2) ‘Aṭā (3) Mujāhid, and (4) ‘Amr b. Dīnār

(1.) The version of ‘Urwah b. al-Zubayr from Ibn ‘Abbās:

The version of ‘Urwah was transmitted to his son Hishām b. ‘Urwah, from Hishām was transmitted to ‘Iṣmah b. Muhammad al-Anṣārī to al-Ḥusayn b. Yazīd and from him to Hārūn b. ‘Alī then to the collector al-‘Uqaylī, who recorded it in his *al-Du‘afā’*. Since this hadith that was transmitted via ‘Urwah has only one strand of isnad, the common link or partial common link would be ‘Urwah himself. However, sometimes the common link is a reliable transmitter, and the problematic transmitter is either below or above him. All transmitters must be investigated before making a final judgment on any given hadith. From the outset, we know through biographical literature that ‘Urwah b. al-Zubayr was reliable. We should, therefore, investigate the transmitters leading to ‘Urwah.

In this chain of transmitters ‘Iṣmah b. Muhammad al-Anṣārī’s integrity was questioned by hadith critics. Yaḥyā b. Ma‘īn was asked about him, and he said: *Hādhā kadhdhābun yaḍa‘u al-hadith*, i.e., this is a liar, he fabricates hadiths (al-‘Uqaylī, 1984, vol. 3, p. 340). According to the criteria set by the *muḥaddithūn*, this version is not accepted due to the weak transmitter, Ismā‘īl b. Muhammad al-Anṣārī. He is probably the one who forged this chain of transmission for this *matn*.

(2.) The version of ‘Aṭā from Ibn ‘Abbās

The version of ‘Aṭā was transmitted to Ṭalḥāh b. ‘Amr; and from him, it was transmitted to Sufyān al-Thawrī in *Fawā’id Tammām*, vol. 1, p. 340 and to Ḥafṣ b. ‘Umar in *Akhhār Aṣbahān*, vol. 2, p. 21. As we have already mentioned in the hadith of Abū Hurayrah, Ṭalḥāh b. ‘Amr’s integrity was disparaged by hadith critics.

Taking into consideration Ibn Ḥibbān's observation concerning Ṭalḥah b. 'Amrī that he ascribed false hadiths to reliable transmitters, there is still a great possibility that he mixed up this hadith, for sometimes he ascribed it to 'Aṭā from Ibn 'Abbās and sometimes he ascribed the same hadith to 'Aṭā from Abū Hurayrah. One might argue that Ṭalḥah heard the hadith from 'Aṭā and 'Aṭā had two sources for the hadith. In theory, it is a reasonable assumption to have had it been that Ṭalḥah was a reliable transmitter. However, critics did not entertain this assumption since he was unreliable in hadith transmission. If this is the case, then it is obvious that the version of 'Aṭā from Ibn 'Abbās with this wording would not be accepted as a statement of the Prophet.

(3.) *The version of Mujāhid from Ibn 'Abbās*

al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī in his *Tārīkh Baghdād*, vol. 4, p. 407, and al-Ṭabarānī in his *al-Mu'jam al-Kabīr*, vol. 11, p. 81, transmitted the version of Mujāhid. In the version of al-Khaṭīb, it is alleged that Mujāhid transmitted to Layth [ibn Abī Sulaym], and he transmitted it to Abū Ḥafṣ al-Abbād, and he transmitted it to Maṣṣūr b. 'Ammār, and he transmitted it to Aḥmad b. Salamah al-Madā'inī, and he transmitted it to Abū Mūsā 'Isā al-Madā'inī, and he transmitted it to 'Ubayd Allah b. Sahl Abū Sayyār, and he transmitted it to Zayd b. 'Alī al-Anṣārī, and he transmitted it to the teacher of al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī al-Ḥusayn b. 'Alī al-Ṭanājīrī. The problem in this line of transmission lies with Aḥmad b. Salamah al-Madā'inī. According to al-Dhahabī he was accused of lying '*muttāham bi al-kadhib*' (al-Dhahabī, 1995, vol. 1, 238).

In the version that was recorded by al-Ṭabarānī, Mujāhid transmitted it to al-'Awām b. Hawshab to 'Abd Allah [Khirāsh] to Zayd to 'Adnān b. Aḥmad. 'Abd Allah b. Khirāsh, though he was mentioned in Ibn Ḥibbān's *Kitāb al-Thiqāt*, he warned that he often makes mistakes and others deemed him weak. All other critics like al-Bukhārī, Abū Ḥatim, Abū Zur'ah, al-Sājī, etc., have all used such disparaging statements that place 'Abd Allah b. Khirāsh in the category of unacceptable transmitters. These statements were collected by al-Mizzī in his *Tahdhīb al-kamāl*. Al-Sājī and Ibn 'Ammār made it very clear that he was a *kadhdhāb* and fabricated hadiths. Therefore, Ibn 'Abbās's version via Mujāhid does not meet the standards of authenticity as stipulated by the hadith critics.

The version of ‘Amr b. Dīnār

This version was recorded by al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī in his *Tārīkh Baghdād*, vol. 7, p. 11, under the entry biography of Ayyūb b. Sulaymān al-Ṣughdī. Ibn ‘Abbās is alleged to have transmitted this hadith to ‘Amr b. Dīnār. ‘Amr b. Dīnār transmitted it to ‘Abbās al-Qurashī, and he transmitted it to Muṣ‘ab b. Sallām al-Tamīmī, and he transmitted it to Yaḥyā b. Yazīd al-Khawāṣṣ, and he transmitted it to Ayyūb b. Sulaymān al-Ṣughdī. Al-Ṣughdī transmitted it to Muhammad b. Aḥmad b. Ibrāhīm al-Ḥalīmī, and he transmitted it to Ibrāhīm b. Makhlad who was the teacher of al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī. In this line of transmission, there are few problematic transmitters. Muṣ‘ab b. Sallām was criticized by Abū Dāwūd and other critics like ‘Alī b. al-Madīnī (al-Ājurrī, 1983, p. 105). For this reason, Ibn Ḥajar concluded in his *Taqrīb al-tahdhīb* that he was *ṣadūq*, but he would make mistakes (*ṣadūq^m lahū awḥām*). Thus this version is also graded as weak.



The diagram of the hadith of Ibn ‘Abbās.

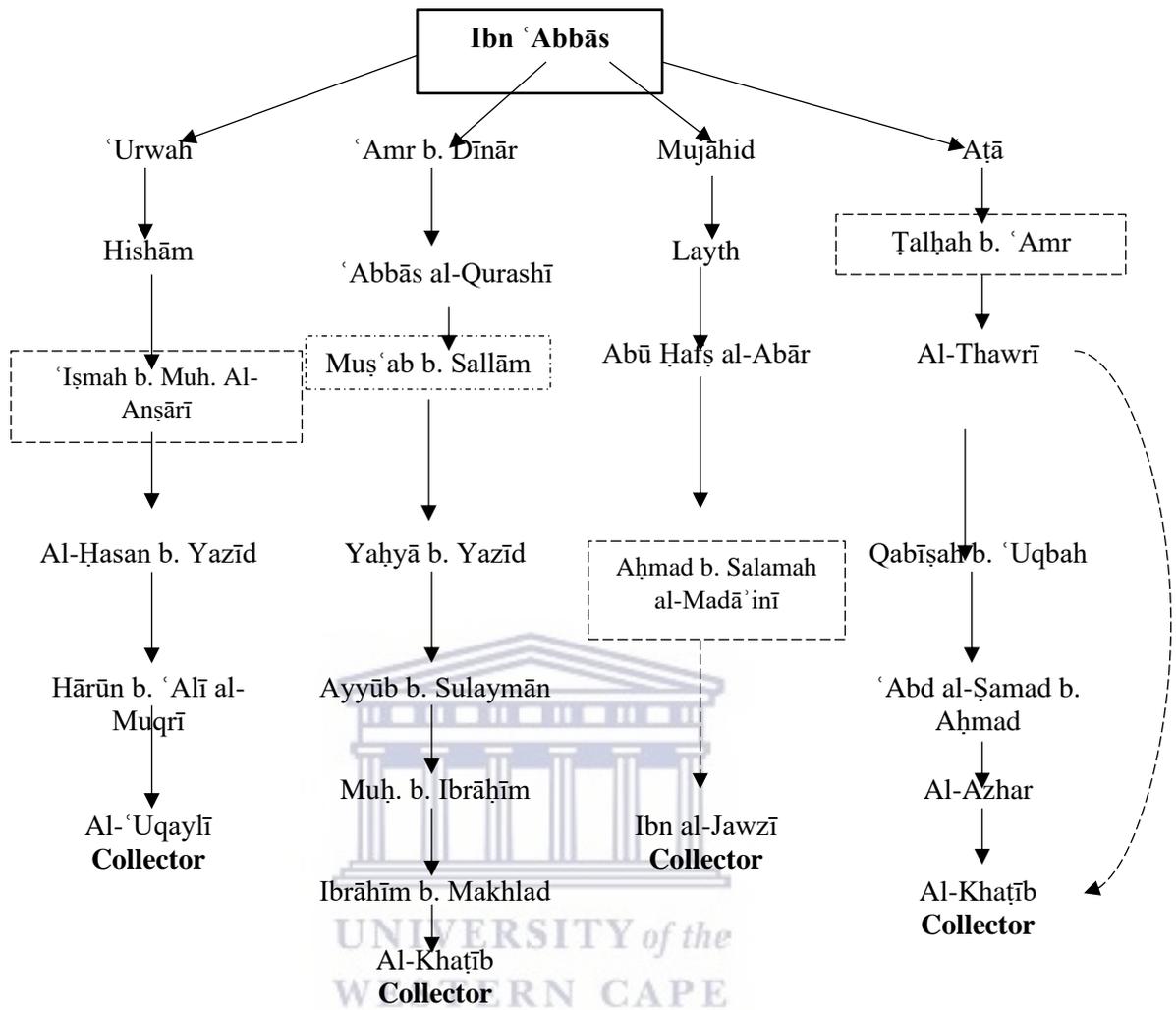


Figure 14. The hadith of Ibn ‘Abbās

The hadith of Anas b. Mālik:

The hadith of Anas is allegedly transmitted to two students of Anas b. Mālik, viz: Khirāsh and al-Zuhrī. The version of Khirāsh is recorded in *Tārīkh Baghdād*, vol. 3, p. 226. Al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī transmitted it from Abū ‘Ubayd Muhammad b. Abī Naṣr, he transmitted it from Muhammad al-Ṭirāzī, he transmitted it from Abū Sa‘īd al-Ḥasan b. ‘Alī al-‘Adawī, he transmitted it from Khirāsh, he transmitted it from Anas b. Mālik. This version, however, has different wording from the others. It reads: “*iltamisu al-khayr ‘inda ...*” In this version, there are three problematic transmitters that beg our attention: Muhammad b. Muhammad al-Ṭirāzī, Abū Sa‘īd al-Ḥasan b. ‘Alī al-‘Adawī and Khirāsh.

Al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī said about Muhammad b. Muhammad al-Ṭirāzī that he transmits *manākīr* and inauthentic hadith “I have seen strange things that show flaws in his knowledge of hadith in his hadith” (al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī, 2002, vol. 3, p. 445).

The second transmitter who is problematic in this isnad, according to hadith critics, is Abū Sa‘īd al-Ḥasan b. ‘Alī al-‘Adawī. Ibn ‘Adī said that he used to fabricate and steal hadiths, i.e., ascribed to himself hadiths that did not belong to him. Sometimes he transmitted from people who didn’t even exist (Ibn ‘Adī, 1997, vol. 3, p. 195). Ibn Ḥibbān said that he narrated hadiths from people he neither met nor did he see (Ibn Ḥibbān, 1988, vol. 1, p. 241). Scholars have even noted his unsubstantiated transmissions from Khirāsh and Anas b. Mālik. Al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī said that none of the hadiths Abū Sa‘īd ascribed to Khirāsh are Khirāsh’s hadiths (al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī, 2002, vol 3, p. 445). Al-Ḥusayn b. ‘Alī al-Ṣaymarī (d. 436) condemned him, saying that he was a big liar for he ascribed to the Prophet that which he did not say (i.e., *kadhhabun ‘alā RasūliLlah sallaLlah ‘alayh wa sallam, yaqūl ‘ala al-Nabiyy mā lam yaqul* (al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī, 2002, vol. 7, p. 393).

There is another version with a slight difference in the wording. It reads: “*Uṭlub al-ḥawā’ij ‘inda ḥisān al-wujūh*”. This version is recorded by Ibn al-Jawzī in his *Kitāb al-Mawḍū‘āt*. It is allegedly transmitted from Anas as well, to al-Zuhrī, to Muhammad b. ‘Abd al-Raḥmān b. Abī Dhi’b, to ‘Abd al-‘Azīm b. Ḥabīb al-Fihri, to Sulaymān b. Salamah, to Aḥmad b. Ishāq b. Ṣāliḥ to Muhammad b. ‘Amrī b. al-Bakhtarī to Ibn Razqūyah, to Naṣr b. Aḥmad, to Muhammad b. Nāṣir and Sa‘d al-Khayr. Ibn al-Jawzī indicated that Sulaymān b. Salamah was the problematic transmitter in the chain. Ibn al-Jawzī claimed that Ibn Ḥibbān had negative comments about his hadith status. al-Dhahabī also pointed out that Sulaymān’s teacher was also problematic

(al-Dhahabī, 1998, p. 194). This hadith, therefore, is not accepted according to criteria set by hadith critics.

The diagram of the hadith of Anas

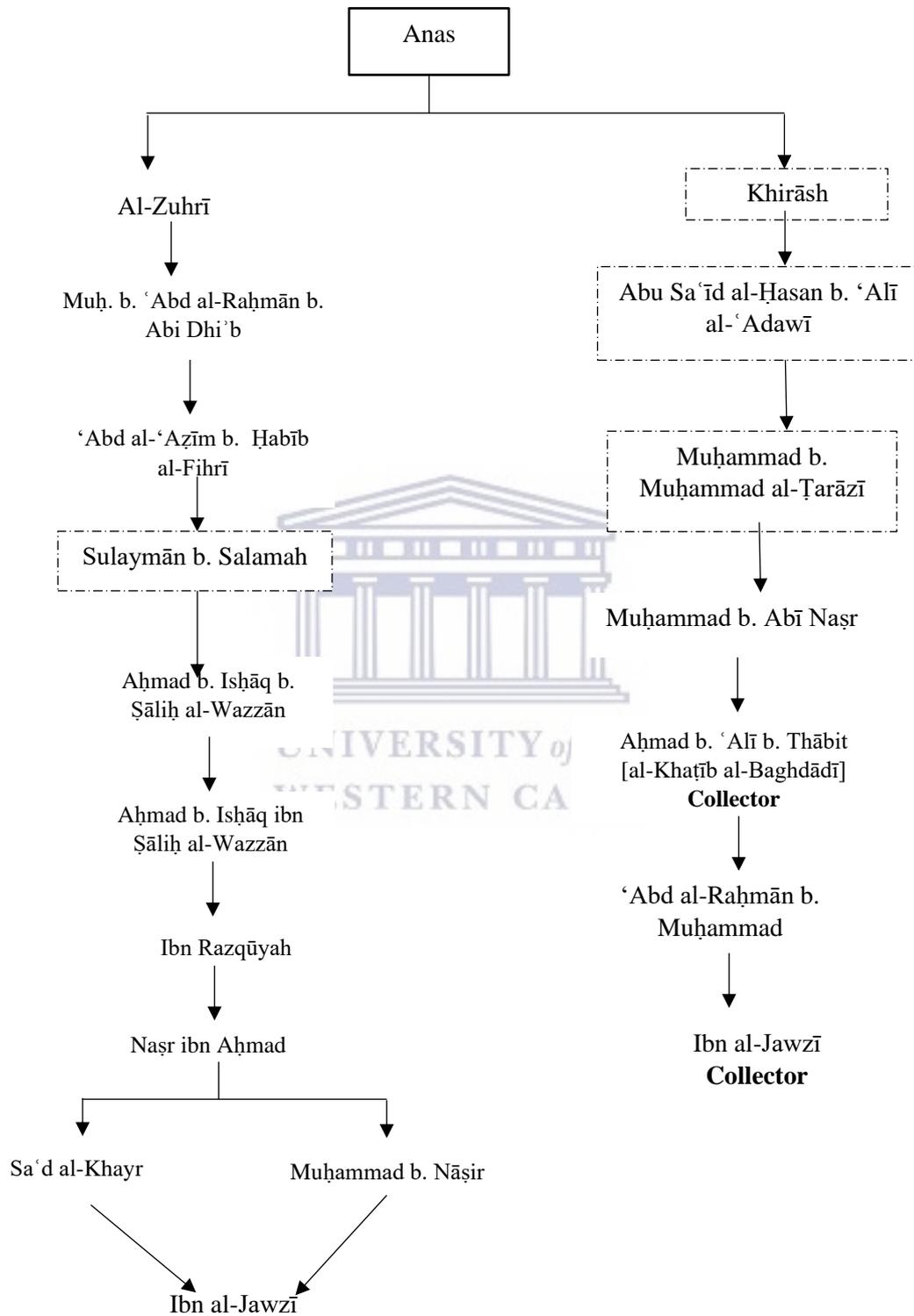


Figure 15. The hadith of Anas b. Mālik

The hadith of ‘Ā’ishah

This hadith is recorded by Aḥmad in his *Faḍā’il al-ṣaḥābah*, vol. 2, p. 726, al-Bukhārī in his *Tārīkh al-kabīr*, vol. 1, p. 456, Abū Ya‘lā al-Mawṣilī (d. 307) in his *Musnad*, vol. 6, p. 646, Abū al-Shaykh al-Aṣbahānī in his *Kitāb al-amthāl*, p. 106, al-Dāraqūṭnī in his *al-Mu’talif wa al-mukhtalif*, vol. 1, p. 383, al-‘Uqaylī in his *al-Ḍu‘afā al-kabīr*, vol. 2, p. 121, Ibn Abī al-Dunayā in his *Qaḍā’ al-ḥawā’ij* (p. 57, hadith: 51) al-Bayhaqī in *Shu‘ab al-īmān*, vol. 3, p. 278.

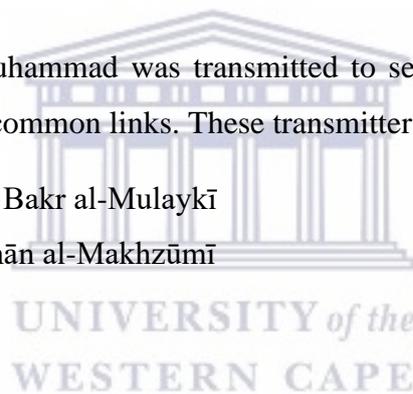
This version of hadith has several isnad strands to ‘Aishah. Two are, however, the main ones. In these two versions, one may see them as common links that, in turn, have several partial common links.

