ḤADĪTH AND ITS PRINCIPLES

IN THE EARLY DAYS OF ISLAM

A CRITICAL STUDY OF A WESTERN APPROACH

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In the name of Allah,
Most Gracious, Most Merciful

"So take what the Messenger gives you,
and refrain from what he prohibits you.
And fear Allah:
for Allah is strict in Punishment".

Qur. lix. 7.

CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

ABBREVIATIONS

A- Periodicals.

BJRL............................*Bulletin of the John Rylands Library.* Manchester.

BSOAS.........*Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies.* London.

IC...*Islamic Culture.* Hyderabad.

JRAS...............................*Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society.* London.

JSS................................*Journal of Semitic Studies.* Manchester.

MW.......................................*The Muslim World.* Hartford.

TGOS.....*Transactions of the Glasgow University Oriental Society.* Glasgow.

ZDMG....*Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft,* Stuttgart.

B- Other works.

B1..................The text of *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī* as represented by al-'Asqalānī in *Fatḥ al-Bārī.*

B2.........*The translation of the meaning of Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī,* by M. M. Khan.

M1............................*Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim,* by Muslim b. al-Ḥajjāj al-Naysābūrī.

M2............................*Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim,* by al-Naysābūrī, English translation, by 'Abd al-Ḥamīd Ṣiddīqī.

I.B..Ibn 'Abd al-Barr al-Andalusī.

Robson (1-18).........Robson's articles on Ḥadīth as listed in the bibliography.

Kh...al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī.

H...al-Ḥākim al-Naysābūrī.

S...al-Ṣābūnī, Muḥammad Alī.

A.D...............................*Sunan Abī Dāwūd,* by Abū Dāwūd al-Sijistānī.

Mishkat.............................*Mishkat al-masabih,* by al-Khaṭīb al-Tibrīzī, (English translation with explanatory notes, by James Robson).

I.M.........*Sunan Ibn Mājah,* by Muḥammad b. Yazīd al-Qazwīnī (Ibn Mājah).

T..............................*Ṣaḥīḥ al-Tirmidhī,* by Muḥammad b. 'Īsā al-Tirmidhī.

A.....................*Musnad al-Imām Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal,* by Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal.

N......................*Sunan al-Nasā'ī,* by Aḥmad b. Shu'ayb al-Nasā'ī.

D..................*Sunan al-Dārimī,* by 'Abd Allah b. 'Abd al-Raḥmān al-Dārimī.

Dh..al-Dhahabī, Muḥammad b. Aḥmad.

I.H...al-'Asqalānī, Aḥmad b. 'Alī b. Ḥajar.

Su...al-Suyūṭī, Jalāl al-Dīn 'Abd al-Raḥmān.

E.I.(1)......................*The Encyclopaedia of Islām,* first edition, 1913-38.

E.I.(2)......................*The Encyclopaedia of Islām,* new edition, 1960-.

KEY TO TRANSLITERATION

A- Constants.

أ	' (Not shown initially)	ض	Ḍ
ب	B	ط	Ṭ
ت	T	ظ	Ẓ
ث	TH	ع	'
ج	J	غ	GH
ح	Ḥ	ف	F
خ	KH	ق	Q
د	D	ك	K
ذ	DH	ل	L
ر	R	م	M
ز	Z	ن	N
س	S	ه	H
ش	SH	و	W
ص	Ṣ	ي	Y

ة   (h) exept when *muḍāf*; then (t).

B- Vowels.

ـَ	a	ـِ	i	ـُ	u
ـَا /ـَى	ā	ـِي	ī	ـُو	ū
ـَو	aw	ـَي	ay		

ABSTRACT

This work is devoted to the appraisal of a western approach to Ḥadīth and its Principles [*'Ulūm al-Ḥadīth*], during the early days of Islam. It is a study, whose main aims are to display the principal views on the subject held by James Robson throughout his articles on the subject, to examine these views in the light of the Quran, Ḥadīth and other relevant historical statements and events, and finally to point out the general features of Robson's writings on Ḥadīth and its principles, alluding to the main issues in which Robson agrees or differs from his predecessors.

The thesis consists of an introduction, three parts and a conclusion. The introduction indicates the main motives that lie behind choosing Robson's works as a subject for research, demonstrates the method according to which the thesis is undertaken and gives an account of Robson's work on Arabic and Islam in general.

The first part is devoted to the issue of the status of Ḥadīth during the early days of Islam, and has two chapters: one deals with the importance of Ḥadīth in these days, demonstrating the motives behind the considerable interest in it and indicating the main objects by which such interest was informed; the other chapter deals with the question of the beginning of the recognition of Ḥadīth as a basic source of guidance at both formal and informal levels.

The second part is assigned to the subject of the Principles of Ḥadīth in the first century of Islam and includes a preamble and two chapters. The preamble gives an account of Robson's view on the subject, while the first chapter attempts to identify some principles related to Ḥadīth, and some standards regarding the criticism of transmissions from the two main sources of Islam, i.e. the Quran and the Ḥadīth; the second chapter pursues similar features in statements and practices of the prominent authorities at that time.

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The third part is dedicated to pointing out general aspects of Robson's approach to Ḥadīth, and involves two issues: the first is a presentation and an examination of various standards applied by Robson to scrutinise ḥadīths, and the second pertains to different features in Robson's writings on Ḥadīth.

Finally, the conclusion presents the findings that the present project has reached.

INTRODUCTION

The beginning of my interest in western writings on Islamic subjects can be traced back to 1986/87, when I matriculated as a full-time student at the Department of Oriental Studies in The Higher Institute of Islamic Da'wah[1], a branch of al-Imām Muḥammad b. Sa'ūd University in Madinah.

Having obtained the Master's degree, I registered, in 1991, as a research student at the Department of Arabic and Islamic Studies in the University of Glasgow, where I have devoted my thesis to an approach of Prof. James Robson[2], a recent western writer on Islamic subjects. He wrote several articles on Ḥadīth and its Principles for *the Encyclopaedia of Islam* in its new edition and other learned journals, translated a number of books on the subject and edited another of which, along with other works on subjects other than Ḥadīth, a full account will be given at the end of this introduction.

The various works on Ḥadīth reflect the considerable interest that Robson had in the subject; thus he was one of the most prominent recent writers interested in this

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1 Recently called: The College of Da'wah and Communication.

2 He was born in 1890, and was educated in Inverness Royal Academy, Sterling High School and Glasgow University at Trinity College. He obtained the degree of D.Litt. from Glasgow University and an honorary degree of D.D. from St. Andrews University. He died in January, 1981, and throughout his active life, he was involved in the following:

    (a) Assistant to Hebrew Professor at Glasgow University, 1915-16.

    (b) Served with YMCA (Young Men's Christian Association) in Mesopotamia and India, 1916-18.

    (c) Lecturer in English at Forman Christian College in Lahore, 1918-19.

    (d) Missionary at Sheikh Othman, Aden, 1919-26.

    (e) Minister at Shandon in Dunbartonshire, 1926-28.

    (f) Lecturer in Arabic at Glasgow University, 1928-48.

    (g) Professor of Arabic in the University of Manchester, 1949-58.

    (h) Member of the Glasgow University Oriental Society, (founded in 1880 and dissolved in 1974), 1922-74, recording secretary, 1931-49, and secretary, 1959-68.

    (i) Member of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland, as a local representative, 1933-79.

    (j) Member of the editorial board of *the Muslim World*, a journal which is devoted to the study of Islam and of Christian-Muslim relationships in the past and present, 1947-80.

kind of studies in Britain[1] and was chosen to edit a number of articles on Ḥadīth and other relevant fields, by the editorial committee of the new edition of the *Encyclopaedia of Islam*. This is one of the motives which lies behind my choosing Robson's works on Ḥadīth as a subject for research; the other reason is the impression that I had after a close examination of one of his articles in the new edition of the *Encyclopaedia of Islām*, namely the article on Ḥadīth which I was able, at an early stage, to compare with an article under the same heading by W. Juynboll in the first edition of the Encyclopaedia. This comparison indicated to me how great the difference was between the two approaches, in scientific and objective terms, and revealed that Robson tried to question the validity of several hypotheses and conclusions which are taken for granted by the leading western writers in the field, particularly Goldziher and Schacht. These findings encouraged me to undertake a comprehensive examination of Robson's up-to-date approach, in which I expected to discover some fresh ideas. I was also curious to find out what non-Muslims had achieved in the subject, and to what extent they were near or far from the Islamic perspective, hoping that they would reach a closer and better understanding.

My primary intention is to examine Robson's approach regarding two aspects, namely Ḥadīth and its Principles, the so called: [*'Ulūm al-Ḥadīth*], with which the thesis deals in three parts. The first part considers two main issues: the importance of Ḥadīth, and the common view of early Muslims towards it. In this part Robson's general ideas regarding the issue are presented and discussed, in the light of the Quran, whose historicity is acknowledged by Robson, ḥadīths and other materials related to the period before that of al-Shāfiʿī, in order to chronicle the commencing of the recognition of Ḥadīth as a basic source of guidance.

In the second part, Robson's conception of the emergence of the Principles of Ḥadīth is demonstrated as it appears in his various articles. In discussing this

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1 al-ʿAqīqī, vol. 3, p. 549.

conception, an attempt is made to identify principles and standards of criticism of transmission, as derived from the Quran and Ḥadīth. In addition, statements and actions of the early authorities, regarding principles of transmission and standards of criticism, are investigated, in order to discover whether the claim made by Robson to the effect that the Principles of Ḥadīth emerged only from the second century onwards holds true.

The third part of the thesis is devoted to two topics: the first deals with a number of standards of criticism, which Robson applies in order to scrutinise different ḥadīths, and examines these standards from the Muslim perspective and in the light of statements and practices of Muslim scholars; the second points out general features noticed by the present writer throughout Robson's articles, identifying in particular the issues on which Robson follows his predecessors and those on which he differs from them.

As the aim of the present research is to deal with the main issues discussed by Robson, it is noteworthy that there are some issues raised by Robson, relating to Ḥadīth and its Principles, which are not discussed here and of which the present writer has kept an account, as he may have an opportunity to consider them in the future. It seems, however, that the issues presented and discussed in the present research are the most important ones and can be considered to be the premises on which other issues are based.

There are a few points to which attention should be drawn:

(1) For convenience, hereafter, Robson's Articles on Ḥadīth will be cited as 'Robson 1-18', according to the order in the account given at the end of this introduction.

(2) The system of transliteration shown in 'Key to transliteration' is adopted throughout the thesis, with the exception of direct quotations.

(3) In quoting the Quran, I am dependent on the revised edition of the translation, by 'Abd Allah Yūsuf 'Alī, published in Madinah in 1410 A.H.

(4) As far as ḥadīths are concerned, I often use the translation of *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, by Muḥammad Muḥsin Khān, that of *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* by 'Abdul Ḥamīd Ṣiddīqī and that of *Mishkat al-Masabih* by James Robson. Occasionally, I have found it necessary to amend these translations, where, it seems to me, they do not convey the exact meaning of the original text; in such cases, I prefix 'see' or 'cf.' to my reference to the translations.

(5) In referring to books, in the footnotes, the name of the author is given, and followed by a number, when the author has more than one book quoted in this research; this number indicates the book cited, according to its order in the bibliography. In referring to articles, the name of the author is given, followed by the complete or short title of his article.

(6) For the sake of abbreviation, I have left out honorific, conventional statements, even in quotations, such as 'Blessed and Exalted' after the names of God, 'Peace be upon him' after the names of the Prophets and 'May Allah be pleased with him' after the names of the Companions; Muslim readers are requested kindly to apply them, whenever they come across such names.

Robson's works on Arabic and Islam.

Robson's various works can be divided into two sections: books and articles in various learned journals, in *The Encyclopaedia of Islam* and in *A Dictionary of Comparative Religion.*

A- BOOKS.
1- *Ion Keith-Falconer of Arabia.* Master Missionary Series, Edinburgh, 1924.
2- *Christ in Islām.* The Wisdom of the East Series, London, 1929.

3- *Ancient Arabian musical instruments, As described by al-Mufaḍḍal Ibn Salama in the unique Istanbul manuscript of the Kitāb al-malāhī.* Text in facsimile and translation edited with notes, the Civic Press, Glasgow, 1938.

4- *Tracts on listening to music.* Being *Dhamm al-Malāhī*, by Ibn Abī al-Dunyā and *Bawāriq al-ilmā‘*, by Majd al-Dīn al-Ṭūsī al-Ghazālī. Edited with introduction, translation and notes. Hertford , 1938.

5- *An Introduction to the science of Tradition.* Being *al-Madkhal ilā ma‘rifat al-Iklīl*, by al-Ḥākim Abū ‘Abdallāh Muḥammad b. ‘Abdallāh al-Naisābūrī. Edited with introduction, translation and notes. The Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland, London, 1953.

6- *Mishkat al-Masabih.* English translation with explanatory notes. 4 vols., Lahore, 1963.

B- ARTICLES.

I- Articles in various journals.

i- On Hadīth :

    1- "The transmission of Muslim's Ṣaḥīḥ". *JRAS*, 1949, pp. 46-60.

    2- "Tradition, the second foundation of Islam". *MW* 41, 1951, pp. 22-23.

    3- "Tradition: investigation and classification". *MW* 41, 1951, pp. 98-112.

    4- "The material of Tradition I". *MW* 41, 1951, pp. 166-80.

    5- "The Material of Tradition II". *MW* 41, 1951, pp. 257-70.

    6- "Muslim Tradition: The question of authenticity". *Memoirs and proceedings of the Manchester Literary & Philosophical Society (Manchester Memoirs)* 93, 1951/52, pp. 84-102.

    7- "The Transmission of Abū Dāwūd's Sunan". *BSOAS* 14, 1952, pp. 579-88.

    8- "The Isnād in Muslim Tradition". *TGOS* 15, 1953-54, pp. 15-26.

    9- "The Transmission of Tirmidhī's Jāmi‘". *BSOAS* 16, 1954, pp. 258-70; *Islamic Literature*, 7, (5), 1955, pp. 39-52.

    10- "al-Ghazālī and the Sunna". *MW* 45, 1955, pp. 324-333.

    11- "Ibn Isḥāq's use of the Isnād". *BJRL* 38, 1955/56, pp. 449-65.

    12- "The Form of Muslim Tradition". *TGOS* 16, 1955/56, pp. 38-50.

    13- "The Transmission of Nasā'ī's Sunan". *JSS* 1, 1956, pp. 38-59.

    14- "The Transmission of Ibn Mājah's Sunan". *JSS* 3, 1958, pp. 129-41.

15- "Standards applied by Muslim Traditionists". *BJRL* 43, 2, 1961, pp. 459-79.

16- "Varieties of the ḥasan Tradition". *JSS* 6, 1966, pp. 47-61.

17- "Tradition from Individuals". *JSS* 9, 1964, pp. 327-40.

18- "A Shīʿa collection of divine traditions". *TGOS* 22, 1967/68, pp. 1-13.

ii- <u>On other subjects</u>.

1- "Aden and its people". *TGOS.*, 5, 1923/28, pp. 7-9.

2- "Some Arab saints". *TGOS.*, 5, 1923/28, pp. 62-65.

3- Introduction. *TGOS.*, 6, 1929/33, pp. v-vii.

4- "Jubilee celebrations". *TGOS.*, 6, 1929/33, pp. viii-ix.

5- "Ashanti weights in the Hunterian Museum". *TGOS.*, 6, 1929/33, pp. 45-46.

6- "The Magical use of the Koran". *TGOS.*, 6, 1929/33, pp. 51-60.

7- "Magic cures in popular Islam". *MW.*, 24, 1934, pp. 33-43.

8- "Does the Bible speak of Mohammed?". *MW.*, 25, 1935, pp. 17-26.

9- "Muḥammad in Islām". *MW.*, 25, 1935, pp. 226-235.

10- "Blessing on the Prophet". *MW.*, 26, 1936, pp. 365-371.

11- "The meaning of the title al-Muʿallaqāt". *JRAS.*, 1936, pp. 83-86.

12- "An Arabic usage". *JRAS.*, 1937, pp. 314-315.

13- "Is the Moslem Hell eternal ?". *MW.*, 28, 1938, pp. 386-396.

14- "The Kitāb al-malāhī of Abū Ṭālib al-Mufaḍḍal Ibn Salama". (*Translation with Introduction and Notes*). *JRAS.*, 1938, pp. 231-49.

15- "Non-Resistance in Islam". *TGOS.*, 9, 1938/39, pp. 2-11.

16- "Muhammadan Teaching about Jesus". *MW.*, 29, 1939, pp. 37-54.

17- "A Hunterian Museum manuscript on magic". *TGOS.*, 12, 1944/46, pp. 9-18.

18- "Catalogue of the oriental MSS. in the library of the University of Glasgow". *Studia Semitica et orientalia*, vol. II, presentation volume to W. B. Stevenson, Glasgow, 1945, pp. 116-37.

19- "The Meaning of Ghināʾ". *J Manch Univ Eg&Or Soc.* 25, 1947/53, pp. 1-8.

20- "Stories of Jesus and Mary". *MW.*, 40, 1950, pp. 236-43.

21- "A Maghribi MS. on listening to music". *IC.*, 26, I, 1952, pp. 113-31.

22- "A chess Maqāma in the John Rylands library". *BJRL.*, 36, 1953, pp. 111-27.

23- "' Islām ' as a term". *MW.*, 44, 1954, pp. 101-9.

24- "The Muharram ceremonies". *Hibbert J.*, 54, 1955/56, pp. 267-74.

25- "Some Arab musical instruments". *IC.*, 32, 1958, pp. 171-85.

26- "Some uses of *Lā* and *Lam* in the Qur'ān". *JSS.*, 4, 1959, pp. 139-41.

27- "Muslim wedding feasts". *TGOS.*, 18, 1959/60, pp. 1-14.

28- "Aspects of the Qur'anic doctrine of salvation". *Man and his Salvation*,
Studies in memory of S.G.F. Brandon. Manchester, 1973, pp. 205-19.

II-Articles in *The Encyclopaedia of Islām*.(New edition).

i- Volume One.

1- Abū Dā'ūd al-Sidjistānī. p. 114.

2- Abū Dharr al-Ghifārī. pp. 114-15.

3- Abū Hurayra al- Dawsī. p. 129.

4- Anas b. Mālik. p. 482. (With A. J. Wensinck)

5- al-Baghawī. p. 893.

6- Barīra. p. 1048.

7- al-Baydāwī. p. 1129.

8- al-Bayhakī. p. 1130.

9- Bid'a. p. 1199.

10- al-Bukhārī , Muḥammad b. Ismā'īl. pp. 1296-97.

ii- Volume Two.

1- al-Dārakutnī.p. 136.

2- al-Dārimī. p. 159.

3- al-Djarḥ wa 'l-Ta'dīl. p. 462 .

iii- Volume Three.

1- Ḥadīth. pp. 23-28.

2- Ḥadīth Kudsī. pp. 28-29.

3- al-Ḥākim al-Naysābūrī. p. 82.

4- Ibn Abī Ḥadjala. p. 686. (With V. Rizzitano)

5- Ibn al-'Arabī. p. 707.

6- Ibn al-Mubārak. p. 879.

7- Ibn Mudjāhid. p. 880.

8- Ibn Sa'āda. p. 921.

9- Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ.p. 927.

iv- <u>Volume Four</u>.

      1- Isnād. p. 207.

III- <u>Articles in</u> *A Dictionary of Comparative Religion*.

In this work, which is edited by S.G.F. Brandon and published in 1970, Robson writes all materials related to Islam.

PART ONE

THE STATUS OF ḤADĪTH
IN THE EARLY DAYS OF ISLAM

CHAPTER ONE

THE IMPORTANCE OF ḤADĪTH

CHAPTER TWO

ḤADĪTH AS A BASIS OF ISLAM

CHAPTER ONE

THE IMPORTANCE OF ḤADĪTH

In Traditionists' terminology, Ḥadīth, in its most general meaning, is identified as what is ascribed to the Prophet including his sayings, deeds, tacit agreement and moral and physical characteristics, and what is attributed to the Companions and the Successors i.e. *Mawqūf* and *Maqṭū'* respectively[1]. However, in this chapter as in the others, Ḥadīth will be considered as it is defined by scholars of *Uṣūl al-fiqh*, who deal with it as a basis of law and usually call it *Sunnah*, being "an account of what the Prophet said or did, or of his tacit approval of something said or done in his presence"[2].

In fact, the question of the importance of Ḥadīth, in this sense, is not completely new; it has its roots in an early date of Islamic history and Muslim scholars, throughout the centuries, have considered it, briefly or at length, in a number of their scholarly works. It is has also been dealt with, from the beginning of this century, by Western scholars interested in the subject, who have discussed it from their own perspective, starting from particular premises. This chapter is devoted to one of the modern, western attitudes, which will be displayed, examined and compared with the Muslim point of view.

Survey of Robson's views.

Consulting biographical works concerning the Prophet Muhammad, we will recognise the considerable interest, shown by Jews, Christians and Pagans as well as by Muslims, in Muhammad and in the way he led his life – not only after he started his

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1 Cf. 'Itr. pp. 26-29.
2 *E.I.*(2), vol. 3, p. 23; cf. al-Kafawī, p. 370; Fallātah, vol. 1, p. 42.

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mission but even before[1]. That is probably the reason which made Robson conclude: "It may safely be assumed that from the very beginning, Muslims were interested in what the Prophet said and did, and that after his death, when Islam spread widely, new converts would be anxious to hear about him. Those who associated with him would be listened to eagerly as they told about him, and in course of time a great amount of material became current"[2].

However, there is an important question, which is: what were the motives and the ultimate goal behind this interest in his sayings and deeds? To answer this question, Robson's opinion concerning this issue as it appears from his writings regarding Ḥadīth will first be displayed, and secondly his approach will be discussed in the light of sources available to us. As far as the motives which made people interested in the stories related to the Prophet are concerned, Robson adduces the following:

(1) Muhammad's striking personality. He states: "That Muḥammad was a very striking personality, there can be no doubt whatsoever. It must therefore have been natural for people to talk about him. This would happen in his lifetime... It would happen all the more after he died"[3].

(2) The instrument of the great development. He says: "People were bound to ask for information about the extraordinary man who had set this great development in motion..."[4].

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1 See Ibn Hishām, vol. 1, the story of the Monk Baḥīrā, pp. 180-183; Jews, Christians and Arabs predict Muhammad's mission, pp. 211-214; the Apostle's public preaching and the response, pp. 264-67; the second pledge at al-'Aqabah, pp. 438-48 and *passim*; and see these articles in Ibn Isḥāq, English ed., pp. 79-81; 90-95; 117-21; 201-6, and *passim*.
2 Robson in his introduction to *Mishkat*, p. ii.
3 Robson 6, p. 85; cf. *E.I.*(2), vol. 3, p. 23.
4 Id., Robson 6, p. 86.

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With regard to the goals observed of this interest, Robson thinks that the stories about the Prophet would merely be retailed for the mere interest[1]. Elsewhere he is more specific: "People who knew him would be asked to tell stories about him, not for the purpose of laying down a supply of material for the guidance of future generations, but merely to satisfy natural curiosity about a great man"[2]. These are the main motives and goals I have identified in Robson's writings for the interest of the people at that time in accounts connected with the Prophet. This conclusion seems to be a natural result of his belief that "It is not at all clear that Tradition as we know it was considered a matter of importance from the beginning. Indeed, it would hardly be necessary in the early period after Muḥammad's death"[3].

In his view, the idea that Ḥadīth is a type of revelation is only the result of a late development when Ḥadīth was adopted as a main source of guidance; at that time, which Robson dates as the time of al-Shāfiʿī towards the end of the second century, it came to be believed "that through Muḥammad, humanity is provided with a double revelation. The Koran, the actual word of God, is the higher type... The lower type is Tradition; but it is slightly inferior, for the Prophet is believed to have been inspired by God continuously"[4].

This is what the reader of Robson's articles on the subject will calculate regarding the nature and the importance of Ḥadīth amongst the Muslims in the early days of Islam. To discuss Robson's view on this issue, it seems to me that there are two significant questions with which one has to start; for specifying the answers of these questions will play a crucial part in comprehending the nature and the extent of the interest in the Prophet's sayings and actions, and in determining the motives and the goals of such an interest. The two questions are:

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1 cf. Robson 2, p. 24f.
2 Robson 6, p. 86.
3 Robson 2, p. 23.
4 Robson 6, p. 84.

(1) <u>What was the idea of Muhammad amongst his people?</u>

As far as this issue is concerned, the following questions may be raised: Was Muhammad an ordinary man? Was he a great reformer? Was he a Messenger of God, who had a certain divine message to deliver? and so on. To answer such questions, there are several approaches, but the one which concerns us, in this chapter, is the Islamic approach, as it is shown through the Quran, Ḥadīth and the statements of Muslim scholars.

The Quran, the basic source of guidance or the only one as Robson claims, makes the answers to these questions very distinct, as there are verses stating that Muhammad is an ordinary human being, who was chosen by God as His final Messenger to mankind. In one verse we read: "Say: "I am but a man like yourselves, (but) the inspiration has come to me, that your God is one God..."[1], and in another verse we are told: "Muhammad is not the father of any of your men, but (he is) the Messenger of Allah and the seal of the Prophets: and Allah has full knowledge of all things"[2]. Other verses ask people to believe in God and His Messenger, "O Ye who believe! believe in Allah and His Messenger and the scripture which He hath sent His Messenger, and the scripture which He sent to those before (him). Any who denieth Allah, His angels, His Books, His Messengers, and the Day of Judgement, hath gone far, far astray"[3].

There are verses in which we are told that the Prophet has been receiving divine revelation, just as those sent before him; "We have sent thee Inspiration, as We sent it to Noah and the Messengers after him; We sent Inspiration to Abraham, Ismāʿīl, Isaac, Jacob, and the tribes, to Jesus, Job, Jonah, Aaron, and Solomon, and to David We gave Psalms"[4].

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1 xviii, 110; cf. xli. 6; xvii. 93.
2 xxxiii, 40; cf. iii, 144.
3 iv. 136; cf. xxiv. 62; xlviii. 9; lvii. 7, 28, lxi. 11; lxiv. 8.
4 iv. 163; cf. xviii. 110.

Another set of verses states that the Prophet is under divine guidance and following only what is revealed to him from his Lord; "Say: I tell you not that with me are the treasure of Allah nor do I know what is hidden nor do I tell you I am an angel; I follow but what is revealed to me..."[1].

Ḥadīth also confirms this fact. There is an account in which Anas b. Mālik says: "While we were sitting with the Prophet in the mosque, a man came riding on a camel. He made his camel kneel down in the mosque, tied its foreleg and then said: 'Who amongst you is Muhammad?' At that time the Prophet was sitting amongst us (his companions) leaning on his arm. We replied, 'This white man reclining on his arm'. The man then addressed him, 'O son of 'Abd al-Muṭṭalib'. The Prophet said, 'I am here to answer your question'. The man said to the Prophet, 'I want to ask you something and will be hard in questioning, so do not get angry'. The Prophet said, 'Ask whatever you want'. The man said, 'I ask you by your lord, and the lord of those who came before you, has Allah sent you as an Apostle to all the [sic] mankind?' The Prophet replied, 'By Allah, yes'...". The man went on asking the Prophet about the five daily prayers, fasting during the month of Ramaḍān, paying alms, and then said: "I believe in all that with which you have been sent , and I have been sent by my people as a messenger, and I am Ḍimām bin Thaʻlabah..."[2]. To the Companions, the fact that the Prophet was a messenger of God and receiving divine revelation was beyond question. Jābir b. ʻAbd Allah related that he once asked the Prophet: "O Allah's Apostle! How should I spend my wealth?". But the Prophet did not give me any reply till the verse of the laws of inheritance was revealed"[3].

In another account we are told that the wife of Saʻd b. al-Rabīʻ came with his two daughters to the Prophet and said: "O Apostle of Allah, these are the daughters of

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1 vi. 50; cf. vii. 203; x. 15.
2 B2., vol. 1, pp. 54f, (n. 63).
3 Id., vol. 9, p. 307f, (n.412).

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Sa'd who was killed in the battle of Uḥud. Their uncle took all the inheritance and there was nothing left for them...". The prophet said: "Allah will give His verdict". The verses regarding the laws of inheritance were revealed and the Prophet asked their uncle to give them two thirds, their mother an eighth and to take for himself what was left[1]. In these two stories it is clear that as the Prophet had no answer regarding the issues in question, he waited for guidance from his God in order to give a judgement.

The Companions' belief that the Prophet was receiving divine revelation is indicated by the following statement of Ibn 'Umar: "We used to avoid chatting leisurely and freely with our wives in the time of Allah's Apostle, lest some divine inspiration might be revealed concerning us, but when Allah's Apostle had died we started chatting leisurely and freely (with them)"[2]. Commenting on this story in an early article, Robson seems to accept such an idea; he says: "Whether or not this is a genuine saying of Ibn 'Umar, it at least indicates a point of view which must have been prevalent"[3]. There is another story of Salamah b. Ṣakhr al-Anṣārī, in which a similar feeling is expressed by the Companions[4].

From the preceding statements, one would infer that Muslims, from the early days of Islam, believed (1) that Muhammad was the final Messenger of God and the bearer of His message to mankind, in whom Allah enjoins people to believe, (2) that he was under divine guidance and receiving divine revelation and (3) that he was following what was revealed to him and giving his judgements according to it.

(2) Who was the nature of his teachings?

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1 T., vol. 2, p. 11.
2 See B2., vol. 7, p. 81, (n. 115); cf. H., 3, vol. 4, p. 37.
3 Robson in "Muḥammad in Islām", *MW*. 1935, p. 229; compare with Robson 6, p. 84.
4 See T., vol. 2, p. 226; H., 3, vol. 2, p. 203.

The belief that Muhammad was a Messenger of God receiving divine revelation from Him, would give rise to another question, as to what was the nature of his sayings and actions?

There is no doubt whatsoever, from the Muslim's perspective, that the Quran is the absolute Word of God with which people, including the Prophet, have nothing to do; "As for thee, thou receivest the Qur-ān from One All-Wise, All-Knowing"[1], "That this is indeed a Qur-ān most honourable. In a book well-guarded. Which none shall touch but those who are clean: a Revelation from the Lord of the Worlds"[2]. Another verse says: "Your companion is neither astray nor being misled, nor does he say (aught) of (his own) desire. It is no less than inspiration sent down to him"[3].

As far as the Prophet's sayings and actions which have a religious nature are concerned, they also seem to be considered as having a divine nature; this is understood from the verse adduced above, on which Ibn Kathīr comments that it means that the Prophet only says what he is instructed to say, and conveys it to the people without any addition or diminution[4]. It is also indicated by the following account reported by 'Abd Allah b. 'Amr to the effect that he wrote down words spoken by the Prophet, whereupon Quraysh objected on the grounds that the Prophet was a human being, and therefore liable to speak under the influence of some emotion. 'Abd Allah consulted the Prophet, who allowed him to write as he never spoke anything but the truth[5].

That the Prophet's teachings, other than that in the Quran, have a divine nature is reflected by a ḥadīth in which the Prophet is reported to have been taught the fixed times of the five daily prayers – the matter which is not precisely determined in the

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1 xxvii. 6.
2 lvi. 77-80.
3 liii. 2-4.
4 See S., 1, vol. 3, pp. 396f; cf. al-Qurṭubī, vol. 17, pp. 84f.
5 A.D., vol. 4, pp. 60f.

Quran – by Gabriel, who acted as Imam, while he offered prayers with him five times. Having reported this incident, the Prophet said: "This how I have been ordered to do"[1]. It is also indicated by a statement of Ḥassān b. 'Aṭiyyah[2] to the effect that Gabriel conveyed the *Sunnah* to the Prophet, just as he did with the Quran, and he taught him the *Sunnah* as he taught him the Quran[3].

Notwithstanding, Muslim scholars believe that the Prophet occasionally used his own judgement without direct guidance from the revelation. There is a ḥadīth in which the Prophet says: "I only use my own judgement where there is no revelation"[4]. As far as this issue is concerned, al-Sakhāwī is of the opinion that when the Prophet faced a certain matter for which there is no direct guidance in the Quran, he waited for an appropriate period before giving a judgement; if no revelation was received, he gave his own decision by practising *Ijtihād*. Other scholars including Mālik, al-Shāfi'ī and Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal, are of the opinion that in dealing with matters for which there is no answer in the Quran, the Prophet took a decision without waiting for a revelation at all. At any rate, such a decision is accepted as a definite authority as long as there is no revelation reported to have been sent by way of correction[5]. Therefore, the outcome of these two opinions does not result in any important difference, as even this kind of decision was also considered equivalent to divine revelation, because the Prophet is believed to be always under divine guidance and his decisions to be preserved by God, Who will not leave him alone if he makes an incorrect decision regarding his mission; unlike others who are not under direct divine

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1 M2., vol. 1, p. 299, (n. 1269); cf. B2., vol. 1, p. 297, (n. 500).
2 He is Abū Bakr al-Muḥāribī, a trustworthy, pious scholar who died 120-130 A.H., see I.H., 4, vol. 2, p. 251.
3 See Kh., 3, p. 12; cf. D., vol. 1, p. 145; I.B., 1, vol. 2, p. 191; al-Qurṭubī, vol. 1, p. 39.
4 A.D., vol. 4, p. 14.
5 See al-'Umarī, Nādiyah, pp. 43f; cf. al-Bukhārī, 'Abd al-'Azīz, vol. 3, pp. 205f.

guidance[1]. 'Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb is reported as saying: "The Prophet's judgements are always right, as he was continuously guided by Allah, while our decisions are fallible"[2].

Therefore, if it happened that the Prophet made a decision which was not in accordance with God's Will, the revelation would descend and convey to him the decision which should have been taken[3]. The story of Ibn Umm Maktūm, in which, although the Prophet did not make a serious mistake, he was reproved, may serve as an example of this. The story tells us that once 'Abd Allah b. Umm Maktūm, the blind, poor Companion, came to the Prophet, who paid no attention to him, resenting the interruption, as he was deeply and earnestly engaged in trying to explain the holy Quran to a group of Quraysh's leaders, hoping that they would accept his call and follow the right path to which he was summoning the people[4]; because of that God's revelation was sent to the Prophet reproving him for such an action. The incident is recorded in the Quran[5] and "reflects the highest honour on the Prophet's sincerity in Revelations that were vouchsafed to him even if they seemed to reprove him for some natural zeal that led him to a false step in his mission according to his own high standards"[6].

On another occasion and out of compassion for his people, the Prophet decided to perform funeral prayers for the hypocrite, 'Abd Allah b. Ubayy b. Salūl, whereupon the following verse was revealed deterring him from doing that: "Nor do thou ever pray for any of them that dies, nor stand at his grave; for they rejected Allah

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1 See al-Bukhārī, 'Abd al-'Azīz, vol. 3, pp. 209f; al-Shāṭibī, vol. 4, p. 21; al-Dahlawī, vol. 1, p. 271; al-Qāsimī, p. 58; Drāz, p. 11.
2 A.D., vol. 4, p. 14.
3 See Abū al-Naṣr, pp. 40f; cf. Ibn Ḥazm, 1, vol. 4, pp. 47, 53.
4 See 'Alī's translation, p. 1896; cf. S., 1, vol. 3, p. 599; Ibn Hishām, vol. 1, pp. 363f.
5 lxxx. 1-10.
6 'Alī, p. 1896.

and His Messenger, and died in a state of perverse rebellion"[1]. At another time, having attempted to convince his uncle to embrace Islam and failed, the prophet said that he would keep asking Allah to forgive him as long as he was not forbidden to do so; because of this incident the following verse was revealed: "It is not fitting, for the Prophet and those who believe, that they should pray for forgiveness for Pagans, even though they be of kin, after it is clear to them that they are companions of the Fire"[2].

However, it is instructive to know that Muslim scholars have dealt in detail with what was ascribed to the Prophet and have stated that there are some sayings or deeds, attributed to the Prophet, which are not included in the *Sunnah*, which should be followed by every Muslim.

Categories of the Prophetic deeds and sayings.

Generally speaking, what is ascribed to the Prophet is divided into two sections. The first is what belongs to his mission as a Messenger of God who has a particular message to convey to the people; this section is considered the *Sunnah*, to which the following verse refers: "Take what the Messenger gives you, and refrain from what He prohibits you"[3]. Teachings in this section can either be received directly from divine revelation or they can be the result of the Prophet's own *Ijtihād*. The second section includes what is not related to his prophetic mission, such as his decisions regarding medical advice, which he acquired by his own experience or some other means, unless there is a clear indication that a particular decision is related to divine revelation. To this section also belongs what he did according to his human nature or to customs prevailing in his lifetime. There is a ḥadīth in which the Prophet

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1 ix. 84; see B2., vol. 6, pp. 153-55; al-Qurṭubī, vol. 8, pp. 218f. For other incidents, in which the revelation revised the Prophet's decisions, see verses ix. 43; lviii. 1-4, and S., 2, vol. 1, p. 537, and vol. 3, p. 334 respectively.
2 ix. 113; for the incident see B2., vol. 6, p. 158.
3 lix. 7.

makes a clear distinction between his sayings which relate to religion and other kinds
of sayings; once, he saw people fertilising Palm-trees and suggested that there was no
need to do this. Being informed of this, the people refrained from doing so. The
incident resulted in making trees yield less fruit. Having been told that, the Prophet
said: "If there is any use of it, then they should do it, for it was only my personal
opinion, and do not blame me for my opinions[1]; but when I say to you anything on
behalf of Allah, then do accept it, for I do not attribute lies to Allah[2], the Exalted and
Glorious". In another version the Prophet is reported as saying: "I am a human
being, so when I command you about a thing pertaining to religion, accept it, and
when I command you about a thing out of my personal opinion[3], keep it in mind that I
am a human being"[4]. Moreover, in yet another version, the prophet is reported as
stating: "You have better knowledge, as far as the affairs of your own world are
concerned [antum a'lam bi amr dunyākum]"[5].

These preceding hadīths refer to the second section, which is not connected
with divine revelation and is completely influenced by the Prophet's human nature[6].

al-Qāḍī 'Iyāḍ points out that occasionally, as far as decisions regarding non-
religious matters are concerned, the Prophet may not reach the right conclusion, and
adduces the story of fertilising the Palm-tree as an example. He follows it by another
story related to the Battle of Badr, in which the Prophet is reported to have chosen a
certain location for his army to camp. al-Ḥubāb b. al-Mundhir inquired of him

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1 The Arabic version reads: 'innamā zanantu zann-an, falā tu'ākhidhūnī bi al-zann', see M1., vol. 15,
pp. 116f.
2 As the Prophet is by no means expected to tell lies against his God, it seems that what he means by
this expression is that he does not make mistakes, as far as matters connected with his mission are
concerned, unlike decisions that do not have a religious nature and, accordingly fallible.
3 This applies to matters related to worldly affairs, and not concerning religious enactments, see al-
Nawawī, 1, vol. 15, p. 116.
4 See M2., vol. 4, p. 1259, (nos. 5830-31); cf. Ibn Khaldūn, vol. 1, pp. 918f; Abū al-Naṣr, pp. 51f.
5 M1., vol. 15, pp. 117f; cf. M2., vol. 4, pp. 1259f, (n. 5832).
6 For this division see al-Dahlawī, vol. 1, pp. 271f; al-Qāsimī, pp. 77f; al-Ashqar, 2, vol. 1, pp. 17f.
For other hadīths that assert his human nature, see M2., vol. 4, p. 1372, (nos. 6287, 6293).

whether this particular location was assigned by God, in which case they would have to stick to it, or was it his own choice? When the Prophet replied that it was his own choice, al-Ḥubāb suggested another location for the army to form camp, whereupon, the Prophet himself declared: "You have made the right suggestion", [*Ashart bi al-ra'y al-ṣā'ib*], and did as al-Ḥubāb suggested[1]. 'Iyāḍ adduces another example regarding the truce between the Prophet and his enemies on the day of al-Khandaq, in which the Prophet revised his decision after a consultation with his Companions. Commenting on these incidents, he confirms that in these events and others similar to them, which are unrelated to religious matters, the Prophet may give his decision according to what appears to him to be right, although in fact it is not; this, however, has nothing to do with his status as a Messenger of God[2].