- a) Jabrah⁹⁸ bint Muhammad b. Thābit b. Sibā‘, from her father, from ‘Ā’ishah
- b) al-Zuhrī from ‘Urwa b. al-Zubayr and Sa‘īd b. al-Musayyab

The chain of Jabrah

The version of Jabrah bint Muhammad was transmitted to several hadith transmitters who might be considered as partial common links. These transmitters were:

- a. ‘Abd al-Raḥmān b. Abī Bakr al-Mulaykī
- b. Khalid b. ‘Abd al-Raḥmān al-Makhzūmī
- c. Ismā‘il b. ‘Ayyāsh



(a) The hadith of ‘Abd al-Raḥmān b. Abī Bakr al-Mulaykī to Jabrah

‘Abd al-Raḥmān b. Abī Bakr al-Mulaykī, the husband of Jabrah, transmitted this hadith to Ma‘n [b. ‘Isā al-Fazarī]. And Ma‘n transmitted it to Ibrahīm, and from him, al-Bukhārī collected the hadith in his *al-Tārīkh al-Kabīr*, vol. 1, p. 51, 157, and his *Tārīkh al-alwsa‘*, vol. 2, p. 176. Ibn al-Jawzī, in his *Kitāb al-mawḍū‘āt*, vol. 2, p. 162, also recorded this version via the chain of al-Bukhārī. Since ‘Abd al-Raḥmān is the focal point of this hadith, it is important to investigate his hadith transmitter status and what the critics said about him.

⁹⁸ This name has been spelt Jabrah, Khayrah and Jabrah in some sources. Other sources recorded her as Khayrah and in some as Ḥurrah. Ibn Ḥajar, for example, spelled her name as Khayrah in his *Lisān al-mizān*. The correct pronunciation, however, appears to be Jabrah. See al-Dāraqūṭnī: *al-Mu’talif wa al-mukhtalif*, vol. 1, p. 383. However,

To start with, Yahyā b. Ma‘īn declared him *ḍa‘īf*. Abū Ḥātim al-Rāzī said: *Laysa bi qawiyy al-ḥadīth* (al-Jarḥ wa al-Ta‘dīl, vol 5, p. 217). Al-Bukhārī said about him: *Munkar al-hadīth* (al-Bukhārī, al-Tārīkh al-Kabīr, vol. 5, p. 260). *Lā yutāba ‘ fī ḥadīthih* (i.e., his hadiths are not supported [by reliable transmitters]) (al-Bukhārī, 1977). Ibn ‘Adī said: *Lā yutāba ‘ fī ḥadīthih* (Ibn ‘Adī, 1997). Al-Nasā‘ī said that he is *matrūk*. Ibn Ḥibbān was even more critical. He said: *munkar al-ḥadīth jiddan, yanfarid ‘an al-thiqāt bimā lā yushbih ḥadīth al-athbāt* (Ibn Ḥibbān, 1988, vol. 2, p. 16). Therefore, even though al-Sakhāwī (1985) regarded him as *ṣadūq* (i.e., moderately reliable) and considered this version alone as a better version out of all chains of this hadith, he was also critical of al-Mulaykī for he said: *ṣadūqun, lākin nahu yanfarid bimā lā yutāba ‘ ‘alayh mimmā lā yuḥtamal ḥattā qīla fīh: innahū matrūk* (He is *ṣadūq*. However, he solitarily transmits hadiths that are neither supported nor tolerably weak, so much so that it is said that he is *matrūk* (al-Sakhāwī, 1985, p. 81). Even if one agrees with al-Sakhāwī on his verdict that this is the best chain of all chains of this hadith, there is another problem in the isnād, that is, Jabrah, ‘Abd al-Raḥmān’s source for this hadith. Ibn Ḥajar said about her: *lā tu‘raf*, i.e., she is an unknown hadith transmitter (Ibn Ḥajar al-‘Asqalānī, 1996).⁹⁹ In another version, ‘Abd al-Raḥmān al-Mulaykī transmitted the hadith directly from Jabrah’s father (Ibn Rāḥawayh, 1990, vol. 3, p. 946). However, there is a doubt whether he met him or not, for all the hadith biographical dictionaries neither mentioned him as Muḥammad b. Sibā‘’s direct student nor was Muhammad listed amongst al-Mulaykī’s teachers. There is certainly a link that is missing between ‘Abd al-Raḥmān al-Mulaykī and Muhammad b. Sibā‘. Therefore, one may conclude that the version of ‘Abd al-Raḥmān b. Abī Bakr al-Mulaykī would not be accepted by hadith critics.

(b) *Khālid b. ‘Abd al-Raḥmān al-Makhzūmī*

Khālid b. ‘Abd al-Raḥmān al-Makhzūmī (d. 210) transmitted this hadith from Jabrah bint Muhammad to ‘Abd al-Ṣamad b. al-Faḍl al-Balkhī to Bakr b. Muhammad b. Ḥamdān al-Ṣayrafi and from him Abū ‘Abd Allah to Imam al-Bayhaqī recorded it in his *Shu‘ab al-īmān*, vol. 3, p. 278. Since Khālid b. ‘Abd al-Raḥmān al-Makhzūmī serves as a partial common link in the version of ‘Āisha, we must look at his hadith status derived from the hadith critics. The

⁹⁹ It is worth noting, here, that Ibn Ḥajar spelled her name in his *Lisān al-mizān* as Khayrah

following were some of the comments of the critics of Khālid b. ‘Abd al-Raḥmān al-Makhzūmī:

Abū Ḥātim al-Rāzī said: *Huwa dhāhib al-ḥadīth, tarakūh* (i.e., his hadiths are not considered, scholars of hadith abandoned him) (Ibn Abī Ḥatim al-Razī, 1952). Al-Bukhārī also commented the same that he is *dhāhib al-ḥadīth*. Both al-Dhahabī and Ibn Ḥajar agreed that he was *matrūk* (al-Dhahabī, 2004). Therefore, Khālid was not reliable in hadith, and thus the chain through him is not accepted according to hadith critics.

(c) *The hadith of Ismā‘il b. ‘Ayyāsh*

Ismā‘il b. ‘Ayyāsh (d. 182) transmitted this hadith to several people. Amongst the students who received this hadith from him are:

- (a) Muhammad b. Bakkār in *Faḍā‘il al-ṣaḥābah* of Aḥmad, vol. 2, p. 726.¹⁰⁰
- (b) Dāwūd b. Rāshid in *Musnad Abī Ya‘lā*, vol. 8, p. 199.
- (c) Abū Bilāl al-Ash‘arī in *Kitāb amthāl al-ḥadīth* of Abu al-Shaykh, p. 106.
- (d) Shujā‘ b. al-Ashras b. Maymūn in *Iṣṭinā‘ al-ma‘rūf* of Ibn Abī al-Dunyā, p. 90.
- (e) Abu al-Rabī‘ in *Shu‘ab al-īmān* of al-Bayhaqī, vol. 3, p. 278.

Since Ismā‘il b. ‘Ayyāsh here appears to be one of the partial common links in the hadith of Jabrāh bint Muhammad; it is also imperative to investigate his hadith status to establish whether his hadiths are to be accepted or not. Ismā‘il b. ‘Ayyāsh b. Sulaym al-‘Ansī, lived in Ḥimṣ, Shām. Even though some hadith scholars praised him, Ismā‘il b. ‘Ayyāsh suffered from two major criticism. The first criticism against him is that he was a *mudallis* or obfuscator. All *ṭuruq* that go through him, we find that he transmitted with the implicit form of ascription to his source Jabrah. He used the form ‘*an*’ in his transmission. Scholars are skeptical when it comes to a hadith transmitter who was declared a *mudallis* to transmit a hadith with an implicit form of ascription. In this hadith, there is still a possibility that Ismā‘il may have heard this hadith from Khālid above but obfuscated and omitted him so that he could transmit directly from Jabrah.¹⁰¹ The second criticism is that even though he was reliable to a certain degree, this

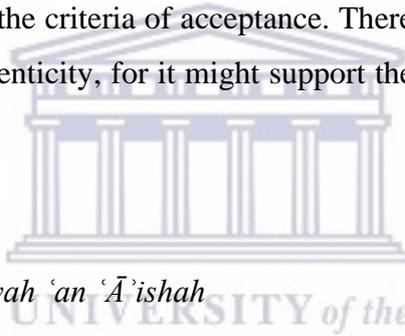
¹⁰⁰ In this isnad, there was a doubt about the correct spelling of the name of Jabrah. Therefore, both Jabrah and Khayrah were mentioned. Whereas in other places like Ibn Abī al-Dunyā’s *Istinā‘ al-khayr* is mistakenly spelled as Khayrah and Abū al-Shaykh went even more to the extreme of spelling it as Ḥurrah.

¹⁰¹ See al-Mu‘allimī’s annotation on al-Shawkānī’s *al-Fawā‘id al-Majmū‘ah*, p. 69

vindication was only when he transmitted from people of his city, i.e., Shām. When he transmitted hadiths from people of other regions, such as Ḥijāz, ‘Irāq, etc. he was not so accurate in his transmission (Ibn Ḥajar al-‘Asqalānī, 1326). The hadith in question, Ismā‘īl transmitted it from Jabrah who was from Ḥijāz (Ibn Ḥibbān, 1973, vol. 5, p. 369). Therefore, even though Ismā‘īl may be treated as a *mutābi‘* or a support for ‘Abd al-Raḥmān b. Abī Bakr al-Mulaykī’s hadith, his support to the hadith of ‘Abd al-Raḥmān does not have an academic value due to mistakes he makes when he transmits from narrators other than his countrymen.

The chain of al-Zuhrī

al-Zuhrī (d. 124/125), a well-known *ḥijāzī* hadith transmitter, sits as a common link in many chains of hadiths. Here, he allegedly transmitted this hadith from two sources: ‘Urwah b. al-Zubayr and Sa‘īd b. al-Musayyab. This version might serve as a *mutābi‘* for Jabrah bint Muhammad if its chain fulfills the criteria of acceptance. Therefore, it is imperative to assess its validity and strength of authenticity, for it might support the hadith of Jabrah bint Abd al-Raḥmān.



The hadith of al-Zuhrī ‘an ‘Urwah ‘an ‘Ā’ishah

Firstly, the version of al-Zuhrī from ‘Urwah is recorded in *al-Ḍu‘afā’ al-kabīr*, vol. 2, p. 121. From al-‘Uqaylī, Ibn ‘Asākir recorded it in his *Tārīkh Dimashq*, vol.22, p. 184, and Ibn al-Jawzī in his *Kitāb al-Mawḍū‘āt*, vol. 2, p. 499. Abū al-Shaykh also transmitted it with the chain to al-Zuhrī from ‘Urwah in his *Kitāb al-amthāl*, p. 108. Al-Zuhrī allegedly transmitted it to Sulaymān b. Arqam to Yazīd b. Hārūn to al-Ḥasan b. ‘Alī to Muhammad b. Ismā‘īl and from him al-‘Uqaylī recorded it in his *al-Ḍu‘afā’ al-kabīr*. Yazīd b. Hārūn would sometimes not mention the name of his informant Sulaymān but would rather refer to him as *Shaykh min Quraysh*. Once al-Ḥasan b. ‘Alī asked him: who is this *Shaykh min Quraysh*? What is his name? Yazīd b. Hārūn responded by quoting the verse: “*Don’t ask about matters that if it becomes clear to you dislike it*”. Then he told him that the *Shaykh* was Sulaymān b. Arqam (al-Uqaylī, 1984). It appears that the version of al-Zuhrī revolves around Sulaymān b. Arqam al-Baṣrī. Sulaymān b. Arqam was accused of fabricating hadith. On account of this, critics have forsaken him (al-Bukhārī, 1977). One might argue that Sulaymān b. Arqam was supported by ‘Uthmān b. ‘Abd al-Raḥmān from al-Zuhrī from ‘Urwah from ‘Ā’ishah (Abu al-Shaykh, 1987, p. 44).

This ‘Uthmān, however, is also problematic. Ibn Ma‘īn declared him *ḍa‘īf* (*Tārīkh ibn Ma‘īn*, vol. 2, p. 394). Al-Bukhārī and al-Nasā‘ī said: He was *matrūk* (al-Bukhārī, 1977; al-Nasā‘ī, 1396, p. 175). Al-Tirmidhī said: He is not strong according to hadith experts. Abū Ḥātim and Ibn Ḥibbān were even more vocal in their vilification. Abū Ḥātim said: *Matrūk al-hadith, dhāhib al-hadith, khadhdhāb* (i.e., his hadith were forsaken, he was a liar (Ibn Abī Ḥatim al-Razī, 1952, vol. 6, p. 157). Ibn Ḥibbān said: He used to ascribe fabrications to reliable transmitters. One is not allowed to use his hadiths as *ḥujjah* (Ibn Ḥibbān, 1988). Al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī quotes Ibn Ma‘īn that he said about him that his hadith were not worthy of writing for he used to lie (al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī, 1417, vol. 11, pp, 279- 280). With all these disparaging comments from hadith critics, ‘Uthmān b. ‘Abd al-Raḥmān’s hadith is not acceptable, let alone it supporting the hadith of Sulaymān b. Arqam.

The hadith of al-Zuhrī ‘an Sa‘īd b. al-Musayyab ‘an ‘Ā’ishah

The version of al-Zuhrī from Sa‘īd b. al-Musayyab was recorded by Ibn ‘Adī in his *al-Kāmil fī al-Ḍu‘afā*, vol. 2, p. 622, Ibn Ḥibbān in his *Kitāb al-Majrūhīn*, vol. 1, p. 248. Al-Ḥakam b. ‘Abd Allah appears to be a student of al-Zuhrī in this hadith. Both Ibn ‘Adī and Ibn Ḥibbān recorded this version under the entry *tarjamah* al-Ḥakam b. ‘Abd Allah. This version revolves around al-Ḥakam b. ‘Abd Allah, hence, he is the partial common link. All critics have indicated that he was not reliable. Ibn Ḥibbān said he used to fabricate hadith in the name of reliable transmitters. Ibn al-Mubārak’s criticism of him was even more severe. Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal said al-Ḥakam’s hadiths were all fabricated (Ibn Ḥibbān, 1988, vol. 1, p. 248). Ibn ‘Adī, after giving a list of hadiths of al-Ḥakam from al-Qāsim b. Muhammad and al-Zuhrī, he said: all the hadiths of al-Ḥakam which I have listed down from al-Qāsim b. Muhammad and al-Zuhrī and others – including other *matns* which I did not mention here – are all not supported by reliable hadith transmitters. The weaknesses in those hadiths are very clear (Ibn ‘Adī, 1997, vol. 2, p. 243). It is, therefore, concluded that the version of al-Zuhrī himself is not accepted. However, the rejection of it is not due to al-Zuhrī himself, for he was considered reliable, but rather due to some unscrupulous transmitters like Sulayman and al-Hakam, who probably fabricated the hadith and ascribed it to a reliable transmitter such as al-Zuhrī.

There is another version that is allegedly transmitted from ‘Ā’ishah recorded in *al-Gharā’ib al-Multaqāh min Musnad al-Firdaws*, also known as *Zahr al-Firdaws* by Ibn Ḥajar al-‘Asqalānī. The chain is as follows:

Akhbaranī Wālidī, akhbaranī Muhammad b. ‘Uthmān, ḥaddathanā Ibn Ishāq, ḥaddathanā Muhammad b. ‘Abd Allah al-Ḥāfiẓ, ḥaddathanā Muhammad b. Ṣāliḥ b. Hāni’, ḥaddathanā Ibrahīm Abū Ishāq, ḥaddathanā ‘Abd Allah b. Muṭī’, ḥaddathanā Hushaym b. Bashīr, ‘an Abī ‘Abd al-Jalīl, ‘an ‘Abd Allah b. Farrūkh, ‘an ‘Ā’ishah, qālat... (Ibn Ḥajar al-‘Asqalānī, 2018, vol. 3, p. 533).

This version may serve as a *mutāba‘ah* for Jabrah bint Muhammad’s hadith if its *sanad* fulfils the criteria of corroboration. To ascertain that it fulfilled the criteria of *mutāba‘ah*, it is imperative to assess its *isnad* for its validity and the strength of its authenticity. In this chain of transmission, several transmitters are problematic. However, I will concentrate on one transmitter only, that is Abū ‘Abd al-Jalīl. Abū ‘Abd al-Jalīl’s name was ‘Abd Allah b. Maysarah. ‘Abd Allah b. Maysarah was one of the famous sources of Hushaym, who often hid ‘Abd Allah b. Maysarah’s identity and obfuscated him by assigning several nicknames to him, including Abū ‘Abd al-Jalīl. Many scholars knew him as Abū Ishāq. Hadith critics disparaged ‘Abd Allah b. Maysarah. Abū Zur‘ah, for example, commented about him that he was ‘*wāh al-hadith, ḍa‘īf al-hadith*’ (Abū Zur‘ah al-Rāzī, 1989, p. 426). Al-Nasā’ī in his *al-Du‘afā wa al-mtrūkīn* declared him *ḍa‘īf*. Despite the few hadiths he transmitted, he would contradict well-known transmitters (Ibn Ḥibbān, 1988, vol. 2, p. 32). Al-Bukhārī also disparaged him, and he called him *dhāhib al-ḥadith* (al-Dhahabī, 1963, vol. 2, p. 511). The hadith that has in its chain a transmitter like Abū ‘Abd al-Jalīl would not be accepted, for he contradicted reliable transmitters. Therefore, this version was also not accepted by hadith critics.

The diagram of the hadith of ‘Āishah

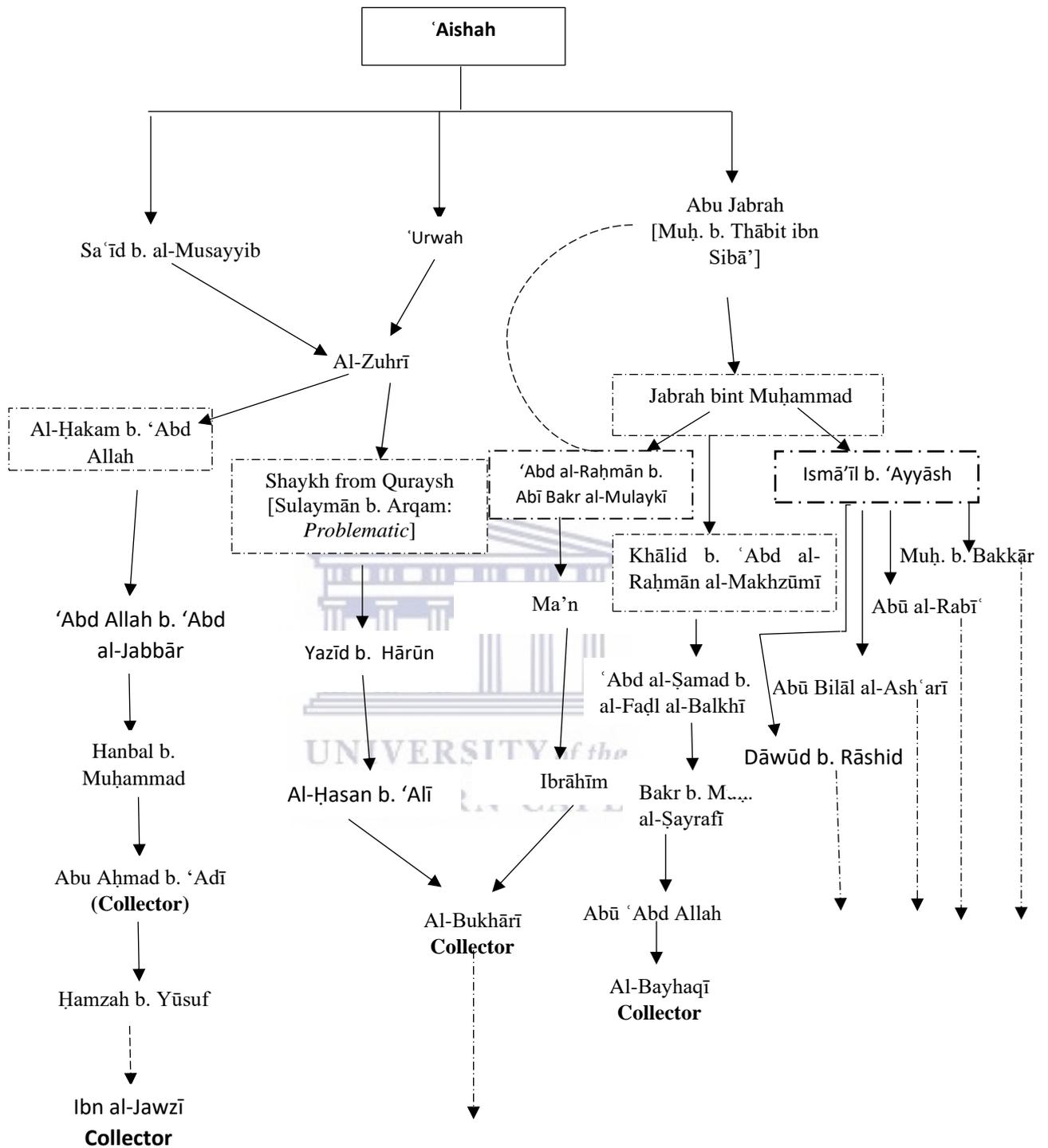


Figure 16. The hadith of ‘Āishah

The hadith of Yazīd al-Qasmalī

Yazīd al-Qasmalī is one of the Companions to whom this hadith was attributed. The hadith to Yazīd was recorded by Ibn al-Jawzī in his *Kitāb al-Mawḍū‘āt*, vol. 2, p. 498, via Ahmād b. Manī‘. Yazīd al-Qasmalī is alleged to have transmitted it to his son al-Ḥajjāj b. Yazīd, and he transmitted it to Hishām b. Ziyād. Hishām transmitted it to ‘Abbād b. ‘Abbād and from him Aḥmad b. Manī‘. Aḥmad b. Manī‘ recorded it in his *Musnād*. One must heed that this version has only one single strand of isnad. There are a few problematic transmitters in the chain of narration of this version. Ibn al-Jawzī mentioned that Aḥmad and Yaḥyā declared Hishām weak. Al-Nasa’ī also said that he was *matrūk*. Another problematic transmitter in this version is ‘Abbād b. ‘Abbād. Ibn Ḥibbān said that he used to transmit unusual hadiths for which he deserved to be abandoned (Ibn al-Jawzī, *Kitāb al-Mawḍū‘āt*, vol. 2, p. 164).

Due to these unreliable transmitters, critics did not accept this version too.

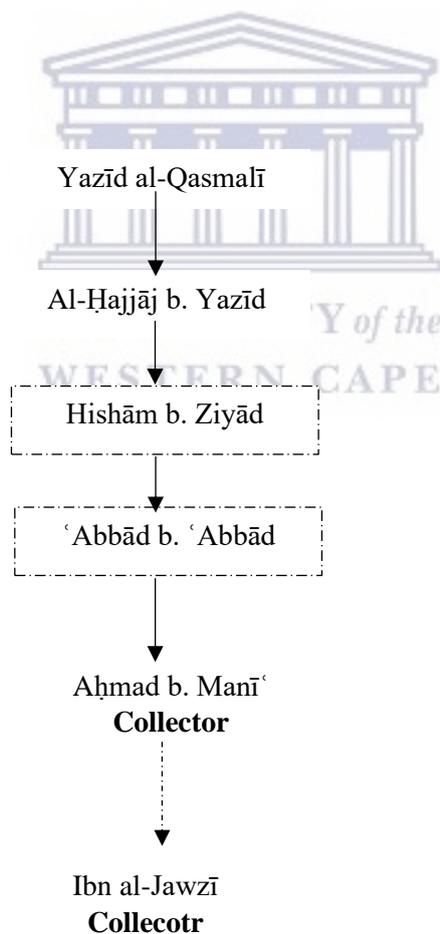


Figure 17. The hadith of Yazīd al-Qasmalī

The hadith of Abu Bakrah

Another Companion to whom the hadith “*Uṭlub al-khayr ...*” was attributed was Abū Bakrah al-Anṣārī. His hadith was recorded by Tammām in his *Fawā'id*, vol. 1, p. 340. Tammām al-Rāzī transmitted it from Abū ‘Alī Muhammad b. Hārūn b. Shua‘yb, he said: Aḥmad b. Khālīd al-Kindī informed us, he said: Abū Ya‘qūb al-Aṭṭas informed us, he said: al-Mubārak b. Fuḍālah from al-Ḥasan from Abū Bakrah said: The Messenger of Allah said: ...

Though this version has no common link because the entire isnad is a single strand, the hadith critics still apply their method of investigating the status of the narrators when critiquing a hadith. On the above chain of transmitters, scholars have identified two problems. First, the teacher of Tammām, Muhammad b. Harūn b. Shu‘ayb’s integrity was questionable. Al-Dhahabī quotes ‘Abd al-‘Azīz al-Kattāni that he was *muttahaam*, i.e., he was accused of lying (*Mīzān al-i’tidal*, vol. 4, p. 54). Second, al-Mubarak b. Fuḍālah. Many hadith critics criticized him due to his habit of obfuscating transmissions. As an adage says: *a hadith of a mudallis is not accepted unless he uses an obvious form of transmission indicating that he heard that hadith from the sources mentioned* (al-Bayhaqī, 2017, vol. 1, p. 256). In this transmission, he obfuscated his transmission. Therefore, he is suspected of having dropped some intermediary transmitter between him and al-Ḥasan.

Due to these two problematic transmitters, this hadith is not accepted.

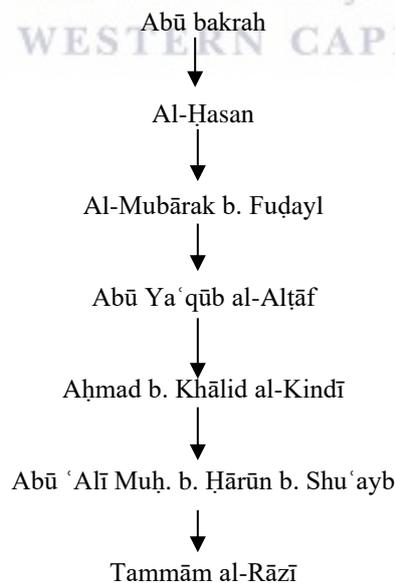


Figure 18. The hadith of Abū Bakrah

The hadith of Abū Muṣ‘ab al-Anṣārī

This hadith is recorded by Ishāq b. Rāhawayh in his *Musnad*, vol. 3, p. 947. This is probably the shortest isnad of this hadith. Its isnad reads Ishāq b. Rāhawayh said: *akhbaranā ‘Īsā b. Yūnus, akhbaranā ‘Abd al-Ḥamīd b. Ja‘far al-Anṣārī, ḥaddathanī Abū Muṣ‘ab al-Anṣārī, qāla: Qala Rasūl Allah ...* At first glance, the hadith looks fine, and one might even believe it to be an authentic version out of all versions. However, according to the criteria set by the critics in accepting the hadith ascribed to the Prophet, this hadith suffers from a break in the chain which is known as *inqiṭā‘*. Both al-Bukhārī and Abū Ḥātim declared this version to be a *mursal hadith* (al-Bukhārī, *al-Tārīkh al-Kabīr*, vol. 9, p. 71; Ibn Abī Ḥatim al-Razī, 1952, 9, p. 441). There is a difference of opinion regarding Abū Muṣ‘ab al-Anṣārī whether he was a Companion or not. Ibn Hajar’s view that he was not a Companion of the Prophet is the preponderant view amongst the hadith critics. Ibn Hajar contested Abū Nu‘aym’s inclusion of Abū Muṣ‘ab al-Anṣārī in his *Ma‘rifat al-ṣaḥābah*. Abū Nu‘aym believed that he was *mukhtalaḥ^{um} fī ṣuḥbatih* (i.e., it is contested whether he was a Companion or not). Ibn Hajar contested the opinion of Abū Nu‘aym arguing that if he was a Companion, then this hadith would have been declared authentic, but all critics have declared this text to be inauthentic. This implies that he was not a Companion. In addition, Ibn Hajar said that he was not among the Successors. Due to this reason, he declared him *majhūl* (Ibn Hajar al-‘Asqalānī, 1996, vol. 8, p. 19). The hadith, therefore, through this line of transmission is not accepted by hadith critics.

From the above exercise, it is clear that scholars of hadith did not just make statements to accept or reject any hadith without a thorough investigation of the hadith and its transmitters. Some of the theories introduced by western scholars are not new to Muslim hadith critics. If one wants to see the application of those theories, one should focus on the *mawḍū‘āt* genre instead of the hadiths that were already authenticated by hadith critics. At this juncture, we note the thoroughness of the traditional Muslim scholars of hadith when they investigated and passed judgment on hadiths. al-‘Uqaylī said regarding this hadith *‘laysa lahū ṭarīq^{um} yathbut’* i.e., there’s no single *isnad* that is proven authentic for this hadith (al-‘Uqaylī, 1984). Al-‘Irāqī after providing reference for some sources of this hadith commented that this hadith had many variations, all of them were, however, weak (al-‘Irāqī, 2005, vol. 2, p. 1027). Ibn al-Qayyim, in his *al-Manār al-munīf*, also made a similar observation. He said: “Any hadith that speaks about beautiful faces, praising the faces, commanding that one look at beautiful faces, or

seeking needs from them or that Hellfire will not touch beautiful faces; all those hadiths are lies and fabricated (Ibn al-Qayyim, 1970, p. 63).

To sum up our discussion on these two hadiths, one may compare the outcome of the application of common link theories of Western scholars on the one hand and Muslim hadith critics on the other hand, in the following table.



A comparative outcome of the application of the common link theories (CLT) to the above two case study hadiths

<i>Scholars</i>	<i>Theories about Common Links</i>	<i>Hadith</i>	<i>Possible Outcomes of the application of Western scholars' CLT to the above two case study hadiths</i>	<i>A critique of the application of CLT to the two case study hadiths</i>
Joseph Schacht	The common link transmitter is responsible for putting the hadith into circulation; hence, he is a forger. He is also responsible for the names of transmitters from him to earlier authorities.	H. 1	The hadith should not be accepted since it contains a cl and there was no isnad in the first century of Islam.	I have argued that the hadith was in circulation before the transmission of the current cl. The cl transmitter confirmed and clarified the mistakes in transmission.
		H. 2	The hadith should be accepted despite Muslim hadith critics rejecting it since there is no cl that can be accused of having forged the hadith. However, since there was no isnad, the hadith in the form we have is still questionable.	Since I have argued that isnad did exist during and after the first century, this hadith could be accepted since the isnad bundles show that the cls were at the level of Companions. However, after a thorough investigation of its isnad, Muslim hadith critics rejected it since each isnad leading to the cls contained unreliable transmitters.
G.H.A. Juynboll	The cl is the key figure who forged the text and names associated with that text from him to earlier authorities. Thus, we can safely determine and answer the question of who, when, and where, the hadith was forged. The only hadith of a common link that can be accepted is the one that has several partial common links. Hadith compilers are also responsible for creating many common links.	H. 1	The hadith should not be accepted except the isnad bundle that its cl has pcl. Hadith collectors probably fabricated all single strands of this hadith and some pcl too.	The hadith was in circulation before the cl. How did a student of the alleged cl influence his peers to transmit from a figure that did not exist if the cl himself was a fictitious figure? In addition, an argument can apply to the cls that have pcls which Juynboll accepts as historical. Many hadith compilations that exist today have also only one single strand to the author, and yet everyone, including Juynboll accepts those compilations.
		H. 2	This hadith might be accepted according to Juynboll since all versions, apart from	Muslim hadith critics rejected this hadith despite having multiple isnad bundles to the Companions, for all isnads contain one or

			the hadith of Yazīd al-Qasmalī and Abū Muṣ‘ab al-Anṣarī, have pcls.	more unreliable transmitters. If collectors were also involved in forging hadiths and cls, why is it then they implicate the same transmitters they forged?
Michael Cook	Common links were the results of <i>tadlīs</i> and the practised by some hadith transmitters. A cl is not always responsible for forging a hadith. Hadith transmitters who came after a common can also create a figure as a common link.	H. 1&2	This hadith was not a result of cl; hence cls are not responsible for its spread. Cook might accept or reject this hadith because the cl is not the way to judge a hadith.	This is partially correct as many transmitters and students of the cl in this hadith were not known as <i>mudallisūn</i> . Tadlīs did not necessarily create cls. And, since we have no single cl in the second hadith, rather, we have several cls at the generation of the Companions, it was the later unreliable transmitters who ascribed this hadith to the earlier authorities. This did not bypass the Muslim hadith critics. They knew about them, discussed them and documented their discussions about fraudulent transmitters.
Norman Calder	Common links are the result of competition amongst the legal scholars of the 3 rd century.	H. 1 & 2	These are not legal hadiths, so a lawyer would not be competing with other lawyers and thus not need to forge a hadith ascribed to an invented cl in order to support their views, so the two hadiths might be acceptable.	There are no legal concerns surrounding these two hadiths that can be suggested as a result of the existence of cls. The second hadith's cls are at the level of the Companions and not the 3 rd century.
Andreas Görke	The common link transmitter is responsible for the hadith in the form we have it. He could also be a transmitter who spent most of his life in transmitting the hadiths he has learned throughout his life.	H. 1	Suhayl b. Abī Ṣāliḥ is responsible for this hadith, at least, in the form we have it.	The hadith was already known to the students of the cl before Suhayl became a cl. The hadith existed long before the cl. The second point is correct for many cls who dedicated their lives to transmitting hadiths. However, whether that can be generalized, is a question that requires a thorough study.

		H. 2	The alleged common links existed long before the hadith. later hadith transmitters ascribed the hadith to earlier authorities.	The hadith is attributed to several Companions wrongfully for each isnad contains either one or more unreliable transmitters. Therefore, hadith critics rejected it for the authority it seeks to establish.
Powers	A common link can be found at the level of the Companions. Therefore, he was not necessarily fabricated by later transmitters.	H. 1&2	Hadith 1 can be assumed to be historical, at least to the authority it claims. Looking at the hadith critics' comments on hadith 2, it can be rejected.	These hadiths could be historical only if the criteria laid down by hadith critics are met.
Harald Motzki	There are many ways to explain the occurrence of common links in hadith. From the outset, the cl is not a forger of the hadith and the authorities he mentioned in his hadith. A common link could be the first systematic collector of hadiths, who recorded and transmitted the hadiths in regular classes.	H. 1	Since Motzki did not survey this hadith yet, he might not necessarily comment on it. However, due to the many ahadith he studied, he would hesitate to declare this hadith a forgery because the cl was not always responsible for bringing the hadith into existence. Rather, if he was reliable, then he was the first systematic collector of the hadith.	Since all transmitters of this hadith are reliable, the hadith is accepted by hadith critics. Though Motzki's one of the ways to explain away the occurrence of the cl is to treat him as the first systematic collector of the hadith, this hadith was already in circulation before the current cl became a cl.
		H. 2	Using <i>isnad-cum-matn</i> , looking at variations in its wording Motzki would be inclined to authenticate this hadith. However, due to his reliance on biographical dictionaries of hadith transmitters, he would declare this hadith unauthentic.	Though <i>isnad-cum-matn</i> analysis agrees with the criteria of corroboration according to hadith critics, integrity and accuracy in transmission remain the major criteria for determining whether the hadith is accepted or not. <i>Isnad-cum-matn</i> helps to authenticate a hadith but not to discover a problem in the hadith.
Traditional Muslim hadith	A common link could be a reliable figure or not. His reliability is determined by looking	H.1	Depending on the integrity of all transmitters and their accuracy, in addition to the corroboration between them, this hadith is authentic	

	<p>at his integrity and accuracy when transmitting a hadith, in addition to the generation he is in. There are many factors, which Traditional hadith critics look at before judging a cl. and his hadith. In general, the common link is not automatically dealt with as a forger of the hadith.</p>	<p>H. 2</p>	<p>Due to each isnad leading to the cl. i.e., Companions contains unreliable transmitter/s the hadith is not accepted even though the cl seems to be at the level of Companions and cls have several pcls.</p>
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Summary of the chapter of the Case study

In this chapter, we have seen that the theories about common links are complex. It is, therefore, important to understand the definitions of a common link and its equivalent terms used in hadith literature by traditional Muslim hadith critics. We also saw how important it is to identify the correct common links in hadiths so that their integrity and their hadith status be investigated. Without following a proper method of identifying common links, one might fall into error and treat a transmitter as a common link when he is not. Identifying common links also helps find a 'illah in hadiths. There are different ways of finding common links in hadiths. Books such as *al-Mu'jam al-awsaṭ*, and *Tuḥfat al-ashrāf* are good sources for finding common links. These books also indicate that traditional Muslim hadith scholars knew and dealt with common links in *isnads*.

We have also explored two *aḥādīth* as case studies and applied the *muḥaddithūn*'s critical approach to hadiths. The hadith critics would first study all the hadith transmitters of any given hadith before accepting or rejecting their hadith narrations. In the *isnad* bundle, for example, they studied first each hadith separately to determine whether the hadith was acceptable on its own or could only be used for corroboration. If the hadith lacked any of the criteria for authenticity, scholars still recorded those hadiths in their collections and many a time pointed out the problematic areas of the said hadith. This proves that the *muḥaddithūn*'s methodology was all-encompassing in that only after a thorough investigation of the transmitters' lives and after confirmation of their integrity and accuracy in their transmission then their hadith accepted. Sometimes the hadiths were falsely attributed to earlier authorities, but this did not bypass the hadith critics. If one wants to see the traditional hadith critical methodologies, one should investigate the hadith declared weak by hadith critics found in the books of *mawḍū'āt*, *ḍu'afā'*, and the *rijāl* books.