A similar attitude is expressed by Ibn Khaldūn in the *Introduction* to his thesis on history. He states that what is ascribed to the Prophet concerning some medical prescriptions is mainly based on a limited experience of the effect on some patients rather than on natural principles; this is something that Arabs are accustomed to practise and bears no relation to divine revelation. Such a practice is ascribed to the Prophet in the same way as the deeds which resulted from his human nature or from the custom of the people at that time. He concludes that the Prophet is sent to teach us religious matters and not to instruct us in medicine-related issues or other things of a customary nature[3]. Nevertheless, one should state that this rule applies, as understood from Ibn Khaldūn's discussion[4], so long as there is no indication of any kind that a particular medical prescription or a certain custom is connected to divine revelation, and hence to be dealt with entirely as a religious matter.

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1 See Ibn Hishām, vol. 1, p. 620.
2 See al-Andalusī, 2, vol. 2, pp. 163f; Abū al-Naṣr, pp. 51-54.
3 Ibn Khaldūn, vol. 1, pp. 918f; cf. Abū al-Naṣr, pp. 55f.
4 Id., Ibn Khaldūn, vol. 1, p. 919.

The judgement of the Prophet between adversaries is also considered as having no relation to divine revelation; in this situation the Prophet is believed to have followed what appears to him a right decision, according to confessions and testimonies represented to him[1]. This is confirmed by a ḥadīth in which the Prophet is reported as saying: "I am only a human being, and opponents come to me (to settle their problems); maybe someone amongst you can present his case more eloquently than the others, whereby I may consider him true and give a verdict in his favour. So, if I give the right of a Muslim to another by mistake, then it is really a portion of (Hell) fire, he has the option to take or give up"[2].

Attention may be drawn to another classification put forward by al-Qurāfī on a different basis. He divides the Prophet's actions into four kinds:

(1) What he did as a leader of the people [Imām]: such as the distribution of the booty, and implementing punishments [ḥudūd]. This kind of actions should be carried out by rulers only.

(2) What he did as a judge: such as ending a marriage by separation [faskh], which is the task of judges only.

(3) What he did as a Messenger of God who has teachings to convey to people: what comes under this section is what should be followed and observed by all Muslims until the Last Day.

(4) What he did in an indeterminate capacity[3].

For a more detailed classification, deeds attributed to the Prophet may be categorised as follows[4]:

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1 See al-Qurāfī, p. 23; al-Dahlawī, vol. 1, p. 272; al-'Arūsī, pp. 174-77.
2 B2., vol. 3, p. 381, (n. 638).
3 See al-Qurāfī, pp. 24-28.
4 See al-'Arūsī, pp. 145-174; Hītū, pp. 272-276; cf. al-Asnawī, vol. 3, pp. 16-34; al-Shāṭibī, vol. 4, pp. 55-58; al-Khuḍarī, pp. 261f; al-Ashqar, 2, vol. 1, pp. 219-381.

(1) What he did according to his human nature, such as moving, standing, sitting and so on. To this section the question of following or not does not apply.

(2) What he did according to the custom prevailing at that time, such as customs regarding eating, drinking, sleeping and clothing. He is for example reported as eating barley and having a mat or something special to sleep on. Practising such things indicates that they are lawful [Mubāḥ] for him and for others alike, and whoever follows him in these deeds, intending to adhere to the Prophet's customs, is exposing himself to Allah's Blessing because of his good intention. 'Abd Allah b. 'Umar is one of those who are reported to have done their best in following the Prophet's actions to a great extent.

(3) Actions which have no indication whether it was performed by the Prophet as a custom ['Ādah] or a religious worship ['Ibādah]; such as going by one way to the Prayer of 'Id and returning by another. As far as such actions are concerned, Muslim scholars are of different opinions, and doctors of law [al-Fuqahā'] are inclined to believe that they are recommended to be followed [Mandūb or Mustaḥabb].

(4) Actions which serve as an execution or explanation of particular commands; such as performing prayers or pilgrimage which are in fact implementations of the enactments enshrined in the Quran; "And be steadfast in prayer: give Zakat, and bow down your heads with those who bow down (in worship)"[1], and "Pilgrimage thereto is a duty men owe to Allah,- those who can afford the journey;..."[2] respectively. This kind of deeds has the same status as the enactments they are intended to observe or explain.

(5) Actions which are considered to be related to the Prophet's privileges [khaṣā'iṣ] and not applicable to his followers; such as fasting for more than one day without breaking the fast which the Prophet practised. When his Companions tried to

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1 ii. 43.
2 iii. 97.

follow him, he did not give them permission, pointing out the difference between him and them[1]. It is, however, worthy of note that a recognised authority should be adduced for determining that a particular action is one of the Prophet's privileges, inasmuch as such actions are exceptions, while the general rule is: "Ye have indeed in the Messenger of Allah an excellent exemplar, for him who hopes in Allah and the final day, and who remember [sic] Allah much"[2].

As far as sayings of the Prophet are concerned, three types may be distinguished:

(1) Divine [*qudsī*] hadīths, which consist of hadīths whose sense was received by the Prophet from his God; he, in his turn, transmitted them by using his own words[3]. Here are two examples: there is a hadīth in which Abū Dharr reported the Prophet as saying that Allah, the Exalted and Glorious, said: "My servants, I have made oppression unlawful for Me and unlawful for you, so do not commit oppression against one another..."[4]. In another the Prophet said: "Allah revealed to me that we should be humble amongst ourselves and none should show pride upon the others. And it does not behove one to do so..."[5].

(2) Prophetic hadīths to which the majority of hadīths belong. They consist of two kinds; The first includes hadīths which are in fact divine hadīths, but as there is no indication that they have a divine nature one cannot identify them, they are merely called Prophetic hadīths – as far as one can tell; the second are hadīths which contain enactments and decisions of the Prophet which he decided in the light of what he received from his Master[6].

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1 See below p. 56; for another example see xxxiii. 50, and S., 2, vol. 2, p. 531.
2 xxxiii. 21.
3 Cf. al-Jurjānī, p. 74.
4 M2., vol. 4, p. 1365, (n. 6246).
5 Id., vol. 4, p. 1489, (n. 6856).
6 See al-Shāṭibī, vol. 4, p. 21; Drāz, pp. 9-11; al-Ṣabbāgh, pp. 135-37.

(3) Sayings which are not connected with religious matters, and have no relation with divine revelation; those sayings originated from his own experience, or they were natural human reaction, such as his advice with regard to fertilising the Palm-tree discussed earlier.

Accordingly, Ḥadīth or *Sunnah* with its three divisions, i.e. sayings, deeds and tacit agreements, to the exclusion of what originated from his human nature or from the customs which prevailed at that time, has been considered as a type of revelation, as far as religious matters are concerned, from the time of the Prophet. It refers to divine revelation either through direct teaching or through God's approval of the Prophet's decisions, or lastly through abrogation[1]; this was simply a result of the Muslims' belief that Muhammad is a Messenger of God and the bearer of His message to mankind. Therefore, Robson's theory that, before Ḥadīth was considered as a basic source of law, at the time of al-Shāfiʿī as he believes, there was no suggestion that Ḥadīth was a type of revelation, cannot be accepted as portraying the actual belief of Muslims at that time.

Motives and objects of Muslims' interest in Ḥadīth.

We shall now turn to examine, in the light of the discussion presented above, Robson's opinion regarding the motives and the goals of people's interest in Ḥadīth in the early days of Islam. It seems that although no one would dismiss the considerable general interest in Muhammad's sayings and deeds in his life-time or even after his death, there is some disagreement with respect to the motives or the reasons behind, and the goals of, this interest. In my opinion the reasons mentioned by Robson above are natural enough for all those who, at that time, were aware of Muhammad; believers and unbelievers alike, and something more should be said as far as believers are concerned.

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1 See Drāz, p. 11.

Considering the motives for the Muslims' particular interest in stories about the Prophet and his sayings, a number of sources have to be consulted; the first of these is the Quran, because, as Robson admits, it is "universally recognised as coming from Muḥammad"[1]. He personally acknowledges its historicity without necessarily accepting its divine origin, when he says: "What can be traced to the Prophet is found in the Koran and in the Koran alone"[2]. It should be noted that Muslims believe in the Quran as the actual Word of God; nevertheless, Robson's belief in the level of its historicity forms a suitable ground for adopting it as a genuine document which represents the actual teachings of the Prophet. Therefore I will depend mainly on the Quran while dealing with the view of Robson presented earlier.

The second source to be consulted is the works of Ḥadīth, from which I will quote a number of texts which express the same ideas as the Quran since this may testify, to some extent, to their authenticity in Robson's eyes[3].

Examining these two sources, one encounters many verses and ḥadīths, regarding the obligation of the obedience to Allah and His Messenger, which is one of the main aspects of Islamic teaching. From these statements, I have been able to identify six different methods by which the Quran encourages people to observe this obedience:

(1) Using the form of a command such as 'obey!' and 'follow!'. In one verse we are told: "Take what the Messenger gives you, and refrain from what He prohibits you"[4]. Although this verse has a special reason, it has – as Commentators on the Quran say – a general meaning and refers to everything that is ordered or prohibited by the Apostle of Allah; this is indicated by the way in which Ibn Masʿūd

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1 Robson 6, p. 94.
2 Id., p. 102; cf. Robson 11, p. 464.
3 See Robson 12, p. 47.
4 lix. 7. See. al-Qurṭubī, vol. 1, pp. 17-19; S., 2, vol. 3, p. 351.

is reported to have quoted this verse. Another verse says: "We sent not a Messenger, but to be obeyed, in accordance with the leave of Allah"[1]. This verse indicates that the main duty of people towards the Messengers sent to them by Allah is to offer them obedience and to observe their enactments[2]. There is a verse in which Muslims are instructed: "O ye who believe! obey Allah and obey the Messenger, and those charged with authority [ūlū al-amr] among you. If ye differ in anything among yourselves, refer it to Allah and His Messenger, If ye do believe in Allah and the Last Day: that is best, and most suitable for final determination"[3].   Mujāhid b. Jabr (d. 104 A.H.), a Successor and an early commentator on the Quran, is reported to have interpreted referring to Allah and His Messenger as referring to the Book of Allah and to the Sunnah of His Prophet[4]. ʿAṭāʾ, another Successor (d. 114 or 115 A.H.), is reported as having a similar interpretation; he says that referring to the Prophet is accomplished by referring to him in his lifetime and to his Sunnah after his death[5].

Ibn al-Qayyim points out that Allah orders the Believers to obey Him and His Messenger, and He repeats the verb 'obey' to confirm that, along with obedience to Him, obedience to the Prophet has to be observed independently. That is to say: what is enjoined by the Prophet is to be followed whether there is something to the same effect in the Quran or not. He remarks that although the injunction of obedience is also applied to ūlū al-amr, the verb 'obey' is not repeated before them, but instead they are simply linked with the Prophet; this indicates that their enactments should be obeyed as long as they are in keeping with what is enjoined by Allah and His Prophet, and that no obedience should be given to any of them who orders people to act in

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1 iv. 64.
2 S., 1, vol. 1, p. 409.
3 iv. 59, cf. iii. 32, 132; v. 92; viii. 1, 20, 24,46; xxiv. 54, 56; xlvii. 33; lviii. 13; lxiv. 12.
4 See Su., 1, p. 53.
5 See I.B., vol. 2, p. 28; cf. al-Qurṭubī, vol. 5, pp. 261f, where this interpretation is ascribed to Mujāhid, Qatādah and al-Aʿmash.

contrary to the Quran and the *Sunnah*[1]. As regards having recourse in matters of conflict to Allah and His Apostle, he says that *'Shay' '*, from *"fa in tanāza'tum fī shay'-in "*, is an indefinite noun within a conditional sentence; Accordingly it includes every matter of dissension among the believers. He comes to the conclusion that Muslims are unanimously agreed that referring to Allah is attained by referring to His Book, and referring to the Prophet is attained by referring to him personally during his lifetime and to his *Sunnah* afterwards[2].

The order to follow the *Sunnah* of the Prophet is also found in a ḥadīth in which 'Irbāḍ b. Sāriyah said that the Messenger of Allah led them in prayer one day then faced them and gave them a lengthy exhortation... A man asked him to give them an injunction. He said: "I enjoin you to fear God, and to hear and obey, even if it be an Abyssinian slave; for those of you who live after me will see great disagreement. You must therefore follow my *Sunna* and that of the rightly guided Caliphs. Hold to it and stick fast to it. Avoid novelties, for every novelty is an innovation and every innovation is error"[3]. The Prophet is also reported as saying: "If I forbid you to do something, then keep away from it; and if I order you to do something, then do of it as much as you can"[4]. 'Ubādah b. al-Ṣāmit reported that he, along with a group of people, gave the pledge of allegiance to the Prophet , who said to them: "I take your pledge on the condition that you (1) will not join partners in worship with Allah... (6) and will not disobey me when I order you to do good..."[5].

2- Offering a reward for those who obey the Prophet, and stating that they will be those who triumph on the day of Judgement. One verse says: "Those who obey

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1 See Ibn Qayyim, 1, vol. 1, p. 48.
2 Id., pp. 49f.
3 *Mishkat.* vol. 1, p. 44; cf. H., 3, vol. 1, pp. 95f.
4 B2., vol. 9, pp. 289f, (n. 391).
5 Id., vol. 9, p. 420, (n. 560).

Allah and His Messenger will be admitted to Gardens with rivers flowing beneath, to abide therein (for ever) and that will be the supreme achievement"[1]. In another we read: "He that obeys Allah and His Messenger, has already attained the great victory"[2].

These verses and several others to the same effect exhort people to obey Allah and His Messenger by showing them the honour, the one who observes this obedience will attain. To these verses many others, which go into details in describing the Paradise and the blessings it contains, can be adduced. In *Sūrah* no. 76, one reads: "And because they were patient and constant, He will reward them with a Garden and (garments of) silk. Reclining in the (Garden) in raised couches, they will see there neither the sun's (excessive heat) nor excessive cold. And the shades of the (Garden) will come low over them, and the bunches (of fruit), there, will hang low easy to reach. And amongst them will be passed round vessels of silver and goblets of crystal... Verily this is a Reward for you, and your Endeavour is accepted and recognised"[3]. This promise and its elaborated description had an enormous effect on the Companions, as their biographies show, which made them follow the Prophet step by step, in order to attain this great assurance.

(3) Warning people of the consequences of disobeying the Prophet or turning away from his commands. "For any that disobey Allah and his messenger, for them is Hell; they shall dwell therein for ever"[4]. Another verse says: "Let those beware who withstand the Messenger's order, lest some trial befall them or a grievous chastisement be inflicted on them"[5]. This threat should be sufficient to prevent those, who devoted themselves to the obedience of Allah, from disobeying His Messenger;

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1 iv. 13; cf. iv. 69; xlviii. 17.
2 xxxiii. 71; cf. xxiv. 52, 54.
3 lxxvi. 12-22; cf. xiii. 35, xxxvi. 55-58, lvi. 10-38, lxxxviii, 10-16, and many others.
4 lxxii. 23; cf. iv. 14; xxxiii. 66.
5 xxiv. 63; cf. viii. 13; xxxiii. 36; xlviii. 17.

and if we add to these verses those which portray some of the chastisements which the people of Hell will suffer[1], we will recognise the great effect of this warning for those who may think of disobeying Allah or His Messenger.

Sa'īd b. al-Mussayyib is reported to have advised a man, who performed more than two *Rak'ahs* after *Adhān* of the Fajr prayer, to abandon this particular action, as it disagrees with the *Sunnah*. The man asked if he would be punished for doing that, and Sa'īd answered: "I am afraid that Allah will punish you for abandoning the *Sunnah*"[2]. Abū al-Zinād[3] states that the *Sunnah* isan unopposable authority[4]. In Hadīth, it is declared that anyone who acts in contrary to the *Sunnah* of the Prophet, or even applies it in an extreme case cannot be considered as his follower. Anas b. Mālik reported that "A group of three men came to the houses of the wives of the Prophet asking how the Prophet worshipped (Allah), and when they were informed about this, they seemed to find it inadequate for themselves, and said: 'How can we compare ourselves with the Prophet, since his past and future sins have been forgiven'. Then one of them said: 'I will offer prayers throughout the night forever'. The second said: 'I will fast throughout the year and will not break my fast'. The third said: 'I will keep away from women and will never marry'. The Apostle of Allah came to them and said: "Are you the people who said so-and-so? By Allah I am more submissive to Allah and more afraid of him than you; yet I fast and break my fast, I sleep and I also marry women. So he who does not follow my tradition in religion is not of me (not one of my followers)"[5]. This indicates that anyone who refrains from the *Sunnah* of the Prophet, believing that other practices are better than it, is not considered to be one of his followers[6].

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1 See lvi. 42-44, 51-56, lxxviii. 22-26, lxxxviii. 4-7, and many others.
2 Kh., 1, vol. 1, p. 147; cf. D. vol. 1, p. 116.
3 He is 'Abd Allah b. Dhakwān (d. 130, 131 A.H.).
4 Kh., 1, vol. 1, p. 152.
5 See B2., vol. 7, pp. 1f, (n. 1).
6 Cf. I.H., 1, vol. 9, pp. 105f.

(4) Making submission to the Prophet's judgement a sign of faith. "But no by the Lord, they can have no (real) faith. Until they make thee judge in all disputes between them. And find in their souls no resistance against thy decisions, but accept them with the fullest conviction"[1]. Accordingly, anyone who considers himself a believer should have no other choice, after the Judgement of Allah or His Apostle is known, than their judgements. Ibn 'Abbās, a Companion, asked the Successor Ṭāwūs not to perform two *Rak'ahs* after the 'Aṣr prayer, since the Prophet had prohibited doing this, and he quoted the following verse: "It is not fitting for a believer, man or woman, when a matter has been decided by Allah and His Messenger, to have any option about their decision"[2]. These verses are clear in stating that there is no true belief without an entire submission to the judgement of Allah and His Apostle.

(5) Making non-submission to the Prophet's commands a sign of hypocrisy. Speaking about the hypocrites, the Quran says: "When they are summoned to Allah and His Messenger, in order that He may judge between them, behold, some of them decline (to come)"[3]. Those who incline to accept judgements other than that of the Prophet were denounced in the following verse: "Hast thou not turned to those who declare that they believe in the revelations that have come to thee and to those before thee? their (real) wish is to resort together for judgement (in their disputes) to the Evil (Tagut) though they were ordered to reject him. But Satan's wish is to lead them astray far away (from the Right)"[4]. This verse is said to be connected with a story to the effect that Bishr, a hypocrite, was in dispute with a Jew who suggested to him to go to the Prophet in order to judge between them, but Bishr refused and asked him to

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1 iv. 65; cf. iv. 59, and the comment on it in Ibn al-Qayyim, 1, vol. 1, p. 50; xxiv. 51.
2 xxxiii. 36. For the anecdote see D., vol., 1, p.115; al-Shāfi'ī, p. 443; I.B., 1, vol. 2, p. 189.
3 xxiv. 48; cf. iv. 60.
4 iv. 60.

go to Ka'b b. al-Ashraf, a prominent Jew.   Eventually they agreed to go to the Prophet who gave his judgement in favour of the Jew.   Bishr was unsatisfied and went to 'Umar who in his turn killed him on the account of his refusal of the Prophet's judgement[1].   However that may be, the verse is general and denounces all those who deviate from the verdict of the Quran and the *Sunnah* and prefer to accept the decisions of any other sources[2].

(6) Stating that anyone who obeys the Prophet is obeying God and that the way towards the obedience to Allah and the attainment of His love is the following of the Prophet;   "He who obeys the Messenger, obeys Allah; but if any turns away We have not sent Thee to watch over them"[3].   There is another verse that states: "Say: 'if ye do love Allah, follow me: Allah will love you and forgive you your sins: for Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful'"[4].   al-Azharī remarked that to love Allah and his Apostle is to obey them and to observe their enactments, and that the love of Allah towards His people is granting them His forgiveness[5].   In Ḥadīth, we encounter something to the same effect; Abū Hurayrah reports the Prophet as saying: "Whoever obeys me, obeys Allah, and whoever disobeys me, disobeys Allah..."[6].

These are six methods or forms which I have been able to identify, although it is quite possible that others may also be identified.   To sum up, one would conclude that, during the Prophet's lifetime, Muslims were enjoined to follow the *Sunnah* of the Prophet by observing the enactments he taught, whether it was received from God directly, or a result of his own *Ijtihād*, and by emulating the example he set for them, as long as there is no indication that this particular action is one of the Prophet's

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1 al-Qurṭubī, vol. 5, pp. 263f; cf. S., 2, vol. 1, p. 284.
2 Cf. S., 1, vol. 1, p. 409.
3 iv. 80.
4 iii. 31; cf. vii. 158.
5 al-Qurṭubī, vol. 4, p. 60.
6 B2., vol. 9, p. 189, (n. 251).

privileges. Nevertheless, certain actions practised by the Prophet as a ruler or a cadi cannot be implemented, as al-Qurāfī points out[1], without the existence of such authorities.

At any rate, the verses I have mentioned, attested by a number of ḥadīths, indicate that the interest in the Prophet's sayings and deeds in the early days of Islam, as far as Muslims are concerned, could not be only a result of the reasons put forward by Robson. It seems that there was one main reason other than these mentioned above, which is the observance of the command prescribed in the Quran and Ḥadīth, requiring people to follow the Prophet and obey his orders, since he is the example that must be followed by every Muslim; "Ye have indeed in the Messenger of Allah an excellent exemplar, for him who hopes in Allah and the final day, and who remember [sic.] Allah much"[2]. Therefore, with regard to Muslims, although reasons other than this could be given, one cannot but feel that this last reason is the most important one, and all others are subsidiary. In order to execute this command, early Muslims felt that it was necessary for them to study the accounts of words and deeds of the Prophet. This was in fact what they did, observing the Command of their God to convey the Islamic teachings and summon people to them; "It is not for the Believers to go forth together: if a contingent from every expedition go forth to devote themselves to studies in religion, and admonish the people when they return to them,– that thus they (may learn) to guard themselves (against evil)"[3]. Another verse states: "Say thou: "This is my way; I do invite unto Allah,- with a certain knowledge I and whoever follows me..."[4].

The Prophet himself also attached a good deal of importance to the knowledge of his own Ḥadīth by asking his Companions to convey his teachings and make them

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1 al-Qurāfī, pp. 25f.
2 xxxiii. 21.
3 ix. 122.
4 xii, 108

as widely known as possible[1]; once after he addressed his Companions, he concluded: "It is incumbent on those who are present to inform those who are absent"[2]. 'Abd Allah b. 'Amr reports as saying: "Convey (my teachings) to the people, even if it were a single sentence..."[3]. Accordingly, the interest of the believers, as Ṣiddīqī states, "was naturally greater than that of his foes. They had accepted him as their sole guide and Prophet... All his actions served them as a precedent (*Sunnah*), every word falling from his lips was a law to them and all his actions were virtuous in their eyes, which they wanted to follow as faithfully as they could"[4]. Esposito reaches a similar conclusion, when he says: "Both during his lifetime and throughout the following centuries, Muhammad has served as the ideal model for Muslim life, providing the pattern that all believers are to emulate"[5].

As far as the ultimate goals of this interest is concerned, one may conclude, in the light of the previous discussion, that this interest was informed by two principle objects: the first was to obtain guidance to the right path, in this life, according to God's Will: "If ye obey Him, the Messenger, ye shall be on the right guidance"[6]; the Prophet is reported to have said: "I have left among you two things, as long as you hold fast to which, you will not go astray: Allah's Book and the *Sunnah* of His Prophet"[7]. The second was to receive God's rewards and to avoid His punishments in the Hereafter: "Those are limits set by Allah; those who obey Allah and His Messenger will be admitted to Gardens with rivers flowing beneath, to abide therein (for ever) and that will be the supreme achievement. But those who disobey Allah and His Messenger and transgress His limits will be admitted to a Fire, to abide

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1 See Ṣiddīqī, p. 7
2 B2., vol. 1, p. 83, (n. 105).
3 Id., vol. 4, p. 442, (n. 667); cf. T., vol. 2, p. 111; *Mishkat.* vol. 1, p. 50.
4 Ṣiddīqī, p. 4.
5 *Islam*, p. 13.
6 xxiv. 54; cf. vii.158.
7 H., 3, vol. 1, p. 93; cf. *Mishkat.* vol. 1, pp. 47f.

therein, and they shall have a humiliating punishment"[1]. The Prophet is reported as saying: "All my followers will enter Paradise except those who refuse". The Companions said: "O Allah's Apostle! who will refuse?". "Whoever obeys me will enter Paradise, and whoever disobeys me is the one who refuses", the Prophet answered[2]. al-Kirmānī, in his commentary on Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī, states clearly that the ultimate object of the study of Ḥadīth is to obtain happiness both in this life and in the Hereafter[3].

The reasons and the objects suggested above will enable us to understand the eagerness of the Companions not to miss any of the Prophet's sessions or addresses, and the considerable interest shown both during his lifetime and after his death, not only in his sayings and deeds but also in everything connected with him[4].

'Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb (d. 22. H) says: "My Anṣārī neighbour from Banī Umaiya..., and I used to visit the Prophet by turns; he used to go one day and I another day. When I went I used to bring the news of that day regarding the divine Inspiration and other things, and when he went he used to do the same for me..."[5]. Even women at that time took a noticeable interest in Ḥadīth. al-Bukhārī reported that a woman came to the Prophet and said: "O Allah's Apostle! Men (only) benefit by your teachings, so please devote to us from (some of) your time, a day on which we may came to you so that you may teach us of what Allah has taught you". He replied: "gather on such-and-such a day at such-and-such a place". They gathered and the Prophet came to them and taught them...[6].

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1 iv. 13-14.
2 See B2., vol. 9, p. 284, (n. 384); cf. p. 286, (n. 387).
3 Su., 2, vol. 1, p. 41; cf. B2., vol. 9, p. 268, (n. 387), where the Prophet is reported to set an example for those who obey him and those who disobey the truth he has brought.
4 See Ṣiddīqī, pp. 3-5.
5 B2., vol. 1, p. 73-74 (n.89); cf. Kh., 3, p. 31, where the statement reads: "regarding divine Inspiration and other things about the Messenger".
6 See B2., vol. 9, p. 308, (n. 413).

If this had not been the case, Muslims would not have gone to such lengths in collecting and searching for minute details concerning the Prophet. The determination of 'Abd Allah b. 'Amr b. al-'Āṣ to write down every thing he heard from the Prophet[1], the fact that "some fifty Companions and almost as many early Followers are said to have possessed manuscripts, then called ṣuḥuf (sing. ṣaḥīfah)"[2], and the painstaking effort made by 'Abd Allah b. 'Abbās to collect ḥadīths from the Companions shortly after the death of the Prophet[3] give an indication of the serious interest of the Companions and the Successors. "It is said to have been a common practice among the friends of Muḥammad that whenever any two of them met, one of them enquired from the other whether there was any Ḥadīth (The news of the sayings and the doings of the Prophet), and the other in his reply reported some sayings and doings of the Prophet"[4].

In addition to this, journeys for pursuing Knowledge were undertaken from the very beginning; Abū Ayyūb (a Companion, d. 81 A.H.) travelled from Madinah to Egypt in order to meet 'Uqbah b. 'Āmir (another Companion, d. 58 A.H.), simply to check one of the ḥadīths he had heard from the Prophet[5]. Jābir b. 'Abd Allah (a Companion, d. 78 A.H.) also made a journey to Damascus to hear a ḥadīth from 'Abd-Allah b. Unays al-Anṣārī (another Companion, d. 54 A.H.), because he had not had the chance to hear it from the Prophet[6]. 'Abd-Allah b. 'Umar says: "Let the searcher for knowledge [i.e. Ḥadīth], have iron shoes"[7].

Regarding the immediate Successors, we find stories to the same effect. Sa'īd b. al-Musayyib (d. 94 A.H.) says: "I have travelled days and nights for the sake of

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1 See above, p. 24.
2 Abdul Rauf, "The development of the science of Ḥadīth", p. 271.
3 See below, p. 104.
4 Ṣiddīqī, p. 6.
5 H., 2, pp. 7f; see. pp. 8f. For a similar story ascribed to Jābir b. 'Abd Allah; cf. Su., 1, p.42.
6 See Kh., 2, vol. 2, pp. 336f; cf. B2., vol. 1, p. 65; Su., 1, pp. 43f.
7 H., 2, p. 9.

one ḥadīth"[1]. Abū al-'Āliyah al-Riyāḥī (d. 93 A.H.) says: "Whenever we heard a ḥadīth on the authority of the Companions, we would not be satisfied until we had travelled to them in order to hear it from them"[2]. al-Sha'bī stated that he had not known anyone who searched for knowledge all over the world more than Masrūq b. al-Ajda' (a prominent Successor d. 63 A.H.)[3]. Abū Qilābah ('Abd Allah b. Zayd al-Baṣrī d. 104 A.H.) reported that he stayed in Madinah for three days to do nothing but wait for a transmitter of a certain ḥadīth in order to hear it from him[4].

If the reasons and the objects had been only those mentioned by Robson above, it would have been enough for the students of Ḥadīth at that time to restrict themselves to sources close at hand instead of undertaking long, difficult journeys. The fact that they did undertake such journeys will support the suggestion that there was another, more cogent reason behind the interest in Ḥadīth, and that the ultimate goal cannot only be the one that Robson offered.

Ḥadīth as an integral source of guidance.

Before we come to the end of this chapter, there is one more argument which may serve as evidence for the fact that Ḥadīth was a matter of importance from the early days of Islam, and that people found it an essential source of guidance, without which the observation of Quranic teaching cannot be accomplished. In the Quran there are many passages which order people to observe the Prayer, to perform *Zakāh* and to do other things; but it is not at all clear, in the Quran, how to execute these commands. To do so, one must have recourse to Ḥadīth, where he will find a detailed elucidation, since one of the Prophet's main tasks, as a bearer of God's

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1 Id., p. 8; cf. Kh., 2, vol. 2, p. 339; I.B., 1, vol. 1, p. 94; Dh., 3, vol. 1, p. 52.
2 Abū Zahū, p. 112. Abū al-'Āliyah is Rafi' b. Mihrān one of the great Successors.
3 See I.B., 1, vol. 1, p 94.
4 Kh., 2, vol. 2, p. 340. For more incidents see *al-Riḥlah* of al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī, and al-A'ẓamī, p. 14, (footnote no. 32).

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Message, was to teach people the Quran, and how to observe its commandments; "Allah did confer a great favour on the Believers when He sent among them a Messenger from among themselves, rehearsing unto them the Signs of Allah, purifying them, and instructing them in Scripture and Wisdom, while, before that, they had been in manifest error"[1]. This was the argument of 'Imrān b. Ḥuṣayn (a Companion d. 52 A.H.), when someone asked him to teach only the Quran. He said: "If you confine yourself to the Quran, how can you know that the Noon Prayer consists of four *Rak'ahs*, that the Sun-set Prayer consists of three *Rak'ahs*, in two of which one recites aloud, and that both *Ṭawāf* and *Sa'y* consist of seven *ashwāṭ*. Oh people, take from us [sc. Ḥadīth]; otherwise you will go astray"[2]. In al-Ḥākim's version, 'Imrān says to the man: "But I was present at the time of the Prophet, while you were absent", whereupon the man expresses his gratitude to him for the useful teachings that he is transmitting[3]. In another source 'Imrān is reported as saying: "The Quran was revealed, and the Prophet enacted the *Sunnah* ", and concluding: "Follow us! If you do not follow us, you will go astray"[4]. 'Umar, the second Caliph, is reported as declaring that the time will come when some people will argue on the bases of verses which have inconclusive meanings, and advising Muslims to refer them to the *Sunnah*; reminding them that those who have the knowledge of the *Sunnah* are more versed in the Quran[5]. Makḥūl, a prominent scholar (d. 113 A.H.), emphasises this point by stating: "The Quran is more in need of the Ḥadīth than the Ḥadīth is of the Quran"[6]. Ibn 'Abd al-Barr remarks that Makḥūl indicates that the

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1 iii. 164.
2 Kh., 3, p. 15; cf. al-Shāṭibī, vol. 4, p. 26; al-Ḥajawī, vol. 1, pp. 42-44.
3 H., 3, vol. 1, pp. 109f; cf. I.B., 1, vol. 2, p. 191; Su., 1, pp. 19f.
4 A., vol. 4, p. 445.
5 D., vol. 1, pp. 49, 65, 67.
6 Kh., 3, p. 14; cf. I.B., 1, vol. 2, p. 191.

Sunnah determines what is meant by Quranic statements and clarifies the teachings of the Quran[1].

The relationship between the Quran and Hadith.

It is instructive to have a quick glance at the relationship between the Quran and Hadith which implies the importance of Hadith as an integral source of Islam, and reflects the great need the Quran has of it; Hadith has, in relation to the Quran, four categories[2]:

(i) Hadiths that are in agreement with the Quran, and confirm its teachings; such teachings have two bases, the first from the Quran and the second from Hadith. The obligations of performing Prayer, offering *Zakah* and undertaking Pilgrimage are a few examples.

(ii) Hadiths that give an elucidation of some teachings of the Quran, inasmuch as it is the Prophet task to clarify to the people what is revealed to them; "...and We have sent down unto thee (also) the Message; that thou mayest explain clearly to men what is sent for them, and that they may give thought"[3]. This category includes: (1) hadiths that serve as an explanation of how certain enactments in the Quran should be observed [*tabyin al-mujmal*], like hadiths that teach Muslims how and when to perform the five daily prayers, *Zakah*, *Hajj* and other obligations about which there are no further details in the Quran, (2) hadiths that serve as a clarification of the meaning of certain verses [*tawdih al-mushkil*]; there is a report in which 'Adi b. Hatim is reported to have asked the Prophet about the verse which allows Muslims to eat and drink, during the month of Ramadan, until the white string can be distinguished from the black, enquiring whether the strings are to be taken literally. The Prophet

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1 See al-Shatibi, vol. 4, p. 26.
2 See Abu Zahu, pp. 37-40; Khallaf, pp. 39f; al-Subki, pp. 67f.
3 xvi. 44; cf. al-Qurtubi, vol. 10, p. 109.

answered: "No, it is the darkness of the night and the whiteness of the day"[1], (3) ḥadīths that serve as a limitation of the unrestricted [taqyīd al-muṭlaq]; verse (v, 38) states that if someone commits theft, his hand is to be cut off; but it is only the Sunnah that specifies how and when that should be carried out[2], and lastly (4) ḥadīths that serve as a particularisation of the general [takhṣīṣ al-'āmm], like a ḥadīth in which the Prophet is reported to have particularised the general implication of verse (vi. 82), by stating that what is ment by ẓulm, which mentioned in the verse, is joining partners with God [shirk][3].

(iii) Ḥadīths that provide Muslims with some enactments, about which nothing is said in the Quran, like the prohibition of marriage to those with whom one has a foster relationship, inasmuch as there is a ḥadīth in which the Prophet says: "Fosterage makes unlawful what consanguinity makes unlawful"[4]. The prohibition of wearing gold rings for men is another example; Abū Hurayrah reported that the Prophet forbade the wearing of a gold ring[5]. However it has been argued that such enactments have their indirect basis in the Quran[6].

(iv) Ḥadīths which are said to have abrogated some commands of the Quran, like a ḥadīth that states: "Allah gives each one his fair share, therefore, a legal heir has no right to inherit through a will"[7], which is said to abrogate the order understood from the following verse: "It is prescribed, when death approaches any of you, if he leave any good, that he make a bequest to parents and next of kin..."[8]. Nevertheless,

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1 B2., vol. 6, p. 29, (n. 37). The verse about which the Companion inquired is ii. 187.
2 See al-Qurṭubī, vol. 6, pp. 159-75; I.H., 1, vol. 12, pp. 96-108.
3 See Abū Zahū, p. 38; cf. S., 2, vol. 1, p. 403.
4 M2., vol. 2, p. 737, (n. 3396); cf. B2., vol. 3, p. 493, (n. 813).
5 See B2., vol. 7, p. 501, (n. 754).
6 Abū Zahū, pp. 40-45.
7 See B2., vol. 4, p. 6, where it is quoted as a name of a bāb; cf. A.D., vol. 3, pp. 290f; I.M., vol. 2, p. 83, where it is transmitted as a ḥadīth on the authority of Abū Umāmah al-Bāhilī and Anas b. Mālik.
8 ii. 180.

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not everyone agrees about this category, inasmuch as some scholars suggest that such enactments are abrogated by the Quran itself[1].

Summing up.

At all events, it is now clear that Ḥadīth was considered as a great source of guidance, and that the people's interest, generally speaking, in Ḥadīth in the early days of Islam, was due to two reasons: the first is the striking personality of the Prophet, the second is the great development which had been set in motion by him. But as far as Muslims are concerned, we have to add another motive which seems to be the main reason behind their interest, namely the observance of the command that people should follow and obey the enactments of the Prophet, who lived perpetually under divine guidance and was the example to be emulated by every Muslim. This observance was informed by two main objects, namely to attain guidance to the right path, in this life, according to God's Will, and to obtain God's Blessings and avoid His punishment in the Hereafter. Taking this into account, we will be able to understand how serious and effective this interest was.

Thus, it is difficult to accept Robson's claim that it is not at all clear that Ḥadīth was considered a matter of importance from the early days of Islam; and the same applies to the ultimate goal of the interest in Ḥadīth suggested by him. As far as the reasons behind the people's interest in Ḥadīth is concerned, one feels that although the ones adduced by Robson can be accepted as general reasons for Muslims and others alike, they cannot account satisfactorily for the great interest of the Muslims in materials connected with their Prophet.

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1 See Ibn Ḥazm, 2, vol. 4, pp. 477-83.

CHAPTER TWO

ḤADĪTH AS A BASIS OF ISLAM

It has already been shown that Ḥadīth was a matter of importance and was considered as a type of revelation from the time of the Prophet. This chapter is devoted to a very important issue regarding the adoption of Ḥadīth as a main source of Islam in its early days, with reference to Robson's approach to this particular issue.

Survey of Robson's views.