After a thorough presentation of Muslim scholars' critical approach to hadiths which contain common links, I have demonstrated by way of a table wherein Western scholars' common link theories are briefly outlined. I have also demonstrated the possible outcomes of applying the theories of Western scholars like Schacht and Juynboll. to the two case study hadiths. Judging from their theories, one would conclude that if Western scholars had studied these two hadiths, they would have reached different conclusions and possibly accepted these hadiths that would be rejected by Muslim critics. Western scholars' theories of common links have their own

merit; however, it is the generalization of their theories that caused more problems than what it attempted to solve. However, looking at the two methods – the Muslim critics’ method and the Western method, one learns that despite Western critical methods having a value in some areas, Muslims had a broader web of criticism that included the transmitter’s integrity and *dabt*. These, too, were not the only method applied for the authenticity of hadith, but rather a part of a broader method of hadith criticism. Hence decontextualizing the common link theory without looking at the broader aspects of hadith criticism leads to erroneous conclusions.



Chapter Seven: Conclusion and Recommendation

The objective of this study was to clarify the approach of the traditional hadith critics to common link transmitters in hadith and compare them with the findings of Orientalists and other Western scholars of hadith. Thus, in chapter one, I elaborated the layout in which the aims and objectives of this research were outlined. The main objective of conducting this research was to explore the tenets of both Orientalists and traditional Muslim scholars regarding hadith and its authenticity with specific reference to the Common Link. I discussed Joseph Schacht's introduction of the common link theory and the subsequent studies on common link theory. Though Schacht's explanation of the occurrence of common links in hadith had an impact on Orientalist scholars, other scholars criticised him because of his extreme generalisation and the limited sources he consulted.

In chapter two, I outlined the approach of Orientalists and other western scholars and their views regarding the sources of early Islam. I noted that there were different approaches to these sources. Early Orientalist scholars accepted Muslim sources as a valid tool to understand the early Muslim communities. However, in the second half of the nineteenth and first half of the twentieth century, Western scholars of Islam became sceptic about these sources, hence, adopted different methods of source criticism. The Historical-Critical Method (HCM) was the most critical method adopted by many scholars. Using HCM, they developed new theories regarding the provenance and authorship of the Prophetic traditions (Khan, 2020).

In chapter three, I explored the Muslim account of hadith and its development from the time of the Prophet to the tenth century of Islam. At the time of the Prophet, and a few decades after his demise, people trusted each other, hence, very rarely would they ask for corroboration for the hadiths they heard from each other. It was only after the *fitnah* that led to the assassination of the 'Uthmān, the then Caliph of the believers, that people started asking for corroboration, for it was at this point that people started fabricating in the name of the Prophet or early authorities. It was due to the spread of forgery that hadith critics intensified the ways of hadith transmission and acceptance. It was also due to forgery in hadith that the science of *jarḥ wa ta'dīl* was introduced for transmitters were now judged according to their integrity and precision. Scholars travelled far and wide for the sake of hadith collection. In the second century, books of hadith were compiled. And by the turn of the third century, the idea of

isolating only authentic hadith was already in circulation. Thanks to al-Shāfi‘ī, who vehemently argued for the use of authentic prophetic hadith in matters of law.

Though the hadith criticism continued by some hadith critics for centuries, after the major hadith compilations, there was a change in the approach to authenticating hadiths.

In chapter four, I have explored and discussed in detail the theories regarding common links in hadith according to Orientalist and some Revisionist scholars. Schacht, the founding father of the CL theory in Western circles, was discussed at length. Schacht believed that a common link transmitter is responsible for fabricating hadith or putting it into circulation. This researcher noticed that though some scholars embraced Schacht’s explanation of the occurrence of common links in isnad in totality, other scholars, like Calder, Cook, Powers and Motzki, held different interpretations of common links. According to Motzki, for example, there is no reason to believe that a common link was always a fabricator. “Why must the common link always be a fabricator?” he asked (Motzki, 2005, p. 238). He suggested that there were other explanations for the occurrence of common links in isnads. One explanation that Motzki offered is that the common links were the first systematic collectors of hadith (Motzki, 2004, p. xli; Motzki, 2005, p. 340).

In chapter five, I discussed how traditional Muslims approached common links in hadiths. Unlike Orientalist scholars, the traditional Muslims’ account of common links was closely related to how they evaluated hadith transmitters. In addition to the common link’s status as a hadith transmitter, it is also important to investigate his generation, for that has a direct impact on his isolated hadiths. Using *tafarrud* and sometimes *madār al-isnād* analysis, this researcher has proved that not all common links in hadith are problematic. Since Sunni Muslims believe that all Companions are trustworthy, hadiths transmitted by common links of the generation of Companions were accepted, provided the link to the Companion was proven authentic. Common links that were known for their hadith collection were also treated differently by hadith critics.

In chapter six, I studied two hadiths which I chose as case studies on common links in hadiths and applied the Muslims’ critical approach to hadiths. Prior to discussing the two hadiths, I believe that it was necessary to first understand the definition of common links in hadiths and their terminology according to Muslim hadith scholars. Hence, this was provided with adequate detail. The importance and value of the common link in isnad and the process of finding it was also elaborated. Two easy but useful, ways of finding common links in hadiths were suggested.

The two hadiths which I have studied confirmed that Muslim hadith scholars' method of hadith criticism is far more comprehensive than Western methods of criticism. In the first hadith, I have established that if a common link is reliable, then his hadith is accepted if all other considerations for acceptance are met. It has also come to light that there were many reasons why transmitters became common links. Many a time, the hadith was already in circulation prior to an individual transmitter becoming a common link. In the second hadith, we learned that sometimes the common links might appear on the level of Companions or the Prophet himself. However, due to the transmitters in the isnad not meeting the criteria for acceptance, critics rejected that hadith. From this exercise, we assert that for traditional hadith critics, a common link was not the sole criterion for accepting or rejecting a hadith. Integrity and precision when retelling the hadith – in addition to being corroborated, were the main criteria for accepting or rejecting hadiths. On the other hand, I do acknowledge that in some instances, hadith critics rejected some hadiths transmitted by reliable common links. This, however, has been explained in that critics rejected those hadiths due to other reasons, for instance, where a reliable narrator contradicted other reliable transmitters. Hadith critics dismissed the isolated transmissions of common links that were of a moderate calibre as transmitters because their isolated narrations begged a lot of questions. Why was it that he was the only one transmitting that hadith? Why didn't his contemporaries or classmates transmit the hadith? How did that hadith escape everyone's attention? Therefore, the task of evaluating the hadith transmitted by a common link is as complex as the common link itself.

This thesis also demonstrates that Orientalists and Revisionists had different assumptions and tenets when they dealt with hadith traditions. Some Western scholars who studied Islam believe that its adherent members missed Islam's important historical phase of its first century. Most western scholars believe that the history of the first century of Islam is merely a collection of what Muslims perceived it to be and not a reflection of events. This perception of Islam is based on the colonial perspective of the Western mind about Muslims and their epistemological assumption that only textual and physical evidence is acceptable as sources of evidence. For this reason, Western scholars see Muslims as simple-minded. They do not hesitate to accuse Muslims of being fixated on investigating hadith transmitters and ignoring content criticism that resulted in Muslims falling prey to treacherous transmitters who forged and circulated hadiths and that hadith scholars did not detect the forged hadith, for they only concentrated on the *isnād*. But as we have seen, Traditional Muslim critics did, in fact, use content criticism. Critics like Abū Ḥātim, Abū Zur'ah, and others would sometimes look at the hadith and

immediately conclude that the hadith was not authentic because it did not sound like the words of the Prophet. Traditional Muslim scholars do not deny that forgery found its way into the hadith genre. Contrary to what Orientalists and Revisionists believed, those forged hadiths were noticed and distinguished from authentic hadiths. The entire Sunni hadith criticism was founded for the sake of preserving and transmitting the teachings of the Prophet in its pristine tone. For that, they dealt stringently with hadiths dealing with law and dogma more than the hadiths that dealt with other genres such as history (*maghāzī*), virtues of people and acts (*fazā'il*). Western scholars who used only content criticism, like Goldziher, unfortunately, paid much attention to areas that were of less priority to Muslim critics.

It was only Schacht that concentrated on the legal hadith genre and the use of isnād in hadith. However, Schacht's understanding of the function of isnad was incorrect. His purpose for the study was to date the origin of the hadith. In the hadiths he studied, he identified the common links as the transmitters solely responsible for bringing the hadith into circulation, hence, fabricators. However, the few sources he studied did not warrant the overwhelming conclusion he drew. In addition, the discoveries of manuscripts and subsequent studies challenge his general conclusions and beg that his theories be updated or rejected (Azami, 1996).

On the concept of common links in hadith, the general outlook of Orientalists and Revisionists ignored the development of isnād in general and its function in particular. Though isnād was there prior to the forgery in hadith, hadith critics used it as a stringent means of authentication only after the dishonest hadith scholars forged hadith for their own agendas. When a reliable transmitter transmitted a hadith, by no means did it mean that he was the only one who knew that particular hadith. 'Alqamah b. Waqqāṣ, for example, heard 'Umar relating the hadith of 'intention' to the audience whilst on the *minbar*. Despite that, he is the only one who transmitted it to Muhammad b. Ibrāhīm al-Taymī. Clearly, 'Alqamah was not the only one present when 'Umar related the hadith of 'intention' from the Prophet.

Traditional Muslim scholars had their assumptions about hadith transmission, in general, and common links, in particular. They did not have only one general rule for all common links in hadiths. Taken by the historical phases in judging transmitters' transmitting solitary hadiths, hadith critics treated each common link according to the qualities and qualifications of that particular transmitter. In addition, traditional Muslim critics also looked at various circumstantial evidence before passing the final ruling on the common link's credibility and acceptance of his hadith. Generally, the transmission of common links found in early generations of Companions and Successors was accepted if the isnāds leading to them were

sound. The argument for this general acceptance of common links found in the generations of Companions and early Successors is that the sources of two generations are generally trusted, and spurious transmitters were not as common as in later generations. In later generations, however, hadith critics hesitated to accept hadiths of common links for the following reasons:

- Most hadiths by this time had been collected by many hadith scholars,
- and lots of scholars made an effort to collect hadiths, especially the hadiths of notable hadith scholars. Thus, these notable scholars had lots of students, which makes it impossible that only one student could transmit a hadith from a notable scholar of hadith.
- Common links in later generations leave a lot of questions in the minds of critics as to why he was the only one transmitting a particular hadith. Thus, stringent measures were taken, and investigations were conducted before accepting his solitary transmission.

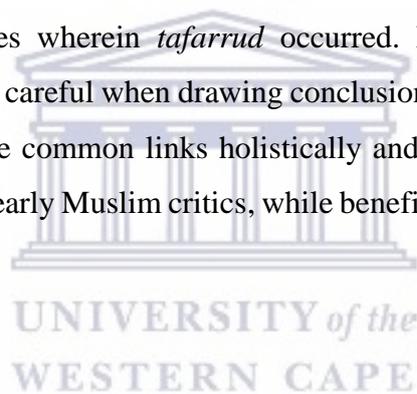
While I do not attempt to claim, in this study, that all solitary transmission by reliable transmitters should be accepted or rejected, I do confirm, however, that not all solitary transmissions are problematic as a result of which the hadith should be rejected. Nor do I prove that the common link is the originator of the said hadith. The solitary transmission of a reliable transmitter is rejected if there exists evidence that indicates that there is a mistake (*wahm, khaṭʿ*) or anything that disfigures the hadith (Mujīr al-Khaṭīb, 2007, vol. 1, p. 479). The evidence could be found in the transmitter himself or the *matn* transmitted. For example, if the transmitter is disqualified on account of a fault in his integrity or *ḍabṭ*, his hadith cannot be accepted at all. On the other hand, we find transmitters that were only disparaged if they transmitted sole narrations from specific teachers or people of specific regions. These transmitters' narrations would not be accepted if they were the common links in those hadiths.¹⁰² For a hadith to be sound, according to Sunni hadith scholars, the *adālah* and *ḍabṭ* of the transmitter had to be intact, there had to be continuity in its isnād, the hadith would have to be devoid of hidden defects and *shudhūdh* or contradictions. This is evidence that scholars of hadith took into consideration the qualification of a transmitter as well as the text he transmitted.

As a researcher who trusts the Traditional Sunni sources of Islam, I do not doubt that early Muslim hadith transmitters were trustworthy. In the case when some treacherous hadith transmitters forged hadiths, or any transmitter erred in a hadith, those hadiths were not missed

¹⁰² Sometimes the transmitters were generally reliable but due to circumstances. 'Abd Allah b. Lahī'ah for example was disparaged after his library burned to fire. See Ibn Ḥajar, *Taqrīb al-Tahdhīb*, entry: 3563.

by hadith critics. Rather, those forgeries were revealed, and those mistakes were clarified. For this reason, hadith critics emphasized that one is not permitted to transmit a hadith which he clearly knows that it is fabricated or mistaken. I, therefore, have no doubt that the traditional approach to common links is an appropriate and logical approach to hadith transmission. As I mentioned earlier in this research, Orientalist scholars study Islam, and its related disciplines from a colonial point of view and, hence attach little value to the perspectives of the colonised. It is about time now that independent researchers decolonise themselves from the Orientalist mindset and maintain fairness in their research.

While this study clarified how the traditional hadith critics dealt with common links in the isnād in general, further studies on books that concentrated on common links are still required. These books include the *al-Baḥr al-Zakḥkhār*, famously known as *Musnad al-Bazzār* of Abū Bakr Aḥmad al-Bazzār (d. 292) and the *Ma'ājim* of Abu al-Qāsim al-Ṭabarānī (d. 360), etc. al-Bazzār in his *Musnad* as well as al-Ṭabarānī in his *al-Mu'jam al-awsaṭ* and *al-Mu'jam al-ṣaghīr* pointed out most of the places wherein *tafarrud* occurred. Even in studying the above-mentioned books, one had to be careful when drawing conclusions as it might lead to erroneous outcomes. One has to study the common links holistically and comprehensively with hadith criticism in mind, according to early Muslim critics, while benefitting from the positive insights from Western scholars.



Appendices

(1)

Dating the fitnah and asking for sources: Source for confusion

The question of ‘when the actual *fitnah* that led scholars to question the sources of their informants occurred’ has caused debate amongst hadith scholars, especially in the past century. The dating of Great *fitnah* is important to the hadith scholars of Muslims and Non-Muslims as it has a direct impact on dating the beginning of *isnād*. Since historians, and scholars of hadith alike, have identified different occurrences in Islamic history as civil strife, some scholars of hadith in recent times find it difficult to clarify which *fitnah* Ibn Sīrīn referred to in his statement. According to Joseph Schacht, the *fitnah* here refers to the assassination of the Umayyad Caliph Walīd b. Yazīd b. ‘Abd al-Malik b. Marwān towards the end of the Umayyad dynasty in the year 126 H. According to Schacht, this was a conventional date for the end of the good old time during which the *Sunnah* of the Prophet was still prevailing (Schacht, 1979, p. 37). Since the killing of this Caliph was long after the death of Ibn Sīrīn (d.110), Schacht questioned the ascription of the statement “*lam yakūnū yas’alūn ‘an al-isnād, falmā waqa‘at al-fitnah qālū sammū lanā rijālakum* ([Usually,] they did not ask their informants the sources of their information. However, when the *fitnah* occurred, they said: name to us your men)” to Ibn Sīrīn. It appears that Schacht used the Principle of Anachronism to disqualify this statement. In his *Origins*, he states: “As the usual date for the death of Ibn Sīrīn is 110H, we must conclude that the attribution of this statement to him is spurious. In any case, there is no reason to suppose that the regular practice of using *isnaās* is older than the beginning of the second century A.H” (Schacht, 1979, pp. 36-37). Schacht relied for his conclusion on Ibn Jarīr al-Ṭabarī’s statement in his *Tārīkh* (Fullātah, 1981, vol. 2, p. 12). Ibn Jarīr, speaking about the events that happened in the year 126H, said: “*Wafī hadhih al-sanah idṭarabat ḥabl banī Marwān wa hājat al-fitnah*,” ‘In this year, the house of Banū Marwān was at disarray, and *fitnah* (disturbance) stirred up’ “*Dhikr al-khabar ‘ammā ḥadatha fihā min al-fitān*” ‘Information about the *fitān* that took place in this year’ (Ibn Jarīr al-Ṭabarī, 1407, vol.

8, p. 287). However, with little scrutiny of Ibn Jarīr's statement one wonders how Professor Schacht reached this conclusion. According to Azami, Schacht's "whole argument is based on his arbitrary interpretation of the word *Fitnah*". In addition, "[t]he assassination date of Walīd b. Yazīd has never been a conventional date in Islamic history and was never reckoned as the end of the "good old time" (Azami, 1992, p. 216).

It appears that even some early Orientalists believed that *isnād* as a system came as late as the second century. Caetan (d. 1935), for example, argued in his *Annali delli' Islam*, that the formation of the *isnād* followed and did not accompany the formation of traditions. He argued that the *isnād* was a consequence of the needs of the new civilization due to the Muslim conquest. Thus, the idea of the *isnād* is quite alien to the nature of primitive Arabs. Caetan further claimed that 'Urwah b. al-Zubayr, the oldest systematic collector of traditions, used no *isnāds*, and quoted no authority but the Qur'ān. Caetan held that, in the time of 'Abd al-Malik (ca 70 – 80), more than sixty years after the Prophet's death, the practice of giving an *isnād* did not exist. He, therefore, concluded that the beginning of the *isnād* system may be placed in the period between 'Urwah and Ibn Ishāq (d. 150) (Robson, *The Isnād in Muslim Tradition*, 1953, pp. 17-18). Professor James Robson critically studied Caetan's arguments and informed us that these claims are largely answered in a very important article by Josef Horovitz entitled *Alter und Ursprung des Isnād*. Horovitz's conclusion is that *isnād* first appeared in hadith literature not later than the last third of the first century (Horovitz, 1918, p. 5).

Robson acknowledged that after the prophet's death, Companions must have told stories about him, and these would be accepted without question whether the Companion said he had heard the Prophet say such and such or seen him do such and such or whether he merely said that the Prophet had said or done it. There could be no demand for authority at that period. Robson, therefore, asked, how early can we expect an *isnād* to appear? During the middle years of the first century, many of the Companions were dead, and people who had not seen the Prophet would be telling stories about him. It might, therefore, naturally occur to some to ask these men for their authority. This is the period Robson believes that one would first expect anything like an *isnād*. However, the growth of a hard and fast system must have been very gradual (Robson, 1953, p. 21).