Robson admits that without any doubt many people wrote down some of the stories about the Prophet and his sayings for their own guidance[1]; however, he does not recognise Ḥadīth as a source of Islam from the beginning, as the following representation of his theory will demonstrate. He claims that "In the early decades of Islam the Koran was thus the only official source of guidance, and what was not specifically laid down there had to be determined some other way"[2]. At the beginning of the same article he says: "the system of Islam is based fundamentally on the Koran which is believed to be the eternal word of God, and to be uncreated. But the Koran does not give all the guidance necessary for the conduct of life, and therefore some additional authority was required. This was eventually found in Tradition"[3]. Throughout Robson's articles there are two arguments on which he seems to depend. The first is: "at that time [after the Prophet's death and during the quick spreading of Islam] there was no idea that Tradition was second in authority to the Ḳor'ān, because

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1 See Robson 6, p. 86; cf. *E.I.*(2), vol. 3, p. 24. In Robson 15, p. 459, he uses the word "use" instead of "guidance"; cf. his introduction to *Mishkat.* pp. ii-iii. However, he might be referring to his claim that the pious were the only people to seek guidance in Ḥadīth, in Robson 2, p. 23.
2 Robson 6, p. 87.
3 Id., p. 84.

there was no collected body of traditions"[1]. The second is the method adopted by

Mālik in his *Muwatta'*. He says: "That Tradition did not in the early days hold the

prominence which it later attained is indicated by the fact that in his *Muwatta'* Mālik b.

Anas (d.179/795) included only, at the most, over 800 traditions traced to the Prophet,

and a large number traced back only to Companions or Followers; and, further, that

he was often content to quote his own opinion... If Tradition had early been

recognised as normative, Mālik could not have produced his work on the principle

which he adopted"[2].

This is not to say that Hadīth was neglected completely, as far as guidance was

sought after; Robson's view is that "those who sought guidance in Tradition were not

in the first place those who were in authority. They were rather pious people who

were distressed by the methods of government and longed for a state ruled by the

principles of Islam"[3].

Robson concludes that adopting Hadīth as a basis of Islam is the result of a

later development. He suggests two reasons for such an adoption:

(1) The development of the community. He says: "to begin with the

community had the Quran as guide, but as it developed this was found to be

insufficient. New situations arose on which the Quran gave no guidance or

insufficient guidance, and so something else had to be found. And it is not surprising

that men should have felt that next to the Quran, the example of the Prophet must

supply all that was needed"[4]. On another occasion, he states: "But when the Muslim

conquests spread throughout the world problems not met within Arabia had to be

faced, and some source of guidance was required for circumstances about which the

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1 *E.I.*(2), vol. 3, p. 23; cf. *A Dictionary of Comparative religion*, p. 316.
2 Robson 2, pp. 23f.
3 Ibid.
4 Robson 3, p. 98.

Quran did not provide regulations. Eventually Tradition came to be recognised as a second basis of Islam"[1].

(2) The need for authority. He remarks: "Matters should not be dealt with according to the discretion of rulers or magistrates; there must be some authority on which they should base their judgements"[2]. Therefore a subsidiary source was required and this was found, after a lengthy process[3], in Ḥadīth (Tradition).

To justify the high status which Ḥadīth would attain, Robson says: "It is therefore not surprising that the community came to accept Tradition as its second basis, for when a secondary authority was sought, no higher one could be found than the record of the words and deeds which were traced back to the Prophet"[4].

As far as the period of time it took the community to recognise Ḥadīth as a source of guidance is concerned, Robson suggests: "It took Islam a long time to settle on Tradition as a guide second in importance to the Quran"[5]; in another article he states: "A truer appreciation of the development of the system makes one understand that only in 'Abbāsid times did Tradition come to be recognised as one of the fundamental bases for the government of the community"[6]. He becomes more specific: "Shāfi'ī, the third of the four famous doctors, made a strong fight to establish Tradition as a supreme source of authority after the Koran"[7]; he "argues very ingeniously in favour of the establishment of the *Sunna* in the Prophet's life-time by referring to the Quranic phrase: "the Book and the Wisdom" (ii, 146; iii, 158). He

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1 Robson 15, p. 459; cf. Robson 2, p. 23; *E.I.*(2), vol. 3, p. 23.
2 Introduction to *Mishkat.* p. ii.
3 see *E.I.*(2), vol. 3, p. 23.
4 Robson in his introduction to *Mishkat.* p. ii; cf. Robson 2, p. 23; Robson 3, p. 98.
5 Robson 2, p. 23; cf. *E.I.*(2), vol. 3, p. 23.
6 Robson 6, p. 87; cf. Robson 2, p. 23.
7 Id., Robson 6, p. 88; cf. Robson 10, p. 324; *E.I.*(2), vol. 3, p. 24.

says that the Book is the Quran and the Wisdom is the Prophet's *Sunna* "[1].   Largely

as a result of his work the opponents of Ḥadīth lost the battle[2].

His conclusion concerning this issue is: "for a time many people rejected

Tradition, but in course of time it came to be recognised as a source of law, second in

importance to the Qur'ān"[3].   Therefore the study of Ḥadīth at first was "almost a kind

of underground movement.   Ideas were still fluid and different views were held"[4].

Robson's claims regarding Ḥadīth as a basis of Islam can be summed up as

follows:

(1) Ḥadīth came to be recognised as a second basis of Islam in the Abbasid

period, and this was basically a result of al-Shāfiʿī's struggle.   Therefore in

the early decades of Islam the Quran was the only, officially recognised,

source of guidance for the community.   This does not mean that Muslim

scholars before al-Shāfiʿī belittled Ḥadīth, but rather that in their time it had not

attained the position it later gained[5].   His arguments to prove this were the

absence of a collection of Ḥadīth and the method applied in *al-Muwaṭṭa'*.

(2) As new problems arose, because of the development of the community and

the spreading of Islam, they were dealt with, apart from the Quran, without a

fixed source of guidance;   therefore "for many a day the state was ruled

according to the desire of those who were in authority"[6].

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1 Robson 3, p. 98; cf. Robson 15, p. 459.
2 See Robson's introduction to *Mishkat*. p. ii.
3 Robson 15, p. 459.
4 Robson 2, p. 23.
5 Robson 6, p. 88
6 Robson 2, p. 23.

(3) Many people rejected Ḥadīth before al-Shāfiʿī, and the pious were the only ones to seek guidance in Ḥadīth; although for long they were merely one party among many, they always considered themselves to represent the community[1].

To discuss these claims I will deal with the status of Ḥadīth, from the historical point of view, during the Prophet's lifetime, and after his death, showing how it was considered by the Rightly Guided Caliphs, the Umayyad dynasty and the community at large, concluding with an investigation of the opposition to Ḥadīth in these days. Due to Robson's claim that the adoption of Ḥadīth as a main source of Islam was first recognised in the time of al-Shāfiʿī, who was born in 150 A.H., and onward, the discussion will be confined to authorities who died not later than the end of the first half of the second century.

1- Ḥadīth in the Prophet's lifetime.

In this section incidents and statements which indicate that ḥadīths were considered as a main source of guidance during the Prophet's lifetime will be quoted and analysed. To start with I will quote the ḥadīth I have already mentioned in which the Prophet says: "I have left among you two things, as long as you hold fast to which, you will not go astray: Allah's Book and the *Sunnah* of His Prophet"[2]. Another ḥadīth states: "I have indeed been brought the Quran and something like it along with it, yet the time is coming when a man replete on his couch will say: 'Keep to this Quran; what you find in it to be permissible treat as permissible, and what you find in it to be prohibited treat as prohibited' but what God's Messenger has prohibited is like what God has Prohibited"[3].

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1 Robson 3, p. 102; cf. Robson 2, p. 23; Robson's introduction to *Mishkat*, pp. i-ii; *E.I.*(2), vol. 3, p. 24.
2 H., 3, vol. 1, p. 93; cf. *Mishkat.* vol. 1, pp. 47f.
3 *Mishkat.* vol. 1, pp. 43f; cf. H., 3, vol. 1, p. 109; T., vol. 2, p. 111; I.M., vol. 1, pp. 5f.

Paying homage to the Prophet the Companions used to promise to observe his orders; in one story we are told that 'Ubādah b. al-Ṣāmit said that he, along with a group of people, gave the pledge of allegiance to the Apostle of Allah , who said: "I take your pledge on the condition that you: (1) will not join partners in worship with Allah... (6) and will not disobey me when I order you to good"[1]. In another story Jābir b. 'Abd Allah said: "I gave the pledge of allegiance to the Prophet that I would listen and obey..."[2].

These statements show us the high status attributed by the Prophet himself to his *Sunnah*, to the extent that he appointed it, along with the Quran, as the main source of guidance to which Muslims should resort whenever they deal with the matters of law; moreover, he made it clear that what was enacted by him had the same authority as that enjoined by the Quran, and accordingly, it should be sincerely observed.

As far as the eagerness of the community to emulate the Prophet's example, to learn from him and to observe his enactments is concerned, one encounters a number of anecdotes. In one Ibn 'Umar says: "The Prophet wore a gold ring and then the people followed him and wore gold rings too. The Prophet said: "I had this golden ring made for myself". He then threw it away and said: "I shall never put it on". Thereupon the people also threw their rings away"[3]. In another, we are told that the Companions made an effort to follow the Prophet when he fasted continuously without breaking his fast, and they did not refrain until he enjoined them to do so, explaining to them that this was one of his privileges. 'Ā'ishah said: "Allah's Apostle forbade *al-wiṣāl* out of mercy to them. They said: 'But you practice *al-wiṣāl*?' He said: "I am not like you, for my Lord gives me food and drink"[4].

Furthermore, three of the Companions are reported to have gone to the wives

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1 B2., vol. 9, p. 420, (n. 560), and vol. 1, p. 21, (n. 17); cf. Qur. lx. 12.
2 Id., vol. 9, p. 237, (n. 311); cf. p. 327, (n. 309), for a ḥadīth from Ibn 'Umar to the same effect.
3 Id., vol. 9, pp. 295f, (n. 401).
4 See id., vol. 3, p. 105, (n. 185).

of the Prophet and asked them about the way in which the Prophet worshipped God. Having received the answer, they were not satisfied and felt that in order to attain God's Blessings and avoid His punishment, they had to do more, since they were not like the Prophet, whose sins are forgiven; but the Prophet hindered them from doing so, telling them that they were not asked to do more than his *Sunnah*[1]. Rāfiʿ b. Khadīj is reported as saying: "We used to give on rent land during the lifetime of Allah's Messenger. We rented it on the share of one-third or one-fourth of the (produce) along with a definite quantity of corn. One day a person from among my uncles came to us and said: Allah's Messenger forbade us this act which was a source of benefit to us, but the obedience to Allah and to His Messenger is more beneficial to us..."[2]. In another account al-Nawwās b. Samʿān told us that he stayed with the Prophet for one year, and remarked: "What obstructed me to migrate was (nothing) but (persistent) inquiries from him (about Islam)". He pointed out that it was common practice that when someone travelled to Madinah, he would stay with the Prophet for some time in order to inquire of him about many issues and learn from him[3].

Before sending Muʿādh b. Jabal to Yemen, the Prophet asked him: "How are you going to the judge the matters?". He said "I will judge according to Allah's book". "What are you going to do if you find nothing (about the matter you are dealing with) in Allah's Book, the Prophet asked. Muʿādh answered: "I will judge in accordance with the *Sunnah* of Allah's Apostle". The prophet asked: "what the situation will be if there is nothing neither in Allah's book nor in the *Sunnah*?". Muʿādh's reply was: "I will try to do my best to form an opinion and spare no pains". Whereupon the Prophet expressed his satisfaction by tapping him on the breast and said: "Praise be to

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1 See above p. 38; cf. Ṣiddīqī, pp. 4f.
2 M2., vol. 3, p. 813, (n. 3742).
3 See Id., vol. 4, pp. 1358f, (n. 6196).

Allah who disposed my Messenger to what Allah and His Apostle are pleased with"[1].

Anas b. Mālik reported that when the people of Yemen came to the Prophet, they asked him to send them someone in order to teach them the Quran and the *Sunnah*, so he appointed Abū 'Ubaydah for such a capacity[2].

These stories indicate evidently that the idea of the Quran and the *Sunnah* as basic sources of Islam was well-established; which is, in fact, the belief one would expect to be prevalent among those to whom the Quran constituted the absolute basic rules, and the Prophet the ideal exemplar to be followed. This conclusion is in agreement with the conclusion of Esposito, who states that the impact of the Prophet "on Muslim life cannot be overestimated, since he served as both religious and political head of Medina: Prophet of God, ruler, military commander, chief judge, lawgiver. As a result, the practice of the Prophet, his *sunna* or example, became the norm for community life"[3].

2- Ḥadīth after the Prophet.

Under this heading, I will deal with a number of statements or actions of the Rightly-Guided Caliphs, the Umayyad dynasty and the community at large, in order to show whether or not the idea of the *Sunnah* as a basic source of Islam was well-established.

A- Ḥadīth and the Rightly-Guided Caliphs.

Abū Bakr al-Ṣiddīq. (the first Caliph, d. 13 A.H.).

Abū Bakr al-Ṣiddīq was the first Caliph after the Prophet; therefore, the method he adopted to deal with matters he faced will indicate what Muslims believed

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1 See *Mishkat*. vol. 2, p. 794; cf. D., vol. 1, p. 60; A., vol. 5, p. 236; A.D., vol. 4, pp. 18f; Ibn Sa'd, vol. 2, 2, p. 107.
2 A., vol. 3, pp. 212, 286.
3 Esposito, p. 13.

to be the right method in dealing with matters of law, directly after the death of the Prophet. In his inaugural speech, he stated clearly that the Quran was revealed and that the Prophet enacted the *Sunnah*, then declared that he was merely a follower, who observed the teaching of these two authorities, asking people to co-operate with him to achieve such painstaking task, and to put him straight whenever he departed from the right path. al-Bukhārī reported that 'Ā'ishah, one of the Prophet's wives, told 'Urwah b. al-Zubayr that Fāṭimah, the Prophet's daughter, asked Abū Bakr to give her inheritance from what her father had left. He replied by quoting a ḥadīth from the Prophet: "Our property will not be inherited, whatever we (i.e. Prophets) leave is to be used for charity", and refused to give her anything saying: "I will not leave anything Allah's Apostle used to do, because I am afraid that if I neglected something of his orders, then I would go astray"[1].

As far as his judicial procedure is concerned, Maymūn b. Mihrān reported that when adversaries came to Abū Bakr he used to consult Allah's Book for guidance; if he found some thing relevant he would follow it. If there was no direct guidance in the Quran and he knew of a *Sunnah* of the Prophet he would give his decision according to it; otherwise, he would inquire of the Muslims if they were aware of any decision taken by the Prophet in a similar case. A number of the Companions sometimes came to him reporting something regarding the matter on the authority of the Prophet; accordingly he would follow it and praise God that there were some people who memorised ḥadīths of the Prophet. If neither the Quran nor the *Sunnah* provided an answer for the matter in question he would summon the learned and the most scholarly to an assembly in order to consult them and take a decision according to the conclusion they had reached[2].

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1 B2., vol. 4, pp. 208f, (n. 325); cf. A., vol. 1, p. 4.
2 See D., vol. 1, p. 58.

This reported procedure is supported by the following anecdote, in which we are told that when a grandmother came to Abū Bakr asking for her share of an inheritance, he said: "There is nothing said to be for you either in the Quran or in the *Sunnah* of Allah's Apostle; however, I will ask the people". He asked the people, and al-Mughīrah b. Shuʿbah said that he was present when the Prophet gave her a sixth of the inheritance. Abū Bakr asked if there was anyone else who saw the Prophet doing so, and Muhammad b. Maslamah al-Anṣārī said the same as al-Mughīrah; whereupon Abū Bakr gave the grandmother her share, the sixth[1].

ʿUmar b. al-Khaṭṭāb. (the second Caliph, d. 23 A.H.).

Although Robson incidentally admits that ʿUmar "endeavoured to make his governors keep to the simple practice common in Madina"[2], he does not mention that this Caliph, like his predecessor, adhered strictly to Ḥadīth even though it might occasionally go against his own reasoning, and the only justification for him to follow it was that it was the order or the practice of the Prophet. Once he addressed al-Ḥajar al-Aswad (the black stone at the corner of the Kaʿbah), saying: "By Allah! I know that you are a stone and can neither benefit nor harm. Had not I seen the Prophet touching (and kissing) you, I would never have touched (and kissed) you", Then he kissed it[3]. Concerning *ramal* in *ṭawāf* he says: "There is no reason for us to practise *ramal* (during *ṭawāf*), except that we wanted to show off before the Pagans, and now Allah has destroyed them". He added "Nevertheless, the Prophet did that and we do not want to leave it, i.e. *ramal* "[4].

In one of his Mosque speeches ʿUmar said: "Now then I am going to tell you something... So whoever understands and remembers it must narrate it to others

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1 T., vol. 2, p. 12; cf. Kh., 3, p. 26; H., 2, p. 15.
2 Robson 6, p. 87.
3 B2., vol. 2, pp. 394f, (n. 675).
4 See ibid.; cf. I.M., vol. 2, pp. 115f.

wherever his mount takes him; but if somebody is afraid that he does not understand it, then it is unlawful for him to tell lies about me. Allah sent Muhammad with the truth and revealed the holy book to him. Among what Allah revealed was the verse of the *Rajm* (the stoning of a married person who commits illegal sexual intercourse), and we did recite this verse, understand and memorise it. Allah's Apostle did carry out the punishment of stoning and so did we after him. I am afraid after a long time has passed, someone will say: 'By Allah, we do not find the verse of the *Rajm* in Allah's Book', and thus they will go astray by leaving an obligation, which Allah has revealed..."[1].

His method in judging matters is said to be the same as that reported about his predecessor, viz. Abū Bakr; the only difference is that he is reported to have followed Abū Bakr's decisions if he could find no direct guidance in the Quran or the *Sunnah*[2]. However, this was not always the case, as he is reported –as Strzyzewska points out– to have disagreed with some of Abū Bakr's judgements, and acted according to the outcome of his own *Ijtihād*, whenever he felt that his own decision was right[3].

He is reported to have inquired of his fellow Companions if they knew of anything on the authority of the Prophet regarding the matter he faced, in order to follow it and give an appropriate judgement. Once he asked the people about a woman who had a miscarriage because of having been beaten on her abdomen, saying: "Who among you has heard anything about it from the Prophet?" al-Mughīrah said: "I heard the Prophet say: "Its *Diyah* (blood money) is either a male or a female slave"". 'Umar said: "Do not leave till you present a witness in support of your statement". So al-Mughīrah went and brought Muḥammad b. Maslamah, who

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1 B2., vol. 8, pp. 539f, (n. 817); cf. A., vol. 1, p. 55. The verse of the stoning is *mansūkhah tilāwat-an lā ḥukm-an*; accordingly Muslims are ordered to observe its enactment.
2 See al-Subkī, pp. 87.
3 See Strzyzewska, p. 44, where a number of examples are adduced.

confirmed that he heard the Prophet say just that[1]. In another report, we are told that

he did not collect the *Jizyah* from the Magians until 'Abd al-Raḥmān b. 'Awf told him

that the Prophet did take it from them[2]. Hearing Fāṭimah b. Qays's statement that

after her divorce, the Prophet said to her: "There is no accommodation or maintenance

allowance for you", 'Umar said: "We are not going to abandon the Book of Allah and

the *Sunnah* of our Prophet because of the statement of a woman, concerning whom

we do not know whether she has remembered accurately (what she has reported) or

forgotten"; he subsequently ordered a divorced woman to be provided with

accommodation and maintenance by her husband[3].

He is also reported as saying to someone who killed his son: "If I had not it

heard the Prophet say: "The father is not to be killed because of killing his son", I

would kill you"[4]. There is another version which says: "Were it not that I heard the

Prophet say: "There is nothing for the killer", I would give you the inheritance (from

your son)"[5]. In another story we are told that on hearing a ḥadīth reported by Ubayy

b. Ka'b, he revised his decision regarding forcing al-'Abbās to sell his house or

giving it as a charity, in order to expand the mosque[6].

His injunction to Shurayḥ the Judge is well-known. He recommended him to

give his decision in accordance with Allah's Book, and if there was no guidance, then

according to the *Sunnah* the Messenger of Allah. If he did not find any guidance in

either of them, 'Umar asked him to follow the decision of the learned pious people[7].

As for entirely new incidents with which no one had been known to have dealt, he

gave him permission to apply *Ijtihād* and give his own judgement, advising him not to

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1 See Id., B2., vol. 9, pp. 313f, (n. 420); cf. p. 33, (n. 42); M2., vol. 3, p. 906, (n. 4174).
2 See Kh., 3, p. 27.
3 See M2., vol. 2, p. 772, (n. 3524); T., vol. 1, p. 221; cf. Kh., p. 83.
4 A., vol. 1, p. 49.
5 Ibid.
6 Ibn Sa'd, vol. 4, 1, pp. 13f.
7 D., vol. 1, p. 60; N., vol. 8, p. 231.

do that and to inform him instead[1]. His letter to Abū Mūsā al-Ash'arī is of equal importance. It indicates distinctly that judges, considering matters brought before them, should begin by consulting the Quran and the *Sunnah* before giving their own decisions[2].

Lastly, he is reported to have told his people that Allah did not send any Prophet after this Prophet and He did not reveal any book after this Book was revealed to him; therefore what was pronounced by the Prophet to be lawful was lawful, and what was declared to be prohibited was prohibited until the Day of Judgement takes. He concluded: "I am only an administrator (of what is prescribed by Allah and His Apostle); I am not an inventor but a follower..."[3].

'Uthmān b. 'Affān. (the third Caliph, d. 35 A.H.)

To invest 'Uthmān as Caliph, 'Abd al-Rahmān said to him: "I gave the oath of allegiance to you on condition that you will follow Allah's Laws and the traditions of Allah's Apostle and the traditions of the two Caliphs after him"[4]. As far as the rites of the Pilgrimage are concerned, Ibn Sīrīn points out that 'Uthmān was the most expert, and that Ibn 'Umar came after him[5]. When the matter of a woman slave, who had committed adultery and given birth, was presented to him, he stated that he would follow the judgement of the Prophet and gave his decision to the effect that the child belonged to the bed (where he was born) and that the adulterer received nothing but the stone (i.e. deprivation), after pointing out that [6]. He is also reported to have reminded the people that the Prophet prohibited fasting on the day of *al-Fitr* and that of

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1 See Ibn Qayyim, 1, vol. 1, p. 84.
2 See Id., p. 85f; al-Ḥajawī, vol. 1, pp. 237-39.
3 D., vol. 1, p. 115.
4 B2., vol. 9, pp. 238-40, (n. 314).
5 See Dh., 4, vol. 3, p. 474.
6 A., vol. 1, p. 65, 59. For the judgement of the Prophet see B2., vol. 4, p. 5, (n. 8), and vol. 8, p. 529, (nos. 807-8).

al-Nahr[1]. Once, after eating meat and performing a prayer, he remarked that he did

exactly the same as the Prophet had done[2]. On another occasion, he is reported to

have performed *tawāf* with Ya'lā b. Umayyah, whom he deterred from touching the

west corner of the Ka'bah, the one after (the corner of the Black Stone), and asked

him whether he had ever performed *tawāf* with the Prophet. Having received a

positive reply, 'Uthmān asked if he had ever seen him touching these two corners.

When Ya'lā answered in the negative, 'Uthmān said to him: "Do you not have in the

Prophet a good example"[3]. As a funeral passed him, Abān, a son of 'Uthmān, stood

and said that his father had once stood when he saw a funeral and told them that the

Prophet had done the same[4]. A sister of Abū Sa'īd al-Khudrī reported that 'Uthmān

sent for her, asking about what she had transmitted, on the authority of the Prophet, to

the effect that he had enjoined her, after her husband's death, to spend her *'iddah* in

her home. She subsequently stated that when she had told him about this injunction,

he followed it and gave his judgement according to it[5].

'Alī b. Abī Ṭālib. (the fourth Caliph, d. 40 A.H.).

In the *Musnad* he is reported as saying: "I am neither a prophet nor receiving

revelation. I am conducting my life according to Allah's Book and the *Sunnah* of His

Prophet as much as I can. Whatever I have asked you to do, which is in accordance

with Allah' Will, you have to do it whether you like it or not"[6]. He advised people to

have the Quran and the recognised *Sunnah* as their guide [*Imām-an wa qā'id-an*] and

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1 Id., A., vol. 1, pp. 60f.
2 Id., pp. 62, 67. See a similar example regarding the ritual ablution in B2., vol. 1, p. 115, (n. 165).
3 Id., pp. 70f. See how he rebuked Muhammad b. Ja'far b. Abī Ṭālib because of wearing a garment dyed with safflower during performing the pilgrimage on the account that the Prophet prohibited wearing them, id., p. 71.
4 Id., p. 64; cf. pp. 68, 73.
5 T., vol. 1, p. 227; A.D., vol. , p. 724.
6 A., vol. 1, p. 160.

to follow them and to draw analogy from them, in matters which are not elucidated in them[1].

Regarding the matter of wiping the upper side of one's shoes [al-mash 'alā al-khuffayn], instead of washing one's feet in ablution, he is reported to have said: "If it is left to one's own discretion, then to wipe the sole of one's shoes is more reasonable than to wipe the top of them; but I have seen the Apostle of Allah wiping the top of his shoes"[2].

Once, when he drank water while he was standing and people who saw him seemed to disapprove of such an action, he told them that he had seen the Apostle of Allah drinking water in both positions, i.e. standing and sitting[3]. al-Sha'bī reported that when 'Alī stoned a woman to death, he said: "I have stoned her according to the tradition (the Sunnah) of Allah's Messenger"[4].

Having knowledge of these statements and actions of the first four Caliphs, one will be justified in inferring that, directly after the Prophet's death, the principles of the judicial process were distinctly determined, and that Islamic legislation at this early time was based on the Quran, the Sunnah and Ijtihād which was applied by one or more of the prominent scholars. Whenever a matter faced the Caliphs, they used to consult first the Quran and second the Sunnah, but if they found nothing relevant in either of them, they had recourse to Ijtihād in the light of the two main sources[5]. However, some statements indicate that before applying Ijtihād, one should follow the judgement of the learned, pious scholars, as long as one thinks that they are appropriate – an act which is reported on the authority of 'Umar who is said to have followed the judgement of his predecessor, and which was clearly suggested by him

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1 al-Ḥajawī, vol. 1, p. 49.
2 A.D., vol. 1, pp. 114f.
3 See A., vol. 1, pp. 101, 114.
4 B2., vol. 8, pp. 526f.
5 Cf. Strzyzewska, pp. 36, 39.

to his judge Shurayḥ. However, if a judge feels that he can reach a better judgement, he should follow his own decision, as 'Umar is reported to have done, or refer the matter to other scholars whom he thinks are more qualified to deal with it. It seems that as 'Umar had in Madinah a number of learned scholars around him, whom he used to consult on important issues or new problems that emerged at that time, he recommended his judge Shurayḥ to inform him whenever he met such new problems.

B- Ḥadīth and the Umayyad dynasty.

As regards the relation between Ḥadīth and the Umayyad dynasty, Robson suggests: "we should not think of the Umayyads suppressing those who wished to follow the practice of the Prophet, but should rather realise that in their day the idea of Tradition as a basis for regulating the community had not been developed"[1]. In this section I will consider the questions: how did the Umayyad rulers deal with Ḥadīth? and what did it mean to them?

Mu'āwiyah b. Abī Sufyān. (ruled from 40-60 A.H.).

Mu'āwiyah b. Abī Sufyān, the founder of the Umayyad dynasty, was very interested in Ḥadīth; he is reported to have written to al-Mughīrah b. Shu'bah[2]: "Write to me what you have heard from Allah's Apostle", and subsequently al-Mughīrah wrote to him[3]. "He wrote some Traditions from Muhammad and added a few more by correspondence with his governor of Iraq. He cited Tradition in his mosque's speeches and court sessions, and is also listed as a Ḥadīth scholar"[4], from whom a number of the Companions and the successors received ḥadīths[5]. 'Abd

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1 Robson 6, p. 87.
2 A Companion appointed by Mu'āwiyah as a governor of Iraq, in which he died in 50 A.H., see Ibn Sa'd, vol. 6, p. 12.
3 B2., vol. 9, p. 292, (n. 395); cf. M1., vol. 11, pp. 12f.
4 Abbott, "Collection and transmission of Ḥadīth", pp. 291f.
5 Ibn Kathīr, 1, vol. 8, p. 117

Allah b. al-Mubārak and al-Muʿāfā b. ʿImrān are reported as preferring him even to the pious Caliph ʿUmar b. ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz[1].

His adherence to the *Sunnah* is reflected in a number of stories; in one he is reported to have repeated the words of the *Adhān* after the *muʾadhdhin*, until the latter said: "*ḥayya ʿalā al-ṣalāh and ḥayya ʿalā al-falāḥ* ", when Muʾāwiyah said: "*lā ḥawl wa lā quwwah illā bi Allah* ", and commented: "I have heard the Prophet say that"[2].

Once, as he went in to Ibn ʿĀmir and Ibn al-Zubayr, the former stood to greet him while the latter did not. Muʿāwiyah asked Ibn ʿĀmir to sit and said: "I have heard the Prophet say: "Whoever likes people to stand for him, let him abide in his chair in Hell-Fire""[3]. In another story he is reported to have rebuked the people of Madinah for their divergence from an enactment of the Prophet. Ḥumayd b. ʿAbd al-Raḥmān reported that Muʿāwiyah, in the year in which he performed the Pilgrimage, took a wig and said: "O people of Madina, where are your learned men? I heard the Prophet forbidding such a thing as this and he used to say, 'The Israelīs were destroyed when their ladies practised this habit"[4]. He is also reported to have addressed the people saying: "You offer a prayer (two *rakʿahs* after the ʿAṣr prayer) which, although we accompanied the Prophet, we never saw him perform, and (moreover) he prohibited its performance"[5]. Having seen Ibn ʿAbbās touching all corners of the Kaʿbah during the *ṭawāf*, Muʿāwiyah said: "I have seen the Prophet touching only the two Yemenite corners". Ibn ʿAbbās replied to the effect that none of its corners should be left out[6]. In another account, he is reported to have offered two prostrations at the end of his prayer, as a compensation for his forgetfulness while

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1 See Id., p. 139.
2 A., vol. 4, pp. 91, 92, 98.
3 Ibn Kathīr, 1, vol. 8, p. 126. The author points out that this ḥadīth is transmitted by al-Tirmidhī and Abū Dāwūd; cf. A. vol. 4, p. 93.
4 B2., vol. 4, p. 449, (n. 674).
5 Ibn Kathīr, 1, vol. 8, p. 123; cf. B2., vol. 5, p. 74; A. vol. 4, pp. 99, 100.
6 A. vol. 4, pp. 94f, 98.

offering a prayer, and to have pointed out that he had heard the Prophet say that whoever forgot something while performing a prayer should offer these two prostrations[1].

Marwān b. al-Ḥakam. (ruled 64-65 A.H.).

Before becoming ruler of the Umayyad dynasty, Marwān b. al-Ḥakam was appointed as a governor of Madinah by Muʿāwiyah. He used to invite a number of the Prophet's Companions to consult them in matters he was dealing with and act according to their judgement[2] – an action which indicates his keen intention to adhere to the *Sunnah*. He engaged in transmitting ḥadīths and investigating their transmitters. Abū al-Zuʿayziʿah, Marwān's scribe, says: "Marwān invited Abū Hurayrah and asked me to hide and write what the latter would transmit, so I did. In the following year Marwān invited Abū Hurayrah again and asked him to re-transmit the same ḥadīths in order to compare them with what he had transmitted a year before". Abū al-Zuʿayziʿah remarks that Abū Hurayrah neither added nor omitted (with regard to what he had transmitted before)[3]. His adherence to the *Sunnah* is shown by the following story, in which Sulaymān b. Yasār reported that once upon a time, Abū Hurayrah criticised Marwān for allowing a particular transaction to be practised, quoting a ḥadīth in which the Prophet is reported to have prohibited such a proceeding. Having heard this, Marwān addressed the people and banned what he had allowed before[4].

ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz b. Marwān. (governor of Egypt, 60-85 A.H.).

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1 Id., vol. 4, p. 100. See pp. 95, 100, and 101, for other statements that indicate his adherence to the *Sunnah* of the Prophet.
2 See Ibn Saʿd, vol. 5, pp. 24-30; I. H., 4, vol. 10, pp. 91f.
3 H., 3, vol. 3, p. 510; cf. Ibn Kathīr, 1, vol. 8, p. 106; Dh., 2, vol. 2, p. 598.
4 A., vol. 2, p. 349.

'Abd al-'Azīz b. Marwān had a considerable interest in Hadīth. This is shown by his initiative when he commissioned the Syrian Kathīr b. Murrah, who met seventy of the Companions who participated in the battle of Badr, to make a written collection of hadīths transmitted by the Companions, except that of Abū Hurayrah, which he had already[1]. It is noteworthy that 'Abd al-'Azīz himself was a transmitter of hadīths; both Ibn Sa'd and al-Nasā'ī declare him to be trustworthy, and Ibn Hibbān mentions him among the reliable transmitters in al-Thiqāt [2].

'Abd al-Malik b. Marwān. (ruled 65-86 A.H.).

As a Caliph, "he was patron of outstanding scholars who as a group covered the several branches of the religious sciences. The list of his court scholars included Sa'īd b. al-Musayyib, 'Urwah b. al-Zubayr, Abū Bakr b. 'Abd al-Rahmān b. al-Hārith, and Abū 'Amr 'Āmir al-Sha'bī"[3], who were all well-versed in Hadīth and *Fiqh*. To pay homage, 'Abd Allah b. 'Umar wrote to him: "I swear allegiance to you in that I will listen and obey what is in accordance with laws of Allah and the *Sunnah* of His Apostle as much as I can"[4]. This statement gives an indication of the way according to which the rulers should lead their people. It is instructive to know that 'Abd al-Malik himself was a devoted man, who accompanied the learned (*al-Fuqahā'*) and transmitted a number of hadīths[5]. He is reported to have written to his notorious governor al-Hajjāj, enjoining him to follow the instruction of 'Abd Allah b. 'Umar, who was well-known for his strict adherence to the *Sunnah* of the Prophet, during their journey to perform *Hajj* [6].

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1 Ibn Sa'd, 7, 2 , p. 157.
2 Id., vol. 5, p. 175. cf. I.H., 4, vol. 6, p. 356.
3 Abbot, op. cit., p. 292.
4 B2., vol. 9, p. 281, (n. 377); cf. p. 237, (n. 310); Dh., 2, vol. 3, p. 231.
5 I.H., 4, vol. 6, p. 422.
6 See B2., vol. 2, pp. 424f, (n. 724).

'Umar b. 'Abd al-'Azīz. (ruled 99-101 A.H.)

'Umar b. 'Abd al-'Azīz was the most pious of the Umayyad rulers, to the extent that he was considered to be the fifth of the Rightly-Guided Caliphs. His keen interest in Hadīth is shown by his commissioning of the scholars of Hadīth to collect and make hadīths as widely spread as they could. He is reported to have asked Abū Bakr b. Hazm and Ibn Shihāb al-Zuhrī to undertake this important task. "He wrote to Abū Bakr to send him all the state documents in the family's possession, beginning with Muḥammad's instructions to Abū Bakr's grandfather on his appointment to Yemen in 10 / 631 as instructor in the new faith and administrator of the alms-taxes... Similar orders were sent to the families of the caliphs Abū Bakr, 'Umar and 'Alī, and those of Anas b. Mālik and 'Abdullāh b. al-'Āṣ. The materials received were given to Zuhrī for initial study and co-ordination"[1]. This remarkable interest in Hadīth was mainly for the sake of making its material handy for studying and consulting. He addressed the people, telling them that no decision [ra'y] could be given against the Quran, that the scholars' own decisions were only taken in matters regarding which there was nothing in the Quran or in the *Sunnah* of the Prophet and that it was not permissible for anyone to give his own decision against a *Sunnah* enacted by the Prophet[2]. He is also reported to have written to 'Urwah who had inquired of him about the principles to be followed in judging between adversaries. In this letter, he pointed out four steps, which have to be followed one after the other; first, to follow what is in the Book of Allah, second, to give judgements according to the *Sunnah* of the Messenger of Allah, third, to give judgements according to the decisions of the pious scholars and fourth, to consult the learned [*dhawī al-'ilm wa al-ra'y*][3].

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1 Abbot, op. cit., p. 294
2 See D., vol. 1, p. 114; cf. I.B., 1, vol. 2, p. 34; al-Marwazī, p. 26.
3 See I.B., 1, vol. 2, p. 24.

Dealing with the history of Islamic law during the Umayyad period, Strzyzewska states that paying homage to the Umayyad dynasty was done on the condition that they had to act in accordance to Allah's Book and to the *Sunnah* of His Prophet. Nevertheless, we have seen how the Caliphs diverged from that and followed their own discretion[1]. What concerns us is the formula of the paying of homage to the rulers, which is one of the important pieces of evidence that shows the real status of both the Quran and the *Sunnah* as main sources for the guidance of the community at large. The fact that we encounter with some Umayyad Caliphs who did not keep their commitment does not affect the fact pointed out regarding the recognition of the Quran and the *Sunnah* as main sources of Islam, particularly if we bear in mind the following two aspects. The first is that those Caliphs were ordinary men and apt to make mistakes even in religious matters; they might be tempted by worldly attractions or by any other means to diverge, occasionally, from the teachings of the Quran and the *Sunnah*. In addition to these Caliphs, there were others who were notorious for their impious actions, and did not reach the standard that Caliphs are supposed to have reached. The second aspect is that a number of works of literature that deal with Umayyad history were compiled under, and encouraged by, the Abbasids, who considered the Umayyads as their bitter enemies. Accordingly, one should be cautious of the picture that portrays the Umayyads as irreligious, since this possibly originates from the hostility between these two rival dynasties[2]. However, it seems to me that the previous incidents and statements, regarding the founder of the Umayyad dynasty and some of its rulers, are sufficient to show that Muslim rulers, even at that time, considered the Quran and the *Sunnah* of the Prophet as the main sources of guidance for the whole community. This conclusion is attested

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1 Op. cit. p. 130.
2 See a discussion of the idea that the Umayyad rulers were irreligious in al-Ṣadīq, "Mulāḥaẓāt...", pp. 231-34.

by the fact of its being in keeping with the idea believed from the early days of Islam, as demonstrated earlier; hence it is the one which commends itself to be adopted. There is, however, no doubt that the judicial process during the Umayyad period was, as Strzyzewska concludes, still in a primary stage as it was in the reign of the four Rightly-Guided Caliphs. Judges did not restrict themselves to a certain school of law; they applied their own *Ijtihād* or referred to the opinions of the scholars at that time. She adds that the Umayyad rulers gave their judges the freedom to practise *Ijtihād* in the light of the Quran, the *Sunnah* of the Prophet and the judgements of the Companions, deciding what was the best for their time, provided that it was in keeping with the principles of Islam[1].

C- Ḥadīth and the community.

In this section, statements and anecdotes that show that the prominent scholars of the Companions and the Successors recognised Ḥadīth as an important source of guidance will be adduced.

'Abd Allah b. Mas'ūd. (d. 32 A.H.)