Robson ascertained that even though the system of isnād was present as early a period people could demand it, he denies that Ibn Sīrīn could refer to the strife between ‘Alī and Mu‘āwiyah as that is too early a period to consider. Therefore. The statement should be understood to refer to the upheaval of ‘Abd Allah b. al-Zubayr (Robson, 1953, p. 21). Robson quoted a hadith in Muwaṭṭa’ about ibn ‘Umar’s wish to go to Makkah to perform pilgrimage during the conflict (*fitnah*) between Ḥajjāj b. Yūsuf and ‘Abd Allah b. al-Zubayr (Mālik, hadith: 801).

In addition, Ibn Sīrīn, who was born in the year 33H, would be very young to talk about the killing of the third caliph, Uthmān. However, he would be old enough to speak with authority on what happened in the period of the upheaval of ‘Abd Allah b. al-Zubayr against Ḥajjāj (Robson, 1953, p. 22).

Amongst the Western scholars who also had an interest in the study of isnād and dating the Great *Fitnah* is G.H.A. Juynboll. In his ‘*The dating of the Great Fitna*’, Juynboll criticised Western scholars for accepting Muslims’ understanding of *fitnah* as associated with the murder of the caliph Uthmān without question (Juynboll, 1973, p. 144).

Juynboll, though he differed with Schacht in his conclusion, concurred with him that “the term *fitnah* for the Civil War ensuing the killing of Uthmān came into use only at relatively late date, probably several decades after 110/728, the year in which Ibn Sīrīn died” (Juynboll, 1973, pp. 158-159). Juynboll wants us to believe, through his unconvincing evidence, that the word *fitnah* before 110H could mean anything besides the connotation of ‘civil strife’. The cases where in the reports give the connotation of ‘civil strife after the killing of ‘Uthmān’ came into existence after the ‘Abbāsids had come to power (Juynboll, 1973, p. 152). Juynboll claimed that he found in the history of Islam the first political event that is most often called the *fitnah* is the revolt of ‘Abd Allah b. al-Zubayr against the Umayyad caliphs (Juynboll, 1973, p. 152). Juynboll, therefore, agrees with J. Robson in his conclusion on dating the *fitnah* though he criticized him for not adducing concluding evidence (Juynboll, 1973, p. 152 note 3).

However, notable Muslim scholars, classical and contemporary, are of the opinion that the Civil Strife in the statement of Ibn Sīrīn is the first Civil War that led to the killing of the 3rd Caliph of the Muslim, ‘Uthmān. In his *al-Mufhim*, Al-Qurṭubī (d. 671)

explained the *fitnah* in the statement of Ibn Sīrīn referred to the assassination of ‘Uthmān and the *fitnah* of the emergence of the Khārijite who declared that ‘Alī, Mu‘āwiyah and their followers to have reneged because they fought amongst each other (al-Qurṭubī, vol. 1, p. 40). Contemporary Muslim scholars Akram Ḍiyā’ al-‘Umarī (1984), among others, are of this opinion. Azami (1992) argued that the *fitnah* should be taken back to the first and most dangerous Civil War in the history of Islam. Azami was aware of the views of Western scholars and attempted to respond to most of their arguments. In the case of Schacht, for example, Azami says that Schacht’s “whole argument is based on his arbitrary interpretation of the word *Fitnah*” (Azami, 1992, p. 216). Therefore, Azami finds no reason whatsoever to discredit the statement of Ibn Sīrīn, for he is relating a practice earlier than his own period. Ibn Sīrīn used the words like ‘They did not ask’, they said ‘Name to us your men’, ‘were accepted’ etc. He did not use the personal pronoun in practice when its usage was common. Furthermore, he says, ‘they did not ask’, which implies that the practice of isnād was in existence, but people did not usually inquire, and it was left to the transmitter whether or not to disclose his sources (Azami, 1992, p. 217). Azami summed up his conclusions on isnād, and the following points are pertinent to our study:

The isnād system began in the lifetime of the Prophet and was used by Companions in transmitting the traditions of the Prophet.

Political upheavals in the fourth decade gave birth to the forgery of traditions in the political sphere to credit or discredit certain parties. So, scholars became more cautious and began to scrutinize, criticize and search for the sources of information. The use of isnād, therefore, became more and more important (Azami, 1992, p. 247).

All these diverse views about the exact period when isnād emerged are dependent on the materials each scholar studied for his conclusions, as we have seen above. Schacht relied on the statement of Ibn Jarīr al-Ṭabarī. In his celebrated history book, Ibn Jarīr mentioned the word *fitnah* for the event that led to the assassination of the Umayyad Caliph Walīd b. Yazīd b. ‘Abd al-Malik b. Marwān in the year 126/744. On the other hand, the scholars who opined that isnād started towards the end of the first century inferred from Mālik’s statement: ‘*Awwalu man asnada al-hadith ibn Shihāb*’, (The first scholar to narrate hadith with *sanad* is Ibn Shihāb) (Ibn Abī Ḥātim al-Rāzī; al-‘Umarī,

1984, p. 48). Imām Mālik probably said the above statement in praise of al-Zuhrī, because al-Zuhrī was known for his emphasis on the use of isnād. In addition, he could mean the first person who used isnād strictly especially in the regions of Shām, as shown above in the narration of Al-Walīd b. Muslim. Robson and Juynboll relied, for their findings, on the argument that the word *fitnah* with the connotation of the killing of the third caliph, ‘Uthmān, is relatively a late insertion because Ibn Sīrīn would have been only two years old at the time of ‘Uthmān’s death.

However, on a closer look, one reaches the conclusion that the isnād system did not come arbitrarily over-a-night as one would imagine. It was a gradual development from the time of the Prophet throughout the three to four decades following his demise. As said earlier, the ill-minded people took advantage of the series of social turmoil, especially the great fitnah that led to the killing of the 3rd Caliph and the strife between the followers of both ‘Alī and Mu‘āwiyah. Brown (2010) asserted that the supporters of ‘Alī falsely claimed that the Prophet said about Mu‘āwiyah that “If you see Mu‘āwiyah ascend my pulpit, then kill him.” Mu‘āwiyah supporters countered by forging hadith as: “It is as if Mu‘āwiyah were sent as a prophet because of his forbearance and his having been entrusted with God’s word” (al-Dhahabī, 1995, p. 112). For that reason, hadith critics became sceptical about accepting traditions and accordingly started demanding sources. Teachers would not let their students hear any hadith narrated without isnād, and students also inquired about isnād from their teachers if teachers did not mention their sources. At one time, Al-Zuhrī was lecturing hadith and Sufyān b. ‘Uyaynah (d. 198) requested al-Zuhrī, not to mention the isnād, for the sake of brevity. Al-Zuhrī reacted infelicitously and remarked: “Do you climb a roof without a ladder?” (al-‘Alā’ī, 1978, p. 70). Sulaymān b. Mihrān, al-A‘mash (d. 147/8), said to his teacher Ibrahim al-Nakha‘ī (d. 96H): “When you narrate a hadith to me, then give it with isnād”. Ibrahim said: “If I say to you that ‘Abd Allah said, then know that a group of people informed me about that particular hadith, but when I explicitly mention a person’s name that he informed me from ‘Abdullah, then know that only that person is the one who informed me” (al-Tirmidhī, 1999; Ibn ‘Abd al-Barr, vol. 1, pp. 37-38; Fullātah, vol. 2 p. 24).

It is, indeed, untenable as Robson has asserted that ‘the great part of the isnād was put together and created by the traditionists of the end of the second century, and sometimes also of the third’ (Robson, 1953, p. 18).



(2)

The hadith of al-Dīn al-Naṣīḥah (Takhrij)

تخريج بعض طرق حديث "الدين النصيحة"

قد روي هذا الحديث من طرق متعددة عن تميم بن أوس الداري، أبي هريرة، عبد الله بن عمر، عبد الله بن عباس، ثوبان وزيد بن أسلم. وقد قمت بجمع بعض هذه الطرق في الصفحات التالية.

حديث تميم بن أوس الداري

أما حديث تميم بن أوس الداري، فقد:

أخرجه الإمام الوكييع في كتاب الزهد، قال رحمه الله تعالى:

٣٤٦ - حدثنا سفيان، عن سهيل بن أبي صالح، عن عطاء بن يزيد الليثي، عن تميم الداري قال: قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم: "الدين النصيحة، الدين النصيحة، قالوا: لمن يا رسول الله؟ قال: «لله ولكتابه ولأئمة المسلمين ولجماعتهم»



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وأخرجه ابن أبي شيبة في مسنده، قال رحمه الله تعالى: ٨٢٠ - أخبرنا أبو نعيم، عن سفيان، عن سهيل بن صالح، عن عطاء بن يزيد الليثي، عن تميم الداري، قال: قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم: «إنما الدين النصيحة» ثلاثا، قيل: يا رسول الله لمن؟ قال: «لله ولكتابه ولرسوله ولأئمة المؤمنين وعامتهم»

وأخرجه الإمام الشافعي في مسنده، قال رحمه الله تعالى:

أخبرنا ابن عيينة، عن سهيل بن أبي صالح، عن عطاء بن يزيد الليثي، عن تميم الداري رضي الله عنه قال: قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم: «الدين النصيحة، الدين النصيحة، لله ولكتابه ولنبيه ولأئمة المسلمين وعامتهم» اهـ

وأخرجه الحميدي في مسنده، قال رحمه الله تعالى:

٨٥٩ - حدثنا الحميدي قال: ثنا سفيان، قال: ثنا سهيل بن أبي صالح، قال: أخبرني عطاء بن يزيد الليثي صديقاً كان لأبي من أهل الشام، عن تميم الداري، قال: قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم: «الدين النصيحة، الدين النصيحة، الدين النصيحة» قالوا: لمن يا رسول الله، قال: «لله ولكتابه، ولنبيه، ولأئمة المسلمين، ولعامتهم». اهـ

وكذلك أخرجه ابن زنجويه (ت: ٢٥١هـ) في الأموال، قال رحمه الله تعالى:

١ - أخبرنا محمد بن يوسف، أنا سفيان، قال: سمعت سهيل بن أبي صالح، يذكر عن عطاء بن يزيد الليثي، عن تميم الداري، قال: قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم: «إنما الدين النصيحة، إنما الدين النصيحة، إنما الدين النصيحة» قيل: لمن؟ قال: «لله، ولكتابه، ولرسوله، ولأئمة المؤمنين، وعامتهم». اهـ

وأخرجه الإمام أحمد في المسند، قال رحمه الله تعالى:

١٦٩٤٠ - حدثنا عبد الرحمن بن مهدي، حدثنا سفيان، عن سهيل بن أبي صالح، عن عطاء بن يزيد الليثي، عن تميم الداري، قال: قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم: "إن الدين النصيحة، إنما الدين النصيحة". قالوا: لمن يا رسول الله؟ قال: "لله ولكتابه ولرسوله ولأئمة المسلمين وعامتهم"

١٦٩٤١ - حدثنا يحيى بن سعيد، عن سفيان، قال: حدثني سهيل بن أبي صالح، عن عطاء بن يزيد، عن تميم الداري، عن النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم قال: "إنما الدين النصيحة إنما الدين النصيحة" قيل: لمن؟ قال: "لله ولرسوله ولكتابه ولأئمة المسلمين وعامتهم"

١٦٩٤٧ - حدثنا وكيع، حدثنا سفيان، عن سهيل بن أبي صالح، عن عطاء بن يزيد الليثي، عن تميم الداري، قال: قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم: "الدين النصيحة، الدين النصيحة" ثلاثاً. قالوا: لمن يا رسول الله؟ قال: "لله ولكتابه ولرسوله ولأئمة المسلمين وعامتهم. اهـ

وأخرجه البخاري في التاريخ الأوسط، قال:

قال حدثنا محمد بن يوسف قال حدثنا سفيان قال سمعت سهيل بن أبي صالح عن عطاء بن يزيد عن تميم الداري عن النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم الدين النصيحة. اهـ

وأخرجه الإمام مسلم في كتاب الإيمان من صحيحه، قال رحمه الله تعالى:

حدثنا محمد بن عباد المكي، حدثنا سفيان، قال: قلت لسهيل: إن عمرا حدثنا عن القعقاع، عن أبيك، قال: ورجوت أن يسقط عني رجلا، قال: فقال: سمعته من الذي سمعه منه أبي كان صديقا له بالشام، ثم حدثنا سفيان، عن سهيل، عن عطاء بن يزيد، عن تميم الداري أن النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم، قال: «الدين النصيحة» قلنا: لمن؟ قال: «لله ولكتابه ولرسوله ولأئمة المسلمين وعامتهم»

قال: وحدثني محمد بن حاتم، حدثنا ابن مهدي، حدثنا سفيان، عن سهيل بن أبي صالح، عن عطاء بن يزيد الليثي، عن تميم الداري، عن النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم بمثله.

وقال: وحدثني أمية بن بسطام، حدثنا يزيد، يعني ابن زريع، حدثنا روح وهو ابن القاسم، حدثنا سهيل، عن عطاء بن يزيد، سمعه وهو يحدث أبا صالح، عن تميم الداري، عن رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم بمثله.

وقال:

وأخرجه أبو داود في السنن:

٤٩٤٤ - حدثنا أحمد بن يونس، حدثنا زهير، حدثنا سهيل بن أبي صالح، عن عطاء بن يزيد عن تميم الداري، قال: قال رسول الله -صلى الله عليه وسلم-: "إن الدين النصيحة، إن الدين النصيحة، إن الدين النصيحة"، قالوا: لمن يا رسول الله -صلى الله عليه وسلم-؟ قال: "لله وكتابه ورسوله وأئمة المؤمنين وعامتهم، أو أئمة المسلمين وعامتهم"

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وأخرجه محمد بن نصر المروزي في تعظيم قدر الصلاة، قال رحمه الله تعالى:

٧٤٧- حدثنا صدقة بن الفضل، أنا سفيان بن عيينة، قال: سمعت سهيلا، يقول: سمعت عطاء بن يزيد الليثي، يحدث عن تميم الداري، قال: قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم: «إنما الدين النصيحة»، قالوا: لمن يا رسول الله؟ قال: «لله، ولرسوله، ولكتابه، وأئمة المسلمين وعامتهم»

٧٤٩ - حدثنا إسحاق، أنا عبد الرحمن بن مهدي، عن سفيان، عن سهيل بن أبي صالح، عن عطاء بن يزيد، عن تميم الداري، عن النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم مثله، وقال: «الدين النصيحة» ثلاثا

٧٥١ - حدثنا إبراهيم بن عبد الله الهروي، ثنا ابن عيينة، عن سهيل بن أبي صالح، سمعت من عطاء بن يزيد الليثي، عن تميم الداري، قال: قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم: «إن الدين النصيحة، إن الدين النصيحة، إن الدين النصيحة» قالوا: لمن يا رسول الله؟ قال: «لله، ولكتابه ولنبيه، ولأئمة المسلمين» قال سفيان: كان عمرو بن دينار أخبرنا عن رجل، عن أبي صالح، فلقيت سهيلا فقلت: كيف كان يحدثه أبوك؟ قال: أنا سمعته ممن كان يرويه أبي عنه

٧٥٣ - حدثنا وهب، أنا خالد، عن سهيل، عن عطاء بن يزيد، عن تميم الداري، قال: قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم: «إن الدين النصيحة، إن الدين النصيحة» قالوا: لمن يا رسول الله؟ قال: «لله ولكتابه ولأئمة المسلمين» أو قال: «المؤمنين وعامتهم»

٧٥٥ - حدثنا محمد بن يحيى، أنا أبو صالح، حدثني الليث، حدثني يحيى بن سعيد، عن سهيل بن أبي صالح السمان، عن عطاء بن يزيد الليثي، عن تميم الداري، عن رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم قال: «الدين النصيحة، الدين النصيحة، الدين النصيحة» قالوا: لمن يا رسول الله قال: «لله، ولكتابه، ولرسوله، ولأئمة المسلمين وعامتهم»

وأخرجه ابن الجعد في مسنده، قال رحمه الله تعالى

٣ - أخبرنا حميد أنا ابن أبي أويس، حدثني سليمان بن بلال، عن محمد بن عجلان، عن القعقاع بن حكيم الكناني، وعبيد الله بن مقسم، عن أبي صالح السمان، عن أبي هريرة، أن رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم قال: «إن الدين النصيحة، إن الدين النصيحة، إن الدين النصيحة». قال: «لله ولكتابه ولرسوله، ولأئمة المسلمين وعامتهم»

وأخرجه ابن حبان في صحيحه، قال رحمه الله:

٤٥٧٤ - أخبرنا الحسن بن سفيان، قال: حدثنا محمد بن ربح، قال: حدثنا الليث بن سعد، عن يحيى بن سعيد الأنصاري، عن سهيل بن أبي صالح السمان، عن عطاء بن يزيد من بني ليث عن تميم الداري، عن رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم أنه قال: "الدين النصيحة" ثلاث مرات، قالوا: لمن يا رسول الله؟ قال: "لله ولكتابه ولرسوله ولأئمة المسلمين أو للمؤمنين وعامتهم".

٤٥٧٥ - أخبرنا الوليد بن بنان بن الوليد بن بنان بواسط، قال: حدثنا محمد بن ميمون البزاز، قال: حدثنا سفيان بن عيينة، قال: حدثنا عمرو بن دينار، عن القعقاع بن حكيم عن أبي صالح، قال: ثم لقيت سهيلاً، فقلت له: رأيت حديثاً كان يحدث عمرو، عن القعقاع، عن أبيك سمعته من أبيك؟ قال: سمعته من الذي سمعه منه أبي صديق لأبي كان يأتي من الشام يقال له: عطاء بن يزيد الليثي سمعته أخبر ذلك عن تميم الداري، عن رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم قال: "ألا إن الدين النصيحة، ألا إن الدين النصيحة، ألا إن الدين النصيحة" قالوا: لمن يا رسول الله؟ قال: "لله ولكتابه ولرسوله، ولأئمة المسلمين وعامتهم"

وأخرجه ابن أبي عاصم في كتاب السنة، قال رحمه الله تعالى:

١٠٨٩ - ثنا يعقوب بن حميد، ثنا ابن عيينة، وابن أبي حازم، عن سهيل بن أبي صالح، عن عطاء بن يزيد، عن تميم الداري، أن النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم قال: «الدين النصيحة». قالوا: لمن يا رسول الله؟ قال: «لله، ولرسوله، ولأئمة المسلمين وعامتهم» قال ابن عيينة: وكان عمرو بن دينار حدثناه، عن القعقاع بن حكيم، عن أبي صالح، فلقيت سهيلاً، فذكرت ذلك له فقال: أنا سمعت عطاء بن يزيد يحدث به أبي.

١٠٩٠ - ثنا دحيم، ثنا ابن أبي فديك، عن الضحاك بن عثمان، عن سهيل بن أبي صالح، عن عطاء بن يزيد، عن تميم الداري، قال: قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم: «الدين النصيحة». قالوا: لمن يا رسول الله؟ قال: «لله، ولكتابه، ولرسوله - مثله -، ولأئمة المسلمين، أو المؤمنين، وعامتهم»

١٠٩١ - ثنا وهب بن بقية، حدثنا خالد، عن سهيل، عن عطاء بن يزيد الليثي، عن تميم الداري، قال: قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم: «الدين النصيحة». قالوا: لمن يا رسول الله؟ قال: «لله، ولكتابه، ولرسوله، ولأئمة المسلمين، أو المؤمنين، وعامتهم»

وأخرجه ابن المقرئ الأصبهاني في المعجم (ت: ٣٨١)، قال رحمه الله تعالى:

٩٤٦ - حدثنا أبو محمد عبد الله بن حاتم الطرسوسي، بطرسوس، ثنا زهير بن محمد بن قمبر، ثنا عبید الله بن عبیدة بن مرة التيمي، ثنا معتمر، عن أبيه، عن سهيل، عن عطاء بن يزيد الليثي، عن تميم الداري رضي الله عنه قال: قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم: «إن الدين النصيحة ثلاث مرات»، قالوا: يا رسول الله لمن؟ قال: «لله عز وجل ولرسوله صلى الله عليه وسلم، ولكتابه، ولأئمة المسلمين وعامتهم»

وأخرجه ابن منده في كتاب الإيمان، قال رحمه الله تعالى:

٢٧١ - أنبأ أحمد بن محمد بن زياد، ثنا محمد بن سعيد بن غالب، ثنا سفيان بن عيينة، عن سهيل بن أبي صالح، عن عطاء بن يزيد، عن تميم الداري، يبلغ به النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم أنه قال: «الدين النصيحة، الدين النصيحة، الدين النصيحة»، قالوا: لمن يا رسول الله؟ قال: «لله ولكتابه ولنبيه ولأئمة المؤمنين ولعامتهم».

وأخرج الإمام أبو نعيم الأصبهاني في المستخرج، قال رحمه الله تعالى:

١٩٢ - حدثنا محمد بن أحمد بن الحسن ثنا بشر بن موسى ثنا عبد الله بن الزبير ثنا سفيان ثنا إسماعيل أخبرني عطاء بن يزيد الليثي ح حدثنا أبو بكر بن مالك ثنا عبد الله بن أحمد بن حنبل ثنا محمد بن عباد المكي قالوا ثنا سفيان ثنا سهيل سمعت

عطاء بن يزيد الليثي صديق كان لأبي من أهل الشام عن تميم الداري قال قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم (الدين النصيحة الدين النصيحة الدين النصيحة) قالوا لمن يا رسول الله قال (لله ولكتابه ولنبيه ولأئمة المسلمين ولعامتهم) وضعف أبو نعيم الطريق الأول فقال: إسناده من الطريق الأول ضعيف.

وأخرجه أيضاً في المستخرج: قال

١٩٣ - حدثنا أحمد بن يوسف ثنا الحارث ثنا أبو عبيد القاسم بن سلام ثنا عبد الرحمن بن مهدي عن سفيان بن سعيد عن سهل بن أبي صالح عن عطاء بن يزيد الليثي عن تميم الداري عن النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم (الدين النصيحة قالها ثلاثاً) الحديث...

وأخرجه أيضاً في معرفة الصحابة، قال رحمه الله تعالى:

حدثنا أبو بكر بن خالد، ثنا الحارث بن أبي أسامة، ثنا عفان، ثنا وهيب، ثنا سهيل بن أبي صالح، قال سمعت عطاء بن يزيد، يحدث عن تميم ح وحدثنا محمد بن جعفر بن الهيثم، ثنا إبراهيم بن إسحاق الحرابي، ثنا أحمد بن يونس، ثنا زهير ح وحدثنا سليمان بن أحمد، ثنا يحيى بن أيوب العلاف، ثنا سعيد بن أبي مرزوق، ثنا محمد بن جعفر بن أبي كثير ح وحدثنا أبو عمرو محمد بن أحمد بن حمدان، قال: ثنا الحسن بن سفيان، ثنا محمد بن رمح، ثنا الليث بن سعد، عن يحيى بن سعيد الأنصاري ح

وحدثنا أبو علي محمد بن أحمد بن الحسن، ثنا بشر بن موسى، ثنا الحميدي، ثنا سفيان، ثنا سهيل بن أبي صالح، أخبرني عطاء بن يزيد الليثي، - صديق كان لأبي من أهل الشام - عن تميم الداري قال: قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم: «الدين النصيحة، الدين النصيحة، الدين النصيحة». قالوا: لمن يا رسول الله؟ قال: «لله، ولكتابه، ولنبيه، ولأئمة المسلمين، ولعامتهم»

وأخرجه أبو عوانة في المستخرج، قال رحمه الله تعالى:

١٠١ - حدثنا أبو جعفر الدارمي، قال: ثنا أبو نعيم، وقبيصة ح، وحدثنا الدارمي قال: ثنا حبان بن هلال قال: ثنا وهيب، عن سهيل ح، وحدثنا الغزي قال: ثنا الفريري، عن سفيان، عن سهيل بن أبي صالح، عن عطاء بن يزيد الليثي، عن تميم الداري قال: قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم: «إنما الدين النصيحة». - ثلاث مرات - قيل: لمن يا رسول الله؟ قال: «لله ولرسوله ولأئمة المسلمين وعامتهم»

وأخرجه أبو يعلى في المسند، قال رحمه الله تعالى:

٧١٦٤ - حدثنا منصور بن أبي مزاحم، حدثنا إسماعيل بن عياش، عن سهيل بن أبي صالح، عن أبيه، عن عطاء بن يزيد، عن تميم الداري، أن النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم قال: «إنما الدين النصيحة، إنما الدين النصيحة، إنما الدين النصيحة»، قالوا: لمن يا رسول الله، قال: «الله، ورسوله، وكتابه، ولأئمة المسلمين، وعامتهم»

وأخرجه الطبراني في المعجم الكبير، قال رحمه الله تعالى:

١٢٦٠ - حدثنا علي بن عبد العزيز، ثنا أبو النعمان، ثنا سفيان، عن سهيل بن أبي صالح، عن عطاء بن يزيد الليثي، عن تميم الداري، قال: قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم: «إنما الدين النصيحة، إنما الدين النصيحة، إنما الدين النصيحة»، قيل: يا رسول الله لمن؟ قال: «الله، وكتابه، وأئمة المؤمنين، وعامتهم»

١٢٦١ - حدثنا أبو يزيد القراطيسي، حدثنا عبد الله بن صالح، حدثني الليث بن سعد، حدثني يحيى بن سعيد، عن سهيل بن أبي صالح السمان، عن عطاء بن يزيد، من بني ليث عن تميم الداري، عن رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم أنه قال: «الدين النصيحة، الدين النصيحة، الدين النصيحة»، قالوا: لمن يا رسول الله؟ قال: «الله، وكتابه، ورسوله، ولأئمة المسلمين، والمؤمنين، وعامتهم»

١٢٦٢ - حدثنا الحسين بن المتوكل البغدادي، ثنا عفان، أنا وهيب، عن سهيل بن أبي صالح، قال: سمعت عطاء بن يزيد، يحدث عن تميم الداري، عن النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم قال: «الدين النصيحة ثلاثاً»، قلت: لمن يا رسول الله؟ قال: «الله، وكتابه، ورسوله، ولأئمة المسلمين، وعامتهم»

١٢٦٣ - حدثنا يحيى بن أيوب العلاف، ثنا سعيد بن أبي مريم، ثنا محمد بن جعفر، أن سهيل بن أبي صالح، عن عطاء بن يزيد الليثي، عن تميم الداري، أن رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم قال: «إن الدين النصيحة، إن الدين النصيحة، إن الدين النصيحة»، قالوا: لمن يا رسول الله؟ قال: «الله، وكتابه، ورسوله، ولأئمة المسلمين، وجماعتهم»

١٢٦٤ - حدثنا علي بن عبد العزيز، أنا أبو عبيد القاسم بن سلام، ثنا إسماعيل بن عياش، عن سهيل بن أبي صالح، عن عطاء بن يزيد، عن تميم الداري، قال: قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم: «الدين النصيحة»، قالوا: لمن يا رسول الله؟ قال: «الله وكتابه، ورسوله، ولأئمة المسلمين، وعامتهم»

١٢٦٥ - حدثنا محمد بن عمرو بن خالد الحراني، حدثني أبي ح، وحدثنا عمر بن حفص السدوسي، ثنا عاصم بن علي، قالوا: ثنا زهير أبو خيثمة، ثنا سهيل بن أبي صالح، عن عطاء بن يزيد، قال: سمعت تميماً الداري، قال: قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم: «إن الدين النصيحة ثلاثاً»، قالوا: لمن يا رسول الله؟ قال: «الله وكتابه، ورسوله، وأئمة المؤمنين، وعامتهم»

١٢٦٧ - حدثنا معاذ بن المثني، ثنا مسدد، ثنا خالد، حدثنا سهيل بن أبي صالح، عن عطاء بن يزيد، عن تميم الداري، قال: قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم: «إن الدين النصيحة» ثلاث مرات، قالوا: لمن يا رسول الله؟ قال: «لله، وملائكته، ولرسوله، ولأئمة المؤمنين أو المسلمين، وعامتهم»

١٢٦٨ - حدثنا عبد الله بن أحمد بن حنبل، حدثني إسماعيل بن عبد الله بن زرارة الرقي، ثنا ابن أبي فديك، عن الضحاك بن عثمان، عن سهيل بن أبي صالح، عن عطاء بن يزيد الليثي، عن تميم الداري، قال: قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم: «الدين النصيحة، الدين النصيحة، الدين النصيحة»، قالوا: لمن يا رسول الله؟ قال: «لله، ولرسوله، ولكتابه، ولأئمة المؤمنين، وللمؤمنين عامة»

أخرجه الشهاب القضاعي في مسنده، قال رحمه الله تعالى:

١٧ - أخبرنا أبو محمد عبد الرحمن بن عمر التجيبي، ثنا أبو سعيد بن الأعرابي، ثنا عبد الله هو ابن أيوب، ثنا سفيان بن عيينة، عن سهيل بن أبي صالح، عن عطاء بن يزيد الليثي، عن تميم الداري، يبلغ به النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم قال: «الدين النصيحة، الدين النصيحة»، قالوا: لمن يا رسول الله؟ قال: «لله ولكتابه ولنبيه ولأئمة المسلمين وعامتهم»

وأخرجه البيهقي في السنن الكبرى، قال رحمه الله تعالى:

٥٩٠ - أخبرنا أبو عبد الله الحافظ، وأبو محمد بن يوسف إملاء، وأبو زكريا المزكي، وأبو بكر القاضي، قالوا: أبنا أبو العباس، أبنا الربيع، أبنا الشافعي، أبنا ابن عيينة، عن سهيل بن أبي صالح، عن عطاء بن يزيد الليثي، عن تميم الداري، قال: قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم: «الدين النصيحة الدين النصيحة، الله ولكتابه ولنبيه وأئمة المسلمين وعامتهم»، رواه مسلم في الصحيح عن محمد بن عباد عن سفيان بن عيينة

وأخرجه في الاعتقاد، قال رحمه الله تعالى:

أخبرنا أبو طاهر الفقيه، أخبرنا حاجب بن أحمد، ثنا عبد الرحيم بن منيب، ثنا جرير، أخبرنا سهيل، (ح). وأخبرنا أبو عبد الله الحافظ، في آخرين قالوا: حدثنا أبو العباس محمد بن يعقوب، أنا الربيع بن سليمان، أنا الشافعي، أخبرنا ابن عيينة، عن سهيل بن أبي صالح، عن عطاء بن يزيد الليثي، عن تميم الداري، قال: قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم: «الدين النصيحة، الدين النصيحة، الدين النصيحة، الله ولكتابه ولنبيه ولأئمة المسلمين وعامتهم» اهـ

وأخرجه أيضاً في الآداب، قال رحمه الله تعالى:

حدثنا محمد بن الحسين العلوي، إملاءً، أنبأنا أبو حامد بن الشرقي، حدثنا أحمد بن حفص، حدثنا حفص بن عبد الله، حدثني إبراهيم بن طهمان، عن سهيل بن أبي صالح، عن عطاء بن يزيد الليثي، عن تميم الداري أنه قال: قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم: «إن الدين النصيحة، إن الدين النصيحة، إن الدين النصيحة»، قالوا: لمن يا رسول الله؟ قال: «لله، ولكتابه، ورسوله، وأئمة المؤمنين» أو قال: «وأئمة المسلمين وعامتهم»

وأخرجه الروياني في مسند، فقال رحمه الله تعالى:

حدثنا عمرو بن علي، ثنا عبد الرحمن بن مهدي، ثنا سفيان، عن سهيل بن أبي صالح، عن عطاء بن يزيد، عن تميم الداري، عن النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم: «إنما الدين النصيحة»، قالوا: لمن يا رسول الله، قال: «لله، ولكتابه، ورسوله، ولأئمة المسلمين، وعامتهم» اهـ

١٥١٢ - حدثنا إسحاق بن شاهين، ثنا خالد، عن سهيل، عن عطاء بن يزيد الليثي، عن تميم الداري، عن النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم قال: «الدين النصيحة، ثلاث مرار»، فذكر مثل حديث الثوري



وأخرجه البغوي فس شرح السنة، قال رحمه الله تعالى:

٣٥١٤ - أخبرنا أحمد بن عبد الله الصالح، ومحمد بن العارف، قالوا: أخبرنا أبو بكر الحيري، نا الأصم، ح

وأخبرنا عبد الوهاب بن محمد الكسائي، أنا عبد العزيز بن أحمد الخلال، نا أبو العباس محمد بن يعقوب الأصم، أنا الربيع، أنا الشافعي، أنا ابن عيينة، عن سهيل بن أبي صالح، عن عطاء بن يزيد الليثي، عن تميم الداري، قال: قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم: «الدين النصيحة، الدين النصيحة، لله ولكتبه ولنبيه، ولأئمة المسلمين وعامتهم».

وأخرجه الخرائطي في مكارم الأخلاق من طريق محمد بن يوسف عن سفيان الثوري به

وقال البخاري: قال ابن عيينة سألت سهيلاً فقال سمعته ممن سمعه أبي من أخ له من الشام يقال عطاء بن يزيد عن تميم الداري عن النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم

حديث أبي هريرة

وأما حديث أبي هريرة فقد

أخرجه محمد بن نصر المروزي في تعظيم قدر الصلاة، قال رحمه الله تعالى:

٧٤٨ - حدثنا إسحاق بن إبراهيم، ثنا صفوان بن عيسى، ثنا ابن عجلان، عن القعقاع بن حكيم، عن أبي صالح، عن أبي هريرة، عن النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم قال: «الدين النصيحة» قالوا: يا رسول الله لمن؟ قال: «لله، ولكتابه، ولرسوله، ولأئمة المسلمين وعامتهم»

وأخرجه الإمام أحمد في المسند، قال رحمه الله تعالى:

٧٩٥٤ - حدثنا صفوان، أخبرنا ابن عجلان، عن القعقاع، عن أبي صالح، عن أبي هريرة، قال: قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم: "الدين النصيحة" ثلاث مرات. قال: قيل: يا رسول الله، لمن؟ قال: "لله، ولكتابه ولرسوله، ولأئمة المسلمين. اهـ

وأخرجه الإمام الترمذي في سننه، قال رحمه الله تعالى:

١٩٢٦ - حدثنا محمد بن بشار قال: حدثنا صفوان بن عيسى، عن محمد بن عجلان، عن القعقاع بن حكيم، عن أبي صالح، عن أبي هريرة قال: قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم: «الدين النصيحة» ثلاث مرار، قالوا: يا رسول الله لمن؟ قال: «لله، ولكتابه، ولأئمة المسلمين وعامتهم»: هذا حديث حسن.

وأخرجه الإمام ابن زنجويه في الأموال، قال رحمه الله تعالى:

٣ - أخبرنا حميد أنا ابن أبي أويس، حدثني سليمان بن بلال، عن محمد بن عجلان، عن القعقاع بن حكيم الكنايني، وعبيد الله بن مقسم، عن أبي صالح السمان، عن أبي هريرة، أن رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم قال: «إن الدين النصيحة، إن الدين النصيحة، إن الدين النصيحة». قال: «لله ولكتابه ولرسوله، ولأئمة المسلمين وعامتهم»

وأخرجه البزار في مسنده، قال رحمه الله تعالى:

٨٩٠١- وحدثننا مُحَمَّد بن مسكين، قَالَ: حَدَّثَنَا عَبْدُ اللَّهِ بن صالح، عَنِ اللَّيْثِ، عَنِ ابْنِ عَجْلَانَ، عَنِ زَيْدِ بنِ أَسْلَمٍ والقَعْقَاعِ بنِ حَكِيمٍ، عَنِ أَبِي صَالِحٍ، عَنِ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ، عَنِ النَّبِيِّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ قَالَ: الدين النصيحة.

٨٩٣٥- حدثنا محمد بن بشار، قال: حدثنا صفوان، قال: حدثنا ابن عجلان عن القعقاع، عن أبي صالح، عن أبي هريرة، قال: قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم: الدين النصيحة قالوا لمن يا رسول الله قال: لله ولكتابه ولأئمة المسلمين ولعامتهم.

وأخرجه الطحاوي في مشكل الآثار، قال رحمه الله تعالى:

١٤٣٩ - حدثنا بكار بن قتيبة، قال: حدثنا صفوان بن عيسى، قال: حدثنا محمد بن عجلان، عن القعقاع بن حكيم، عن أبي صالح، عن أبي هريرة، أن رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم قال: "الدين النصيحة ثلاثا" قيل لمن يا رسول الله؟ قال: لله عز وجل ولكتابه ولرسوله ولأئمة المسلمين وعامتهم"

وأخرجه أبو نعيم في حلية الأولياء، قال رحمه الله تعالى:

حدثنا عبد الله بن محمد بن جعفر، وجماعة، قالوا: ثنا أبو بكر بن أبي عاصم، ح حدثنا سليمان، ثنا عبد الله بن أحمد، قالوا: ثنا العباس بن الوليد، ثنا بشر بن منصور، ثنا سفيان، عن سهيل، عن أبيه، عن أبي هريرة، قال: قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم: «إنما الدين النصيحة إنما الدين النصيحة» قالوا: لمن يا رسول الله؟ قال: «لله ولرسوله ولكتابه ولأئمة المسلمين ولعامتهم» قال: غريب من حديث الثوري، عن سهيل، عن أبيه، عن أبي هريرة تفرد به بشر. ورواه أصحاب الثوري، عن سهيل، عن عطاء بن يزيد، عن تميم.