'Abd Allah b. Mas'ūd is reported as saying: "When someone has a matter to judge, he should judge according to the Book of Allah; if he finds no answer to the matter there, he should follow a judgement of the Prophet; but if the matter is not among those with which the Prophet dealt, he should follow the judgement of the learned. If the matter is completely new, he should study the matter carefully and make a decision; he should not say: 'I am afraid (of making decisions) and I fear', inasmuch as what is lawful is clearly distinct from what is forbidden. However, there are some confusing matters, in considering which you should put aside what you doubt, in favour of what you are sure about [*Da' mā yurībuk ilā mā lā yurībuk*]"[2].

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1 Strzyzewska, pp. 133f.
2 D., vol. 1, p. 59; cf. N., vol. 8, pp. 230f.

The following anecdotes testify to the judicial method he adopted. It is reported that when a matter regarding a married woman, who died before her *Mahr* (bride-price) was fixed, was brought to him, he inquired of the people if they knew of any judgement regarding this particular issue having been reported on the authority of the Prophet. Having received the answer in the negative, he said: "I will give my own decision, and if it is right, it is due to Allah's guidance"[1]. Thus, when nothing was available, Ibn Mas'ūd would use *Ijtihād* and make his own decision, whereas, on another occasion, he is reported as saying, before giving his judgement on a certain issue: "I will give a judgement to the same effect as that of the Prophet"[2].

In another story we are told that he once cursed women who were practising specific deeds, whereupon a woman, called Umm Ya'qūb, was surprised and asked how he dared to do this; his answer was: "Why should not I curse those who were cursed by Allah's Apostle, and it is in the Quran. The woman said: "I have read all the Quran, but I have not found any such thing!"; he replied: "By Allah if you had read it (carefully), you would have found it. Allah says: "Take what the Messenger gives you, and refrain from what he prohibits you" (lix. 7)[3]. His adherence to the *Sunnah* is indicated by an incident in which he is reported as exhorting people with him to perform prayers in Mosques, saying: "If you perform your prayer in your houses as this man does, you will be abandoning your Prophet's *Sunnah*; and if you abandon your Prophet's *Sunnah*, you will go astray..."[4].

Abū Hurayrah. (d. 57, 59 A.H.).

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1 N., vol. 6, p. 121; cf. A., vol. 4, p. 280.
2 A., vol. 1, p. 389; cf. p. 466, where another example is recorded. al-Nu'mān b. Bashīr, a Companion d. 64 A.H., is also reported as giving a similar statement, before pronouncing a judgement on a matter brought to him, see A.D., vol. 4, pp. 604f.
3 See B2., vol. 7, pp. 535f, (n. 822); A.D., vol. 4, pp. 397-99; I.B., 1, vol. 2, p. 188; Su., 1, p. 28.
4 A., vol. 1. pp. 382, 415, 455.

Abū Hurayrah is one of the famous Companions who engaged themselves in learning ḥadīths from the Prophet and later in transmitting a considerable number of them. His adherence to the *Sunnah* of the Prophet is indicated by an account in which he is reported as saying: "The prayer which the Messenger of Allah recited aloud, we have also recited aloud for you, and the prayer which he recited inwardly we have also recited inwardly for you (to give you a practical example of the prayer of the Holy Prophet)"[1].

'Abd Allah b. Mughaffal. (d. 57 A.H).

'Abd Allah b. Mughaffal is one of the Companions who was among the ten scholars whom 'Umar sent to Iraq to instruct its people[2]. Once, when he saw a man throwing small stones with two fingers, he asked him to stop doing this, as the Messenger of Allah had forbidden or discouraged such action. Afterwards, he saw the same man throwing stones, whereupon he said to him: "I tell you that the Allah's Messenger forbade or discouraged throwing stones (in such a way), yet you are throwing stones! I shall not talk to you for such-and-such a period"[3].

'Abd Allah b. 'Abbās. (d. 68 A.H).

'Ikrimah said that some *Zanādiqah* were brought to 'Alī and he burnt them. When the news of this event reached Ibn 'Abbās, he said: "If I had been in his place, I would not have burnt them; inasmuch as the Apostle of Allah forbade doing this, saying: "Do not punish anybody with Allah's punishment". I would rather have killed them according to the statement of the Apostle of Allah: "Whoever changes his religion, kill him"[4].

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1 See M2., vol. 1, p. 217, (n. 778).
2 I.H., 4, vol. 6, p. 42.
3 See B2., vol. 7, pp. 282f, (n.388); cf. D., vol. 1, p. 117.
4 See Id., B2., vol. 9, p. 45, (n. 57).

Once he advised Ṭāwūs not to perform a prayer after the 'Aṣr prayer, because the Prophet prohibited it, and Allah said: "It is not fitting for a believer, man or woman, when a matter has been decided by Allah and His Messenger, to have any option about their decision" (xxxiii. 36)[1]. Ṭāwūs is also reported to have asked Ibn 'Abbās about a certain action he was practising in his prayer. Ibn 'Abbās said: "This is the *Sunnah*". When Ṭāwūs expressed his disapproval, he confirmed this, saying: "It is the *Sunnah* of your Prophet"[2]. These incidents show us how keen Ibn 'Abbās was to follow the *Sunnah* of the Prophet and adhere to it.

The way according to which he used to judge matters brought to him is reported by 'Ubayd Allah b. Abī Yazīd who pointed out that when Ibn 'Abbās was asked to give his decision on a particular matter, he would act as follows: if there was an answer to it in the Book of Allah, he would follow it, but if he found nothing there, he would look for a dictum, first from the Prophet, then from Abū Bakr and 'Umar. If the matter was not dealt with by any of the preceding sources, he would do his best in considering the matter and giving his own decision[3]. His reliance on Ḥadīth is indicated in a story in which we are told that while he was an Amir of Iraq, he gave his verdict regarding the usury which was not in accordance with what Ibn 'Umar and Abū Saʿīd related from the prophet. Having learnt of this ḥadīth he asked for Allah's forgiveness, and said: "it was my own judgement"[4].

'Abd Allah b. 'Umar. (d. 74 A.H.)

'Abd Allah b. 'Umar is one of the Companions who lived for a considerable time under the Umayyad dynasty. He was very famous for his strict adherence to Ḥadīth even in matters which were not obligatory[5]. He is reported as saying: "I have

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1 D., vol. 1, p. 115; cf. Abū Zahū. pp. 44f.
2 Ml., vol. 5, pp. 18f; cf. A., vol. 1, p. 313.
3 D., vol. 1, p. 59; H., 3, vol. 1, p. 127; cf. Ibn Saʿd, vol. 2, 2, p. 120.
4 Kh., 3, p. 28.
5 See Dh., 2, vol. 33, p. 213; Su., 1, p. 59; al-Haythamī, vol. 1, pp. 174f.

never missed the touching of these two stones of *Ka'ba* (the black stone and the Yemenite corner) both in the presence and the absence of crowds since I saw the Prophet (peace be upon him) touching them"[1].

In one story we are told that he used to rent plantations, until he heard that the Prophet interdicted this, after which he refrained from it[2]. In another we are told that he rebuked someone by saying: "You have heard me say that the Prophet said: "Do not prevent women going to Mosques", but you say: "I will prevent them"; then he left angrily[3]. Having mentioned the Prophet's actions during the *Hajj* (Pilgrimage), he says: "The *Sunnah* of Allah and His Apostle is to be followed rather than the *Sunnah* of so and so"[4]. When he was asked to give his decision regarding a certain matter, he would usually mention an action or a saying of the Prophet, quoting the following verse from the Quran: "Ye have indeed in the Messenger of Allah an excellent exemplar..."[5].

Once someone said to him: "We find the prescription for the normal prayer (*salāt al-ḥaḍar*) and that for the prayer at a time of fear (*salāt al-khawf*) in the Quran, whereas we do not find the prescription for the prayer while travelling (*salāt al-safar*)". Ibn 'Umar replied: "Allah sent us Muhammad when we knew nothing; therefore we act as we have seen him acting"[6]. Another version has Ibn 'Umar saying: "This is the *Sunnah* of the Messenger of Allah"[7].

In a recent work dealing with Ibn 'Umar's opinions on various aspects of Islamic law, it is pointed out that the procedure which he adopted in judging matters

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1 B2., vol. 2, p. 395, (n. 676).
2 Kh., 3, p. 28.
3 H., 2, p. 182; cf. D., vol. 1, pp. 117f.
4 A., vol. 2, pp. 56f.
5 xxxiii, 21; see A., vol. 2, pp. 15, 65, 154, 156; B2., vol. 3. p. 13 (n. 20); T., vol. 1, p. 94. 'Umar, the second Caliph, and 'Ā'ishah, the Prophet's wife, are reported as quoting the same verse, when giving their judgements, see A., vol. 4, p. 222, and vol. 6, pp. 174, 192, respectively.
6 A., vol. 2, p. 94.
7 Id., pp. 20, 31.

was similar in essentials to that of his father[1]. Nevertheless, he seems to restrict himself to the statements of the Quran and the *Sunnah* of the Prophet and to apply *Ijtihād* far less frequently than his father or other scholars, like 'Abd Allah b. Mas'ūd, who applied *Ijtihād* to a great extent. This is confirmed by an account in which Ibn 'Umar is reported to have advised Jābir b. Zayd al-Jawfī, a judge from al-Baṣrah, to restrict his fatwas to what is recorded in the Quran or known from the *Sunnah*[2].

Abū al-'Āliyah al-Riyāḥī. (d. 90, 93 A.H.).

Abū al-'Āliyah al-Riyāḥī is one of the prominent Successors. He is reported to have advised people to learn (the teachings of) Islam, to hold fast to them..., and to follow the *Sunnah* of the Prophet and what the people used to do before the killing of their fellow Companion (i.e. the third Caliph 'Uthmān)[3].

Sālim b. 'Abd Allah b. 'Umar. (d. 106 A.H.).

Sālim b. 'Abd Allah is reported as saying that 'Umar, his grandfather, used to prohibit using perfume before the adoption of *iḥrām*, in order to perform the *Ḥajj* or the *'Umrah*; but 'Ā'ishah said that she applied perfume to the Prophet with her hands before he adopted *iḥrām* and again when he put it off, before he had offered *ṭawāf*. Having reported this, Sālim declared that the *Sunnah* of the Prophet was to be followed, abandoning his grandfather's opinion[4].

It is noteworthy that, on several occasions, early scholars adduced a ḥadīth as a fatwa, when they were asked their opinion on certain issues, without pointing out that it was a ḥadīth from the Prophet; this is evident from the fact that, on another

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1 Qal'ahjī, pp. 27f.
2 Dh., 3, vol. 1, p. 68.
3 al-Marwazī, p. 8.
4 See Su., 1, pp. 40f; cf. B2., vol. 2, p. 469, (n. 809); M2., vol. 2, p. 586, (n. 2681).

occasion, they transmitted the same statement as a ḥadīth[1]. Therefore, a number of statements which appear as legal decisions are in fact either actual ḥadīths or paraphrases of ḥadīths – another feature which proves that Ḥadīth was considered as a source of guidance for the community at large.

In any case, although other statements will be adduced in the coming discussion, I think that the preceding examples will suffice to show the importance of Ḥadīth as a basic source of Islam, which the community at large believed in, in these early days. Von Kremer, in his *Orient under the Caliphs*, reaches a similar conclusion: "The life of the Prophet, his discourses and utterances, his actions, his silent approval and even his passive conduct constituted next to the Qur'ān the second most important source of law for the young Muslim empire"[2], and in a more recent work, Esposito points out that Muslims "look to Muhammad's example for guidance in all aspects of life: how to treat friends as well as enemies, what to eat and drink, how to make love and war"[3].

As far as the judgements of the scholars in the early days of Islam are concerned, one would infer that they were based on the following:

(1) The Quran, the supreme source of guidance.

(2) Ḥadīth or the *Sunnah* of the Prophet, as long as they were aware of it and it was transmitted to them in a recognisable manner.

(3) *Ijtihād*, which they applied, in a general sense, in the light of the two main sources, namely the Quran and the Ḥadīth.

Dealing with the nature of Islamic law during the time of the Companions, al-Khuḍarī reaches a similar conclusion, except that he suggests the third basis to be

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1 See Kh., 3, p. 417; cf. Al-JarAllah, pp. 193-99, where several examples relating to early scholars, like Abū Sa'īd al-Khudrī, Sa'īd b. Jubayr, Qatādah al-Sadūsī, al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī and others, are adduced.
2 Ṣiddīqī, p. 7.
3 Esposito, p. 13.

analogical reasoning[1] (*Qiyās*) which at that time called *ra'y* [2]. It seems that *Qiyās* was only one aspect of *Ijtihād*, which the Companions applied in a general sense, including *istiḥsān* [approval], *al-maṣāliḥ al-mursalah* [unconsidered benefits] and other aspects as well[3]; it therefore seems preferable to identify the third basis as *Ijtihād* rather than as *Qiyās*.

The main reasons behind the disagreement of the early scholars' judgements.

Considering the judgements of the Companions or other early scholars, one will discover that they sometimes disagree in their opinions regarding the same issue; accordingly, the question as to the reasons behind this disagreement, although they adopted the same principles, may be raised. It seems that the three principles of the judicial procedure, i.e. the Quran, Ḥadīth and *Ijtihād*, were behind this disagreement[4].

(1) Regarding the Quran, there are two reasons that can be mentioned:

i- In the Quran there are verses which are not conclusive in their significance, and they are classified under what is called *ẓannī al-dalālah*, accordingly, these verses can be comprehended in different ways. For example in the verse that states that a divorced woman has to wait for three *qurū'* [5] the word *qur'* [pl. *qurū'*] has two meanings; the first is the monthly period of a woman, which is *ḥayḍ*, and the second is the days between two monthly periods, which is *ṭuhr* [6]. On account of this uncertainty regarding the significance of this verse, the Companions were split into two opinions; the four Rightly-Guided Caliphs and 'Abd Allah b. Mas'ūd identified *qur'* with the monthly period, while 'Ā'ishah, Ibn 'Umar and Zayd b. Thābit are

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1 For the elucidation of this term see Khallāf, pp. 52-60; cf. Esposito, p. 83.
2 al-Khuḍarī, pp. 127-29.
3 See al-Subkī, p. 86, citing Ibn al-Qayyim; cf. Strzyzewska, p. 36. For the significance of the terms adduced above see Khallāf, pp. 79-83, 84-88, respectively.
4 This account is deprived mainly from al-Dahlawī, vol. 1, pp. 296-303; al-Khuḍarī, pp. 131-40; al-Subkī, pp. 102-9; al-Qāsimī, pp. 334-39; Strzyzewska, pp. 136f.
5 ii. 228
6 Ibn Manẓūr, vol. 1, p. 43; cf. al-Rāzī, Muḥammad b. Abī Bakr, p. 220.

reported to have chosen the other meaning; both groups had authorities to enhance their views[1]. The outcome of this disagreement is that a divorced woman will terminate her waiting period ['*iddah*], when she finishes her third monthly period, according to the former opinion, or when her third monthly period starts according to the latter.

ii- There are also verses which seem to contradict each other; this seeming contradiction may be the reason behind the disagreement of the scholars. The different opinion reported on the authority of the Companions regarding the compulsory waiting period ['*iddah*] for a pregnant widow is a result of the seemingly contradictory verses that deal with it. There are two verses; the first states: "If any of you die and leaves widows behind; they shall wait concerning themselves four months and ten days..."[2], the other states: "...For those who are pregnant, their period is until they deliver their burdens..."[3]. Dealing with this question, Ibn 'Abbās held the opinion that a pregnant widow would have to wait for the longer of these two periods; that is to say that her waiting period should not be less than four months and ten days, while the most of the scholars are of the opinion that her period finishes directly after delivery, even if it happens a short time after her husband's death, maintaining that the second verse particularises the generality of the first.

(2) With regard to Ḥadīth, there are various reasons that can be adduced:

i- As there was no specific collection of ḥadīths, the early scholars depended on what they were aware of or what was reported to them, which varies from one to another. This variation in the knowledge of ḥadīths was one of the main causes of their disagreement, a phenomenon which became more widespread and more noticeable when the learned Companions, from the time of the second Caliph, began

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1 See al-Shāfiʿī, p. 562.
2 ii. 234.
3 lxv. 4.

to migrate to the newly conquered countries, in order to become teachers and judges. 'Abd Allah b. Mas'ūd, for example, was sent to Kūfah[1], 'Imrān b. Ḥusayn was sent to Baṣrah to instruct its people[2], and al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī reported that 'Abd Allah b. Mughaffal was one of the ten scholars whom 'Umar sent to them for the same purpose[3]. 'Umar is reported to have written to the people of Kūfah: "I have sent you 'Ammār b. Yāsir as a governor and Ibn Mas'ūd as an instructor... Follow and obey them, and I have (indeed) favoured you with Ibn Mas'ūd over myself"[4]. Bearing in mind the fact that communications among the various countries were so difficult that they could not keep the scholars, in contact in order to consult each other, one can appreciate the extent to which this reason affected their decisions[5]. Indeed, some of them tried to overcome this difficulty by travelling in search of knowledge; a course of action that helped to narrow the gap among them. In any case, each scholar would give his judgement according to the ḥadīths at his disposal, and naturally, what was known to one of them might not be known to another. Dealing with problems brought to them, some scholars were obliged, by their unawareness of certain ḥadīths on the subject, to have recourse to *Ijtihād* and take a decision, which may have differed of that reported from the Prophet, but as soon as they knew of an authoritative ḥadīth on the matter, they would follow it[6]. al-Shāfi'ī points out that he had not known of any one of the Companions or the Successors who would decline to follow any ḥadīth transmitted to him and recognise it as a *Sunnah*[7]. A number of examples can be presented which elucidate the effect of this reason. 'Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb used

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1 See Ibn Sa'd, vol. 6, p. 7.
2 See Dh., 3, vol. 1, p. 28.
3 I.H., 4, vol. 6, p. 42.
4 Dh., 3, vol. 1, p. 14. This statement is reported by Ḥārithah b. Muḍarrib al-Kūfī.
5 Cf. Strzyzewska, pp. 134f.
6 See a number of anecdotes in which the Companions are reported to have revised their own decisions, as ḥadīths were reported to them, in Kh., 1, vol. 1, pp. 138-41; Su., 1, p. 37; cf. Ṣiddīqī, p. 196.
7 See Su., 1, p. 40.

to hold the opinion that the wergild of a dead man was to be given to his *'āqilah* (i.e. his paternal relatives, who are responsible, along with the killer, for paying the wergild of unwitting murder[1]), and that nothing of it to be given to his wife, until al-Ḍaḥḥāk b. Sufyān informed him that the Prophet bequeathed the wife of Ashyam al-Ḍibābī from his wergild; whereupon 'Umar revised his judgement and followed what was reported by al-Ḍaḥḥāk[2]. In another version 'Umar is reported as saying: "Had we not heard this, we would have given another judgement; we have almost judged the matter according to our own opinion [*ra'y*]"[3]. Abū Mūsā al-Ash'arī is reported to have revised his decision regarding an issue of inheritance to a daughter, a son's daughter and a sister, as he was told that Ibn Mas'ūd gave a different decision on the same issue, saying: "I will give my judgement to the same effect as that of the Prophet". He is reported as saying: "Do not ask me for verdicts, as long as this learned man is amongst you"[4]. Abū Hurayrah is reported to have retracted what he used to say regarding observing fasting, if someone was in a state of seminal emission [*janābah*], when he was informed that 'Ā'ishah and Umm Salamah reported something different on the authority of the Prophet, pointing out that they had better knowledge[5]. Once it was conveyed to 'Ā'ishah that Ibn 'Amr ordered women who took a bath for ritual purification, to undo their hair plaits; she commented: "How strange it is for Ibn 'Amr that he orders women to undo the plaits of their heads while taking a bath; why he does not order them to shave their heads? I and the Messenger of Allah took a bath from one vessel. I did no more than this that I poured three

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1 al-Rāzī Muḥammad b. Abī Bakr, p. 188.
2 A.D., vol. 3, pp. 339f; cf. I.M., vol. 2, p. 74; T., vol. 2, p. 14.
3 Su., 1, pp. 36f.
4 B2., vol. 8, pp. 480f, (n. 728); see al-Subkī, p. 110. See another example regarding taking a bath after sexual intercourse, in B2., vol. 1, pp. 174-76.
5 M2., vol. 2, p. 539, (n. 2451); cf. B2., vol. 3, pp. 81f, (n. 148).

handfuls of water over my head"[1]. It seems that while 'Ā'ishah was aware of the Prophet's approval of such an action, Ibn 'Amr was not, and accordingly gave a contrary opinion concerning it.

ii- It may be that one scholar followed a ḥadīth abrogated by another, because of his unawareness of the latter, while others, being aware of it, followed the abrogating ḥadīth. Demonstrating the way according to which the prayer should be performed as it was taught to them by the Prophet, 'Abd Allah b. Mas'ūd pointed out that during rukū' the Prophet practised tatbīq [putting both hands between one's legs]. Having heard this, Sa'd b. Abī Waqqāṣ remarked that Ibn Mas'ūd told the truth: "We did that first, then we were ordered to hold our knees with our hands instead"[2].

Moreover, scholars may disagree as to whether a certain ḥadīth is abrogated by another or not; the short-lived marriage [nikāḥ al-mut'ah] was one of the controversial issues, because the Prophet is reported to have allowed it first, and to have forbidden it later. Ibn 'Abbās is said to be of the opinion that this kind of marriage had been permitted in case of necessity and still was, while most of scholars held that the later action of the Prophet abrogated the earlier permission altogether[3].

iii- Scholars may dismiss a certain ḥadīth, because they have some doubts regarding it or its transmitters. We have already come across an anecdote in which 'Umar is reported to have rejected a ḥadīth transmitted by Fāṭimah b. Qays on account of the uncertainty he had of her precision[4]. 'Ā'ishah, the wife of the Prophet, is also

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1 M2., vol. 1, p. 187, (n. 646). See vol. 3, p. 813, (n. 3741), for another example of Ibn 'Umar refraining from renting lands on account of a ḥadīth reported to him by Rāfi' b. Khadīj.
2 N., vol. 2, pp. 184f. See ibid. for another story in which Sa'd pointed out the abrogation of the old practice; cf. B2, vol. 1, pp. 419f, (n. 756).
3 See al-Qāsimī, p. 339; see also ibid.; al-Dahlawī, vol. 1, pp. 302f, for another example regarding facing the Qiblah while answering a call of nature.
4 See above p. 62.

reported as casting doubt on this particular hadīth[1]. 'Alī, the fourth Caliph, dismissed another hadīth reported by Ma'qil b. Sinān al-Ashja'ī, and had recourse to *Qiyās* instead. He justified his dismissal by revealing his doubt in its transmitter[2]. Pointing out that the Companions, on some occasions, may not follow a particular hadīth, Siddīqī comments: "a close scrutiny of all these cases shows that the *Hadīth* of the Prophet was not rejected altogether. It was either differently interpreted, or the memory and the understanding of the reporters were questioned"[3]. More examples will be presented later, as I deal with the criticism by early scholars of transmitters and their transmission.

iv- Determining whether a certain action of the Prophet has a religious character or not is another cause of divergence. An example of this is the disagreement of scholars with regard to an action of the Prophet during the Hajj; Ibn 'Umar and Abū Hurayrah are of the opinion that this particular action has a religious character and hence it should be observed, while 'Ā'ishah is of the opinion that it is an ordinary action, which has no religious nature[4].

v- Identifying the motivation [al-'illah] of a certain action or judgement of the Prophet is another reason which accounts for divergence among scholars' judgements. The Prophet is reported to have said: "Whenever you see a funeral procession, stand up until it has passed you"[5]. Scholars were of two opinions regarding this particular issue; some believed that the Prophet stood in order to show consideration for death; accordingly, they recommended doing so for all funerals, of believers and unbelievers alike. Others held another view and, therefore, restricted this recommendation to

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1 al-Qāsimī, pp. 336f.
2 al-Subkī, pp. 95f; cf. pp. 107f. For the transmission of Ma'qil b. Sinān, see N., vol. 6, p. 121.
3 Siddīqī, p. 196.
4 al-Dahlawī, vol. 1, pp. 300f. The action refers to the Prophet's stopping at al-Abṭaḥ *'al-taḥṣīb'*.
5 See B2., vol. 2, p. 222, (n. 394). It is worthy of note that Bukhārī transmitted other hadīths in which the Prophet is reported as ordering the Companions to stand, when a funeral of a Jew passed them, see id., vol. 2, p. 224.

funerals of Muslims only[1]. There is another incident which happened during the Prophet's lifetime in which the Companions were divided into two groups in executing an order of the Prophet. 'Abd Allah b. 'Umar reported that when the Prophet returned from the battle of al-Aḥzāb, he said: "No one is to offer 'Aṣr prayer but at Banī Quraiẓa". To some of the Companions the 'Aṣr prayer was due on the way. Some of them decided not to pray but at Banī Quraiẓa while some others decided to pray on the spot and said that the intention of the Prophet was not what the former party had understood. And when that was told to the Prophet he did not rebuke any one of them[2]. In this report we find that while the first group understood the Prophet's command literally, the second understood it as a metaphor that urged them on to their destination as quickly as possible, and that both understandings were acknowledged[3].

(3) *Ijtihād* is an important reason which accounts for disagreement amongst scholars in their verdicts regarding the same issue. It was a common practice of judges, whenever they met new problems, to practice *Ijtihād* and give their own decision [*ra'y*] in the light of the teachings of the Quran and the *Sunnah*. As scholars naturally differed in their knowledge, faculties and mental capabilities, different views were to be expected. As far as the Companions are concerned, Masrūq b. al-Ajda', (a prominent successor d. 63 A.H.), described the Companions as springs of water which differ in their abundance; some quench the thirst of only one or two, some satisfy ten or even one hundred and some can suffice all the world's population[4].

These are the main reasons that resulted in disagreement among early scholars. It is worthy of note that there is no indication, as far as I have been able to discover,

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1 See al-Qāsimī, pp. 338f.
2 See B2., vol. 2, pp. 34f.
3 Cf. I.H., 1, vol. 7, p. 410.
4 al-Subkī, p. 90.

that this disagreement could be the result of neglecting Ḥadīth as a main source of guidance.

3- Ḥadīth and its opponents.

To sum up the practice of Muslims regarding the way in which they judge matters, al-Bukhārī says: "After the Prophet, Muslims used to consult the honest, religious, learned men in matters of law so that they might adopt the easiest, but if the Book (the Quran) and the *Sunna* (Ḥadīth) gave a clear, definite statement about a certain matter, they would not seek any other verdict. In that they used to copy the way of the Prophet"[1].

In sources available to us, there is no indication, particularly during the time of the Rightly-Guided Caliphs, of any opposition to Ḥadīth. The first reference I have come across is the statement in which ʿImrān b. Ḥuṣayn (d. 52 A.H.) was asked to teach only from the Quran[2]. Then there is another story in which a man said to Muṭarrif b. ʿAbd Allah (d. 95 A.H.): "Teach us only from the Quran". Muṭarrif replied: "By God, we do not seek to replace the Quran with anything else, but we are quoting the one who is more versed in it than we are (sc. the Prophet)"[3]. Qatādah al-Sadūsī (d. 118 A.H.) is reported as saying: "If someone abandons the *Sunnah* of his Prophet, he will destroy himself. So follow the *Sunnah* and avoid innovations"[4]. Another statement is ascribed to Ibn Shihāb al-Zuhrī (d. 124 A.H.) in which he reported on the authority of his predecessors. He said: "Our masters used to say that salvation was in holding fast to the *Sunnah*, and that (religious) knowledge would vanish soon. The revival of knowledge would result in the revival of religion and the world, and the cessation of knowledge would cause the cessation of them both"[5].

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1 B2., vol. 9, p. 341.
2 See Kh., 3, p. 15.
3 I.B., 1, vol. 2, p. 191; cf. al-Shāṭibī, vol. 4, p. 26.
4 Su., 1, p. 70
5 D., vol. 1, p. 45; cf. Su., 1, p. 56.

There is another statement made by Abū Ayyūb al-Sakhtiyānī (d. 131 A.H.) in which he considered the tendency of abandoning Ḥadīth and restriction to the Quran as a sign of going astray and innovation; he is reported as saying: "If you convey a *Sunnah* to someone, then he says: 'Leave this and tell me from the Quran (only)', you should know that he has gone astray"[1]. As these statements were made by authorities who mostly died at the beginning of the second century, they lead one to conclude that, although the tendency of opposition to Ḥadīth as a basic source of guidance can be referred back to the second half of the first century, as the statement ascribed to 'Imrān b. Ḥuṣayn indicates, it hardly existed in an organised form until the beginning of the second century of Islam; it was the exception rather than the rule, as we will see later in this chapter.

In his comprehensive study, Esposito concludes: "For Muslims throughout the centuries, the message of the Quran and the example of the Prophet Muhammad have constituted the formative and enduring foundation of faith and belief. They have served as the basic source of Islamic law and reference points for daily life"[2].

Nevertheless, in order to sustain his argument that in the early days of Islam Ḥadīth was not considered a basic source of guidance, Robson says: "That the party which upheld Tradition had much to contend with is shown very clearly by Ibn Qutayba (213-276 / 828-889) in his *Kitāb Ta'wīl mukhtalif al-ḥadīth*, in which he deals at length with the arguments adduced against the upholders of Tradition by different groups"[3].

This reference actually makes it clear that Ḥadīth was recognised as a basis of Islam from the beginning, and indicates that there were doubts being expressed by some groups who had recently developed. This view is reflected in the introduction

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1 Kh., 3, p. 16; cf. H., 2, p. 65; Su., 1, p. 41.
2 Op. cit., p. 33.
3 Robson 3, p. 101.

of the work, in which the author says, responding to a correspondent: "You have written to me in order to let me know how *Ahl al-Kalām*, in their books, disparage and rebuke *Ahl al-Ḥadīth*"[1]. He starts by dealing with doubts raised by al-Naẓẓām, refuting them one after the other[2], then he introduces a number of people, among them Abū al-Hudhayl al-ʿAllāf, and mentions some of their errors and innovations. Later he mentions *Ahl al-Raʾy*, quoting a statement of Isḥāq b. Rāhūyah that criticises them for abandoning the Book of Allah and the *Sunnah* of His Messenger, and adhering to analogical reasoning (*Qiyās*)[3]; he then returns to *Ahl al-Kalām* once again, dealing first with al-Jāḥiẓ [4].

Ibn Qutaybah is dealing with two main parties, namely, *Ahl al-Kalām* and *Ahl al-Raʾy* [5]. *Ahl al-Kalām* seems to be a nickname for the Muʿtazilah, to which both al-Naẓẓām (d. 221/ 836) and his student al-Jāḥiẓ (d. 255/869) belong, as do also to Bishr b. al-Muʿtamir the founder of the Muʿtazilah in Baghdad (d. 210/825), and Abū al-Hudhayl al-ʿAllāf (d. 227/841)[6]. *Ahl al-Raʾy* is the name of the Iraqis who are said to depend on *Qiyās*, and their master is Abū Ḥanīfah (d. 150 A.H.).

The portrayal of *Ahl al-Raʾy*, and particularly their master Abū Ḥanīfah, as those who dismiss ḥadīths is the result of deficient investigation. Abū Ḥanīfah himself is reported to have warned people against giving decisions in religious matters on their own discretion, and to have said: "Follow the *Sunnah*, since whoever diverges from it will go astray". Once, a man from Kūfah joined his session, while he, along with his students, was studying Ḥadīth, and asked them to abandon it. Abū Ḥanīfah rebuked him and pointed out: "Were it not for the *Sunnah*, no one would be

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1 Ibn Qutayba. p. 2.
2 Id., pp. 21-53.
3 Id., p. 65.
4 Id., p. 71.
5 As he states clearly before dealing with their arguments, see p. 15.
6 See *E.I.*(2), vol. 7, p. 784.

able to understand the Quran". He is also reported as saying that the people would be rightly guided as long as they studied Ḥadīth; once they acquired knowledge apart from it, they would be misguided[1]. As far as the method he adopted in giving judgements is concerned, he is reported to have said: "I follow the Book of Allah, and then the *Sunnah* of His Prophet. If there is no answer to the matter in question in either of them, I follow one of the Companions' decisions restricting myself to them. But when the matter is only dealt with by Ibrāhīm, al-Shaʿbī, Ibn Sīrīn, al-Ḥasan or other scholars of the Successors who applied *Ijtihād* and took decisions according to it, I will apply my own *Ijtihād* as they did"[2]. Ibn al-Qayyim remarks that the companions of Abū Ḥanīfah unanimously agreed that he was of the opinion that weak ḥadīths, i.e. what is later called *Ḥasan*, are preferable to *Qiyās* (analogical reasoning) as far as matters of law [*Aḥkām*] are concerned[3]. Therefore, he adhered to a ḥadīth regarding laughing loudly during performing prayer, and gave his verdict according to it, invalidating not only the prayer performed, in this case, but also the ritual ablution, although it is not in keeping with his decision regarding the same action out of prayer. It is the common doctrine of the *ḥanafī* scholars that one should not have recourse to *Qiyās* unless there is no ḥadīth dealing with the matter under investigation[4]. It is well-known that Abū Yūsuf, a prominent student of Abū Ḥanīfah, disagrees with the decision of his master on a number of issues; some of these disagreements were because of ḥadīths transmitted later to him, of which his master was not aware. This is attested by a statement of Abū Yūsuf to the effect that if this particular ḥadīth reached his master, he would have followed it. This fact is indicated by Schacht when he deals with Abū Yūsuf's legal thought; he says: "In the details of his

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1 al-Qāsimī, p. 51; cf. al-Dārī, vol. 1, pp. 134-37, 143f, 171.
2 Su., 1, p. 53; cf. al-Ḥajawī, vol. 1, p. 354; Strzyzewska, p. 164.
3 Ibn Qayyim, 1, vol. 1, p. 77.
4 See the annotation on al-Shāṭibī, vol. 3, p. 23.

doctrine, Abū Yūsuf is more dependent on traditions than his master, because there were authoritative traditions in existence in his time"[1].

Such statements confirm that the matter of recognition of Ḥadīth as a basis of Islam was beyond question, although there were different views regarding the way according to which it should be adopted. For example, the *hanafī* school, or some of its scholars, dismisses an individual ḥadīth in three cases[2]:

(1) If it is related to a matter which should be known to the majority of the people [*mā ta'umm bih al-balwā*], since people are expected to ask a lot about such a matter, and it is hardly conceivable that it should be transmitted only by one or two transmitters. If this were the case, it would tend indicate that this particular ḥadīth was not sound.

(2) If the transmitter who transmitted a particular ḥadīth, acted or gave his judgement to its contrary, unless he did so before having knowledge of it, in which case, it would not affect the authority of the ḥadīth. However, this rule seems to be confined to the Companions and the learned authorities of the Successors, as they are not expected to transmit a ḥadīth and act contrary to it, unless they know that it is abrogated, or for any other valid reason.

(3) If it is not in keeping with the analogy, provided that its transmitter is not known as a doctor of law [*Faqīh or Mujtahid*].

Mālik b. Anas, the founder of another school of law in Madinah, has a different approach. He is reported to have recognised the authority of individual ḥadīths, as long as they do not contradict what the people of Madinah agree upon or their common practice[3]. Accordingly, he does not accept a ḥadīth stating the impurity resulting from a dog drinking from a vessel, and rejects another giving the choice to a

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1 Schacht, p. 301.
2 See Hītū, pp. 302-4; cf. al-Ashqar, 1, pp. 83f.
3 See id., p. 302.

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seller and a buyer to invalidate the selling procedure, since both ḥadīths are opposed to the common practice of the people of Madinah[1], who learned how to lead their lives from the Prophet and handed down this knowledge from one generation to another. To him, this contradiction indicates that these ḥadīths have some defect, and, therefore, do not constitute a binding authority, and the consensus of the people of Madinah upon a certain practice is stronger than an individual ḥadīth[2].

Whether other scholars agree with these views is another issue which does not concern us here; what is relevant to us is the fact that all the recognised scholars, even before al-Shāfi'ī, recognised Ḥadīth as a binding authority. Therefore, al-Shāfi'ī himself, who disagrees with some of the criteria displayed earlier, declares that there is not one person of knowledge [Ahl al-'ilm] who considers Allah's command to follow the Prophet and submit to his judgements as a controversial issue[3]. He also states that Muslims are in unanimous agreement that as long as the recognised Sunnah exists, it should not be abandoned in favour of a statement from any other authority, and that the outward divergence from Ḥadīth is due to the fact that: (1) They were not aware of the ḥadīth which their judgement contradicted. (2) They were aware of it, but they dismissed it because of the weakness of its transmitter or any other defect they discovered, which, in the eye of other scholars, would have no effect on its authority. (3) They had a ḥadīth to the contrary of that which reached the other scholars[4].

In any case, one concludes that Muslim scholars at that time resorted to systematic reasoning [Ra'y or Ijtihād] only in cases when there was no answer to the

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1 See I.B., 2, vol. 1, p. 3. Cf. al-Aṣbaḥī, 2, p. 466, where Mālik quotes a ḥadīth that allows such a choice, pointing out that he does not know a limit for this choice and that there is no practice regarding it.
2 Cf. al-Andalusī, 1, vol. 1, p. 224.
3 al-Qāsimī, p. 284.
4 See al-Subkī, p. 182.

matter they were dealing with in the Quran or the authoritative ḥadīths of which they were aware.

The two types of *ra'y* and the emergence of *Ahl al-Ḥadīth* and *Ahl al-ra'y*.

It is instructive to know that *ra'y* is considered to be of two types[1]:

(A) *Ra'y* which is mere discretion and not based upon any recognised authority; this type of *ra'y* is disapproved of by the Companions and the Successors, and all disapproving remarks regarding *ra'y* refer to it. 'Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb is reported to have put Muslims on their guard against *ra'y* in religious matters, pointing out that the companions of *ra'y* are the enemies of the *Sunnah*; they found the *Sunnah* hard to memorise and comprehend, therefore, they gave their own decisions in religious matters, contradicting the *Sunnah*[2]. He also reported that on the day of the truce of al-Ḥudaybiyah, it happened that he opposed what the Prophet intended to do, because he used his own discretion[3]. He was regretful to the extent that he performed a lot of pious deeds hoping that this would atone for the sin he had committed[4]. Regarding the same incident, Sahl b. Ḥunayf says: "O people! You should suspect your personal opinions concerning your religion. I remember myself on the day of Abū Jandal[5]; if I had had the power to refuse the order of Allah's Apostle, I would have refused it"[6].

B- *Ra'y* which means *Ijtihād*; that is to say, studying the matter in question carefully in the light of the statements of the two main sources, i.e. the Quran and the

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1 See Ibn Qayyim, 1, vol. 1, pp. 83-85.
2 Id., p. 55.
3 Id., pp. 55f.
4 See Ibn Hishām, vol. 2, pp. 316f.
5 Abū Jandal is the son of Suhayl b. 'Amr, who ratified the accord with the Muslims; he came to the Prophet on that day and was sent back with his father, according to the accord. See Ibn Hishām, vol. 2, pp. 318f.
6 See B2., vol. 9, pp. 306f, (n. 411); cf. B2., vol. 6, p. 347f, (n. 367); M2., vol. 3, pp. 980-82, (nos. 4405-8).