حدثنا أبو بكر عبد الله بن محمد، وأبو محمد بن حيان، قالوا: ثنا أبو بكر بن أبي عاصم، ثنا عباس بن الوليد النرسي، ثنا بشر بن منصور، ثنا سفيان، عن سهيل، عن أبيه، عن أبي هريرة، قال: قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم: «إنما الدين النصيحة ، إنما الدين النصيحة» ، قالوا: يا رسول الله ، لمن؟ قال: «لله، ولرسوله، ولكتابه، ولأئمة المسلمين، وعامتهم» مشهور من حديث سهيل ، عن أبيه، عن تميم. غريب من حديث سهيل ، عن أبيه، عن أبي هريرة. تفرد به عن الثوري، بشر بن منصور السليمي

وأخرجه تمام في فوائده: قال رحمه الله تعالى

١٢٧١ - حدثنا أبو القاسم علي بن الحسين بن محمد بن السفر الجرشبي المقرئ، وعبد الرحمن بن عبد الله بن عمر بن راشد، وأحمد بن سليمان بن حذلم، قالوا: ثنا بكار، ثنا صفوان بن عيسى، ثنا محمد بن عجلان، عن القعقاع بن حكيم، عن أبي صالح، عن أبي هريرة، أن رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم قال: «الدين النصيحة، الدين النصيحة» ثلاثا قيل: لمن يا رسول الله؟ قال: «لله ولكتابه ولرسوله ولأئمة المسلمين وعامتهم»

أما حديث ابن عمر فقد:

أخرجه الدارمي في سننه، باب الدين النصيحة، الحديث: ٢٩٦٠، قال رحمه الله

أخبرنا جعفر بن عون، عن هشام بن سعد، عن زيد بن أسلم، ونافع، عن ابن عمر، قال: قال لنا رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم: «الدين النصيحة». قال: قلنا: لمن يا رسول الله؟ قال: لله، ولرسوله، ولكتابه، ولأئمة المسلمين وعامتهم "



وأخرجه الإمام أحمد في المسند، قال رحمه الله تعالى:

حدثنا صفوان، أخبرنا ابن عجلان، عن القعقاع، عن أبي صالح، عن أبي هريرة، قال: قال رسول الله -صلي الله عليه وسلم: "الدين النصيحة"، ثلاث مرات، قال: قيل: يا رسول الله، لِمَنْ؟ قال: "لله، ولكتابه، ولأئمة المسلمين". اهـ

وأخرجه محمد بن نصر المروزي في تعظيم قدر الصلاة. قال رحمه الله تعالى:

٧٥٨ - حدثنا محمد بن يحيى، ثنا جعفر بن عون، ثنا هشام بن زيد، ثنا نافع، وزيد بن أسلم، عن ابن عمر، قال لنا رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم: «الدين النصيحة» قلنا: لمن يا رسول الله؟ قال: «لله، ولرسوله، ولأئمة المسلمين وعامتهم»

وأخرجه ابن زنجويه في الأموال، قال رحمه الله تعالى:

٢ - أنا جعفر بن عون، أنا هشام بن سعد، أنا نافع، وزيد بن أسلم، عن عبد الله بن عمر، قال: قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم: «إنما الدين النصيحة» ، قال: قلنا: لمن يا رسول الله؟ قال: «لله ولرسوله ولأئمة المسلمين وعامتهم»

وأخرجه الطبراني في مكارم الأخلاق، قال رحمه الله تعالى:

حدثنا علي بن عبد العزيز، ثنا أبو همام الدلال، ثنا هشام بن سعد، عن نافع، عن ابن عمر قال: قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم: «الدين النصيحة»، قلنا: لمن يا رسول الله؟ قال: «لله، ولكتابه، ولرسوله، ولأئمة المسلمين ولعامتهم» اهـ

وأخرجه ابن أبي عاصم في كتاب السنة، قال رحمه الله تعالى:

١٠٩٢ - ثنا عباس بن الوليد، حدثنا بشر بن منصور، عن سفيان، عن سهيل بن أبي صالح، عن أبيه، عن أبي هريرة، قال: قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم: «إنما الدين النصيحة» ثلاثا. قالوا: لمن يا رسول الله؟ قال: «لله، ولرسوله، ولكتابه، ولأئمة المسلمين، ولعامتهم»

١٠٩٣ - حدثنا أحمد بن عثمان أبو الجوزاء، حدثنا محمد بن خالد بن عثمة، حدثنا مالك بن أنس، عن سهيل، عن أبيه، عن أبي هريرة، قال: قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم: " الدين النصيحة: لله، ولرسوله، ولأئمة المسلمين، ولعامتهم "

١٠٩٤ - حدثنا عبد الله بن شبيب، ثنا ابن أبي أويس، ثنا سليمان بن بلال، عن محمد بن عجلان، عن القعقاع بن حكيم، وعبيد الله بن مقسم، عن أبي صالح، عن أبي هريرة، عن النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم أنه قال: «الدين النصيحة» ثلاثا. قالوا: لمن يا رسول الله؟ قال: «لله، ولكتابه، ولرسوله، ولأئمة المسلمين، وعامتهم»



وأخرجه ابن المقرئ الأصبهاني في المعجم (ت: ٣٨١)، قال رحمه الله تعالى:

٣٨٣ - حدثنا أبو عثمان أحمد بن عبد العزيز بن محمد بن عثمان بن شيبه بن عثمان بن أبي طلحة الشيبه بمكة حدثنا العباس ابن السندي، حدثنا أبو تمام، حدثنا هشام بن سعد، عن نافع عن ابن عمر قال: قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم: «إنما الدين النصيحة» فقلت: لمن يا رسول الله؟ قال: «لله عز وجل ولكتابه ولرسوله ولأئمة المسلمين»

وأخرجه تمام في الفوائد، قال رحمه الله تعالى:

١١٦١ - أخبرنا أبو القاسم علي بن الحسين بن محمد بن السفر الجرشي، وأحمد بن سليمان بن حذلم، قالوا: ثنا بكار بن قتيبة، ثنا أبو همام الدلال، ثنا هشام بن سعد، عن زيد بن أسلم، ونافع، عن ابن عمر، قال: قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم: «الدين النصيحة» قلنا: لمن يا رسول الله؟ قال: «لله، ولكتابه، ولرسوله، ولأئمة المسلمين، وعامتهم»

وأخرجه الشهاب القضاعي (ت: ٤٥٤) في مسنده: قال رحمه الله تعالى

١٩ - وأناه أبو محمد بن النحاس، ثنا ابن الأعرابي، ثنا إبراهيم، هو ابن فهد، ثنا أبو همام الدلال، ثنا هشام بن سعد، عن سعد، عن نافع، عن ابن عمر، قال: قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم: «الدين النصيحة». قيل: لمن يا رسول الله؟، قال: «لله ولرسوله ولكتابه ولأئمة المسلمين وعامتهم»

أما حديث ابن عباس فقد:

أخرجه الإمام أحمد في مسنده، قال رحمه الله تعالى:

حدثنا زيد بن الحباب قال أخبرني عبد الرحمن بن ثوبان قال سمعت عمرو بن دينار يقول: أخبرني من سمع ابن عباس يقول: قال رسول الله - صلى الله عليه وسلم - : "الدين النصيحة"، قالوا: لمن؟، قال: "لله ولرسوله ولأئمة. اهـ

وأخرجه الطبراني في المعجم الكبير، قال رحمه الله تعالى:

١١١٩٨ - حدثنا الحسين بن إسحاق التستري، ثنا عمرو بن هشام أبو أمية الحراني، ثنا عثمان بن عبد الرحمن الطرائفي، ثنا عبد الرحمن بن ثابت بن ثوبان، عن عمرو بن دينار، عن ابن عباس، قال: قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم: «الدين النصيحة»، قيل: لمن يا رسول الله؟ قال: «لله ولكتابه ولنبيه ولأئمة المسلمين وعامتهم» وكذلك أخرجه في مسند الشاميين، قال رحمه الله تعالى:

٩٢ - حدثنا أنس بن سليم الخولاني، ثنا عمرو بن هشام أبو أمية الحراني، ثنا عثمان بن عبد الرحمن الطرائفي، ثنا عبد الرحمن بن ثابت بن ثوبان، عن عمرو بن دينار، عن ابن عباس، قال: قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم: «الدين النصيحة» قالوا " لمن يا رسول الله؟ ، قال: «لله ولكتابه ولأئمة المسلمين وعامتهم»

وأخرجه أبو يعلى في مسنده، قال رحمه الله تعالى:

٢٣٧٢ - حدثنا أبو بكر بن أبي شيبة، حدثنا زيد بن الحباب، حدثنا محمد بن مسلم، عن عمرو بن دينار، عن ابن عباس قال: قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم: «الدين النصيحة». قالوا: لمن يا رسول الله؟ قال: «لكتاب الله، ولنبيه، ولأئمة المسلمين»

وكذلك أوردته الهيئتي في المقصد العلي في زوائد مسند أبي يعلى، باب في الدين النصيحة، قال رحمه الله تعالى:

٣٥ - حدثنا أبو بكر بن أبي شيبة، حدثنا زيد بن الحباب، حدثنا محمد بن مسلم، عن عمرو بن دينار، عن ابن عباس، قال: قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم: «الدين النصيحة». قالوا: لمن يا رسول الله؟ قال: «لكتاب الله ولنبيه ولأئمة المسلمين»

حديث ثوبان

أما حديث ثوبان فقد أخرجه محمد بن نصر المروزي في تعظيم قد الصلاة. قال رحمه الله تعالى:

٧٦٠ - حدثنا يونس بن عبد الأعلى، ثنا أيوب بن سويد، عن أمية بن يزيد، عن أبي مصبح الحمصي، عن ثوبان، قال: قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم: «رأس الدين النصيحة» قلنا: يا رسول الله لمن؟ قال: «الله، ولدينه، ولكتابه، ولأئمة المسلمين وللمسلمين عامة»



وأخرجه ابن أبي عاصم في كتاب السنة، قال رحمه الله تعالى

١٠٩٥ - حدثنا أبو موسى عيسى بن يونس الرملي، ثنا أيوب بن سويد، عن أمية بن يزيد، عن أبي المصباح، عن ثوبان، عن النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم قال: «رأس الدين النصيحة». قالوا: لمن يا رسول الله؟ قال: لله، ولدينه، ولرسوله، ولأئمة المسلمين، وللمسلمين عامة " حدثني به إن شاء الله.

وأخرجه الروياني في مسنده، قال:

٦٥٧ - أخبرنا الربيع بن سليمان نا أيوب بن سويد، حدثني أمية بن سعيد بن يزيد، عن أبي مصبح الحمصي، عن ثوبان قال: قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم: «رأس الدين النصيحة» قلنا: لمن يا رسول الله؟ قال: «الله ولدينه ولأئمة المسلمين، وللمسلمين عامة» اهـ

حديث زيد بن أسلم

أما حديث زيد بن أسلم فقد أخرجه كل من محمد بن نصر المروزي، لكن كأن ابن أبي فديك أرسله عن ابن عمر، فقد جاء متصلاً عن زيد بن أسلم عن ابن عمر كما مر من حديث ابن عمر.

قال محمد بن نصر المروزي في تعظيم قدر الصلاة،

٧٥٦ - حدثنا الحسين بن عيسى، أنا ابن أبي فديك، عن هشام بن سعد، عن زيد بن أسلم، قال: قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم: «إنما الدين النصيحة» قلنا: لمن يا رسول الله؟ قال: «لله، ولرسوله، ولكتابه، ولأئمة المسلمين وعامتهم»

الكلام على الحديث:

هذا! وقد وقع اختلاط من بعض الرواة في نسبة هذا الحديث إلى غير تميم بن أوس الداري. وقد نبه عليه قديماً علماء الحديث ونقادهم. فقد قال أبو عبد الله محمد بن نصر المروزي في تعظيم قدر الصلاة بعد أن روى الحديث بسنده عن سهيل عن أبيه عن أبي هريرة، عن رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم قال: «إن الله يرضى لكم ثلاثاً يرضى لكم أن تعبدوه ولا تشركوا به شيئاً، وأن تعتصموا بحبل الله جميعاً ولا تفرقوا، وأن تناصحوا من ولئى الله أمركم» قال سهيل: فحدثنا عند ذلك عطاء بن يزيد الليثي قال: سمعت تميم الداري يقول: سمعت رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم يقول: «إنما الدين النصيحة إنما الدين النصيحة» ثلاثاً، فقيل: يا رسول الله لمن؟ قال: «لله، ولكتابه، ولرسوله، ولأئمة المسلمين» أو قال: «أئمة المسلمين وعامتهم»

قال أبو عبد الله - هو ابن نصر المروزي - وحديث ابن عجلان، عن القعقاع، عن أبي صالح، عن أبي هريرة غلط، إنما حدث أبو صالح، عن أبي هريرة، عن النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم بهذا الحديث: «إن الله يرضى لكم ثلاثاً» وعطاء بن يزيد حاضر ذلك، فحدثهم عطاء بن يزيد، عن تميم الداري، عن النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم: «إنما الدين النصيحة». اهـ¹⁰³

وقد وقع الشك في نفس إمام المحدثين سفيان ابن عيينة رحمه الله في نسبة هذا الحديث إلى أبي هريرة. قال سفيان: قال سفيان: وكان عمرو بن دينار حدثناه أولاً، عن القعقاع بن حكيم، عن أبي صالح، قال: فلما لقيت سهيلاً، قلت: لو سألته لعله يحدثني عن أبيه فأكون أنا وعمرو فيه سواء، فسألته، فقال سهيل: أنا سمعته من الذي سمعه منه أبي، أخبرني عطاء بن يزيد.¹⁰⁴

ونبه عليه على خطأ بشر بن منصور من أصحاب سفيان الثوري أبو نعيم في الحلية، فقال بعد أن أورد حديث أبي هريرة من طريق بشر: غريب من حديث الثوري، عن سهيل عن أبيه أبي هريرة. تفرد به بشر. ورواه أصحاب الثوري عن سهيل عن عطاء بن يزيد عن تميم.¹⁰⁵

وقال الدارقطني (ت: ٣٨٥) في الأحاديث التي خولف فيها مالك:

¹⁰³ تعظيم قدر الصلاة، ٢ / ٦٨١ نسخة المكتبة الشاملة

¹⁰⁴ مسند الحميدي، ٢ / ٨٥، تعظيم قدر الصلاة، ٢ / ٦٨١، صحيح ابن حبان، ١١ / ٤٣٦

¹⁰⁵ حلية الأولياء، ٢ / ٢٤٢

روى مالك عن سهيل بن أبي صالح عن أبيه عن أبي هريرة أن النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم قال (الدين النصيحة ثلاثا لله ولكتابه...) الحديث. خالفه أصحاب سهيل منهم سليمان التيمي ويحيى بن سعيد الأنصاري وسفيان الثوري وسفيان بن عيينة وزهير بن معاوية وخالد بن عبد الله وجريير بن عبد الحميد ومحمد بن جعفر بن أبي كثير وإبراهيم بن طهمان وغيرهم روه عن سهيل عن عطاء بن يزيد الليثي عن تميم الداري. اهـ¹⁰⁶

وأما حديث ابن عباس رضي الله عنهما فقد قال ابن أبي الحديد في العلل، ما نصه

وسألت أبي عن حديث رواه أيوب الوزان، عن زيد بن الحباب، عن ابن ثوبان، عن عمرو بن دينار، عن رجل، عن ابن عباس؛ قال: قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم: الدين النصيحة ... ؟

قال أبي: هذا خطأ؛ إنما هو: ما رواه ابن عيينة، عن عمرو بن دينار، عن القعقاع بن حكيم، عن أبي صالح، قال: ثم لقيت سهيلا فسألته فقال سهيل: سمعته من الذي سمعه منه أبي أخبرني عطاء بن يزيد - صديق كان لأبي من أهل الشام - عن تميم الداري، عن النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم.¹⁰⁷

وأما حديث ثوبان رضي الله عنه، فقال ابن أبي حاتم، وسألت أبي عن حديث رواه أيوب بن سويد، عن أمية بن يزيد، عن أبي المصباح المقرائي، عن ثوبان، عن النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم؛ قال: رأس الدين النصيحة، قلنا: لمن؟ قال: لله ولرسوله ... ؟ قال أبي: هذا حديث منكر. اهـ¹⁰⁸

وقد أجاد الإمام ابن حجر العسقلاني في تغليق التعليق فجمع طرقه العديدة ونبه على العلل فيها، ثم قال وفي الباب عن ثوبان، وأبي أمامة، وحذيفة بن اليمان، وأسانيدهم ضعيفة، وأصح طرقه حديث تميم. اهـ¹⁰⁹

فاتضح ما قاله الإمام البخاري في تاريخ الأوسط (رقم: ١٧٠٢): فمدار هذا الحديث كله على تميم ولم يصح عن أحد غير تميم. اهـ

¹⁰⁶ الأحاديث التي خولف فيها مالك، ص: ١١٢

¹⁰⁷ علل الحديث لابن أبي حاتم، ٥/ ٣٣٢

¹⁰⁸ علل الحديث لابن أبي حاتم، ٥/ ٣٣٢

¹⁰⁹ تغليق التعليق: ٢/ ٥٤-٦١

(3)

The hadith “Uṭlub al-khayra ‘inda ḥisān al-wujūh” (Takhrīj)

تخریج بعض طرق حدیث "اطلبوا الخیر عند حسان الوجوه"

قد روي هذا الحديث عن عدة الصحابة منهم أبي هريرة، وجابر، وعبد الله بن عمر، وعبد الله بن عباس، وأنس بن مالك، وعائشة، ويزيد القسملی، وأبي بكر، وأبي مصعب الأنصاري، رضي الله عنهم أجمعين

أما حديث أبي هريرة، فقد

أخرجه العقيلي في الضعفاء الكبير: ٢/٢٣٠، قال:

حدثني إسماعيل بن محمود النيسابوري قال: حدثنا محمد بن الأزهر البلخي قال: حدثنا زيد بن الحباب قال: حدثنا عبد الرحمن بن إبراهيم، عن العلاء بن عبد الرحمن، عن أبيه، عن أبي هريرة، أن رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم قال: «اطلبوا الخیر عند حسان الوجوه» قال أبو جعفر العقيلي: ليس له طريق يثبت. اهـ

وأخرجه تمام في فوائد الحديث: ٢/٢٩٨، قال:

١٧٩٨ - أخبرنا أبو القاسم عبد الرحمن بن أحمد بن عمران الدينوري، ثنا أبو بكر محمد بن علي بن الحسن بن مهران المستملي الدينوري، ثنا عباد بن عمرو، ثنا نصر بن سلام المدني، عن مالك بن أنس، عن سفيان الثوري، عن طلحة بن عمرو، عن عطاء، عن أبي هريرة، أن النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم قال: «اطلبوا الخیر عند حسان الوجوه»

وأخرجه ابن أبي الدنيا في قضاء الحاجة، ص: ١٠٨، قال:

٥٣ - أخبرنا القاضي أبو القاسم، حدثنا أبو علي، حدثنا عبد الله، حدثني مجاهد بن موسى، حدثنا معن، حدثنا يزيد بن عبد الملك بن المغيرة، عن عمران بن أبي أنس، عن أبي هريرة، أن رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم قال: «ابتغوا الخیر عند حسان الوجوه»

وأخرجه أبو الشيخ في كتاب أمثال الحديث، ص: ٦٩، قال:

حدثنا يوسف بن الحكم الخياط، ثنا يعقوب بن حميد بن كاسب، ثنا معن، عن يزيد بن عبد الملك النوفلي، عن عمران بن أبي أنس، عن أبي هريرة، أن رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم قال: «ابتغوا الخیر عند حسان الوجوه»

وأخرجه الدارقطني في الأفراد:، قال:

حدثنا القاسم بن سليمان الثقفي، ثنا أبو غسان مالك بن خالد الواسطي، ثنا زيد بن الحباب، عن طلحة بن عمرو الحضرمي، عن عطاء، عن أبي هريرة، عن النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم مثله

وأخرجه أبو نعيم الأصبهاني في تاريخ أصبهان، ٢/٢١٦، قال:

حدثنا أبو إسحاق بن حمزة، ثنا أبو عبد الله محمد بن الحسن بن زياد المقرئ، ثنا عقيل بن يحيى، ثنا أبو داود، ثنا طلحة بن عمرو، سمعت عطاء، عن أبي هريرة قال: قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم: اطلبوا الخير عند حسان الوجوه "

وأخرجه الطبراني في المعجم الأوسط، ٤/١٢٩، قال:

حدثنا علي بن أحمد بن النضر الأزدي قال: نا عبید الله ابن عائشة التيمي قال: نا صفوان بن عيسى، عن طلحة بن عمرو، عن عطاء، عن أبي هريرة قال: قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم: «اطلبوا الحوائج إلى حسان الوجوه».