Sunnah of the Prophet.   As far as this type of *ra'y* is concerned, one finds that the Companions and the Successors were of two tendencies.

The first tendency is of those who followed the outward significance of the statements of the Quran and the Ḥadīth they were aware of, and rarely resorted to *Ijtihād*.   Most of the Madanī scholars represent this tendency, since they were surrounded by a considerable number of the Companions, who are said to amount to some ten thousand, while all the other provinces are said to have had only two thousand.   These Companions were able to provide them with many ḥadīths because of their direct association with the Prophet.   Along with that, they were provided with the judgements of the four Caliphs and other learned Companions, which helped them to overcome new problems not considered in the Quran.   This abundance of material encouraged them to depend on what they had heard from, or what had been reported to them on the authority of, the Prophet and other prominent scholars;   *Ijtihād* was applied only occasionally[1].   Moreover, some of them were reluctant to do anything but to restrict themselves to these authorities, as was reported about 'Abd Allah Ibn 'Umar, who is considered a typical representative of this tendency.   He is reported to have declared that knowledge consisted of three things: the Book of Allah [*Kitāb nāṭiq*], the recognised *Sunnah* [*Sunnah māḍiyah*] and the saying: 'I do not know' [*Lā a'lam*][2].   He is well-known for his strict adherence to the *Sunnah* of the Prophet and for his observance of accuracy in transmitting his ḥadīths, as we will see later.   We have already seen how he used to adduce sayings or actions of the Prophet as an answer to the questions he faced;   the following example is typical of his method in dealing with questions brought to him.   A man asked him about the touching of the Black Stone, and Ibn 'Umar replied that he saw the Apostle of Allah touching and kissing it.   The man asked: "Do you think I should still try to do that even if it was

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1 See Strzyzewska, p. 140.
2 al-Haythamī, vol. 1, p. 172.

very crowded and the people overwhelmed me?" Ibn 'Umar answered: "Leave the question 'Do you think [*ara'ayta*]' in Yemen! I saw the Apostle of Allah touching and kissing it"[1]. It seems that because of such a tendency, 'Āmir al-Sha'bī characterised him as good at Ḥadīth but not at *Fiqh*, whose piety and fear of God restricted him from giving any fatwa not based upon the Quran and the Ḥadīth[2]. al-'Abbās b. 'Abd al-Muṭṭalib (d. 33 A.H), Abū Hurayrah (d. 57 A.H.) and 'Abd Allah b. 'Amr b. al-'Āṣ are also reckoned to belong to this school of law[3].

There are a number of the Successors who followed Ibn 'Umar in his tendency. His son Sālim, a learned Successor d. 106 A.H., is said to have had the same inclination. Once, he was asked about a certain matter, and he replied that he had not heard anything about it. Having being asked to come up with his own decision, he refused and said: "I am afraid that I may change my decision after your departure and I could not find you then"[4]. Sa'īd b. al-Musayyib is also considered to belong to this school, as he is reported to have obtained numerous ḥadīths, plus a large number of the fatwas of Abū Bakr, 'Umar and other versed Companions[5].

Muḥammad b. Sīrīn, along with most of the Hijazi scholars[6], represents the tendency of following authorities [*nuṣūṣ*], rather than using *Ijtihād*, inasmuch as he is reported to have restricted himself to what he heard[7]. Unlike his fellow Iraqi scholars, 'Āmir al-Sha'bī is reported to have warned the people of using analogy, as it led, according to his view, to making what is forbidden lawful and vice versa; he recommended people to restrict themselves to acting according to what was conveyed

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1 See B2., vol. 2, p. 397, (n. 680); cf. id., vol. 2, pp. 402f, (n. 690).
2 al-Subkī, pp. 130f.
3 Id., p. 178.
4 Id., p. 179.
5 Id., p. 178. See p. 182, for a typical example that shows his method in dealing with questions brought to him.
6 See al-Khuḍarī, pp. 155-57; al-Ḥajawī, vol. 1, pp. 315f.
7 See D., vol. 1, p. 47.

to them by the Companions, who got what they heard from the Prophet by heart[1].
He is also reported as advising people to accept from *Ahl al-Ra'y* only what they
transmitted on the authority of the Companions, and to dismiss their own decisions
[*ra'y*][2].

The second tendency is that , generally speaking, of the Iraqi scholars who,
unlike the Hijazis, applied *Ijtihād* widely in the light of the main sources whenever
there was no direct guidance regarding the matter they were dealing with in the Quran
or in that part of the *Sunnah* of which they were aware. They would also dismiss
some individual ḥadīths if they contradicted clear analogical reasoning[3]. The wide
practice of *Ijtihād* can be traced back to the two first Caliphs, namely Abū Bakr and
'Umar, who as we have seen above applied *Ijtihād* and made their own decisions
whenever the need arose. In his letter regarding judicial procedure to Abū Mūsā al-
Ash'arī, the second Caliph makes it clear that one's own decision should be based
upon the Quran and the *Sunnah* [4]. 'Abd Allah b. Mas'ūd, a prominent figure of this
school, advised judges, in cases where the Quran and the *Sunnah* gave no guidance,
to apply *Ijtihād* carefully, and to take appropriate decisions[5].

Of the Successors, Ibrāhīm al-Nakha'ī is reckoned as belonging to this school
of law[6], as well as the Madanī, Rabī'ah b. Abī 'Abd al-Raḥmān, who, owing to his
usage of *Ra'y*, was called Rabī'at al-Ra'y[7]. However, it is said that this tendency,
which most Iraqi scholars followed, is an effect of the judicial method adopted by
'Alī, and 'Abd Allah b. Mas'ūd, who migrated to and settled in Iraq.

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1 See ibid.
2 See al-Subkī, p. 181.
3 al-Shahrastānī vol. 3, pp. 6-8.
4 See Ibn Qayyim, 1, vol. 1, pp. 85f. This idea can be understood from the following words: [*qāyis
al-umūr 'ind dhālik wa i'rif al-amthāl*], which come after the mention of the Quran and the *Sunnah*.
5 See above p. 72.
6 See al-Subkī, p. 180.
7 He is a prominent scholar, who transmitted a lot of ḥadīths and died in 136 A.H., see I.H., 4, vol.
3, pp. 258f.

Accordingly, one will infer that this type of *ra'y* was not just mere discretion; it was in fact dependent on a recognised authority, and, therefore, although some of the early scholars inclined not to resort to it or in fact restricted it to a few occasions, there were others who approved of it and moreover encouraged judges to make use of it, as being the only way to overcome new problems. Nevertheless, the scholars at this time were very cautious in keeping their own decisions distinct from the *Sunnah*, as the former were apt to be wrong, unlike the *Sunnah*, which was believed to be infallible. 'Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb is reported to have said: "The *Sunnah* is only what was enacted by the Prophet, therefore, (keep your own decisions distinct and) do not make erroneous decisions a *sunnah* for the Community [*Lā taj'alū khaṭa' al-ra'y sunnah li al-ummah*][1]. On another occasion, having given his decision regarding a particular issue, he asked his clerk to write: "This is what 'Umar has decided"[2].

These two tendencies were the starting points of what were later called *Ahl al-Ḥadīth* and *Ahl al-Ra'y*. Those who restricted themselves mainly to authorities (*al-nuṣūṣ*) were the nucleus of the former, and those who applied *Ijtihād* widely were the nucleus of the latter. Towards the beginning of the second century, the distinction between the two parties become unmistakable, and a situation of misunderstanding arose among them, to the extent that they began to suspect and denounce each other; *Ahl al-Ḥadīth* accused the others of abandoning Ḥadīth and resorting to their own decisions, while *Ahl al-Ra'y* claimed that their opponents were narrow-minded and unable to practice *Ijtihād*. Both parties, in fact, adopted a similar approach in the essentials, i.e. in following the Quran and the *Sunnah* of the Prophet, and in practising *Ijtihād* in matters not dealt with in either of them. Even Ibn 'Umar, who is looked on as the father of the school of *Ahl al-Ḥadīth*, is reported to have applied *Ijtihād* and

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1 Ibn Qayyim, 1, vol. 1, p. 54.
2 Id., p. 61

used analogy[1]. The only difference between the two schools is that, while *Ahl al-Ra'y* were at ease in using *Ijtihād* in order to meet new problems, because of the relative shortage of ḥadīths available to them[2], the others, *Ahl al-Ḥadīth*, restricted themselves mainly to statements of the Prophet and the learned Companions, and applied *Ijtihād* only occasionally. Notwithstanding, the dispute between these two schools continued, until the time al-Shāfi'ī, who pointed out that all Muslims unanimously agreed that as long as an authoritative *Sunnah* was known, it should not be abandoned in favour of any other authority, and that *ra'y*, which was based on the main principles, was necessary to deal with matters about which there was no direct guidance in the Quran and Ḥadīth. The initiative was acknowledged by Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal, the founder of the fourth school of law, who is reported as saying: "We, *Ahl al-Ḥadīth*, used to execrate *Ahl al-Ra'y*, and they did the same to us, until al-Shāfi'ī came and made peace between us"[3].

al-Muḥaddithūn & al-Fuqahā'.

It is important, however, to differentiate between the academic study of Ḥadīth and the recognition of Ḥadīth as a basis of Islam. Although almost all the community recognised Ḥadīth as an important source of Islam from the beginning, there was a certain group who indulged more than others in the study of ḥadīths, holding sessions and travelling from one place to another in order to collect them. These people are called the Traditionists (*al-Muḥaddithūn*); although, owing to the nature of their work, they were more interested in Ḥadīth than others and had certain ideas that in one way or another differed from those of others, they were by no means the only party to adopt Ḥadīth as a basic source of Islam. *al-Muḥaddithūn* themselves could be divided

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1 See Qal'ahjī, pp. 27f, where a number of examples of his *Ijtihād* are presented.
2 This is said to be because of two factors; the first is that only a few Companions migrated to them, and the second is the strict standards they put forward for criticising ḥadīths.
3 al-Andalusī, 1, vol. 1, p. 96.

into two groups: those whose task was merely to collect hadīths from different districts and to transmit them afterwards, and those whose task was also, as critics of Hadīth, to distinguish between genuine and spurious hadīths. Although a number of these authorities existed in each generation, they were naturally less in number than the former group.

Along with Traditionists, there was another group, who specialised in matters of law, called jurists (*Fuqahā'*). They had a good knowledge of Hadīth, but they were more interested in studying the Quran and Hadīth and identifying the law within them. Abū Yūsuf, a student of Abū Hanīfah, reported that al-A'mash, a famous critic of hadīths, asked him about a particular matter, and he gave him an answer. When al-A'mash interrogated him about his authority, Abū Yūsuf pointed out that his authority was a hadīth transmitted to him by al-A'mash himself, whereupon al-A'mash commented that he had known this particular hadīth even before Abū Yūsuf's parents got married, but he had not fully understood its significance before this moment. In another version al-A'mash is reported to have used doctors and druggists as examples for Jurists and scholars of Hadīth respectively[1]. It seems that "the function of the collection of *Ahādīth* and of their formal criticism (the criticism of the *Isnād*) was reserved for their collectors, whereas the function of their material criticism (the criticism of the text) was left for the Jurists and the commentators of the various collections"[2]. That is not to say that there were not scholars who had a tremendous knowledge in both Hadīth and *Fiqh* (law) such as Ahmad b. Hanbal the founder of the Hanbalite School and others. The further back we go, the more such learned scholars we find.

Therefore, the terminology '*al-Muhaddithūn*' or the scholars of Hadīth has nothing to do with the recognition of Hadīth as a basis of Islam, and all early Muslim

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1 See I.B., 1, pp. 130f.
2 Siddīqī, p. xxvii.

scholars were unanimously of the opinion that every ḥadīth from the Prophet which was proved to be reliable according to the canons laid down by them and was of religious character, was of great legal importance, second only to that of the Quran[1].

The Muʿtazilah.

The Muʿtazilah, founded at Baṣrah by Wāṣil b. ʿAṭāʾ (d. 131/ 748)[2], was a new heresy which emerged at the beginning of the second century. It is useful to note that al-Shāfiʿī, in *al-Risālah* and *al-Umm*, deals in detail with those who are said to have rejected ḥadīths, and al-Khuḍarī points out that al-Shāfiʿī's discussion shows that those whose ideas were discussed, rejected only individual ḥadīths which did not constitute absolute knowledge, and that they did not abandon the *Sunnah* if it was reported to them in a way which constituted absolute knowledge. It is stated that the ones who upheld this particular view belonged to Baṣrah, the place from which the Muʿtazilah emerged, and accordingly, this view is more likely ascribed to them[3]. Thus, it seems that even the Muʿtazilah, or at least most of them, did not refuse to accept the importance of Ḥadīth as a basis of Islam, but according to their own intellectual doctrine or standards, preferred the outcome of their own reasoning to individual ḥadīths and, moreover, did not accept these kinds of ḥadīths in matters connected with the creed [*al-ʿaqīdah*][4]. This doctrine led them to dismiss a considerable number of ḥadīths, which are accepted according to the conventional doctrine of the Muslims, on account of their outward contradiction of the reason[5]. Inasmuch as most ḥadīths, particularly those upon which the Islamic law is based, are

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1 Cf. Id., p. 197.
2 *E.I.*(2), vol. 7, p. 783; cf. Esposito, p. 72.
3 See al-Khuḍarī, pp. 195-97.
4 See al-ʿAbdah, p. 82. For more information about the doctrine of the various sects of the Muʿtazilah, see Ibn Ḥazm, 1, vol. 5, pp. 33-46; al-Shahrastānī, vol. 1, pp. 65-176.
5 See Ibn Qutaybah, pp. 176, 351, 450.

considered as individual and only some of them are considered as *Mutawātir*[1], only a small number of ḥadīths were left for the Mu'tazilah to make use of.

Moreover, concerning the various sects of the Mu'tazilah, al-Shahrastānī remarks that Abū al-Hudhayl, a student of Wāṣil, is reported to have believed that *Mutawātir* ḥadīths, which – according to the common doctrine – provide absolute knowledge, would not constitute the absolute knowledge unless they were transmitted by, at least, twenty pious transmitters [*Awliyā'* of Allah], among them one who was protected from sin[2]. However, there is no need to consider the validity of the Mu'tazilah's doctrine as this lies outside the scope of this thesis; it is sufficient to draw attention to the following:

(1) That this particular school emerged in the first half of the second century, and enjoyed its golden age during the reign of the Abbasid Caliph, al-Ma'mūn, who devoted himself to this doctrine and forced people to adopt it, later followed by al-Mu'taṣim and his son al-Wāthiq. It was not until the coming of al-Mutawakkil, a son of al-Mu'taṣim, in 232 A.H. who, had a considerable interest in the *Sunnah*, that the Sunni doctrine prevailed again[3].

(2) That despite their intellectual tendency, the Mu'tazilah, generally speaking, recognised Muhammad as a Messenger of Allah and accepted his *Sunnah* as long as it was reported in a way that met their own conditions. Ibn Qutaybah himself, in his book mentioned above, points out that even those who disagree with *Ahl al-Ḥadīth* are all, despite their heresy, in agreement that whoever holds fast to the *Sunnah* of the Prophet is the one who follows the right path and the way of guidance[4].

al-Shī'ah & al-Khawārij.

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1 For the definition of this term and different views held about it see Su., 2, vol. 2, pp. 176-179.
2 see al-Shahrastānī, vol. 1, pp. 79f.
3 See al-'Abdah, pp. 17ff.
4 See op. cit. p. 103.

For a more comprehensive picture, I would like briefly to consider the approach of another two main parties, namely the Shī'ah and al-Khawārij, who emerged during the dissension between 'Alī and Mu'āwiyah. As far as the Shī'ah is concerned, one finds that they accepted ḥadīths, as long as they were transmitted by their Imams or those who adopted their doctrine. They dismissed all other transmitters since they did not support 'Alī's cause and, accordingly, were not considered trustworthy. It is noteworthy that they believed that all the Companions, excluding a few of them like al-Miqdād b. al-Aswad, Abū Dharr al-Ghifārī and Salmān al-Fārisī, became infidels after the death of the Prophet, inasmuch as they denied the right of 'Alī to become Caliph directly after the Prophet[1]. Due to this heretical doctrine, they rejected a large number of ḥadīths which are reported by the most of the Companions.

al-Khawārij were another main party, the direct cause of whose emergence was the agreement of 'Alī and Mu'āwiyah, during the Battle of Ṣiffīn in 37 A.H., on two referees who would pronounce judgement according to the Quran. While the majority of 'Alī's army accepted the proposal, a group of warriors vigorously protested against it; they moved to Ḥarūrā' and elected 'Abd Allah b. Wahb al-Rāsibī as their leader[2]. As far as their attitude to Ḥadīth is concerned, they are said to have accepted ḥadīths which were transmitted by the Companions whom they trusted, excluding those who were declared infidels by them, such as 'Alī, 'Uthmān, al-Zubayr, 'Ā'ishah and Ibn 'Abbās. They are also reported as rejecting a number of ḥadīths, which are accepted by Sunni Muslims, in that they contradict the Quran, such as those that prescribe the stoning of a married person who commits adultery, and, to the contrary of the common doctrine, they believed that the hand of a burglar must be

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1 See Ẓahīr, pp. 49f, Su., 1, pp. 16f.
2 See E.I.(2), vol. 4, pp. 1074f.

cut off regardless of whether the amount he stole was tiny or large[1]. They are said to

depend only on ḥadīths known before *al-fitnah*, i.e. the dissension between 'Alī and

Mu'āwiyah after the killing of the third Caliph[2]. Their recognition of the *Sunnah* as a

binding authority is implied in a statement of 'Alī in which he advised Ibn 'Abbās to

debate with them using ḥadīths (*al-Sunan*), in that their teachings were more specific

than that of the Quran[3]. If they had not been adopting Ḥadīth as a binding authority,

'Alī would not have asked Ibn 'Abbās to use it as an argument against their opinions.

From the preceding discussion, one may conclude that, generally speaking, all

parties and schools in the early days of Islam recognised Ḥadīth or the *Sunnah* of the

Prophet as a main source of guidance, but that they differ from each other in the

conditions they put forward for the acceptance of ḥadīths, and in the way according to

which they considered them; this recognition is reflected in the fact that all these

parties believed that Muhammad was a Messenger of God and that they unanimously

agreed on several issues which are known only from Ḥadīth, such as the number of

rak'ahs in the five daily prayers. With regard to those who are reported to have asked

authorities to abandon ḥadīths and teach only the Quran, it seems to me that this

inclination was merely a result of certain views held by the parties discussed earlier,

rather than a result of the absence of the recognition of the *Sunnah* as a main source of

guidance. This conclusion is attested by the fact that, at that time, there was not, as

far as I have been able to discover, any recognised party who abandoned the *Sunnah*

altogether. It was a question of authenticity rather than a question of recognition.

<u>Discussion of Robson's arguments regarding the delay in the recognition of</u>

<u>Ḥadīth as a basis of Islam</u>.

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1 al-Ashqar, 1, pp. 15f.
2 See al-Shahrastānī, vol. 2, pp. 32f; al-Khuḍarī, p. 210. For more details about the doctrine of al-Khawārij, see Ibn Ḥazm, 1, vol. 5, pp. 29-33; al-Shahrastānī, vol. 2, pp. 23-58.
3 See al-Ashqar, pp. 21f, citing Su., 1.

I shall now consider the two arguments with which Robson supports the delay in the recognition of Ḥadīth as an important source of guidance, namely, the lack of a collected body of Ḥadīth, and the method adopted by Mālik in his *al-Muwaṭṭa'*. As far as the first argument is concerned, it is well-known that Muslims or Arabs in general, at the beginning, were dependent on their retentive memories[1] rather than on collected materials and that those who could write or read were relatively few. Nevertheless, Muslims, at the time of the Prophet, paid considerable attention to the Quran, the actual Word of God, in order to reduce it to writing, as it was the most important source of guidance with which they, including the Prophet, had nothing to do; but at the same time there were a number of written copies of ḥadīths kept by the Companions and the Successors[2].

After the death of the Prophet, Muslims felt that it was necessary to collect the scattered pieces of wood and other materials, which were used for writing down the Quranic verses at the time, and the task was accomplished during the time of the first Caliph, Abū Bakr, and under his patronage[3]. The direct reason for the collecting of the Quran was the death of a great number of people, who knew it by heart, on the battlefields; otherwise Muslims might have not felt the necessity for such an action until a later time. Abū Bakr said to Zayd b. Thābit: "To me has came 'Umar and said that a great number of the learned (*Qurrā'*) were killed in the battle of al-Yamāmah, and he was afraid that the casualties among them might increase on other battle-fields

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1 Reading through biographical works regarding the student of Ḥadīth during that period, one encounters a number of them who were very famous for their sharp and retentive memories; for example, Ibn 'Abbās is said to have got by heart a ḥadīth or even a long poem by hearing them once, not to mention Abū Hurayrah whose memory proved to be unchallengable. Of the Successors, Nāfi' and al-Zuhrī were also noted for their good memories. See M. A. al-Khaṭīb, p. 136.
2 *E.I.*(2), vol. 3, p. 24; cf. Robson 6, p. 86; Robson 15, p.459. For detailed information, see M. 'Ajāj al-Khaṭīb, pp. 343-357; al-A'ẓamī in his *Dirāsāt fi al-Ḥadīth al-nabawī*.
3 See B2., vol. 6, pp. 477f, (n. 509).

thereupon a large part of the Quran could be lost. Therefore he ('Umar) considered it advisable that I should have the Quran collected…"[1].

As regards Ḥadīth, there were many people who heard the Prophet say or saw him do something. Moreover, there were others, like Abū Hurayrah, who were interested in knowing and learning everything about him and associated with him as much as possible and, like 'Abd Allah b. 'Amr, who occupied themselves with writing down his sayings. It seems that the necessity of collecting Ḥadīth or *Sunnah* out of fear of losing them was not felt until the time of the second Caliph, 'Umar (d. 23 A.H.), who is the first, according to the materials available, to think formally and seriously of committing ḥadīths to writing; nevertheless, he refrained, although the Companions whom he consulted approved such an initiative, out of fear that people would not pay sufficient attention to the Quran, which was still mainly preserved by memory, and that they would engage themselves too fully in studying such a collection[2]. Next we come across an individual initiative by Ibn 'Abbās (d. 68 A.H.) who felt the necessity of collecting ḥadīths; he is reported to have said: "After the Apostle of Allah died, I said to one of al-Anṣār: "Let us ask the Prophet's Companions (in order to collect ḥadīths from them) as there are still a lot of them". As the Anṣārī did not realise the importance of such a work, Ibn 'Abbās left him and started doing the job himself[3]. His books are said to have amounted to a Camel-load[4]. Another attempt is attributed to 'Abd al-'Azīz b. Marwān, the ruler of Egypt (60-85 A.H.), who wrote to Kathīr b. Murrah al-Ḥaḍramī to ask him to write down what he had heard from the Companions of the Prophet except for the ḥadīths of Abū

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1 See Id., vol. 9. p. 228-230, (n. 301).
2 Ibn Sa'd, vol. 3, 1, p. 206. It was under the third Caliph, 'Uthmān, that the Quran was written down in a form of book, and a number of copies were sent to various districts. See B2., vol. 6, pp. 478-480, (n. 510); vol. 4, p. 466, (n. 709).
3 H., vol. 1, pp. 106f; Ibn Sa'd, vol. 2, 2, p. 121.
4 Ibn Sa'd, vol. 5, p. 216.

Hurayrah, which were already known to him; we are, however, not sure about the outcome of this attempt[1].

al-Suyūṭī suggests three reasons to account for the absence of formal Ḥadīth collections at the time of the Companions and the first generation of the Successors (*kibār al-Tābi'īn*): first, the good memory that some possessed at that time; second, the prohibition of writing down ḥadīths, at the beginning, from fear of confusing its materials with those of the Quran; and third, the fact that a lot of them were illiterate[2]. It was not until the end of the first century of Islam, that the first formal attempt to fulfil its goal was undertaken at the order and under the patronage of the Umayyad Caliph, 'Umar b. Abd al-'Azīz (ruled. 99-101 A.H), who was afraid of the perishability of *al-'Ilm* (Ḥadīth). He wrote to Abū Bakr b. Ḥazm: "Look for the knowledge of Ḥadīth and get it written, as I am afraid that religious knowledge will vanish and the religious learned will pass away (die). Do not accept anything save ḥadīths of the Prophet (Peace be upon him). Circulate the knowledge and teach the ignorant, for knowledge does not vanish except when it is kept secretly (to oneself)"[3]. Mālik reported the compilation of several books by Abū Bakr b. Ḥazm, which 'Umar asked to be sent to him, but he died before receiving any of them[4]. It seems, however, that 'Umar had the chance to see some of the fruits of his initiative; Ibn Shihāb al-Zuhrī is reported to have said that when 'Umar commissioned them to collect *al-Sunan*, they wrote several copies, and he sent a copy to every province under his power[5].

In any case, the early Caliphs used to have a council which consisted of learned people who were well-informed concerning the Quran and Ḥadīth. Ibn

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1 See M. 'Ajāj al-Khaṭīb, pp. 373-375.
2 Su., 2, vol. 1, p. 88.
3 B2., vol. 1, p. 79; cf. M. 'Ajāj al-Khaṭīb, pp. 328-332.
4 See I.B., 2, vol. 1, pp. 80f.
5 See I.B., 1, vol. 1, p. 76.

'Abbās says: "The Qurrā' (learned men knowing Quran by heart) were the people of 'Umar's meetings and his advisers whether they were old or young"[1]. Another method used by Caliphs and some early scholars was to ask people if they knew any ḥadīth from the Prophet regarding the matter they were dealing with, as we have seen above[2]. These two methods helped them to compensate, to some extent, for the absence of a collected body of Ḥadīth.

As far as the second argument, which is the method adopted in *al-Muwaṭṭa'*, is concerned, it seems to be rather an argument for the recognition of Ḥadīth as a basis of Islam. This idea is demonstrated by the fact that Mālik (d. 179) uses Ḥadīth as a basis for his decisions in many cases, as Robson admits[3]; his *al-Muwaṭṭa'* is said to contain around 822 ḥadīths, 600 hundred of which have complete *isnāds*, while 222 are in the form of *mursal*[4] which, according to the opinion held by Mālik, are of an equal authority to the *musnad* ones, as long as they are transmitted by trustworthy transmitters[5].

As for ḥadīths which Mālik reported by saying: "It has reached me [*balaghanī*]", or "On the authority of a trustworthy person[*'an al-thiqah*]", Ibn 'Abd al-Barr, who devoted a book to presenting the complete *isnāds* for ḥadīths which Mālik adduced with defective ones, states that all these ḥadīths, which amount to 61, are transmitted with a connected *isnād* by other transmitters with the exception of four, which are not known[6]. As far as the rest of his work is concerned, one should note the following:

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1 B2., vol. 9, pp. 287f, (n. 389).
2 See pp. 59-61.
3 Cf. Robson 2, p. 24, where he says that in his *al-Muwaṭṭa'* Mālik includes "only, at the most, over 800 traditions traced to the Prophet".
4 See Su., 4, vol. 1, p. 9.
5 See I.B., 2, vol. 1, pp. 2f.
6 Su., 4, vol. 1, p. 8.

(1)   With regard to legal statements or practices of the Companions and the Successors[1], one should note that Mālik includes them on the basis that he considers them legal authorities, inasmuch as the practices or the opinions of the Companions and even the Successors are believed to be based on sayings or actions of the Prophet which they followed scrupulously after due consideration[2]; or they were the result of the *Ijtihād* they applied in the light of the Quran and the *Sunnah* of the Prophet[3].

(2)   His producing the common practice of the people of Madinah in his book as an authority is due to his belief that such recognised practices do not need to be supported by ḥadīths, since they are more authoritative than an (individual) ḥadīth. This belief is stated distinctly by him in a discussion with Abū Yūsuf regarding the way in which *Adhān* is performed[4].

(3)   Regarding his own opinions that he includes, he is reported as saying that he is an ordinary human being and apt to make mistakes, and asking people to consider his opinions; to accept what is in accordance with the Book of Allah and the *Sunnah*, and to abandon what is not in accordance with them[5].

His recognition of Ḥadīth as a main source of legal decisions is shown by a number of anecdotes; once, while speaking to the Caliph Hārūn al-Rashīd, Mālik stated clearly that Allah sent Muhammad to us and enjoined us to obey him and follow his *Sunnah*[6]. Muṭarrif reported that whenever a certain person who held a heretical doctrine was mentioned in front of Mālik, he used to point out that 'Umar b. 'Abd al-'Azīz said that the Prophet and the rulers after him enacted certain practices, which

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1 These reports, called *Mawqūf* and *Maqṭū'*, according to the assessment of Abū Bakr al-Abharī, amount to 613 and 285 respectively, see Su., 4, vol. 1, p. 9.
2 Cf. Ṣiddīqī, p. 197.
3 Cf. al-Shāṭibī, vol. 4, pp. 4f.
4 al-Andalusī, 1, vol. 1, p. 224; see ibid. For another declaration of this doctrine, when he was asked about ṣā'.
5 Id., vol. 1, pp. 146f; cf. I.H., 4, vol. 10, p. 9.
6 Id., al-Andalusī, 1, vol. 1, p. 159; see his reverence for Ḥadīth pp. 153-62.

when held to, would accomplish the following of the Book of Allah...; no one should change them or consider something that disagrees with them[1]. On another occasion he was asked about someone who assumed the state of *Iḥrām* from Madinah, he replied to the effect that this was a divergence from the command of Allah and His Apostle, who enjoined Muslims to initiate *Iḥrām* from *al-Mīqāt*, and he expressed his fear, to the effect that such a man was exposing himself to tribulation in this life, and to severe punishment in the Hereafter, quoting the following verse: "...then let those beware who withstand the Messenger's order, lest some trial befall them or a grievous chastisement be inflicted on them" (xxiv. 63)[2].

It is important to note that this book is a handbook of law rather than a Ḥadīth book; this is indicated by a statement of al-Mufaḍḍal b. Muḥammad b. Ḥarb to the effect that 'Abd al-'Azīz al-Mājishūn (d. 164 A.H.) was the first to compile a book of a similar nature of that of *al-Muwaṭṭa'*, pointing out that this book did not contain ḥadīths at all[3]. This kind of book aim mainly to provide the community with verdicts and decisions regarding various matters according to Islamic law. Such books might adduce, from time to time, some statements which sustain the ideas included, but this is not necessary. A quick glance at Mālik's work will attest this claim; sometimes, one finds that Mālik is content to adduce ḥadīths or statements of the Companions or the Successors regarding the matter in question without any comments[4]; sometimes, he gives his judgement supporting it with a verse or a ḥadīth[5], and sometimes the judgement of Mālik is reported without presenting any authority at all[6]. Mālik himself points out that his *al-Muwaṭṭa'* contains ḥadīths from the Prophet, statements of the

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1 Id., vol. 1, p. 172.
2 Id., vol. 1, pp. 171f; see another anecdote p. 226
3 See I.B., 2, vol. 1, p. 86.
4 al-Aṣbaḥī, 2, the transmission of Yaḥyā al-Laythī, pp. 112-124, and *passim*.
5 See id., pp. 388, concerning the matter of *li'ān*, and 469, concerning *musāqāh* respectively.
6 See id., pp. 269, 289, 384, 412, 486-93 and *passim*.

Companions and the Successors, and *ra'y*, which consists of the unanimity of the people of Madinah[1]. One should not think, however, that these statements are the only ones that the author has obtained, unless he states that he is going to adduce all the authorities that he has, for the matters he is dealing with. As Mālik does not state his intention as such, and as the nature of his book does not prove this, one cannot justifiably conclude that he was content to establish the law only on the authorities he had provided, or even at his own discretion[2]. Following Robson's argument, are we to infer that the Quran was not considered as a source of guidance at that time, since Mālik does not mention certain verses regarding all the matters he deals with?

One is inclined to conclude that Mālik is neither expected to present all the authorities [*adillah*] he has, nor to include all the ḥadīths that were circulating at that time. This view is supported by the following:

(1) When Abū Ja'far al-Manṣūr suggested attaching *al-Muwaṭṭa'* to the Ka'bah and forcing people to observe its legal verdicts, Mālik prevented him from doing so on the grounds that Muslims of all provinces had their own ḥadīths and legal statements [*aqāwīl*] of their own scholars, from the Companions and others, which they had learned and followed. He pointed out to him that it was not practical, and even too difficult to force them to abandon what they believed, and asked him to leave them to follow what they chose for themselves[3].

(2) Mālik's work survived in different versions through his disciples; these versions vary in the way in which the ḥadīths are arranged, and more importantly in the number of ḥadīths they include. For example, the version of Abū Muṣ'ab al-Zuhrī is said to have contained one hundred ḥadīths more than the others[4]; the editors of this version remark that: (a) it has fifteen *musnad* ḥadīths and six *mursal* ones

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1 al-Andalusī, 1, vol. 1, p. 192; cf. p. 193.
2 Cf. Robson 2, pp. 24f.
3 al-Andalusī, 1, vol. 1, p. 193; cf. al-Qinnawjī, p. 278.
4 See Su., 4, vol. 1, p. 9.

which do not exist in Yaḥyā's version, (b) it has two connected ḥadīths which are transmitted in *mursal* form in Yaḥyā's version, (c) it has a *musnad*, which is transmitted in Yaḥyā's version in the form of *balāgh*[1], and (d) it has nine ḥadīths in the form of *mursal* and one in the form of *balāgh*, which have completed *isnāds* in Yaḥyā's version[2].

"A comparison of the Caliph's material in the two versions of *al-Muwaṭṭa'* which are available to us now, that of Yaḥyā b Yaḥyā [al-Laythī] and that of al-Shaybānī, is instructive. The only ḥadīth of Abū Bakr in the former version does not appear in the latter, and while there are three Prophetic ḥadīths on the authority of 'Uthmān in Yaḥyā's version, only one is found in al-Shaybānī's version"[3].

(3) Having being asked about the absence of some authorities, like 'Alī b. Abī Ṭālib and 'Abd Allah b. 'Abbās, Mālik replied to the effect that they did not settle in the province/city where he settled and that he did not meet their students who transmitted on their authority[4].

(4) It is pointed out that all transmitters on whose authority Mālik transmits ḥadīths in his *al-Muwaṭṭa'* are Madanī, excluding six men; Abū al-Zubayr from Makkah, Ayyūb al-Sakhtiyānī and Ḥumayd al-Ṭawīl from Baṣrah, 'Aṭā' b. 'Abd Allah from Khurāsān, 'Abd al-Karīm from the Peninsula and Ibrāhīm b. Abī 'Ablah from Damascus[5]. This would account for the absence of other ḥadīths on the authority of many other transmitters of various districts.

Summing up.

From the previous discussion, one would conclude the following:

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1 It is a ḥadīth transmitted by saying: "It has reached me" [*balaghanī*].
2 al-Aṣbaḥī, 1, the transmission of Abū Muṣ'ab al-Zuhrī, vol. 1, pp. 41f; for other differences among the various versions, see al-Qinnawjī, pp. 280-88.
3 al-JarAllah, pp. 58f
4 See Su., 4, vol. 1, p. 7.
5 Id., p. 10.

(1) In the early days of Islam, during the Prophet's lifetime and also after his death, the idea of the Ḥadīth or the *Sunnah* of the Prophet as one of the main sources of Islam was well-established and recognised by almost all the community.

(2) This recognition was on both formal and informal levels, i.e. it was a source of guidance for the rulers as well as for judges and scholars who were dealing with matters of law regarding all aspects of life. That is to say that the state was not ruled according to the desire of those who were in authority, and that the pious were not the only ones to seek guidance in Ḥadīth.

(3) In cases where there is no clear guidance either in the Quran or in Ḥadīth, the early, qualified scholars used to adopt the opinions of learned scholars, particularly those of the Companions, or to have recourse to *Ijtihād*, the process in which they would study the matter carefully using analogical reasoning [*Qiyās*] or other means, in order to form a decision.

(4) In the course of time, the opposition to certain kinds of ḥadīths began to emerge; this was a natural result of the development of new doctrines, like that of the Shī'ah or the Khawārij. Nevertheless, the opposition was an exception rather than a rule, and that is why the pious, as Robson calls them, who uphold Ḥadīth as a basic source of Islam, considered themselves to represent the community.

(5) Although al-Shāfi'ī deals with those who are said to reject Ḥadīth and refutes their arguments, his work does not aim to constitute Ḥadīth or the *Sunnah* as a main source of guidance; it rather aims to re-establish its authority, as far as those who dismissed it are concerned, and, on the other hand, to debate certain opinions and conditions regarding the adoption of individual ḥadīths put forward by some of his predecessors, pointing out what appeared to him as a divergence from the *Sunnah* in the early schools of law. He was in fact a great advocate of the conventional doctrine, i.e. the recognition of the Quran and Ḥadīth as main sources of guidance, and he argued ingeniously to support this recognised doctrine.

(6) The theory that Ḥadīth was not recognised as a basic authority until the time of al-Shāfiʿī is not warranted, as it has no cogent premises. It is refuted by the preceding discussion, and by "the general acceptance by all the Traditionists as well as the Orientalists of the fact that not long after the Prophet's death a large number of traditions were forged by all the political, sectarian and other Muslim parties in support of what they asserted. For if Ḥadīth was not accepted by all the Muslims as an authority, there would be no sense in forging Aḥādīth for any purpose"[1].

Although the authenticity of some statements adduced above may be doubted, one should notice that they were not the only evidence we have; our main evidence is the Quran and what are considered, by Muslim scholars, authentic ḥadīths reported by the authors of the six books and others. As far as statements or examples about which one may argue are concerned, I have to declare that they were presented as subsidiary evidence, inasmuch as it is sufficient, in my opinion, that they are in agreement with the clear indication of the main proofs or with their implications. To consider all these statements spurious until proven otherwise appears to reverse the burden of proof[2]. At any rate, one cannot but accept these results, since they are in keeping with what I have concluded, in the preceding chapter, regarding the importance of the *Sunnah* and its divine nature. To adopt Robson's claims, one needs to neglect unjustifiably the considerable and stringent evidence that proves the opposite.

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1 Ṣiddīqī, footnote 3, p. xviii.
2 Cf. Esposito, p. 82.

PART TWO

THE PRINCIPLES OF HADĪTH
IN THE EARLY DAYS OF ISLAM

PREAMBLE

ROBSON'S APPROACH TO THE SUBJECT

CHAPTER ONE

THE PRINCIPLES OF HADĪTH
DURING THE PROPHET'S LIFETIME

CHAPTER TWO

THE PRINCIPLES OF HADĪTH
IN THE FIRST CENTURY OF ISLAM

PREAMBLE

ROBSON'S APPROACH TO THE SUBJECT

Muslim and western scholars recognise the fact that, in the early days of Islam, the believers, namely the Companions and their Successors, engaged themselves in studying and circulating information regarding the Prophet Muhammad. Whether or not there were adequate principles regarding the transmission of Ḥadīth, at that time, is a crucial issue which needs more consideration and scrutiny. This part will deal with this very question, by showing first the image created by Robson, and secondly by examining his approach in the light of the evidence the writer has been able to collect from the Quran, Ḥadīth collections and other books concerning the principles of Ḥadīth.

Robson portrays the Muslim community in the early days as if it was engaging in both studying and inventing ḥadīths. He says: "What in fact took place was that men in different districts settled down to the study and, one must add, the invention of traditions. But this invention commonly had a good purpose behind it, and it served to establish the law"[1]. This image applies to all parties at that time without any exception: "It became the practice for members of various parties to invent traditions in order to uphold the views they wished to propagate. In this respect the pious section of the community was no different from the more worldly"[2]. Robson believes that people were free to enlarge on stories about the Prophet; he says: "No doubt some such stories would be enlarged as they passed from mouth to mouth, especially when there was a desire to impress foreigners who had been brought in to the fold of the new faith, and in course of time elements which had nothing to do with

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1 Robson 3, p. 98.
2 Robson, "Non-resistance in Islam", p. 3; cf. Robson 3, p. 99.

the real life of the Prophet would be introduced"[1]. If we accept his previous claim that stories about the Prophet were related for mere interest, we must consider that the transmission of ḥadīths was in a situation of anarchy, since there was no reason, according to Robson's claim, to prevent transmitters from enlarging or even inventing stories and ascribing them to the Prophet. This situation, which resulted in a vast number of ḥadīths attributed to the Prophet, made it necessary for the community to develop certain criteria, by which it would be possible to decide what was genuine and what was fictitious. Robson remarks: "Muslims generally were well aware that many spurious traditions had become current, and therefore efforts were made to guard against them"[2]. Eventually, and as a result of a great effort, "A very strict system of judging traditions in virtue of the *isnād* arose, but it is difficult to state when this began"[3]. Nevertheless, in a later article Robson becomes able to specify the date by stating that "The criticism of Tradition had begun in the second century of Islam, but it was at an elementary stage and still had to settle its principles"[4]. In his introduction to *Mishkat*, Robson admits that "By the second century the criticism of traditions was well developed, and warnings were given against unreliable transmitters"[5].

His only argument regarding the delay of the development of criticism of Ḥadīth, as far as I have discovered, is that "Mālik, in his *Muwaṭṭa'*, does not always trouble to give a complete *isnād*, which would suggest that by his time the method had not hardened into a strict system"[6].

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1 Robson 6, p. 86.
2 Id., p. 88; cf. Robson 15, p. 459, and Robson's introduction to *Mishkat*, pp. vi, vii.
3 Robson 2, p. 27.
4 Robson 6, p. 92.
5 *Mishkat*. vol. 1, p. vi.
6 Robson 2, p. 27; cf. Robson 6, p. 92.

At any rate, the real damage had been done before the time of the six recognised books' compilers "by the development of traditions which had no basis in fact, and their promulgation through channels recognised as reputable"[1].

Robson's views regarding the development of the principles of Ḥadīth can be summarised in two points:

(1) In the early days of Islam, with the absence of the principles of transmission, invention of ḥadīths was a common practice among the various parties in different districts, in order to establish the law, or to uphold views they wished to propagate, or merely to impress the new converts; this situation led to the circulation of many ḥadīths that had nothing to do with the real life of the Prophet.

(2) The development of criticism of Ḥadīth began, as a reaction to the considerable amount of fabricated ḥadīths which became current in different areas, and was well developed in the second century of Islam after the damage had been done.

To discuss these two points, I will deal with the nature of the transmission of Ḥadīth during the early days of Islam in two chapters; the first will be devoted to the principles of transmission and the standards of criticism of transmission, during the Prophet's lifetime, and the second will consider these two aspects of the transmission after the Prophet's death up to the time set by Robson as a starting point for criticism of Ḥadīth.

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1 Robson 4, p. 169.

CHAPTER ONE

THE PRINCIPLES OF ḤADĪTH
DURING THE PROPHET'S LIFETIME

In the preceding chapters I have reached the conclusion that in the early days of Islam, during the Prophet's lifetime and after his death, Muslims adopted the Book of Allah and the *Sunnah* of His Messenger as basic sources of guidance for the community at large in all aspects of life, and that they were very keen to observe their teachings, of which the instructions regarding the Principles of Ḥadīth are by no means an exception. This inclination is confirmed, as far as the Quran is concerned, by a statement attributed to Abū 'Abd al-Raḥmān al-Sulamī (d. 73 A.H.), in which he says: "We (the successors) have received the Quran from those (the Companions) who told us that whenever they learnt ten verses, they would not move to another ten until they comprehended their teachings. Therefore, they had been learning the Quran and how to lead their lives according to it"[1]. Regarding Ḥadīth, we have already seen how serious the companions and their Successors were in following the Prophet and emulating him in his actions. Therefore, in the present chapter, these two main sources will be considered, in an effort to identify their teachings regarding two features of the Principles of Ḥadīth, namely the principles of transmission and the standards of criticism of transmission.

THE QURAN AND THE PRINCIPLES OF ḤADĪTH.

A- Principles of transmission in the Quran.

It is a recognised doctrine in the Quran that conveying the Islamic teachings, the final Message of God to the whole of humanity, to others is one of the most

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1 Ibn Sa'd, vol. 6, p. 119.

important tasks prescribed to Muslims; "Let there arise out of you a band of people inviting to all that is good, enjoining what is right, and forbidding what is wrong: they are the ones to attain felicity"[1], "Say thou: 'This is my Way; I do invite unto Allah,– with a certain knowledge I and whoever follows me. Glory to Allah! and never will I joins gods with Allah!'"[2]. Accordingly an appropriate system to control this process is needed – a matter about which the Quran does not remain silent. In the following study we will discover that preparing the community to impart Islam through its two main sources, the Quran has set for the community the main principles of transmission, which should be observed while undertaking such an important task. The principles the present writer has been able to identify are as follows:

(1) Ordering people to be truthful.

The first principle of transmission is the command to believers to be straightforward in what they say and do. Throughout the Quran, there are a number of verses that enjoin and exhort people to be truthful and to accompany the righteous, showing them the rewards that the truthful people are going to receive. In one verse we are told: "O ye who believe! fear Allah and be with those who are truthful"[3]. In another we are informed: "Allah will say; 'This is a day on which the truthful will profit from their truth: theirs are gardens, with rivers flowing beneath,– their eternal Home: Allah well-pleased with them, and they with Allah: that is the mighty triumph (the fulfilment of all desires)'"[4].

(2) Prohibition of telling lies.

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1 Qur. iii. 104. See S., 2, vol. 1, p. 221.
2 Qur. xii. 108.
3 ix. 119.
4 v. 119; cf. iii. 15-17; xxxiii. 24, 35; lvii. 19.

A common message found in the Quran is the warning of people against telling lies in general: "... Shun the abomination of idols and shun the word that is false"[1]. There are other verses prohibiting falsehoods concerning God, His Messengers, His Books and His legislations. "... But who doth more wrong than one who invents a lie against Allah, to lead astray men without knowledge? For Allah guideth not people who do wrong"[2]. This verse is particularly concerned with ascribing prohibition to things which are not prohibited by God[3]. In the *Sūrah* of al-An'ām we come across a verse to the effect that: "But say not –for any false thing that your tongues may put forth,– 'This is lawful, and this is forbidden,' so as to ascribe false things to Allah. For those who ascribe false things to Allah, will never prosper"[4]. Other verses are devoted to showing people the shameful end, and the grievous punishment awaiting those who tell lies; "On the Day of Judgement wilt thou see those who told lies against Allah;– their faces will be turned black; is there not in Hell an abode for the Haughty"[5]. Another verse says: "Who doth more wrong than those who forge a lie against Allah? They will be brought before their lord, and the witnesses will say, "these are the ones who lied against their Lord! Behold! The curse of Allah is on those who do wrong!–"[6]. I will conclude with the verse which makes inventing false things the behaviour of those who do not believe in God, since those who believe in God will obey his command to be truthful, in order to get His blessings and avoid His grievous punishment; the verse says: "It is those who believe not in the Signs of Allah, that forge falsehood: it is they who lie!"[7].

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1 xxii. 30.
2 vi. 144; cf. ii. 79; iii. 94; vi. 21, 93; vii. 37; x. 17; xviii. 15; xxix. 68; xxxix. 32; lxi. 7.
3 See S., 2, vol. 1, p. 425.
4 xvi. 116.
5 xxxix. 60.
6 xi. 18; cf. ii. 10; vi. 93; ix. 77; x. 69; xvi. 56, 116; xx. 61.
7 xvi. 105; cf. iv. 50; v. 103.

(3) Prohibition of alteration.

This principle can be understood from the following verse: "Those who pervert the Truth in Our Signs are not hidden from Us. Which is better?– he that is cast into the Fire, or he that comes safe through, on the Day of Judgement. Do what ye will: verily He seeth (clearly) all that ye do"[1]. This verse contains a strong warning and threatens any one who attempts to deal falsely with, and distort, things related to God. This distortion of the truth can be carried out "either by corrupting the scriptures or turning them to false and selfish uses[2]; or by neglecting the signs of Allah in nature around them, or silencing His voice in their own conscience"[3]. There is another verse which shows us the punishment brought upon the Children of Israel because of their distorting of the Word which had been given to them and their altering of Allah's orders; "And remember We said: 'Enter this town, and eat of the plenty therein as ye wish; and enter the gate prostrating, and say: Forgive (us). We shall forgive you your faults and increase (the portion of) those who do good'. But the transgressors changed the word from that which had been given to them; so We sent on the transgressors a plague from heaven, for that they infringed (our command) repeatedly"[4]. There is another verse which shows us how the Jews did not deal honestly with their law; "... They change the words from their (right) places. They say: 'If ye are given this, take it, but if not, beware!'... For them there is disgrace in this world, and in the Hereafter a heavy punishment"[5]. Ibn 'Abbās interpreted the words which have been changed as follows: "They are the punishments enacted by

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1 xli. 40.
2 This interpretation is ascribed to Ibn 'Abbās, see al-Qurṭubī, vol. 15, p. 366.
3 A. Y. Alī, p. 1466.
4 ii. 58-59; see S., 2, vol. 1, p. 60; cf. ii. 75; iv. 46; v. 13, 41; vii. 161-62, and S., 2, vol. 1, pp. 477f.
5 v. 41.

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Allah in the Torah. The Jews replaced stoning (the punishment for committing adultery) with flogging and loss of face [*al-jald wa taswīd al-wajh*]"[1].

(4) The revival of the doctrine of responsibility and accountability.

This doctrine teaches people that they are responsible for their speech and actions, which should be in accordance with God's Will, and that they will receive reward or punishment accordingly. This teaching is connected with the doctrine of life after death in the Hereafter when every one – as Muslims believe – will be brought to justice and receive what he really deserves. A verse says: "And pursue not that of which thou hast no knowledge; for surely the hearing, the sight, the heart, all of those shall be questioned of"[2]. Qatādah is reported to have remarked that this verse meant: "Do not say: 'I saw, heard or knew, while you did not, because you will be asked about all these actions by Allah the Almighty"[3]. Concerning speech in particular, the Quran points out that for everyone there are two Angels – one is on his right and one is on his left – who are appointed to note down his deeds; "Not a word does he utter but there is a vigilant Guardian"[4].

This principle teaches Muslims the importance of being straightforward in their actions, and that they are not free to be otherwise, even when they have an axe to grind, since they will be interrogated about every single action they committed in their present life.

(5) Reminding people that Allah is the All-Hearing and the All-Knowing.

It is a very common doctrine in the Quran that "From Allah, verily nothing is hidden on the earth or in the heavens"[5]. With regard to speech, there is a verse which

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1 S., 2, vol. 1, pp. 343f.
2 xvii. 36; cf. xvi. 93; xxxvii. 24; xcix. 6-8.
3 S., 2, vol. 2, p. 159.
4 l. 18; cf. iv. 1. 81; xxxiii. 52; lxxxii. 10-12.
5 iii. 5; cf. xiv. 38.

declares: "And whether ye hide your word or make it known. He certainly has (full) knowledge of the secrets of (all) hearts"[1]. In another verse we read: "It is the same (to Him) whether any of you conceal his speech or declare it openly; whether he lie hid by night or walk forth freely by day"[2]. To the Muslims nothing can be hidden from Allah; therefore, the more they are sincere in their faith the more they observe these Divine characteristics and behave in the way that pleases God.

Considering these principles, one will recognise how important they are, to protect reports, particularly those of a religious nature – which are transmitted by one to another and handed down from one generation to a succeeding one – from invention or distortion. The more these principles are observed, the more transmissions become safe from diminution, addition and alteration. Bearing in mind the keen interest of the early Muslims in observing Quranic teaching, as reflected in their biographies, one will appreciate the significant role these principles have played in preserving transmissions, and the level of accuracy that the transmissions have received at the hands of sincere Muslim students and scholars of Ḥadīth.

B- Standards of criticism of transmission in the Quran.

Along with the previous principles of transmission, one can identify a number of standards regarding its criticism; these standards indicate to Muslims the most important criteria for distinguishing what is wrong from what is right and what is spurious from what is authentic. The present writer has been able to identify several aspects which may serve as standards for the criticism of transmission.

(1) The investigation of men's integrity.

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1 lxvii. 13.

2 xiii. 10; cf. ii. 77; iv. 108; vi. 3; xi. 5; xvi. 19, 23; xx. 7; xxi. 110; xxxvi. 76; xl. 80; lxiv. 4; lxxxvii. 7.

Guiding the community to distinguish between those whom one can trust and those whom one cannot trust, the Quran makes a clear distinction between two groups. The first comprises those who have characteristics which are praised by God, and accordingly, they should be cultivated, their characteristics should be emulated, and they are the ones to be trusted in all aspects of life; they are the ones who are truthful, just, God-fearing and with whom Allah is pleased. The second group consists of those people who have characteristics which are denounced by God, and accordingly, they should be avoided, their characteristics should be shunned, and they are the ones not to be trusted at all; they are the ones who are untruthful, transgressors, those who do wrong and with whom Allah is not pleased.

This distinction is shown by many verses dealing with the two groups to which I have alluded above; these verses may be read as statements of *al-Jarḥ wa al-taʿdīl* (technical terms in Ḥadīth scholarship, regarding the integrity of transmitters = praise and dispraise), which, as we shall see, will constitute the most important feature of Ḥadīth criticism. With regard to laudatory remarks, one finds many verses which can be classified in three sections:

I- Praising of individuals.

As an example, I will adduce two verses; the first says: "And there is a type of man who gives his life to earn the pleasure of Allah; and Allah is full of kindness to (His) devotees"[1]. This verse is said to be revealed as a laudatory statement to Ṣuhayb al-Rūmī, who while he was heading for Madinah in order to follow his fellow believers therein, was confronted with a group of Quraysh, who tried to stop him and did not leave him until he offered them all the money he had in Makkah. When he reached Madinah, the Prophet congratulated him for paying out his money for the sake of God[2]. The second verse states: "Thou wilt not find any people who believe in

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1 ii. 207. For another example, see xix. 55, which is attributed to Ismāʿīl.
2 See S., 1, vol. 1, pp. 184f; S., 2, vol. 1, p. 132.

Allah and the Last Day, loving those who oppose Allah and His Messenger, even though they were their fathers or their sons, or their brothers, or their kindred. For such He has written Faith in their hearts, and strengthened them with a spirit from Himself. And He will admit them to Gardens beneath which rivers flow, to dwell therein (for ever). Allah will be pleased with them, and they with Him..."[1]. This verse is attributed to a number of the companions who took part in the battle of Badr: Abū 'Ubaydah for killing his unbeliever father; Abū Bakr al-Ṣiddīq, who endeavoured to kill his unbeliever son; Muṣ'ab b. 'Umayr, who killed his brother; Ḥamzah, 'Alī and 'Ubaydah who killed a number of their unbelieving relatives[2]. These true believers are given as examples of the first group of people, who are firm, sincere and willing to give their money or lives to the cause of God.

II- Praising of a certain group.

An example of this feature is the verse regarding a group of the Companions who gave the pledge to the Prophet (the pledge of al-Riḍwān), at al-Ḥudaybiyah, that they would fight with him[3]. The verse declares: "Allah's good pleasure was on the believers when they swore fealty to thee under the tree. He knew what was in their hearts, and He sent down tranquillity to them; and He rewarded them with a speedy victory"[4]. This group of believers committed themselves to Islam; they obeyed the Prophet and were ready to fight with him until they died; therefore, they deserved blessings from their God.

III- General praise.

Many verses are found in the Quran expressing Allah's approval of those who behave in certain ways or possess specific characteristics: those who are kind and do good [al-Muḥsinūn], (Qur. ii. 195; iii. 134, 148; v. 13, 93.), those who are fair and

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1 lviii. 22.
2 See Ibn Kathīr, 2, vol. 4, p. 329; S., 2, vol. 3, p. 344.
3 See Ibn Hishām, vol. 2, pp. 315f; cf. Ibn Isḥāq, English ed., pp. 503f.
4 xlviii. 18; cf. lix. 8, 9, and S., 2, vol. 3, pp. 351f.

just [*al-Muqsiṭūn*], (v. 42; xlix. 9; lx. 8.), those who accept guidance [*al-Muhtadūn*], (ii. 156-57.), those who are God-fearing and act rightly [*al-Muttaqūn*], (ii. 177; iii. 76; ix. 4,7.), those who are sincere [*al-Ṣādiqūn*], (xlix. 15.), those who are firm and steadfast [*al-Ṣābirūn*], (iii. 146.), those who keep themselves pure and clean [*al-Mutaṭahhirūn*], (see ii. 222; ix. 108.) and those who fight in the cause of Allah, (see lxi. 4.). These are the ones who will prosper [*al-Muflihūn*], (ii. 2-5; iii. 104; vii. 157; ix. 88; xxiv. 51; xxx. 38; xxxi. 5; lviii. 22; lxiv. 16.), who will triumph [*al-Fā'izūn*], (xxiv, 52.), and who will be the companions of the Garden [*Aṣḥāb al-Jannah*], (vii. 42; xi. 23; xlvi. 14.).

As far as censorious remarks are concerned, there are also a number of verses, which can be classified in three sections.

I- Disparaging of individuals.

al-Naḍr b. al-Ḥārith was a notorious opponent of the Prophet's mission; he used to pursue those who were about to embrace Islam and try to deter them from doing so by offering them food, alcohol and song, claiming that these entertainments were much better than those to which Muhammad was summoning people, i.e. prayer, fasting and suchlike. This behaviour was the direct cause – as commentators say – of the revelation of the following verse: "But there are, among men, those who purchase idle tales, without Knowledge (or meaning), to mislead (men) from the path of Allah and throw ridicule (on the path): for such there will be a humiliating chastisement"[1]. Although the incident of al-Naḍr was the direct cause of the revelation of this verse, it included all those who were hindering people from following the right path assigned by their Creator, to which all His messengers summoned their people. There are other verses which are said to be connected with

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1 xxxi. 6; see S., 2, vol. 2, pp. 486f. Cf. xxii. 3, which is attributed to the same person, see S., 2, vol. 2, p. 280. For another example see ix. 75-77, and S., 2, vol. 1, pp. 551-52.

another notorious pagan figure called al-Walīd b. al-Mughīrah. The verses read: "Obey not every mean,– swearer, a slanderer, going about with calumnies, (habitually) hindering (all) good, transgressing beyond bounds, deep in sin, violent (and cruel),– with all that of a doubtful birth,– ..."[1].

These verses indicate that such figures should be avoided and that what they say should be rejected, since they are apt to alter the truth intentionally. However, this rejection is not restricted to unbelievers, as there is a verse, in which a believer who failed to carry out his task and gave wrong information was labelled as *fāsiq*, and Muslims were asked to put the information he reported under investigation, as we shall see later in this chapter.

II- Disparaging of a certain group.

There is a *Sūrah* in the Quran called *al-Munāfiqūn* (the Hypocrites) in which we read: "When the Hypocrites come to thee, they say, "We bear witness that thou art indeed the Messenger of Allah". Yea, Allah knoweth that thou art indeed His Messenger, and Allah beareth witness that the Hypocrites are indeed liars ..."[2]; then the verses go on to show their wrong actions and bad qualities. Moreover, the *Sūrah* of al-Tawbah is almost completely devoted to Hypocrites and their characteristics. Ibn 'Abbās, when asked about it, said: "It is the one which exposes the Hypocrites..."[3]. Ḥudhayfah b. al-Yamān is reported to have said: "You call it the *Sūrah* of al-Tawbah (Repentance), while it is (really) the *Sūrah* of al-'Adhāb; not one of *al-Munāfiqūn* has remained untouched by it"[4].

These verses divulge the secret of the most bitter enemies of Islam at the time, as they pretended to be believers, while they were not; therefore, their characteristics were disclosed and a warning issued against them, "When thou lookest at them, their

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1 lxviii. 10-16; see S., 2, vol. 3, p. 426.
2 lxiii. 1-5; cf. ii. 8-16; ix. 42, and S., 2, vol. 1, p. 537; xxiv. 47-50, and S., 2, vol. 2, pp. 344f.
3 S., 2, vol. 1, p. 519.
4 Ibid.

bodies please thee; and when they speak, thou listenest to their words. They are as (worthless as hollow) pieces of timber propped up, (unable to stand on their own)[1]. They think that every cry is against them. They are the enemies; so beware of them. The curse of Allah be on them! How are they deluded (away from the truth)!"[2].

III- General disparaging.

In contrast to the verses expressing Allah's approval of those who behave in certain ways or possess specific characteristics, there are also verses expressing Allah's disapproval of those who behave in a contrary manner or possess unpleasant characteristics: those who are liars [al-Kādhibūn], (xvi. 105; xxix. 12; xxxvii. 152; lxiii. 1.), those who are treacherous [al-Khā'inūn], (viii. 58; cf. iv. 107; xxii. 38.), those who are transgressors [al-Mu'tadūn], (ii. 190; cf. v. 87; vii. 55; xxiii. 7.), those who are arrogant [al-Mustakbirūn], (xvi. 23; cf. iv. 36; xxxi. 18; lvii. 23.), those who are wasters [al-Musrifūn], (vii, 31.), those who do mischief [al-Mufsidūn], (vi. 64; xxviii. 77.), those who do wrong [al-Zālimūn], (iii. 57, 140; v.45; xlii. 40.), and those who reject Faith [al-Kāfirūn], (iii. 32; xxx. 45.). These are the ones who will lose [al-Khāsirūn], (ii. 27, 121), and who will be the companions of the Fire [Aṣḥāb al-Nār], (ii. 39, 81, 217, 275).

These verses, along with many others, regarding the praise or the dispraise of different people, show how important this kind of criticism is from the Islamic point of view, particularly when the issue in question has a religious character. Nevertheless, one should note that these statements are general remarks from which Muslims should draw their own conclusions, in order to determine what characteristics are needed according to the field they are considering. For example, when Muslims deal with Ḥadīth, which they believe to be a kind of revelation in one

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1 That is to say that "they have no firm character themselves, and for others they are unsafe props to rely upon". See A. Alī, p. 1751.
2 Qur. lxiii. 4.

way or another, the criticism of men will play a crucial role, and they will accept, in this field, only those who are truthful, righteous, God-fearing and have all the other qualities important for engaging in this field. In any case, one can confidently conclude that the criticism of men, or as it is come to be known *'Ilm al-Jarḥ wa al-Taʻdīl* ', started and had its bases in the Quran itself[1], in which one finds a clear distinction between those who can be trusted and those who are in the opposite position, praising the former group and denouncing the latter.

(2) Demanding the tested integrity of an informant.

As far as testimony is concerned, there is a distinct command in the Quran to the effect that only straightforward, trustworthy people are qualified to give testimony; "...and take for witness two persons from among you, endued with justice, and establish the evidence for the sake of Allah"[2]. Another verse reads: "...And get two witnesses out of your own men. And if there are not two men, then a man and two women, such as ye choose, for witnesses..."[3]. The term '*'Adl*' means, in the general sense, the one with whose sayings and judgements others are satisfied[4]. As a restricted technical term, Ibrāhīm al-Nakhaʻī reported that it used to be said that the trustworthy man is the one who is not suspected (regarding his straightness)[5], and al-Māwardī describes it as a state of moral and religious perfection[6]. Commenting on the sentence [*min man tarḍawn mina al-shuhadā'*] of the second verse, Mujāhid states that it means two trustworthy [*'adl*], free, Muslim male witnesses[7]. Muslim scholars

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1 Cf. al-Muʻallimī, the introduction to his *'Ilm al-rijāl*.
2 lxv. 2; cf. v. 106. The expression '*Dhaway 'Adl*' means those who are characterised with straightness and honesty so that one can trust them, see S., 2, vol. 3, p. 399.
3 ii. 282.
4 Ibn Manẓūr, vol. 2, p. 706.
5 Kh., 3, pp. 78f.
6 See *E.I.*(2), vol. 1, p. 209.
7 al-Bayhaqī, vol. 10, p. 163; cf. S., 2, vol. 3, p. 399. For a detailed presentation of the meaning of *'adl*, see al-Aʻẓamī, pp. 23-30.

are of the opinion that the trustworthiness demanded in those who bear witness [al-shuhūd] is also demanded in transmitters of ḥadīths, because they are considered the equivalent of witnesses; and that testimony differs from transmission in two respects, namely the condition of being free and the condition of being male[1]. ʿAbd Allah b. ʿAbbās is reported as advising students of Ḥadīth that they should accept someone's learning (of Ḥadīth) only if they accepted his testimony, and a similar statement is attributed to Ibn Sīrīn[2]. Abū Nuʿaym, al-Faḍl b. Dukayn d. 219 A.H., is reported to have pointed out that transmitting ḥadīths is one of the most important types of testimony[3]. Bahz b. Asad, a student of Shuʿbah d. after 200 A.H., is reported to have said, whenever a sound *isnād* was mentioned in front of him: "These are testimonies of trustworthy men, one to the other", and when an unsound *isnād* was mentioned in front of him, he would reject it and point out that if someone owed another ten Dirhams, but the debt was denied, the lender would not be able to get his money back, until he presented two trustworthy witnesses; the religion of Allah was more worthy to be received only from trustworthy transmitters[4]. Accordingly, information adduced by someone who is considered as unreliable should not be accepted; it should be submitted to careful scrutiny, in order to ascertain its genuineness. This rule is supported by the following verse: "O, ye who believe, if a sinner (*fāsiq*) comes to you with any news, ascertain the truth, lest ye harm people unwittingly and afterwards become full of repentance for what ye have done"[5]. Quoting the verses mentioned above, Muslim remarks that these verses prove that

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1 See Su., 2, vol. 1, p. 300.
2 See Ibn ʿAdī, 1, p. 152.
3 Kh., 3, p. 77.
4 Ibid.
5 xlix, 6. This verse is attributed to al-Walīd b. ʿUqbah, whom the Prophet sent to collect alms money from Banū al-Muṣṭaliq, but when they came out to welcome him, he misinterpreted their action, and returned back to the Prophet, giving wrong information. See Ibn Kathīr, 2, vol. 4, p. 208ff, al-Qurṭubī, vol. 16, p. 311.

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reports transmitted by a *fāsiq* should not be accepted, and that the testimony of someone who is not *'adl* should be rejected. He also indicates that although the transmission of ḥadīths may differ from testimony (*shahādah*) in certain respects, in most respects they are equivalent, inasmuch as a transmission of a *fāsiq* is not acceptable to scholars, just as his testimony is rejected by them[1].

It is interesting to note that the Quran also warns Muslims against those who may have some good qualities, which are used as a cover for their unsatisfactory intentions or beliefs. There is a verse said to be attributed to al-Akhnas b. Shurayq who came to the Prophet Muhammad and claimed falsely that he embraced Islam and swore that he loved the Messenger of Allah[2]. This verse reads: "There is a type of man whose speech about this world's life may dazzle thee, and he calls Allah to witness about what is in his heart; yet is he the most contentious of enemies"[3]. In the second *Sūrah* of the Quran we read: "Of the people there are some who say: "We believe in Allah and the Last day:" but they do not (really) believe. Fain would they deceive Allah and those who believe, but they only deceive themselves, and realise (it) not!"[4]. These verses indicate that Muslims should not base their verdicts of people on outward qualities, particularly in important issues, as this may lead them to mistaken verdicts.

It is recognised as impossible, in many cases, for someone to reach an absolute conclusion regarding the inherent integrity of a particular person, as it is not necessarily evident, and can be known for certain by God only. What one should do, whenever such investigation is needed, is to conduct a careful consideration, in order to reach what may called tested integrity. A typical example of this careful consideration is an anecdote in which a man is reported to have born witness in front

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1 Ml., introduction, vol. 1, pp. 61f; cf. Juynboll, "Muslim introduction ...", pp. 272f.
2 S., 2, vol. 1, pp. 132f.
3 ii. 204.
4 ii. 8-9; cf. ii. 204; lxiii. 1-4.

of 'Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb. As 'Umar did not know the man, he asked him to bring someone who knew him as a referee. Someone came and praised the man in question as trustworthy. 'Umar asked the referee whether the man he praised was his near neighbour, for him to know him so closely, and the referee answered in the negative, 'Umar asked whether he dealt with him in money which would reflect on his honesty, and the referee also answered in the negative, 'Umar lastly asked whether he travelled with him, as travelling discloses one's real behaviour, and the referee answered in the negative, whereupon 'Umar told the referee that he did not know the man, and asked the man to bring someone else. In another version, 'Umar is reported to have said to the referee: "I am afraid that you have only seen him offering prayers at the mosque"[1].

It is worthy of note that scholars of Ḥadīth differentiate between evident integrity and tested integrity [al-'adālah al-ẓāhirah and al-'adālah al-bāṭinah[2]respectively], and they do not accept the transmission of a student of Ḥadīth until his tested integrity is established, rejecting the opinion of those who incline to accept the transmission of al-mastūr, i.e. an informant of evident integrity, whose tested integrity is not established[3].

(3) Scrutiny of the texts.

Although the Quran has paid considerable attention to criticising the media through which information is being conveyed, it has not neglected by any means what is called internal investigation or scrutiny of the materials. In the Sūrah of al-Ḥujurāt, we find a verse which says: "O, ye who believe, if a sinner comes to you with any news, ascertain the truth, lest ye harm people unwittingly and afterwards become full

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1 Kh., 3, p. 84.
2 This term can be translated as inherent integrity which is not necessarily evident, but this is not meant, since it cannot be absolutely established; what is meant is tested integrity which is decided after appropriate consideration.
3 See Su., 2, vol. 1, pp. 299f.

of repentance for what ye have done"[1]. This verse draws Muslims' attention to two essential points that help them to be on their guard against making any erroneous decision; the first is the importance of criticising information reported to them, and the second is that the transmission of an unreliable transmitter should not be accepted[2]. From this warning which is given to believers, in order to prevent them doing harm to others, a stronger warning will be understood when the issue concerns God, His Books, and His Messengers. In the light of this verse, and as far as Ḥadīth is concerned, Muslims are urgently required to verify materials regarding their Prophet as far as possible. They are not permitted to cite ḥadīths, in order to determine what is lawful and what is forbidden, without appropriate investigation. There is another verse, in which Muslims are asked not to propagate information they receive before consulting those who are in charge among them, who differ from one field to another; "When there comes to them some matter touching (public) safety or fear, they divulge it. If they had only referred it to the Messenger or to those charged with authority among them, the proper investigators would have known it from them (direct)..."[3]. This scrutiny should be carried out by the experts in each field, who are qualified to take a decision as to whether this particular information is genuine or spurious, suitable to be circulated or not. This reminds us of the general rule which advises those who do not know to ask those who have knowledge, instead of depending on their own judgement; "And before thee We sent none but men, to whom We granted inspiration: If ye realise this not, ask of those who possess the message"[4].

The necessity of verifying items of information before accepting them is also indicated by the disapproval, found in the Quran, of listening to, and accepting, falsehood. There is a verse denouncing those who accept information without

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1 xlix. 6.
2 Cf. al-Rāzī, Muḥammad b. 'Umar, vol. 7, p. 589.
3 iv. 83.
4 Qur. xvi. 43; xxi. 7; cf. al-Rāzī, Muḥammad b. 'Umar, vol. 5, p. 460.

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verifying it; the verse says: "O Messenger, let not those grieve thee, who race each other into Unbelief: (whether it be) among those who say, 'we believe' with their lips but whose hearts have no faith; or it be among the Jews —men who will listen to any lie,– will listen even to others who have never so much as come to thee. They change the words from their (right) places ... For them there is disgrace in this world, and in the Hereafter a heavy punishment"[1]. This verse denounces these people because first they were eager to accept any information from their Rabbis regarding God or His Books, whether it was genuine or not; secondly, because they had altered God's commands[2]. It also indicates that they should not have accepted distorted information, and that they should have verified its authenticity, a procedure that would have prevented them committing this dreadful mistake.

Lastly, I would conclude with an example from the Quran, which shows us a process of criticism of a statement, by considering some of the aspects connected to it. The statement is of the wife of al-'Azīz, the master of Yūsuf, in which she claimed that Yūsuf had assaulted her, while her husband was away from home and she resisted. The verses go on: "He [Yūsuf] said: "It was she that sought to seduce me– from my (true) self". And one of her household saw (this) and bore witness, (thus):– "If it be that his shirt is rent from the front, then is her tale true, and he is a liar! But if it be that this shirt is torn from the back, then is she the liar, and he is telling the truth!". So when he saw his shirt,– that it was torn at the back,– (her husband) said: "Behold! it is a snare of you women! truly, mighty is your snare! ..."""[3]. Considering the circumstantial evidence, the master was able to establish the false nature of his wife's statements beyond doubt.

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1 v. 41.
2 See S., 2, vol. 1, pp. 343f.
3 xii. 26-28.

As far as I have been able to discover, these are the main standards regarding criticism of transmission in the Quran. they cover, as we have seen, both features of transmission; the people who convey the information [*isnād*], and the material adduced by them [*matn*]. This is not pretend that all Muslims in the early days of Islam observed the principles of transmission and applied the standards of the criticism of transmission carefully; I believe, however, that at least some of them observed these principles and applied standards regarding the criticism of transmission, as the following chapter will demonstrate. These are people whose painstaking efforts should be publicised and given truer appreciation, since they were the representatives of scholarly work in this field, who were able, as far as their human capability allowed, to distinguish, with the help of these principles and standards, between genuine and spurious ḥadīths, and thus preserved genuine ones from alteration, diminution and addition.

ḤADĪTH AND THE PRINCIPLES OF ḤADĪTH.

C- Principles of transmission in Ḥadīth.

It is well-known that the Prophet asked his Companions to convey his teachings to others. Bukhārī reports a ḥadīth in which the Prophet is reported as saying: "It is incumbent upon those who are present to inform those who are absent because those who are absent might comprehend (what I have said) better than the present audience"[1]. There is another ḥadīth that says: "Convey (my teachings) to the people even if it were a single sentence ..."[2]. Along with this command, one would expect some principles that would make the process of transmission more efficient. The Prophet, as a bearer of God's message to mankind, put forward a number of principles to be observed, which , in essentials, confirm those identified from the

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1 B2., vol. 1, p. 58, (n. 67); cf. p. 82, (n. 104), and p. 83, (n. 105).
2 Id., vol. 4, p. 442, (n. 667); cf. T., vol. 2, p. 111; *Mishkat*. vol. 1, p. 50.

Quran and add some more principles or details to the issue in question. These principles can be inferred from a number of hadīths which will be dealt with in this section. The aim here is to study the indications of these reports rather than scrutinising their authenticity. Considering the Hadīth materials available to us, we may deduce the following principles:

(1) Confirming the doctrine of responsibility and accountability.

This doctrine, which is well-established in the Quran, is expressed in Hadīth as well. Mu'ādh b. Jabal reported the Prophet as saying, pointing to his tongue,: "Beware of this". Whereupon Mu'ādh said: "O Messenger of Allah, are we responsible for what we have said?'. The Prophet answered: "O Mu'ādh, it is the harvests of people's tongues which cause them to be sent to Hell"[1]. Abū Hurayrah reported the Prophet as saying: "Do you know the thing which most commonly brings people into paradise? It is fear of God and good character. Do you know what most commonly brings people into hell? It is two hollow things: the mouth and the private parts"[2]. Another hadīth which is reported on the authority of Bilāl b. al-Hārith says: "A man speaks a good word, not realising its worth, for which God records for him His pleasure till the day he meets Him; and a man speaks an evil word, not realising its importance, for which God records for him His displeasure till the day he meets Him"[3].

These hadīths state clearly that every one will be brought to account for every word that he utters, and will receive accordingly what he deserves, whether it be reward or punishment. This principle will make one careful to avoid the utterance of

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1 T., vol. 2, pp. 102f; cf. A., vol. 5, p. 231.
2 *Mishkat.* vol. 3, p. 1008. It is transmitted by al-Tirmidhī and Ibn Mājah.
3 Ibid. The compiler says: Mālik, al-Tirmidhī and Ibn Mājah transmitted something to the same effect.

any word which makes God displeased with him, if he wishes His blessings and fears His chastisement.

(2) Ordering people to be truthful and prohibiting telling lies.

This principle is one of the essential teachings of the Quran as well as of Hadīth. 'Abd Allah b. Mas'ūd reported the Prophet as saying: "Adhere to truth, for truth leads to good deeds and good deeds lead him who does them to Paradise. If a man continues to speak the truth and make truth his object, he will be recorded in God's presence ['ind Allah] as eminently truthful. Avoid falsehood, for falsehood leads to wickedness and wickedness leads to hell; and if a man continues to speak falsehood and make falsehood his object, he will recorded in God's presence ['ind Allah] as a great liar"[1]. There is a hadīth which makes telling lies a sign of the hypocrites; Abū Hurayrah reported the Prophet as saying: "The signs of a hypocrite are three: 1- whenever he speaks, he tells a lie; 2- whenever he promises, he always breaks it (his promise); 3- if you trust him, he proves to be dishonest"[2].

There are many other hadīths dealing with this principle that one can cite; however, the ones adduced above seem to be sufficient to elucidate how important adherence to the truth is for a believer, since it is considered to be the way for someone to be admitted to Paradise, the ultimate goal of all Muslims.

(3) Prohibiting fabrications and inventions of hadīths.

This is a well established principle which is expressed in many hadīths. In one al-Zubayr b. al-'Awwām reported that he heard the Prophet say: "Whoever tells a lie against me (intentionally) then (surely) let him occupy his seat in Hell-Fire"[3]. This

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1 Id., p. 1006; cf. B2., vol. 8, pp. 75f, (n. 116); M2., vol. 4, pp. 1375f, (nos. 637-39); A.D., vol. 5, p. 264.

2 B2., vol. 1, p. 31, (n. 32); cf. ibid., (n. 33). For more hadīths on this subject see *Mishkat.* vol. 3, p. 1010.

3 B2., vol. 1, p. 83, (n. 107); cf. ibid., (n. 106), p. 84, (nos. 108-110); M1., introduction, vol. 1, pp. 67f; Kh., 3, p. 166.

particular ḥadīth has many versions, to the extent that scholars of Ḥadīth present it as an example for *Mutawātir* ḥadīths[1]. Another ḥadīth reads: "Verily, one of the worst lies is to claim falsely to be the son of someone other than one's real father, or to claim to have had a dream one has not had, or to attribute to me what I have not said"[2]. Furthermore, the Prophet is reported to have said: "If any one relates a ḥadīth from me thinking that it is false, he is one of the liars"[3]. Commenting on this ḥadīth al-Ḥākim says that this statement is a threat to any one who transmits ḥadīths that he knows to be spurious, even if he is not a liar himself[4]. al-Dāraquṭnī holds a stricter view; he is of the opinion that the outward significance of this ḥadīth takes into account even those who transmit ḥadīths about whose authenticity they have some doubt[5].