وأما حديث جابر

فقد أخرجه العقيلي في الضعفاء الكبير، ٢/١٣٨، قال:

وحدثنا إبراهيم بن محمد، ومحمد بن زنجويه، قالوا: حدثنا سليمان بن كراز قال: حدثنا عمر بن صهبان، عن محمد بن المنكدر، عن جابر بن عبد الله قال: قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم: «اطلبوا الخير عند حسان الوجوه» وليس في هذين البابين عن النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم شيء يثبت

وأخرجه الطبراني في المعجم الأوسط، ٦/١٧٦، قال:

٦١١٧ - حدثنا محمد بن زكريا الغلابي قال: نا سليمان بن كراز قال: نا عمر بن صهبان، عن محمد بن المنكدر، عن جابر، قال: قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم: «اطلبوا الخير عند حسان الوجوه» قال الطبراني: لم يرو هذا الحديث عن محمد بن المنكدر إلا عمر بن صهبان، تفرد به سليمان بن كراز، ولا يروى عن جابر إلا بهذا الإسناد "

وأخرجه أبو نعيم الأصبهاني في تاريخ أصبهان، ٢/٢١، قال:

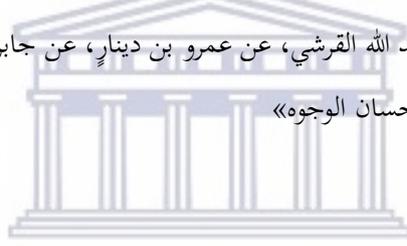
حدثنا أحمد بن بندار، ثنا محمد بن زكرياء، ثنا سليمان بن كراز، ثنا عمر بن صهبان الأسلمي، عن محمد بن المنكدر، عن جابر، قال: قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم: «اطلبوا الخير عند حسان الوجوه»

وأخرجه في تاريخ أصبهان وأخبار أصبهان (١/ ٣٦٣):

حدثنا سليمان بن أحمد، ثنا علي بن عبد العزيز، ثنا خلف بن يحيى قاضي الري، ثنا مصعب بن سلام، عن العباس بن عبد الله القرشي، عن عمرو بن دينار، عن جابر، قال: قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم: «اطلبوا حوائجكم عند حسان الوجوه، فإن قضاها قضاها بوجهٍ طلقٍ، وإن ردها ردها بوجهٍ طلقٍ»

وأخرجه أيضاً أبو نعيم في تاريخ أصبهان وأخبار أصبهان (٢/ ١٨٤):

حدثنا عبد الله بن محمد بن جعفر، ثنا عبد الله بن محمد بن عيسى المقرئ، ثنا محمد بن إسماعيل، ثنا يحيى بن خلف القاضي، ثنا مصعب بن سلام، عن العباس بن عبد الله القرشي، عن عمرو بن دينار، عن جابر بن عبد الله، قال: قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم: «اطلبوا حوائجكم عند حسان الوجوه»



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وكذا أخرجه في حلية الأولياء، ١٥٦/٣، قال: حدثنا أحمد بن إسحاق بن محمد بن زكرياء، ثنا سليمان بن كراز، ثنا عمر بن صهبان الأسلمي، عن محمد بن المنكدر، عن جابر، قال: قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم: «اطلبوا الخير عند حسان الوجوه» غريبٌ من حديث جابرٍ لم نكتبه إلا من حديث سليمان عن عمر

وأخرجه تمام في فوائد الحديث: ١٨٧/٢، قال:

١٤٨٨ أخبرنا أبو الحسن خيثمة بن سليمان، ثنا هشام بن علي بن هشام السيرافي، بالبصرة، وأحمد بن الأسود الحنفي، قالوا: ثنا سليمان بن كراز الطفاوي أبو أحمد، ثنا عمر بن صهبان الأسلمي، عن محمد بن المنكدر، عن جابر بن عبد الله، قال: قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم: «اطلبوا الحوائج عند حسان الوجوه» واللفظ لهشام بن علي

وأما حديث ابن عمر

فقد أخرجه عبد بن الحميد كما في المنتخب، ص: ٢٤٣، قال:

٧٥١ - أنا يزيد بن هارون، أنا محمد بن عبد الرحمن بن المجبر، عن نافع، عن ابن عمر قال: قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم: «اطلبوا الخير عند حسان الوجوه».

وكذا الضعفاء الكبير، ١٠٢/٤، في ترجمة...؟ قال:

ومن حديثه ما حدثناه جدي وإبراهيم بن محمد، وعلي بن عبد العزيز قالوا: حدثنا حجاج بن المنهال، حدثنا محمد بن عبد الرحمن بن المجبر، عن نافع عن ابن عمر أن رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم قال: «اطلبوا الخير عند حسان الوجوه» الرواية في هذا الباب فيها لين

وأخرجه أبو الشيخ في أمثال الحديث، ص: ١١٠، قال:

٧١ - حدثنا العباس بن حمدان الحنفي، ثنا شعيب بن عبد الحميد الطحان، ثنا يزيد بن هارون، عن محمد بن عبد الرحمن بن المجبر، عن نافع، عن ابن عمر، قال: قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم: «اطلبوا الخير عند حسان الوجوه».



وكذا أخرجه الشهاب القضاعي في مسنده: ٣٨٤/١، قال:

٦٦١ - أخبرنا عبد الرحمن بن عمر المعدل، أبنا أحمد بن إبراهيم بن جامع، ثنا علي بن عبد العزيز، ثنا الحجاج بن المنهال، ثنا محمد بن عبد الرحمن بن المجبر، عن نافع، عن ابن عمر، قال: قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم: «اطلبوا الخير عند حسان الوجوه»

وأما حديث ابن عباس

فقد أخرجه تمام الرازي في فوائده: ٣٤٠ / ١، قال:

٨٦٥ أخبرنا أبو الحسن خيثمة بن سليمان، ثنا السري بن يحيى، ثنا قبيصة بن عقبة، ثنا سفيان الثوري، عن طلحة بن عمرو، عن عطاء، عن ابن عباس، أن النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم قال: «التمسوا الخير عند حسان الوجوه»

وأخرجه أبو نعيم في تاريخ أصبهان ٢ / ٢١، قال:

حدث أبو علي أحمد بن محمد بن عاصم، ثنا عبد الله بن يحيى بن العباس، ثنا لوين، ومحمد بن يحيى بن فياض، قالوا: ثنا حفص بن عمر، ثنا طلحة بن عمرو، عن عطاء، عن ابن عباس، قال: قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم: «اطلبوا الخير عند حسان الوجوه»

وأخرجه العقيلي في الضعفاء الكبير ٣ / ٣٤٠، في ترجمة ... ؟ قال:

من حديثه: ما حدثناه هارون بن علي المقرئ قال: حدثنا الحسين بن يزيد قال: حدثنا عصمة بن محمد الأنصاري، عن هشام بن عروة، عن أبيه، عن عبد الله بن عباس، أن رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم قال: «اطلبوا الخير عند حسان الوجوه» والرواية في هذا لينة حدثنا عبيد الله بن محمد قال: سمعت يحيى بن معين، سئل عن عصمة بن محمد الأنصاري، فقال: هذا كذاب يضع الحديث



وأخرجه الطبراني في المعجم الكبير ١١ / ٨١، قال:

١١١٠ - حدثنا عبدان بن أحمد، ثنا زيد، ثنا عبد الله، عن العوام بن حوشب، عن مجاهد، عن ابن عباس، أراه رفعه قال: «اطلبوا الخير والحوائج من حسان الوجوه»

وأما حديث أنس بن مالك

فقد أخرجه ابن الجوزي في كتاب الموضوعات ٢ / ١٦١، من طريقين قال:

أنبأنا عبد الرحمن بن محمد أنبأنا أحمد بن علي بن ثابت أنبأنا أبو عبيد محمد بن أبي نصر أنبأنا أبو بكر محمد بن محمد الطرازي حدثنا أبو سعيد العدوي وهو الحسن بن علي حدثنا خراش حدثنا أنس بن مالك قال قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم: " التمسوا الخير عند حسان الوجوه ".

وأخرجه أيضاً، قال:

أنبأنا محمد بن ناصر وسعد الخير قالاً أنبأنا نصر بن أحمد الوزان أنبأنا ابن رزقويه حدثنا محمد بن عمرو بن البحري حدثنا أحمد بن إسحاق ابن صالح الوزان حدثنا سليمان بن سلمة حدثنا عبد العظيم بن حبيب الفهري حدثنا محمد بن عبد الرحمن بن أبي ذئب عن الزهري عن أنس قال قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم: " اطلبوا الخواص عند حسان الوجوه ".

وأخرجه ابن عساكر في تاريخ دمشق ٨/٥٧، قال:

أنبأنا أبو محمد بن الأكفاني أنا عبد العزيز بن أحمد بقراءتي عليه أنا تمام بن محمد حدثني أحمد بن محمد بن أحمد الهروي الحافظ نا أبو الفتح محمد بن أحمد بن محمد بن علي بن النعمان نا أبو يزيد المبارك بن سعيد بن المبارك البعلبكي نا ناعم بن السري نا قبيصة بن عقبة نا الثوري نا ابن أبي ذئب عن مالك بن أنس عن الزهري عن أنس بن مالك عن النبي (صلى الله عليه وسلم) قال اطلبوا الخير عند حسان الوجوه

وأما حديث يزيد القسملبي

أخرجه ابن الجوزي في كتاب الموضوعات ٤٩٨/٢، قال:

أنبأنا محمد بن ناصر أنبأنا المبارك بن عبد الجبار أنبأنا أبو الحسن محمد بن عبد الواحد أنبأنا أبو بكر بن شاذان حدثنا أبو عبد الله أحمد ابن محمد بن المغلس حدثنا أحمد بن منيع حدثنا عباد بن عباد عن هشام بن زياد عن الحجاج بن يزيد عن أبيه قال قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم: " إذا طلبتم الحاجات فاطلبوها إلى الحسان الوجوه".

وأما حديث أبي بكرة

أخرجه تمام الرازي في فوائده ١ / ٣٤٠: قال:

٨٦٤ حدثنا أبو علي محمد بن هارون بن شعيب، ثنا أحمد بن خليل الكندي، بحلب، ثنا أبو يعقوب الأفسس، ثنا المبارك بن فضالة، عن الحسن، عن أبي بكرة، قال: قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم: «اطلبوا الخير عند حسان الوجوه

وأما حديث عائشة

الأحاديث المرفوعة المسندة في كتاب التاريخ الكبير للبخاري (١ / ٤٥٦):

١٨٦: حدثني إبراهيم، قال: نا معن، قال: حدثنا عبد الرحمن بن أبي بكر المليكى، عن امرأته جيرة، عن أبيها، عن عائشة، عن النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم: «اطلبوا الخير عند حسان الوجوه»

وأخرجه أبو يعلى الموصلي في مسنده

٤٧٥٩ - حدثنا داود بن رشيد، حدثنا إسماعيل، عن خيرة بنت محمد بن ثابت بن سباع، عن أبيها، عن عائشة، أن النبي - صلى الله عليه وسلم -، قال: "اطلبوا الخير عند حسان الوجوه"

وأخرجه أبو الشيخ في أمثال الحديث (ص١٠٦):

حدثنا محمد بن يحيى المروزي، ثنا أبو بلال الأشعري، ثنا إسماعيل بن عياش، عن حرة بنت محمد بن عبد الله، عن أبيها، عن عائشة قالت: قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم: «اطلبوا الخير عند حسان الوجوه»

وأخرجه الدارقطني في المؤلف والمختلف: ٣٨٣/١

جيرة بنت محمد بن ثابت بن سباع روت عن أبيها حدث عنها إسماعيل بن عياش وزوجها عبد الرحمن بن أبي بكر المليكى قال ذلك: معن بن عيسى عنه أخبرنا أبو القاسم عبد الله بن محمد بن عبد العزيز قراءة عليه وأنا أسمع أن داود بن رشيد حدثهم، حدثنا إسماعيل، عن جيرة بنت محمد بن ثابت بن سباع، عن أبيها، عن عائشة قالت: قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم: اطلبوا الخير عند حسان الوجوه

وأخرجه البيهقي في شعب الإيمان:

٣٥٤١ أخبرنا أبو الحسن بن أبي بكر الأهوازي أنا أحمد بن عبيد نا يوسف بن يعقوب القاضي نا أبو الربيع نا إسماعيل بن عياش عن جيرة بنت محمد بن ثابت عن أبيها عن عائشة قالت: قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم اطلبوا الخير عند حسان الوجوه

وأخرجه البيهقي في شعب الإيمان ٢٧٨/٣ أيضاً، قال:

أخبرنا أبو عبد الله الحافظ نا أبو أحمد بكر بن محمد بن حمدان الصيرفي بمرو نا عبد الصمد بن الفضل البلخي نا خالد بن عبد الرحمن المخزومي نا جيرة بنت محمد بن ثابت بن سباع عن أبيها عن عائشة قالت: قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم: «اطلبوا الخير عند حسان الوجوه».

وأخرجه أبو الشيخ في كتاب الأمثال ص: ١٨٠

حدثنا محمد بن إبراهيم بن داود، ثنا نصر بن عبد الملك السنجاري، ثنا الحارث بن أبي المفلح الضبعي، ثنا عثمان بن عبد الرحمن، عن الزهري، عن عروة، عن عائشة، عن النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم قال: «اطلبوا الحاجات إلى حسان الوجوه»

وأما حديث أبي مصعب الأنصاري:

فقد أخرجه إسحاق ابن راهويه في مسنده ٣/ ٩٤٧، قال:

١٦٥١ - أخبرنا عيسى بن يونس، نا عبد الحميد بن جعفر الأنصاري، حدثني أبو مصعب الأنصاري، قال: قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم «اطلبوا الخير عند حسان الوجوه»



Glossary

‘Adālah / ‘Adl: lit. ‘justice’ / ‘just’; half of the qualification of being a reliable transmitter of hadith (along with *dabt*)

Companion (*Arabic, Ṣaḥābah*): any person who saw the Prophet, believed in him and died with that faith

Dabt: accuracy, precision

Da‘īf: weak

Hadith: sayings, actions, and tacit approval of the Prophet

‘Illah: a hidden defect that affects the authenticity of a hadith

Imam: in Sunni Islam; an exceptionally prominent scholar

Irsāl: lit. letting something loose; In hadith: A transmitter who cites the someone of the Prophet without having heard it from him. The term later came to specifically mean a Successor quoting the Prophet directly without mentioning his intermediating Companion. The hadith is *mursal*

Isnad / Sanad: chain of transmitters of hadith

I‘tibār: gathering of *isnāds* for the sake of corroboration

Marfū‘: a hadith ascribed to the Prophet

Matn (pl. *mutūn*): text of hadith

Matrūk: a transmitter who is disparaged so much that his hadith is rejected

Mudallis: obfuscator of transmission; a transmitter, either intentionally or not, transmits a hadith in a manner that obscures or omits transmitter/s in the *isnād*

Muḥaddith: a hadīth scholar, specialist in hadith

Munkar: (lit. unfamiliar) a hadith wherein a weak transmitter contradicts a reliable transmitter

Mutāba': corroboration on the level lower than the Companion, i.e. a hadith transmitted by different individuals by coming from one Companion

Nuqqād (*sing. Nāqid*): *Hadith Critic*

Rāwī: *Hadith transmitter*

Successor (*Arabic, Tābi* 'ī)

Ṣaḥīḥ: 'Sound', 'authentic; a hadith transmitted accurately by reliable and trusted persons from the beginning till the end of the isnād, neither 'illah (hidden defect) is discovered in it nor is there *shudhūdh* (serious contradiction with more reliable source)

Shādhḥ/ shudhūdh: (lit. anomaly, Anomalous); According to vast majority of hadith scholars, it is a hadith that its narrator contradicted someone more reliable than him.

Shāhid: corroboration on the level of Companion, i.e. a hadith transmitted by either two or more Companions

Ṭabaqah (*pl. Ṭabaqāt*): generation

Takhrīj: extracting or mining hadith from various source and hadith collections

Tawātur: massive transmission

Thiqah: a reliable transmitter

Ṭurūq (*sing. Ṭarīq*): (lit. paths); versions of isnāds that converge at a specific point

Zawā'id: Supplemental collections of hadiths that are not found in some canonical hadith collections

Ziyādah: additions (especially a phrase or a transmitter) in hadith

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