Citing this ḥadīth, Abū Ḥātim comments that the fact that the ḥadīth uses the word 'think' [*yurā* or *yarā*] instead of 'know' [*ya'lam*] indicates that whoever transmits a ḥadīth whose authenticity he doubts is included in the outward meaning of this statement[6]. Muslims are also taught that telling lies about the Prophet is a greater sin than telling lies about others. al-Mughīrah reported the Prophet as saying: "Ascribing false things to me is not like ascribing false things to anyone else. Whosoever tells a lie against me intentionally, then surely let him occupy his seat in Hell-Fire"[7]. This distinction is supported by the belief of Muslims that the Prophet Muhammad is a Messenger of God, and that much of what is ascribed to him is considered a type of divine revelation. It can also be understood from a ḥadīth in

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1 See al-Nawawī, 2, vol. 2, pp. 177f. al-Suyūṭī in his *Taḥdhīr al-khawāṣṣ* adduces several versions of this ḥadīth, see pp. 8-26, and in his *Tadrīb al-rāwī*, he points out that it is transmitted by over seventy of the Companions, see vol. 2, p. 177f.
2 B2., vol. 4, p. 467, (n. 712).
3 *Mishkat.* vol. 1, p. 50; cf. M1., introduction, vol. 1, p. 62; T., vol. 2, p. 110; I.M., vol. 1, p. 10.
4 Su., 3, p. 71.
5 Id., pp. 81f.
6 Ibn Ḥibbān, vol. 1, pp. 4-5.
7 B2., vol. 2, pp. 212f, (n. 378); cf. M1., introduction, vol. 1, pp. 69-71; Kh., 3, pp. 36, 174, 176.

which the Prophet makes a clear difference between relating something on his authority and relating on the authority of others, and concludes with a warning for those who tell lies against him. Ibn 'Umar reported him as saying: "Convey (my teachings) to the people even if it were a single sentence, and tell others the stories of Banī Isrā'īl..., for it is not sinful to do so. And whoever tells a lie on me intentionally, will surely take his place in the (Hell) Fire"[1]. In another ḥadīth regarding the stories of the people of the Book, the Prophet is reported as saying: "Neither believe nor disbelieve (the stories of) the people of the Book..."[2]. This permission to relate stories of the Children of Isrā'īl, provided that one should neither believe nor disbelieve seems to be due to the fact that these stories have nothing to do with the Muslim religion, and that there is a lack of documentation; so that one, in many cases, cannot be sure whether these stories are authentic or not. This is different from the case of transmitting ḥadīths, in which one should be scrupulous in order to protect oneself from adding something which has nothing to do with the Prophet or altering something ascribed to him, inasmuch as Ḥadīth is considered to have divine nature and constitute a basic source of Islam.

(4) Observance of accuracy.

This principle can be understood from a ḥadīth on the authority of Zayd b. Thābit in which he is reported to have heard the Prophet say: "May Allah be pleased with someone who hears what I say and learns it by heart, in order to convey it to others; as it might be that the one who receives (the ḥadīth) is more learned than the bearer, and it might be that the bearer of knowledge is not a *faqīh*"[3]. Another version on the authority of Ibn Mas'ūd reads: "May Allah be pleased with someone who hears

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1 Id., B2., vol. 4, p. 442, (n. 667); see al-Khaṭṭābī's comment on this ḥadīth, in A.D., vol. 4, p. 70.
2 B2., vol. 9, pp. 338f, (n. 460); cf. *Mishkat.* vol. 1, p. 42
3 T., vol. 2, p. 109; cf. A.D., vol. 4, pp. 68f; *Mishkat.* vol. 1, p. 55.

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something from me then conveys it as he has heard it ..."[1].   In Ibn 'Umar's version,

we read: "and conveys it without an addition"[2].   Commenting on Abū Dāwūd's

version of this ḥadīth, which is similar to the first, al-Khaṭṭābī remarks that this ḥadīth

supports the idea of the disapproval of an abridgement of a ḥadīth for those who are

not learned, for doing so will deter others from studying and comprehending the text[3].

Abū Mūsā al-Ghāfiqī reported the Prophet as saying: "Hold fast to the Book

of Allah.   You will come across people who are eager to talk about me.   Whoever

reports from me what I have not said, let him occupy his abode in Hell, and people

should transmit only ḥadīths that they have learnt by heart [*wa man ḥafiẓa shay'-an*

falyuḥaddith bih]"[4].   Having taught the people of 'Abd al-Qays, the Prophet is

reported to have addressed them, saying: "Memorise them (the instructions they have

been taught) and tell them to the people whom you have left behind"[5].   These ḥadīths

reflect the importance of observing precision in transmitting ḥadīths, and show that

only those who know them exactly are allowed to transmit them to others.

Nevertheless, there is a report of doubtful authenticity[6] adduced by al-Khaṭīb and al-

Suyūṭī, which states that permission was given, to those who found it difficult to

remember the exact words uttered by the Prophet, to relate the gist of a ḥadīth,

provided that they were able to convey the same meaning.   The report tells us that one

of the Companions said: "O Messenger of Allah, we hear a ḥadīth from you which we

are not able to convey (in the same words) as we have heard it".   The Prophet's

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1 T., vol. 2, p. 109; cf. Kh., 3, p. 173.

2 Kh., 3, p. 190.

3 A.D., vol. 4, p. 68.

4 H., 3, vol. 1, p. 113; cf. A., vol. 4, p. 334; Kh., 3, p. 166. The transmitter is Abū Mūsā Mālik b.
'Ubādah, one of the Companions who settled in Egypt.

5 B2., vol. 1, pp. 72f, (n.87). There is another ḥadīth concerning prayers to be said before sleeping,
which implies that the Prophet was very strict regarding even the words, inasmuch as he corrected his
companion when he replaced one word with another. See Below pp. 187f; cf. al-Khaṭīb's comment on
this ḥadīth in *al-Kifāyah*, p. 203.

6 al-Sakhāwī states that it is an unsound ḥadīth and, furthermore, al-Jūzajānī includes it among
spurious ḥadīths, see annotation on Su., 2, vol. 2, p. 99.

answer was: "There is no harm, provided you are not making what is prohibited lawful or what is lawful prohibited"[1]. In Ibn Mas'ūd's version the answer was: "If you understand the meaning, then transmit it"[2].

It is noteworthy that al-Shāfi'ī quotes a ḥadīth to the effect that the Quran was revealed in seven *aḥruf* (dialects, or ways of pronunciation)[3] as an argument for the permission of transmitting the gist of ḥadīths. He points out that the fact that Allah, out of His compassion, revealed His Book (the Quran) in several dialects means that He allows His Word to be read in several ways which reflect the same meaning, and that if this is the case with the Book of Allah, it is more likely that the statements of others can be conveyed in different wordings, provided that this process will not alter their actual meaning[4].

In any case, Muslim scholars restrict permission for the transmission of the gist of ḥadīths merely to those who know what will alter the meaning and what will not; otherwise the transmitter has to keep to the original words of the ḥadīth[5].

(5) Exhorting people not to relate many ḥadīths.

This principle is indicated by a ḥadīth in which the Prophet says: "Beware of relating many ḥadīths, and whoever wants to relate, let him say but the truth"[6]. There is another statement reported by Abū Hurayrah on the authority of the Prophet: "One cannot avoid falsehood, if one transmits everything that one hears"[7]. Commenting on this ḥadīth, Abū Hātim says that it warns people against transmitting all the ḥadīths

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1 Kh., 3, p. 199.
2 Id., p. 200; see another account on the same page.
3 See B2., vol. 6, pp. 481-83.
4 Su., 2, vol. 2, p. 99.
5 See a detailed discussion about this issue by al-Khaṭīb in *al-Kifāyah*. pp. 198-200, and Su., 2, vol. 2, pp. 98-102.
6 H., 3, vol. 1, p. 111; cf. A., vol. 5, p. 297.
7 M1., introduction, vol. 1, p. 75; cf. H., 3, vol. 1, p. 112; *Mishkat.* vol. 1, p. 42; A.D., vol. 5, pp. 265f, where the text reads: "One cannot avoid sin...".

they hear, unless they know that they are authentically ascribed to the Prophet[1]. It seems that although Muslims, in the early days of Islam, were encouraged to convey the Islamic teachings, they were urged not to engage themselves in relating many hadīths, particularly when there was no need to do so, since this might lead them to make mistakes in their transmissions, or cause them to abandon the study of the Quran. They were also enjoined not to transmit everything they heard about the Prophet, since one usually hears both authentic and spurious reports[2]; they were advised to distinguish between these two types, transmitting the former and dismissing the latter.

Although other principles may be presented[3], the ones adduced above are the most important; they seem to be sufficient to protect hadīths from alteration and fabrication, both before and during the process of transmission.

D- Standards of criticism of transmission in Hadīth.

There is a hadīth in which the Prophet is reported as saying: "Be on your guard about traditions from me, except what you know; for he who lies about me deliberately will certainly come to his abode in hell"[4]. As this statement instructs Muslims to accept only hadīths which they know to be authentically ascribed to the Prophet and to reject others which are falsely attributed to him, it indicates the necessity of investigating hadīths, so that one will be able to distinguish between genuine and spurious ones. Commenting on the hadīth: "Convey (my teachings) to the people, even if it were a single sentence..."[5]. al-Dāraquṭnī remarks that the fact that the Prophet threatened with Hell-fire those who tell lies against him, after

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1 Ibn Ḥibbān, vol. 1, p. 5.
2 Cf. al-Nawawī, 1, vol. 1, p. 75; Su., 3, pp. 82f.
3 For example transmitting hadīths slowly, in order to make it easier for listeners to comprehend and memorise, see B2., vol. 4, p. 494, (nos. 768 A & B).
4 *Mishkat*, vol. 1, p. 56; cf. T., vol. 2, p. 157.
5 B2., vol. 4, p. 442, (n. 667); cf. T., vol. 2, p. 111; *Mishkat*. vol. 1, p. 50.

instructing people to convey his teachings, implies that he wanted only what was genuine to be conveyed, and not everything attributed to him[1].

Considering the material of Ḥadīth, the present writer has been able to identify a number of standards regarding the criticism of transmission, which have helped Muslims in undertaking this task.

(1) Demanding reliable transmitters.

Investigating the reliability of the transmitters of ḥadīth is one of the main aspects of the criticism of transmission. There are a number of ḥadīths, in which Muslims are warned against impious people who put in the mouth of the Prophet words he did not actually utter, in order to lead them astray. In one ḥadīth the Prophet says: "I commend to you as authorities my Companions, those who come after them and those who come after. Then lies will spread"[2]. Abū Hurayrah reported the Prophet as saying: "There will be, at the end of time, impostors (Dajjālūn) who will bring you ḥadīths of which neither you nor your fathers have ever heard. Beware of them lest they lead you astray or seduce you"[3]. al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī remarks that the Prophet informed us that there would be people who would tell lies, and warned Muslims against them, enjoining them not to accept their transmission. Furthermore, he notified us that to tell a lie about him was more sinful than telling lies about anyone else; therefore we had to investigate the credibility of transmitters, in order to guard religion against inventions and fabrications[4].

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1 See Su., 3, p. 81f.
2 H., 3, vol. 1, p. 114; cf. Kh., 3, p. 35; B2., vol. 5, p. 2, (n. 3), where the text reads: "There will come after you people who will bear witness without being asked to do so, and who will be treacherous and untrustworthy...".
3 M1., introduction, vol. 1, pp. 78f; cf. M2., vol. 3, p. 1011, (n. 4483); A., vol. 2, p. 349; *Mishkat.* vol. 1, p. 42; H., 2, p. 13; Kh., 3, pp. 36,429.
4 Kh., 3, p. 35.

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A ḥadīth quoted earlier reads: "Convey (my teachings) to the people, even if it were a single sentence, and tell others the stories of Banī Isrā'īl..., for it is not sinful to do so. And whoever tells a lie on me intentionally, will surely take his place in the (Hell) Fire"[1]. Commenting on this ḥadīth, al-Shāfi'ī states that it is the strictest statement regarding transmission on the authority of untrustworthy transmitters..., and that one should relate ḥadīths only on the authority of those whose reports are reliable, whose piety is recognised and whose honesty is established[2]. al-'Ajlūnī says: "It has been said that the Prophet means that it is lawful to accept stories of the Children of Israel from those who are not known; but as far as Ḥadīth is concerned, it is only allowed to accept them from those who are trustworthy"[3]. Abū Ḥātim adduces a ḥadīth in which the prophet enjoins his followers to hold fast to his *Sunnah*[4] and comments: "This is sound proof that he (the Prophet) ordered his followers to distinguish between weak and trustworthy transmitters, inasmuch as one cannot adhere to the *Sunnah*..., unless he knows reliable from unreliable transmitters"[5]. Regarding the ḥadīth in which the Prophet orders those who are present to convey his teachings to those who are absent[6], Abū Ḥātim remarks that it indicates that one should have knowledge of unreliable transmitters, inasmuch as one who was present could not be considered as informing others, unless he transmitted genuine ḥadīths to them; for if he conveyed to them what was not genuine, he would not in fact be conveying ḥadīths to them (but something else). He concludes that without distinguishing between reliable and unreliable transmitters, one cannot differentiate

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1 B2., vol. 4, p. 442, (n. 667); see al-Khaṭṭābī's comment on this ḥadīth, in A.D., vol. 4, pp. 70.
2 I.B., 2, vol. 1, p. 43; cf. Su., 3, p. 73.
3 al-'Ajlūnī, vol. 1, p. 353.
4 See above p. 36.
5 Ibn Ḥibbān, vol. 1, p. 6.
6 See B2., vol. 1, pp. 82f, (nos. 104-5). Although the words 'who are present' initially concern the Companions, they refer to every one who receives ḥadīths.

between pure genuine ḥadīths and spurious ones[1]. There is another ḥadīth of dubious status, which portrays the Prophet as warning explicitly against transmitting ḥadīths from unreliable transmitters; "The most I am afraid of, regarding my community, is: ...and transmission from those who are not reliable". Another version reads: "The destruction of my community comes from three sources..."[2]. In my opinion, there is no need to adduce such a doubtful ḥadīth to support the matter in question[3], since it is well established by the implication of others that require Muslims to distinguish between genuine and spurious reports, and to transmit and accept only what is considered as genuine. However, it is important to note that the trustworthiness of a transmitter, according to a Muslim scholars' views, includes two features, namely al-'adālah [straightforwardness] and al-ḍabṭ [precision]. This means that a defect in either of them will affect his transmission negatively and will lead to its dismissal; therefore, if someone is characterised as trustworthy [thiqah], this means that he is straightforward ['adl] and accurate [ḍābiṭ].

Regarding the legitimacy of criticising impious people, there is a ḥadīth which implies that to criticise impious people is not only lawful but also obligatory; this ḥadīth reads: "Do not avoid to mention the impious people so that they will be made known. State what is wrong with them, so that they may be avoided"[4]. Another ḥadīth states that disclosing impious people is not considered as backbiting [laysa li

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1 Ibn Ḥibbān, vol. 1, p. 11.

2 Kh., 3, p. 33. Ibn 'Abd al-Barr points out that Baqiyyah alone reported this ḥadīth on the authority of Abū al-'Alā', and that this is a weak isnād, which cannot stand as an authority, (see I.B., 2, vol. 1, p. 58.); al-Khaṭīb, however, adduces another two isnāds for it: one is on the authority of Ibn 'Abbās and has Suwayd b. 'Abd al-'Azīz, a weak transmitter, (see al-Haythamī, vol. 1, 141.), and the other, about which I have not found any comment, is on the authority of Abū Qatādah.

3 It is worthy of note that in the following we will come across a number of ḥadīths which need further investigation so that their authenticity can be determined according to the standards of scholars of Ḥadīth. Having said that, I should note that I use such ḥadīths as subsidiary evidence, pointing out remarks that I have come across, regarding any of them.

4 Kh., 3, p.42. al-Jārūd b. Yazīd, a transmitter accused of mendacity, (see al-'Ajlūnī, vol. 2, p. 172.), appears in the isnād of al-Khaṭīb, but al-Ṭabarānī transmitted this ḥadīth with a sound isnād, see al-Haythamī, vol. 1, p. 149.

fāsiq ghībah][1], but due to its doubtful provenance, it cannot be adduced as an authority for the issue in question.   In any case, it is noteworthy that the Prophet practised the criticism of men himself, praising some people and disparaging others. As far as laudatory statements are concerned, one can identify two features, general praise and praise of individuals.   As regards general praise, we find the Prophet stating: "The best of my followers are those living in my generation, and then those who follow them, then those who follow the latter..."[2].   Abū Saʿīd reported the Prophet as saying: "Do not abuse my companions for if any one of you spent gold equal to [the mountain of] Uḥud (in the cause of Allah) it would not be equal to a *mudd* or even a half of *mudd* spent by one of them"[3].   al-Barāʾ reported that he heard the Prophet say: "None loves al-Anṣār but a believer, and none hates them but a hypocrite.   So Allah will love him who loves them, and He will hate him who hates them"[4].   ʿUthmān reported the Prophet as saying: "The best among you (Muslims) are those who learn the Quran and teach it"[5].   These statements are a sample of the general remarks on this topic.

Regarding individuals, there is a ḥadīth in which we are told that the Prophet once climbed the mountain of Uḥud with Abū Bakr, ʿUmar and ʿUthmān.   The mountain shook under them.   The Prophet said (to the mountain): "Be firm, O Uḥud! For on you there are no more than a Prophet, a Ṣiddīq and two martyrs"[6].   During the battle of Khaybar the Prophet said: "I will give the flag to", or "The flag will be taken by a man whom Allah and His Apostle love", or "a man who loves Allah and His

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1 Kh., 3, p. 42. This ḥadīth is declared to be unsound by al-Ḥakim and other scholars, see al-ʿAjlūnī, vol. 2, pp. 171f.
2 B2., vol. 5, p. 2, (n. 2).
3 See Id., p. 17, (n. 22); cf. T., vol. 2, p. 318. *Mudd* is a small dry measure that equals 1/4 of a *Sāʿ*.
4 Id. B2., pp. 83f, (n. 127).
5 Id., vol. 6, pp. 501f, (n. 545).
6 Id., vol. 5, p. 19, (n. 24).

Apostle". Next day the prophet asked for Alī and gave the flag to him[1]. Anas b. Mālik reported the Prophet as saying: "Every nation has an extremely trustworthy man, and the trustworthy man of this (i.e. Muslim) nation is Abū 'Ubaydah b. al-Jarrāḥ"[2].

As far as disparaging statements are concerned, 'Ā'ishah, the Prophet's wife, reported that a man came to the Prophet and asked for permission to enter; the Prophet said: "Give him permission; he is a bad member of the tribe". Then when he sat down, the Prophet treated him in a frank and friendly way, so when he departed 'Ā'isha said, "Messenger of God, you said such and such about him, then treated him in a frank and friendly way". He replied, "When did you know me to be given to using objectionable language? The one who will have the worst position in God's estimation on the day of resurrection will be the one whom people left alone for fear of the harm he might do"[3]. Abū Ḥātim remarks that this ḥadīth proves that pointing out the (bad) qualities that someone possesses, in the context of religious duty, [*'alā jins al-diyānah*], is not considered as backbiting, and that backbiting is to point out one's qualities for no other reason but defamation. He adds that scholars of Ḥadīth disclose transmitters' characteristics, particularly those who are not reliable, in order that their transmissions may be avoided, but not in order that they may be censured or slandered[4].

There is another anecdote, in which the Prophet is reported to have issued evaluative remarks regarding two other men; having been divorced and terminated her waiting period [*'iddah*], Fāṭimah b. Qays said that she told the Prophet that

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1 See Id., pp. 43f, (nos. 51, 52); cf. T., vol. 2, p. 300.
2 Id., B2., vol. 5, p. 65, (n. 87); cf. T., vol. 2, p. 310; I.M., vol. 1, p. 32. For more laudatory remarks, see B2., vol. 5, pp. 1-108; T., vol. 2, pp. 289-327; I.M., vol. 1, pp. 25-37.
3 *Mishkat*. vol. 3, p. 1007; cf. B2., vol. 8, pp. 50f; Kh., 3, pp. 38f, where there is, along with this ḥadīth, another account in which the Prophet gave censorious remarks about other men.
4 Ibn Ḥibbān, vol. 1, pp. 12f.

Mu'āwiyah and Abū Jahm were among those who had proposed marriage to her, and he remarked that Mu'āwiyah was destitute and in poor condition, and that Abū Jahm was very harsh with women, and advised her to marry Usāmah b. Zayd[1]. Scholars of Hadīth have used this incident as an argument in favour of the permissibility of pointing out bad characteristics that transmitters of hadīths possessed, in the context of religious duty, so that their reports could be avoided[2].

These anecdotes and statements are sufficient to indicate the necessity and the legitimacy of investigating the trustworthiness of transmitters of hadīths, so that one may distinguish between reliable and unreliable transmitters – knowledge which plays a crucial role in determining the genuine *Sunnah* of the Prophet.

(2) Ensuring the accuracy of transmitters.

This standard can be inferred from the hadīths, presented above while dealing with the principles of transmission in Hadīth, which lay great emphasis on observing accuracy[3].

To ascertain the accuracy of a transmitter, the Prophet is reported to have made use of the following methods:

a- Asking the transmitter to repeat the text. There is an anecdote in which we are told that the people of 'Abd al-Qays came to the Prophet at Madinah and stayed there for a period of time. The Companions taught them the Quran and the *Sunnah* of the Prophet; then the Prophet came and asked them to repeat, in front of him, what they had been taught. The transmitter said: "Some of us have learned the *al-taḥiyyāt* [salutations to be read at the last stage of the prayer] and Umm al-kitāb [*Sūrah* no. 1], others have learned a *Sūrah* or two and a *Sunnah* or two"[4]. It seems that the Prophet

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1 See M2., vol. 2, pp. 769f, 772f, (nos. 3512, 3526-27).
2 Ibn Ḥibbān, vol. 1, pp. 46f.
3 See pp. 138f.
4 A., vol. 4, p. 206.

wanted to ascertain their accuracy in what they had learned, before they travelled back to inform their people.

b- Asking for someone to support the transmitter. Abū Hurayrah said: once after the Apostle of Allah had offered two *Rak'ahs* (instead of four) and finished his prayer, Dhū al-Yadayn asked: "Messenger of Allah has the prayer been shortened or have you forgotten? The prophet replied that neither of these had happened and, turning towards his Companions, asked them whether Dhū al-Yadayn was right in claiming that he had offered only two *Rak'ahs*? They answered positively, and accordingly the Prophet stood up, completed his prayer and offered two prostrations [*sajdahs*][1]. In this incident we notice that, as the Prophet had some doubt about the information of Dhū al-Yadayn, he asked his Companions whether he was right. Having had his accuracy confirmed, the Prophet accepted the information and completed the prayer accordingly.

c- Demanding an oath from the transmitter. 'Abd Allah b. Mas'ūd said: "On the Day of Badr I found Abū Jahl lying down. So I hit him with my sword... After hitting him, I came to the Prophet... and said to him: 'Abū Jahl, the enemy of Allah, has been killed'. The Prophet said: 'By Allah, has he been killed?'. I said: 'By Allah, he has been killed...'"[2]. Receiving the information of Abū Jahl's killing, the Prophet demanded an oath from his Companion to confirm his accuracy, since such information, regarding one of the notorious leaders of the unbelievers at that time, was extremely important.

(3) Scrutiny of the text.

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1 See M2., vol. 1, p. 286, (n. 1184); Cf. B2., vol. 1, p. 385, (n. 682), and vol. 9, p. 268, (n. 356). The name of Dhū al-Yadayn is al-Khirbāq, as stated in Muslim's version. See also I.H., 1, vol. 3, p. 100.
2 al-Bayhaqī, vol. 9, pp. 92f; cf. Abdul Gaffar, p. 55.

The necessity of the criticism of the material of ḥadīths can be inferred from the following ḥadīth: "During the last [days] of my community there will be people who will transmit to you what neither you, nor your ancestors have ever heard. Beware of those people"[1]. Another version adds: "Beware of them lest they lead you astray or seduce you"[2]. In this report the Prophet speaks of ḥadīths of which Muslims have never heard, and thus gives a clear indication of the importance of criticising the texts of ḥadīths by comparing them with other ḥadīths, which were transmitted by trustworthy transmitters and whose authenticity is established – a procedure that will determine their genuineness[3]. The ḥadīth, further, indicates that criticism of the materials reported may lead to determining whether their transmitters are reliable or not; for if a student of Ḥadīth often transmits ḥadīths that are similar to those transmitted by transmitters of established authority [al-thiqāt], he will be seen as reliable, but if it happens that he transmits many unknown ḥadīths, or those which have no provenance, he will be seen as an unreliable transmitter[4]. al-Khaṭīb adduces other ḥadīths, in one of which the prophet is reported as saying: "If you hear a ḥadīth, which you recognise as coming from me [ta'rifuhu qulūbukum wa talīn lahu ash'ārukum wa tarawn annahu minkum qarīb], it can be attributed to me, and if you hear a ḥadīth, which you recognise as not coming from me [tunkiruhu qulūbukum wa tanfir minhu ash'ārukum wa absharukum wa tarawn annahu minkum ba'īd], it should not be attributed to me"[5]. Another version says: "If you are told about me, accept only what you recognise (as coming from me) [ta'rifūn], and reject what you disapprove of [tunkirūn]. That is because I do not say what is disapproved of

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1 Juynboll, "Muslim's introduction...", p. 275; cf. M1., introduction, vol. 1, p. 78.
2 See above p. 142.
3 Cf. Beyanouni, M.A. research, p. 23.
4 Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ, p. 116.
5 Kh., 3, p. 430. This ḥadīth is reported by Aḥmad, (vol. 3, p. 497, vol. 5, p. 425.), and al-Bazzār, and has a good [ḥasan] isnād, see al-Haythamī, vol. 1, pp. 149f.

[*munkar*]"[1]. This report gives an instruction to Muslims to investigate carefully the texts of ḥadīths related to them, in order to decide whether the details they contain could possibly have originated from the Prophet or not, accepting the former and rejecting the latter. However, it should be noted that making such a judgement must be restricted to those who are expert and well-versed in Ḥadīth, and have prolonged experience with the Prophet' sayings and a proper comprehension of the nature of his mission, since they are the only ones who are qualified for a such an exacting task. There is another report which refers to a criterion by which the text of a ḥadīth can be judged; "You will hear ḥadīths about me. Those which agree with the Book of Allah and my *Sunnah* are to be accepted, and those which contradict them are to be discarded"[2]. It is informative to know that al-Khaṭīb quotes these ḥadīths as an authority for the opinion that disavowed [*munkar*] ḥadīths and those which contain something which is impossible should be rejected[3].

One of the methods of scrutinising the text which the Prophet is reported to have used is comparing it with its original source, when accessible. ʻAbd Allah b. ʻUmar reported that a Jewish male and female, who committed adultery, were brought to the Messenger of Allah. He came out to the Jews and said: "What do you find in the Torah for one who commits adultery?" They said: "We darken their faces and make them ride on a donkey with their faces turned to the opposite direction (and their backs touching each other), and then they are taken round (the city)". He said: "Bring the Torah if you are speaking the truth. They brought it and recited it, until when they came to the verse pertaining to stoning, the person who was reading placed his hands on the verse pertaining to stoning, and read (only that which was) before it and what come after it. ʻAbd Allah b. Salām, who was at that time with the

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1 Kh., 3, p. 430.
2 Ibid.
3 Id., pp. 429f.

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Messenger of Allah said: "Command him (the reciter) to lift his hand". He lifted it and there was, underneath it, the verse pertaining to stoning. Allah's Messenger pronounced judgement on both of them and they were stoned[1].

E- Other issues regarding the Principles of Ḥadīth.

It is noteworthy that scholars of Ḥadīth used to refer to ḥadīths, in a number of issues, as an authority for their principles; here are a few examples:

(1) Regarding the method of reading over to a *shaykh*, by which ḥadīths may be received, Bukhārī says: "Some people supported their view regarding the legitimacy of the reading over to the *shaykh* by the ḥadīth of Ḍimām b. Thaʻlabah in which he said to the Prophet: 'Is it Allah who ordered you to observe these prayers?'. The Prophet replied: 'Yes'. They (scholars of Ḥadīth) said: this is reading over to the Prophet, about which Ḍimām told his people and they accepted it"[2].

(2) As far as *Ijāzah* (licence) is concerned, al-Khaṭīb points out that the proof for its legitimacy is said to be a ḥadīth, recorded in al-Maghāzī (the military expeditions), in which we are told that the Prophet handed ʻAbd Allah b. Jaḥsh a sealed letter and asked him not to open it until he travelled, with a group of the Companions, for two days in the direction of Nakhlah (name of a place). He reports ʻUrwah b. al-Zubayr as saying: "The Apostle of Allah sent ʻAbd Allah b. Jaḥsh to Nakhlah... He wrote him a letter before telling him where to go and said: 'Travel with your companions for two days then open the letter, then follow the instruction and do not compel any of those with you (to follow you)'. ʻAbd Allah travelled for two days, then opened the letter, which read: 'Go until you reach Nahklah, and bring us the news of Quraysh'. He said: 'I will listen and obey' and gave his fellow

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1 See M2., vol. 3, p. 918, (n. 4211); cf. B2., vol. 4, pp. 532f, (n. 829).
2 See B2., vol. 1, p. 53; cf. Kh., 3, p. 261.

Companions the choice; they chose to go with him..."[1]. Other scholars who accept the authority of ḥadīths received by *Ijāzah* supported their view with a story related to the *Surah* of Barā'ah, in which we are told that the Prophet handed this *Surah* to 'Alī, who did not read it until he reached Makkah. 'Alī read it in front of the people at Minā on the day of al-Naḥr[2]. Abū Nu'aym Aḥmad b. 'Abd Allah was asked his opinion on *Ijāzah*, and he replied: "It is lawful", and supported his view by quoting a ḥadīth reported by 'Abd Allah b. 'Ukaym[3] to the effect that the Prophet wrote to them..."[4]. He added: "All my masters accepted *Ijāzah* and used it, except Abū Shaykh who rejected it"[5].

(3) Regarding the writing down of ḥadīths as an authorised method of receiving them, it is argued that the Prophet himself used this particular method; Ibn 'Abbās reported that the Prophet sent a letter to the governor of Baḥrayn, who, in his turn, sent it to Chosroes[6]. Another letter is reported to have been sent to Heraclius: "O people of the Scripture! Come to a word common to you and us that we worship none but Allah (Qur. iii. 64)[7]. al-Daḥḥāk b. Sufyān reported that the Prophet wrote to him, requiring him to give to the widow of Ashyam al-Ḍibābī her share from the wergild of her husband[8]. The story reported by 'Abd Allah b. 'Ukaym to the effect that the Prophet wrote to them shortly before his death, enjoining them not to use the

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1 Kh., 3, pp. 312f; cf. Ibn Hishām, vol. 1, pp. 601f; Ibn Isḥāq, English translation, pp. 286f. This account seems to be the same one as that to which al-Bukhārī refers as a proof used by some scholars of al-Ḥijāz, in order to support their opinion regarding the legitimacy of *munāwalah* (handing over written copies to someone), see B2., vol. 1, p. 65.
2 Kh., 3, pp. 312f; cf. B2., vol. 6, pp. 143f, (nos. 178-79); S. 2, vol. 1, p. 518.
3 Although he was alive during the lifetime of the Prophet, he did not meet him. See I.H., 4, vol. 5, pp. 323f.
4 T., vol. 1, p. 322.
5 Kh., 3, p. 313. al-Khaṭīb states that Abū Shaykh is 'Abd Allah b. Muḥammad al-Anṣārī.
6 See B2., vol. 1, p. 56, (n. 64).
7 Id., vol. 8, p. 439, *tarjamah*.
8 T., vol. 2, p. 14.

skin of a dead animal, is also adduced as an argument to support the validity of this method for receiving knowledge[1].

Summing up.

At the end of this presentation of the Principles of Ḥadīth during the Prophet's lifetime (principles of transmission and the standards of criticism of transmission), which played a crucial role in helping the Muslim community, or at least a section of it, i.e. its religious, devoted scholars, at that time, to guard the *Sunnah* of the Prophet against alterations and fabrications, one may conclude confidently that the main aspects of these principles are by no means a mere invention of later Muslim generations. They have their bases in, and emerge mainly from, the teachings of the two main sources of Islam, i.e. the Quran and the Ḥadīth; the great initiative of these two in setting the framework of the Principles of Ḥadīth deserves to be considered, and its impact on the thinking of Muslim scholars and the community at large to be recognised in the West, after its long period of disregard and neglect.

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1 See al-Rāmahurmuzī, pp. 453f; cf. A.D., vol. 4, pp. 370f.

CHAPTER TWO

THE PRINCIPLES OF ḤADĪTH
IN THE FIRST CENTURY OF ISLAM

Although the main principles of Ḥadīth were pointed out by the Quran and the Ḥadīth, it was the task of Muslim scholars to comprehend and develop these principles, in order to meet their requirements; in this chapter, I shall throw light on the effort of Muslim scholars in this field.   As Robson admits that the principles of criticism began and were well developed in the second century of Islam, this study will be devoted to the Principles of Ḥadīth in the first century of Islam, and it will deal with the statements and actions of authorities who can be considered as belonging to the first century.   Accordingly, along with those who died during the first century, a number of those who died during the first quarter of the second century will be also quoted.

The study will consist of three sections: first, principles of transmission; second, standards of criticism; third, certain issues regarding the Principles of Ḥadīth, concluding with two lists of names of scholars, that appear throughout the chapter, and their dates of death: one for the Companions and the other for the Successors.

A- Principles of transmission.

Guided by the Quran and the Ḥadīth, the Companions and the leading Successors laid down a number of principles to preserve ḥadīths from alteration or oblivion.   Considering statements and practices attributed to them, the present writer has identified the following principles:

(1) Avoiding lies and fabrications.

As telling lies is prohibited in Islam, Muslims, particularly the Companions, avoided such forbidden action. To demonstrate this, the intention is not to tell stories regarding the veracity of these people in general, but rather to mention anecdotes concerning their truthfulness in transmitting ḥadīths. Abū Bakr is reported to have warned people, from the pulpit, against telling lies, as this is incompatible with Belief[1]. al-Bukhārī reports that 'Alī b. Abī Ṭālib, the fourth Caliph, said: "When I relate some thing on the authority of Allah's Apostle, I would rather fall from the sky than attribute what is false to him..."[2]. al-Barā' b. 'Āzib said: "We did not hear all these ḥadīths from the Prophet directly, since we were engaged in our works and farms, but the people used not to tell lies, therefore those who were present (and heard the Prophet) used to tell those who were absent"[3]. Anas b. Mālik is reported as saying: "We did not hear all the ḥadīths, which we are relating to you, directly from the Prophet, but our companions told us and we used to trust each other"[4]. Another version tells us that once when Anas transmitted a ḥadīth, someone asked him whether he heard it directly from the Prophet, and he replied: "Yes, or it is transmitted to me by someone who does not tell lies. By Allah, we used not to tell lie, nor did we know what mendacity was"[5]. 'Abd Allah b. Mas'ūd is reported as warning Muslims against mendacity, serious or flippant, quoting the following verse: "O ye who believe! Fear Allah and be with those who are truthful"[6], and saying: "Do you find permission for any one to tell lies"[7].

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1 Ibn 'Adī, 2, p. 58.
2 See B2., vol. 4, p. 519, (n. 808).
3 H., 3, vol. 1, p. 127; cf. Kh., 2, vol. 1, p. 174; Kh., 3, p. 385.
4 Kh., 3, p. 386; cf. Ibn 'Adī, 2, p. 248. In B2., vol. 5, p. 80, (n. 122), Anas pointed out that al-Anṣār used not to tell lies.
5 Ibn 'Adī, 1, vol. 1, p. 159.
6 ix. 119.
7 Ibn 'Adī, 1, vol. 1, pp. 26f; cf. pp. 28, 42.

These statements show us how detestable mendacity was in the eyes of the Companions, to the extent that it was looked on as something inconceivable, particularly when it concerned something related to the Prophet.

(2) Avoiding the transmission of many ḥadīths.

It is a very common principle among the Companions and their immediate Successors not to relate ḥadīths when there is no need for them. 'Abd Allah said to his father al-Zubayr b. al-'Awwām: "I do not hear you transmitting ḥadīths about the Apostle of Allah, as so-and-so do? al-Zubayr replied: "I was always with the Prophet, but I have heard him say: "Whoever tells a lie against me, let him occupy his seat in Hell-Fire"[1]. al-Khaṭīb's version has an addition: "By Allah, he (the Prophet) did not say: "intentionally", but you say: "intentionally"[2]. This taboo prevented al-Zubayr and others from quoting the Prophet a great deal, out of fear of unwittingly making mistakes. Once when he heard someone narrating a ḥadīth, he asked him whether he had heard it from the Prophet directly. The man said: "Yes". al-Zubayr commented: "You are right, but you were absent while the Prophet was speaking about the people of the Book; you came only at the end of his speech and heard him say this, thinking that he was speaking about himself (while he was not)". Whereupon al-Zubayr declared: "This and similar incidents deter us from narrating ḥadīths"[3]. Anas b. Mālik is reported to have said: "The fact which stops me from narrating a great number of Ḥadīths to you is that the Prophet said: "Whoever tells a lie against me intentionally, then (surely) let him occupy his seat in Hell-Fire"[4].

'Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb, the second Caliph, was very keen not to transmit a lot of ḥadīths himself and asked the people to do likewise. After he treated Ubayy with

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1 See B2., vol. 1, p. 83, (n. 108).
2 Kh., 3, p. 102.
3 Id. p. 426.
4 B2., vol. 1, p. 84, (n. 107); cf. M1., introduction, vol. 1, p. 66; D., vol. 1, p. 77; Ibn 'Adī, 1, vol. 1, p. 3.

severity because of transmitting a certain ḥadīth, he is reported to have justified his action by assuring him that he trusted him, but that he did not like so many ḥadīths to be transmitted [*wa lākinnī karihtu an yakūn al-Ḥadīth ẓahir-an*][1]. Abū Hurayrah was asked whether he had narrated ḥadīths during ‘Umar’s lifetime as he did afterwards? He said: “If I had done that in his time he would have hit me with his stick”[2]. ‘Abd Allah b. Mas‘ūd avoided transmitting many ḥadīths; he is reported as saying: “One cannot avoid sin if one transmits all that one hears”[3]. Mu‘āwiyah b. Abī Sufyān is reported as instructing people not to transmit many ḥadīths, and to restrict themselves, whenever they wished to transmit, to ḥadīths that were known at the time of ‘Umar, who used to make people fear God[4]. al-Sha‘bī reported that he accompanied ‘Abd Allah b. ‘Umar for a year, but that he did not hear him narrate even one ḥadīth about the Prophet[5]. Mujāhid also reported that he travelled with Ibn ‘Umar to Madīnah, and that he did not hear him transmit on the authority of the Prophet except on one occasion[6]. al-Sā’ib b. Yazīd reported that he travelled with Sa‘d b. Abī Waqqāṣ to Makkah and that he did not hear him transmit a single ḥadīth until they returned to Madīnah[7]. ‘Abd al-Raḥmān b. Abī Laylā pointed out that he met a hundred and twenty of the Anṣār, every one of them would prefer his colleague to transmit a ḥadīth instead of him, and that every one of them would avoid giving a fatwa, preferring others to do so[8]. ‘Āmir al-Sha‘bī remarked that the pious scholars [*al-ṣāliḥūn*] of the preceding generations disapproved of transmitting a lot of ḥadīths, and concluded that

1 Ibn Sa‘d, vol. 4, 1, p. 14.
2 Abū Zahū, p. 68.
3 Dh., 3, vol. 1, p. 15; cf. Ml., introduction, vol. 1, p. 75, where the statement reads: “It is enough falsehood...”, and there is a similar statement ascribed to ‘Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb.
4 See A., vol. 4, p. 99; cf. Ibn ‘Adī., 1, vol. p. 5.
5 D., vol. 1, pp. 84, 86; cf. Dh., 2, vol. 3, p. 214, where al-Sha‘bī is reported as saying that he did not hear him transmit on the authority of the Prophet except one ḥadīth.
6 See B2., vol. 1, pp. 61f.
7 D., vol. 1, p. 85
8 Id., vol. 1, p. 53.

if he had his life over again, he would transmit only ḥadīths upon which the scholars of Ḥadīth agreed[1].

Now we should consider the reasons which made the Companions adopt such a principle, especially at the time of the Rightly-Guided Caliphs[2].

(i) One of the main reasons which can be identified is that the propagation of many ḥadīths, at this early time in Islam, may have caused people to occupy themselves in relating and studying them and not to pay enough attention to the Quran, which was still new in their hearts and needed further attention. It is the same reason which prevented ‘Umar, the second Caliph, from collecting Ḥadīth after he had consulted the Companions, who approved of the idea[3]. It seems also to be the reason which made ‘Umar advise the Companions whom he sent to Kūfah not to narrate many ḥadīths to its people, who were engaging themselves in reciting and memorising the Quran, even if they were asked to do so, because of their companionship with the Prophet[4]. In another version, Quraẓah b. Sa‘d, one of those sent to Kūfah, says that it happened that while he was sitting with the people there, they mentioned a ḥadīth which he remembered better, but as he remembered ‘Umar’s instruction, he kept silent. al-Dārimī comments that ‘Umar’s advice concerns ḥadīths of biographical nature, and not those regarding religious matters and duties[5] – an opinion which is attested by another statement ascribed to ‘Umar, to the effect that not many ḥadīths should be transmitted, unless they were of a practical nature [illā fīmā yu‘mal bih][6]. In any case, it seems that ‘Umar did not want them to be occupied with narrating a lot

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1 Dh., 3, vol. 1, p. 77. For more statements, see al-Khaṭīb, M. A., pp. 92-98.
2 See Abū Zahū, pp. 66f; M. A. al-Khaṭīb, pp. 92-107; Ibn Qutaybah, pp. 48f.
3 See above p. 104.
4 I.M., vol. 1, pp. 8f.
5 D., vol. 1, 85; cf. I.B., 1, vol. 1, pp. 121f.
6 Ibn Kathīr, 1, vol. 8, p. 107.

of ḥadīths, when there was no need for them, and while there was something more important to concentrate on.

(ii) The second reason is that the more one transmits, the more one will be apt to make mistakes[1], either by addition, diminution or even alteration. Out of fear that these mistakes might lead into telling lies against the Prophet, the Companions did not relate many ḥadīths, since there was no need to do so. Aslam, a client of ‘Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb, reported that whenever they asked ‘Umar to relate something about the Prophet, he used to say: "I am afraid of adding or diminishing. The Prophet said: "Whoever tells lies against me will enter the Hell-Fire""[2]. ‘Uthmān b. ‘Affān remarked that what prevented him from narrating many ḥadīths was not lack of knowledge about the Prophet, but a ḥadīth, which he had heard from him, to a similar effect to that reported by ‘Umar[3]. Abū Qatādah, al-Ḥārith b. Rib‘ī, was once asked to transmit a ḥadīth about the Prophet and he refused on account of his fear of saying something the Prophet had not said[4]. This fear is said to be the reason which made Abū Bakr the first Caliph burn his ṣaḥīfah that contained a number of ḥadīths[5]. In any case, It seems that this avoidance of transmitting many ḥadīths only arose when there was need for such action. al-Khaṭīb reports that one of the Companions was asked why he did not transmit ḥadīths like others? His answer was: "I heard as they (the other Companions) heard and I was present when they were present, but the phenomenon of first-hand knowledge of Ḥadīth has not yet disappeared; people have retentive memories of it, and I do not need to transmit, because there are those who already do so. Moreover I am afraid of addition and diminution in Ḥadīth"[6]. As far

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1 Cf. I.B., 1, vol. 1, p. 122.
2 A., vol. 1, pp. 46f; cf. Su., 3, p. 16. In the same report, Aslam himself is reported to have said something similar to that of ‘Umar, as he was asked to relate from his master.
3 See Id., A., vol. 1, p. 65; Ibn ‘Adī, 1, vol. 1, p. 3; Su., 3, p. 17.
4 See Su., 3, p. 104; cf. Ibn ‘Adī, 2, p. 20.
5 Dh., 3, vol. 1, p. 5.
6 Kh., 3, p. 172.

as the Successors are concerned, this tendency had an influence on some of them; once, 'Āṣim asked 'Āmir al-Shaʿbī about a certain ḥadīth, and he transmitted it without ascribing it to the Prophet. 'Āṣim said that it was transmitted on the authority of the Prophet, and al-Shaʿbī pointed out that he preferred to transmit it on the authority of someone other than the Prophet, in case he added something to it to or diminished it[1].

However, in the course of time, the need for collecting ḥadīths arose, particularly when a lot of those who knew them at first hand died; Therefore, a number of the Companions, like Ibn 'Abbās and Abū Hurayrah, began to collect and transmit a great number of ḥadīths – a situation which may account for the fact that younger Companions narrated more ḥadīths than older ones.

iii- Giving the opportunity for people to transmit many ḥadīths may encourage weak believers or hypocrites to fabricate ḥadīths whenever they want, in order to support or propagate ideas which they hold. Therefore, on some occasions 'Umar treated with severity those who seemed to transmit ḥadīths readily and asked them to bring someone who would confirm their transmission. Abū Mūsā was one of those who underwent this treatment, when he related to 'Umar a ḥadīth regarding permission to enter someone's house[2]; when he asked 'Umar the reason for this harsh treatment, 'Umar answered: "I do trust you, but I am afraid that People may ascribe to the Prophet what he did not actually say"[3]. Having acted in this way, it seems that 'Umar aimed to show new believers that even transmissions of the Companions were not accepted easily, so that they would think twice before transmitting anything on the authority of the Prophet. Commenting on this story Ibn

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1 D., vol. 1, p. 82. For other statements which imply this fear of transmission on the authority of the Prophet, see Su., 3, pp. 82f.
2 In this anecdote 'Umar asked Abū Mūsā to bring someone who would confirm his transmission, see B2., vol. 8, p. 173, (n. 262); cf. vol. 3, p. 158, (n. 277). For a similar story with Ubayy b. Kaʿb, see Ibn Saʿd, vol. 4, 1, pp. 13f.
3 I.H., 1, vol. 11, p. 30.

'Abd al-Barr, remarks that it may be that new converts were with 'Umar when Abū Mūsā transmitted this hadīth, and that he was afraid that accepting the transmission of Abū Mūsā too readily might lead them to venture on inventing hadīths, as a justification for their behaviour in particular circumstances. Therefore he treated Abū Mūsā in this way, in order to teach them that whoever transmitted a hadīth would undergo a careful investigation[1]. Commenting on the same incident, Abū Hātim points out that 'Umar did not accuse the Companions regarding their transmission on the authority of the Prophet, and did not mean to stop them from transmitting hadīths, but he anticipated that false reports would be ascribed to the Prophet. Therefore, he disapproved of their transmitting many hadīths, in order to deter those who came after them from following their example – conduct that might have led them to make mistakes, or further to invent hadīths intentionally for worldly gain[2].

Moreover, the names of those who transmitted many hadīths may be misused by weak believers in narrating on their authority what they did not actually transmit; Sa'd b. Abī Waqqāṣ is reported to have said: "What prevents me narrating hadīths is the fear that people may ascribe to me what I have not said"[3].

These are the main reasons which seem to have made the students of Hadīth at that time very cautious, whenever they wanted to transmit something on the authority of the Prophet; although they were aware of their duty to convey Islam through its two main sources (the Quran and the Hadīth), they preferred someone else to undertake this difficult task.

(3) Observance of straightforwardness.

As Muslims believed that Hadīth is a type of revelation and one of the main sources of Islam, they tended from this very early period to accept hadīths only from

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1 Ibid.
2 Ibn Hibbān, vol. 1, pp. 26f.
3 H., 2, p. 61; cf. D., vol. 1, p. 85.

those who were reliable. As far as the Companions are concerned, we find that they observed this principle. This is reflected in a statement of al-Barā' b. 'Āzib: "We did not hear all these ḥadīths from the Prophet directly, since we were engaged in our works and farms, but the people used not to tell lies; therefore those who were present (and heard the Prophet) used to tell those who were absent"[1]. There is another statement to the same effect ascribed to Anas b. Mālik[2]. The Successors were also very cautious about this issue; elucidating a custom that was common among his fellow students of Ḥadīth, Abū al-'Āliyah al-Riyāḥī said that before learning ḥadīths from a certain *shaykh*, they used to watch how he performed his prayer; if he performed it perfectly, they would consider him reliable in other things and would learn from him, otherwise, they would leave him alone[3]. This seems to have been an influence of the Quranic teaching that the observance of prayers deters the observer from wrongdoing; "...and establish regular Prayer: for Prayer restrains from shameful and evil deeds..."[4]. Reporting the practice of an older generation, Ibrāhīm al-Nakha'ī said that whenever they wanted to learn ḥadīths from a certain man, they used to consider his characteristics and his observance of the prayers[5]. As far as his fellow students of Ḥadīth are concerned, Ibrāhīm pointed out that whenever they wanted to learn a ḥadīth with a particular *shaykh*, they would consider his integrity carefully; they would not study ḥadīth with him, unless they found that he was straightforward in the way he led his life[6]. Scholars also advised students of Ḥadīth to avoid receiving ḥadīths from unreliable transmitters. 'Āṣim b. Bahdalah said that while they, he and his colleagues, were young, they attended the sessions of Abū

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1 H., 3, vol. 1, p. 127; cf. Kh., 2, vol. 1, p. 174; Kh., 3, p. 385.
2 See above, p. 155.
3 D., vol. 1, p. 113; cf. Ibn 'Adī, 2, p. 95.
4 xxix. 45.
5 D., vol. 1, pp. 112f; cf. Kh., 2, vol. 1, p. 193; Kh., 3, p. 157. See Ibn Ḥibbān, vol. 1, p. 16, where Ibrāhīm is reported as ascribing this particular practice to his generation.
6 See Ibn 'Adī, 1, vol. 1, p. 156.

‘Abd al-Raḥmān al-Sulamī. He used to say: "Do not frequent story-tellers except Abū al-Aḥwaṣ, and avoid Shaqīq and Sa‘d b. ‘Ubaydah[1]". Commenting on this statement Ḥammād says: "The Shaqīq about whom warning has been issued is not Abū Wā’il[2], but someone else who holds the doctrine of the Khārijites"[3]. Hishām reported his father, ‘Urwah b. al-Zubayr, as saying that sometimes it happened that he heard a ḥadīth which he thought would be interesting to transmit, but he avoided transmitting it out of fear that someone would hear it and act according to it. ‘Urwah added that the fact which stopped him narrating it was that it was conveyed to him by someone whom he did not trust on the authority of someone whom he trusted, or that it was conveyed to him by someone whom he trusted on the authority of someone whom he did not trust"[4]. Ṭāwūs b. Kaysān recommended Sulaymān b. Mūsā, a student of Ḥadīth, to learn ḥadīths only from those who were reliable[5]. Abū Qilābah, ‘Abd Allah b. Zayd, is reported to have advised students of Ḥadīth not to sit with people of heretical doctrines [Ahl al-ahwā’] and not to argue with them, as they might seduce them or lead them astray[6]. The advice of al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī and Muḥammad b. Sīrīn was not to attend sessions of heretical scholars [Ahl al-ahwā’], not to debate matters with them and to avoid listening to them all together[7]. Asmā’ b. ‘Ubayd reported that two heretics [Ahl al-ahwā’] entered to Ibn Sīrīn and asked him whether he wanted them to relate a ḥadīth to him; he answered in the negative. They offered to read to him a verse of the Quran, but he again refused, and said angrily: "If you do not leave, I will leave myself", so they left. After their departure a man asked Ibn

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1 Sa‘d b. ‘Ubaydah al-Sulamī was a student of Abū ‘Abd al-Raḥmān and his son-in-law. He upheld the doctrine of al-Khawārij, but he abandoned it afterwards; see I.H., 4, vol. 3, p. 478.
2 This is Shaqīq b. Salamah al-Asa‘dī (d. 82); see Dh., 1, vol. 2, p. 13.
3 Ibn Sa‘d, vol. 6, p. 126; cf. p. 120; Ml., introduction, vol. 1, p. 100; I.H., 4, vol. 8, p. 169.
4 Kh., 3, pp. 32, 132.
5 Ml., introduction, vol. 1, pp. 85f; cf. D., vol. 1, pp. 112f.
6 D., vol. 1, p. 108.
7 Id., vol. 1, p. 110.

Sīrīn for the reason that made him refuse their even reading a verse of the Quran, and he replied that he was afraid that they might read it in a distorted way, which he would then remember [*fayuḥarrifāniḥā fayaqirr dhālik fī qalbī*][1]. Rajā' b. Ḥaywah asked someone to transmit to him on the authority of straightforward transmitters only[2]. Nāfi', a client of Ibn 'Umar, is reported to have advised the people of Egypt to consider those from whom they received ḥadīths and warned them against story-tellers[3]. Sa'd b. Ibrāhīm is reported as saying: "No one should transmit about the Messenger of Allah, but those who are trustworthy"[4]. He meant that ḥadīths are to be accepted only from trustworthy transmitters[5].

These statements show how authorities in the first century of Islam paid heed to the trustworthiness of the transmitters and asked their students to receive ḥadīths or religious knowledge only from those who were reliable and to avoid listening to story-tellers and others who held certain heretical doctrines.

(4) Observance of accuracy.

Authorities at that time also pointed out the importance of observing accuracy in transmission. Having addressed the people, 'Umar the second Caliph said: "So whoever understands and remembers it (what I said) must narrate it to others wherever his mount takes him; but if somebody is afraid that he does not understand it, then it is unlawful for him to tell lies about me"[6]. There is another statement ascribed to him to the effect that one is free (from responsibility) only if he transmits (a report) exactly as he heard it[7]. Reporting a practice of an older generation, Ibrāhīm al-Nakha'ī said

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1 Id., vol. 1, p. 109.
2 See Ibn 'Adī, 1, vol. 1, p. 155.
3 See I.B., 2, vol. 1, p. 55.
4 M1., introduction, vol. 1, p. 87; cf. Kh., 3, p. 32.
5 al-Nawawī, 1, vol. 1, p. 87.
6 B2., vol. 8, pp. 539f; cf. Kh., 3, p. 166.
7 I.B., 1, vol. 1, p. 123; cf. al-Burhānfūrī, vol. 10, p. 287.

that they used to learn ḥadīths from those who were recognised as students of Ḥadīth, and who were accurate in their transmission[1]. Ibn Sīrīn is reported to have remarked that observing exactness [al-tathabbut] was half of knowledge[2].

Warnings were also issued regarding masters who were inaccurate in their transmission. 'Aṭā' reported Ibn 'Abbās as saying: "Do not write on the authority of a master who is heedless [mughaffal]"[3]. As such a transmitter will be inaccurate in what he transmits, he is not qualified to be quoted as a reliable authority.

In the Books of Ḥadīth one encounters a number of ḥadīths, which reflect the precision of the transmitters of ḥadīths at that time, inasmuch as they occasionally mention two words or sentences of the same meaning, since they are not sure which of them was uttered by the Prophet. Salamah b. al-Akwa' reported a ḥadīth regarding the privilege of Alī b. Abī Ṭālib, in which he said that during the battle of Khaybar the Prophet said: "I will give the flag to a man", or "A man, whom Allah and His Apostle love, (or who loves Allah and His Apostle), will take the flag tomorrow, and Allah will grant victory under his leadership"[4]. Having transmitted a ḥadīth: "The best of my followers are those who are living in my generation...", 'Imrān b. Ḥuṣayn said: "I do not remember whether he (the Prophet) mentioned two or three generations after his generation"[5]. Sometimes the transmitter restricts himself to a certain form of a word, although it is not the common one; Abū Hurayrah in a ḥadīth regarding the prayer to be said before commencing a journey restricted himself to an unusual form ['awthā' al-safar] which seems to be the one he heard instead of using the more common form [wu'athā' al-safar]. Abū Zur'ah[6], the transmitter of this ḥadīth from

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1 Ibn 'Adī, 1, vol. 1, pp. 152f.
2 Kh., 3, p. 166.
3 Id., p. 148.
4 See B2., vol. 5, p. 44, (n. 52).
5 Id., p. 2, (n. 2).
6 Abū Zur'ah b. 'Amr b. Jarīr al-Bujalī was a student of Abū Hurayrah, see I.H., 4, vol. 12, pp. 99f; Dh., 1, vol. 3, p. 297.

him, comments on this transmission: "Abū Hurayrah is an Arab; if he had wanted to say *wu'athā'*, he would have said it"[1]. 'Abd Allah b. 'Umar is well-known for his exactness in his transmissions. He used to restrict himself to the very words he had heard from the Prophet more than anyone else; he would neither add nor subtract a single word of a ḥadīth[2]. When someone repeated a ḥadīth regarding the five pillars of Islam in front of him and mentioned one pillar before the other, he said: "No, put fasting during the month of Ramḍān at the end, as I have heard from the Prophet's mouth"[3]. Abū Sa'īd al-Khudrī before transmitting a ḥadīth said: "I am transmitting only what I have heard from the Prophet; I heard it with my own ears and comprehended it with my heart"[4]. Among those who are reported to have observed accuracy in their transmission is Abū Umāmah al-Bāhilī, who used to relate ḥadīths as if he had to convey what he heard accurately[5].

For the sake of accuracy, Zayd b. Arqam is reported to have given up transmitting ḥadīths when he became old and started to forget. 'Abd al-Raḥmān b. Abī Laylā said: "We asked Zayd b. Arqam to relate a ḥadīth to us, and he replied: 'I have become old and started to forget'; then he concluded: 'transmitting on the authority of the Prophet is a very exacting task'"[6]. Abū al-Dardā' used to say after he related a ḥadīth: "If they are not the exact words, they are similar to them"[7]. Masrūq reported that 'Abd Allah b. Mas'ūd once transmitted a ḥadīth on the authority of the

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1 Kh., 3, p. 180. *Wu'athā'* means hardship and difficulties during travelling, see Ibn al-Athīr, vol. 4, p. 235.
2 Cf. D., 1, 193; Kh., 3, p. 171; Dh., 3, vol. 1, p. 37.
3 Kh., 3, p. 176.
4 A., vol. 3, p. 20.
5 Kh., 3, p. 172.
6 I.M., vol. 1, p. 8; cf. Kh., 3, p. 171.
7 D., vol. 1, p. 83; cf. Kh., 3, pp. 205f.

Prophet, then he started shaking and said: "or something similar to that"[1]. Anas b. Malik is also reported to do the same[2].

These statements and incidents show how far scholars and students of Ḥadīth went at that time, particularly the Companions, in observing accuracy in transmission. Therefore, when we find the scholars of the second century and later putting forward rules regarding the accuracy in transmission, we have to realise that they were inspired by the teachings enshrined in the Quran and the Ḥadīth, and by the statements and practices of the early scholars among the Companions and the Successors. However, it is worthy of note that late scholars of Ḥadīth considered ḍabṭ al-kitāb[3] [the accuracy of the book] as well, while authorities in the first century concentrated, to some extent, on the accuracy of transmitters; this was due to the fact that the latter were dependent mainly on their memories, and that the existence of ṣaḥīfāhs at that time was as an auxiliary element.

(5) Acquisition and presentation of the *Isnād*.

It has already been pointed out that the students of Ḥadīth, in the first century of Islam, were encouraged, and accustomed, to receive their material from trustworthy scholars and accurate authorities. It is important to add here that it was unacceptable, in their opinion, to receive ḥadīths or religious knowledge from written copies without getting them from a recognised authority. 'Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb is reported as saying: "If someone finds a document which contains knowledge that he has not heard from an authority, he should soak it in water until the writing can no longer be

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1 Kh., 3, p. 205. 'Amr b. Maymūn reported something to the same effect, see D., vol. 1, p. 83; I.M., vol. 1, p. 8.
2 See D., vol. 1, p. 84; I.M., vol. 1, p. 8; Kh., 3, p. 206.
3 Ḍabṭ al-kitāb means that once a transmitter has written down something transmitted to him and has had his transcript verified, he must ensure that this transcript remains free from contamination, until he comes to transmit it in his turn, see I.H., 3, p. 32; cf. 'Itr, p. 80.

distinguished"[1].   The Successor authority, <u>Sulaymān b. Mūsā al-Umawī</u> warns students of religious knowledge against taking knowledge from those who had acquired it only from written copies, which they had not heard from a recognised scholar[2].

These statements show how important it was to obtain Ḥadīth or religious knowledge through recognised authorities, (later called the *Isnād*).   In the early days of Islam, this *Isnād* consisted, in most cases, of the Prophet himself, who was quoted directly by the Companions, or of the Prophet and one of his Companions, or of the Prophet, one of the Companions and one of the Successors who was quoted by his students.

Regarding presentation of the *isnād*, it is evident that when a Companion transmits a ḥadīth on the authority of the Prophet, this is his *isnād*, whether he has received this particular ḥadīth from the Prophet directly or on the authority of another Companion.   As we have already seen, it was a common practice amongst the Companions that one who was present with the Prophet, on any occasion, would tell those who were absent what had been said or done[3].   Scholars of Ḥadīth state that when the *isnād* reaches a companion, there is no need to investigate whether this Companion received it directly from the Prophet or not, because they believe that in almost[4] every case, there are two possibilities; the first is that he received it from the Prophet directly;   the second is that he received it from another Companion, particularly in the case of something that he was too young to have experienced personally, or something from the period before he had embraced Islam.   With regard to the latter possibility, there is no need either to identify the Companion from whom

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1 Kh., 3, p. 353.
2 See Id., p. 162.
3 See a statement of al-Barā' b. 'Āzib, p. 162.
4 On the rare occasions when a Companion transmitted a ḥadīth from a Successor, he would disclose his authority, see Su., 2, vol. 1, p. 207; al-'Irāqī, p. 287.

he received the ḥadīth; they are all believed to be above criticism, as their biographies confirm[1]. Nevertheless, some of the Companions transmitted ḥadīths using the forms: 'I heard the Prophet', or 'The Prophet said to me', or 'We saw the Prophet doing so and so', which indicate that they received them directly from him. Mujāhid reported that he saw a ṣaḥīfah in the possession of 'Abd Allah b. 'Amr b. al-'Āṣ; he asked him about it and 'Abd Allah replied: "This is al-Ṣādiqah, which contains what I heard from the Prophet (directly); between him and me there is no one"[2]. Some Companions are reported to have identified the one from whom they had received a ḥadīth[3]. Ash'ath b. Sulaym reported that his father[4] heard the Companion <u>Abū Ayyūb al-Anṣārī</u> transmit a ḥadīth on the authority of Abū Hurayrah, so he asked him the reason for doing so, although he was a Companion himself. Abū Ayyūb remarked that Abū Hurayrah had heard what he himself had not heard; therefore, he preferred to transmit on his authority rather than transmitting on the authority of the Prophet directly[5]. 'Abd Allah b. 'Umar was once asked about a certain matter and he answered by transmitting a ḥadīth on the authority of his father, although they were both Companions[6]. However, the urging of students of Ḥadīth to use *isnād* and to disclose their authorities began at an early stage; <u>Alī b. Abī Ṭālib</u> is reported to have advised students of Ḥadīth to write down ḥadīths together with their *isnāds* "[7].

However, it is important that while considering the beginning of the phenomenon of *isnād*, one should differentiate between *istikhdām al-isnād* [the voluntary proffering of the *isnād*] and *al-su'āl 'an al-isnād* [the request by the hearers for the *isnād*]. As for the former, we have evidence to suggest that it began along

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1 See Su., 2, vol. 1, p. 207.
2 Ibn Sa'd, vol. 7, 2, p. 189.
3 See Su., 2, vol. 2, pp. 386-88.
4 Sulaym b. al-Aswad al-Kūfī, d. 82 A.H.
5 Ibn Kathīr, 1, vol. 8, p. 109; cf. Su., 3, p. 103.
6 A., vol. 1, p. 27; see ibid., for another example.
7 Ṣiddīqī, p. 135, citing al-Qasṭalānī.

with the beginning of the transmission of ḥadīths[1]; the latter will be dealt with in due course.

As far as the Successors are concerned, it seems that although some of their scholars transmitted directly from the Prophet (the form called *Mursal*), for one reason or another, they seem generally to be aware of the authorities from whom they received ḥadīths, inasmuch as they are able, on several occasions, to name them on demand, or whenever they feel that it is necessary to do so. ʿĀṣim al-Aḥwal heard <u>Abū al-ʿĀliyah al-Riyāḥī</u>, a great Successor, transmitting a ḥadīth on the authority of 'someone who had heard the Prophet', so he asked him whether he had forgotten the name of this informant, whereupon Abū al-ʿĀliyah was able to supply his name and the place in which he had received the ḥadīth from him[2]. In another story, we are told that al-Aʿmash asked <u>Ibrāhīm al-Nakhaʿī</u> to name the authority from whom he received Ibn Masʿūd's ḥadīths. Ibrāhīm said: "If I quote Ibn Masʿūd on the authority of a specific transmitter, it means that that is the only route through which I have received what I am transmitting, but if I say: 'Abd Allah Ibn Masʿūd said', this means that I have received what I am quoting by more than one route"[3]. Another example is reported by Yūnus b. ʿUbayd, who once asked <u>al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī</u> how he quoted the Prophet directly, although he had not met him?. al-Ḥasan said: "You have asked me about something about which I have never been asked; were it not for your relation to me, I would not tell you. Whenever you hear me say: 'The Apostle of Allah said', it is on the authority of ʿAlī b. Abī Ṭālib; but this is a time in which it is difficult to mention his name"[4]. It is significant to know that Abū Zurʿah al-Rāzī, a prominent

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1 It is worthy of note that Fallātah reaches a similar conclusion, which he supports with the fact that the Companions would often preface their transmissions with: "We have heard the Prophet...", "We saw the Prophet..." and so forth. See Fallātah, vol. 2, pp. 11-14.
2 I.B., 2, vol. 1, p. 56.
3 Su., 2, vol. 1, p. 205.
4 Id., vol. 1, p. 204.

scholar of Ḥadīth, declares that he finds a provenance [aṣl] for every ḥadīth in which al-Ḥasan quotes the Prophet directly, to the exclusion of four[1]. 'Urwah b. al-Zubayr related to 'Umar b. 'Abd al-'Azīz a ḥadīth on the authority of Abū Mas'ūd al-Anṣārī regarding the time of prayers. 'Umar said: "Be sure of what you say...!". 'Urwah then revealed his direct informant: "This is what Bashīr b. Mas'ūd transmitted on the authority of his father"[2]. Qatādah al-Sadūsī is reported to have begun to disclose his authorities in Baṣrah; Ḥammād b. Salamah reported that Qatādah used to transmit ḥadīths saying: "It reached us [balaghanā] that the Prophet, or 'Umar or 'Alī...", but when Ḥammād b. Sulaymān, another scholar, came, he used to relate thus: "Ibrāhīm and so-and-so told us [ḥaddathanā]...". Having heard of this, Qatādah began to transmit ḥadīths together with their isnāds, saying: "I have asked Muṭarrif, "I have asked Sa'īd b. al-Musayyib..." and "Anas told us..."[3].

These incidents support the idea that transmitting ḥadīths without presenting their isnāds does not mean necessarily that the transmitters were not aware of their authorities; in fact they did so for the sake of brevity or simply because they felt that there was no need to disclose their authorities.

In any case, there are several examples of authorities who are reported to have transmitted ḥadīths along with their isnāds. 'Awf b. Mālik al-Jushamī[4] used to hold Ḥadīth sessions at the mosque, and to introduce his transmissions with the words: "Abd Allah said", i.e. Ibn Mas'ūd, his Master[5]. When al-Zuhrī transmitted a ḥadīth, he would present its isnād; when Sufyān b. 'Uyaynah asked him to transmit a ḥadīth without giving its isnad, he refused and said: "The roof can not be reached without a

1 Ibn Rajab, vol. 1, p. 536; see p. 530, where there is a similar statement expressed by Yaḥyā b. Sa'īd al-Qaṭṭān.
2 See B2., vol. 1, pp. 297f, (n. 500).
3 Ibn Sa'd, vol. 7, 2, p. 2.
4 'Awf b. Mālik, Abū al-Aḥwaṣ, was killed before 95 A.H. by al-Khawārij during the period of al-Ḥajjāj b. Yūsuf al-Thaqafī (d. 95 A. H.), see I.H., 4, vol. 8, p. 169.
5 See Ibn Sa'd, vol. 6, p. 126.

stairway"[1]. He is also reported to have denounced Isḥāq b. Abī Farwah for transmitting ḥadīths without presenting their isnāds [2]. Mālik considered al-Zuhrī to be the first to transmit ḥadīths together with their isnāds [Awwal man asnad al-Ḥadīth][3], but as there are other statements and stories, which indicate that the voluntary proffering of the isnād began before al-Zuhrī, this statement should be understood as implying that al-Zuhrī was the first to restrict himself to prefacing his transmissions with their isnāds, as far as Mālik knows. It seems that the presentation of the isnād for each ḥadīth which one transmitted became common practice among scholars and students of Ḥadīth, from the time of al-Zuhrī onwards[4]. It is significant to note that Hammām b. Munabbih, (whose ṣaḥīfah, which he learned and wrote from his master, Abū Hurayrah, has been recently edited), "introduces his text with the words: 'Abū Hurayrah told us in the course of what he related from the Prophet ', thus giving the source of his information in the manner which become known as sanad or isnād, i.e. the teacher or chain of teachers through whom an author reaches the Prophet, a practice invariably and systematically followed in Ḥadīth compilations"[5].

Moreover, students of Ḥadīth during the first century of Islam, used to look for what was later called: al-isnād al-'ālī [6], which they achieved by travelling in search of knowledge. The journey of Jābir b. 'Abd Allah to Damascus, in order to meet 'Abd Allah b. Unays and to hear a ḥadīth which the latter transmitted is a typical example[7]. I have already quoted a statement of Abū al-'Āliyah al-Riyāhī, in which he

1 Su., 2, vol. 2, p. 160.
2 See Kh., 3, p. 391; H., 2, p. 6.
3 al-Rāzī 'Abd al-Raḥmān, vol. 4, p. 74.
4 Cf. al-'Umarī, Akram, pp. 48f; Fallātah, vol. 2, p. 29.
5 'Abdul Rauf, "The development of the science of Ḥadīth", p. 272. It is noteworthy that in this article, it is said that Hammām died in 110 A.H., while in Dh., 1, and I.H., 4, the date given is 132 A.H.
6 See Su., 2, vol. 2, pp. 159-62.
7 B2., vol. 1, p. 65, tarjamah; cf. Kh., 2, vol. 2, pp. 336f; I.B., 1, vol. 1, p. 93. See another example in I.B., 1, vol. 1, pp. 33-36.

says: "When we hear a ḥadīth on the authority of the Companions, we would not be satisfied until we travel to them, so that we could hear it from them (directly)"[1]. Having heard a ḥadīth from someone on the authority of Abū Masʿūd, 'Abd al-Rahmān b. Yazīd b. Qays wanted to hear it from Abū Masʿūd directly; he said: "I met Abū Masʿūd near the house (Kaʿba) and said to him: A ḥadīth has been conveyed to me on your authority about the two (concluding) verses of Sūrat al-Baqara. He said: Yes, the Messenger of Allah (in fact) said: Anyone who recites the two verses at the end of Sūrat al-Baqara at night, they would suffice for him"[2]. These statements and events reflect the keen interest of students of Ḥadīth at that time in receiving ḥadīths from those who have first-hand knowledge of them, even if they need to travel for achieving a higher isnāds.

(6) *al-Mudhākarah*.[3].

It is one of the important principles, which helped students of Ḥadīth in the first century to keep ḥadīths alive in their heart, since they used, due to the lack of writing materials and people who could read and write, to learn them by heart. From the time of the Prophet, students of Ḥadīth used to hold special sessions aimed at studying and revising ḥadīths they had obtained. Once, Muʿāwiyah entered the mosque of Ḥimṣ and saw a group of people sitting there. He asked them what they were doing. They replied: "We are studying and memorising the *Sunnah* of our Prophet", whereupon he told them that the Prophet entered the mosque one day and found a number of his Companions sitting there. He asked them the reason for their gathering, and they said: "We performed the prayer, then we sat in order to study the Book of Allah and the *Sunnah* of his Prophet..."[4]. Anas b. Mālik declared that they

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1 Abū Zahū, p. 112.
2 M2., vol. 2, p. 386, (n. 1761); cf. Kh., 2, vol. 1, p. 182, where the man from whom 'Abd al-Rahmān heard this ḥadīth is said to be 'Alqamah b. Qays.
3 It is the study and revision of ḥadīths in special Ḥadīth sessions.
4 H., 3, vol. 1, p. 94.

(the Companions) used to study and repeat hadīths after they had heard them from the Prophet, until they had learned them by heart[1]. The Companions also encouraged their students to observe this principle of transmission. Alī b. Abī Ṭālib is reported as saying: "Visit each other and practise al-Mudhākarah continuously; do not let Ḥadīth perish"[2]. 'Abd Allah b. Mas'ūd exhorted students of Ḥadīth to study and repeat hadīths in order to keep them alive[3]. Abū Sa'īd al-Khudrī recommended them to practice al-mudhākarah, since it would preserve hadīths from oblivion[4]. Ibn 'Abbās is reported to have said: "Practice al-mudhākarah, in order to preserve hadīths (in your memories); they are not like the Quran: the Quran is collected and preserved (while hadīths are not), so if you do not practice al-mudhākarah, they will be forgotten"[5]. In another account he is reported to have pointed out that the practising of al-mudhākarah for an hour is better than getting up at night, in order to offer optional prayers[6].

As far as the Successors are concerned, we find that 'Abd al-Raḥmān b. Abī Laylā, a scholar of Kūfah, is reported as saying: "Practice al-mudhākarah, so that Ḥadīth will survive"[7]. Ibrāhīm al-Nakha'ī is reported to have been very eager to meet his colleagues and study hadīths with them, to the extent that he felt that the night was very long[8]. 'Aṭā' b. Abī Rabāḥ reported that they (the Successors) used to practice al-mudhākarah after attending Jābir b. 'Abd Allah's sessions of Ḥadīth, and he declared that Abū al-Zubayr was the best at memorising hadīths transmitted by Jābir[9].

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1 Kh., 2, vol. 1, pp. 363f.
2 H., 3, vol. 1, p. 95; cf. Kh., 2, vol. 1, p. 364. For other statements, see Kh., 2, vol. 2, p. 407.
3 See D., vol. 1, p. 150; cf. H., 3, vol. 1, p. 95; H., 2, p. 141.
4 D., vol. 1, pp. 147, 148; cf. H., 3, vol. 1, p. 94; H., 2, p. 140.
5 al-Khaṭīb, M. A., p. 148, citing al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī.
6 Dh., 3, vol. 1, p. 39.
7 D., vol. 1, p. 147. See a similar statement by the Successor 'Alqamah b. Qays, in D., vol. 1, p. 147; H., 2, p. 141.
8 See al-Khaṭīb, M. A., p. 161, citing al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī.
9 Kh., 2, vol. 1, p. 365; cf. Dh., 3, vol. 1, p. 119. Abū al-Zubayr is Muḥammad b. Muslim, d. 128 A.H.

<u>Ibn Shihāb al-Zuhrī</u> is reported as pointing out that what jeopardised the knowledge was forgetfulness and the abandoning of *al-mudhākarah*[1]

Bearing in mind that a lot of the people in the first century were mainly dependent on memory for receiving knowledge of Hadīth, one can appreciate the importance of such a principle for preserving hadīths and guarding them against forgetfulness and alteration, regarding the *isnād* and the *matn*. However, in the course of time this principle became one of the subjects discussed separately in works on the Principles of Hadīth[2].

(7) Considering the receiver's faculty.

As individuals differ in their faculties and mental abilities, it is very important for a transmitter to decide what should be transmitted to his hearers and what should not. Regarding this principle one finds ʿAlī's advice in which he says: "Transmit to people only what they can understand, if you do not wish misunderstandings of Allah and His Apostle to occur"[3]. ʿAbd Allah b. Masʿūd is also reported to have said: "Whenever you tell people a saying [*hadīth*] which they cannot comprehend, you will cause some of them to be seduced by it"[4].

These statements urge students of Hadīth to be careful regarding their transmission of hadīths, and to choose from hadīths what they believe to suit those who are studying with them, since what suits a certain individual or group does not necessarily suit the other, and each case has its own merits.

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1 D., vol. 1, p. 150; cf. Ibn ʿAdī, 1, vol. 1, p. 59. For more statements regarding *al-mudhākarah*, see al-Khaṭīb, M. A., pp. 159-162.
2 See H., 2, pp. 140-46.
3 See B2., vol. 1, p 95.
4 M1., introduction, vol. 1, p. 76; cf. Dh., 3, vol. 1, p. 15. The word '*hadīth*' seems to be used, in this contest, in its general meaning, which includes hadīths and any other statements, rather than as a technical term; therefore, I render it as 'saying'.

Although one may identify more principles regarding the transmission of hadīths in the first century of Islam[1], the ones presented above seem to be the most important; whenever they are observed, they help to preserve the materials of the second source of Islam and protect them from forgetfulness, distortion and fabrication.

B- Standards of criticism of transmission.

As one can identify several principles regarding the transmission of Hadīth, it is also possible to pick out a number of standards for investigating the authenticity of hadīths. The following section is devoted to identifying the basic standards, which were applied, or pointed out, by scholars of Hadīth in the first century of Islam.

(1) Inquiring about the *isnād*.

It has been pointed out that although early scholars of Hadīth sometimes transmitted hadīths without disclosing their *isnāds*, they were heedful of them, and were able to present them, whenever they felt the need; but when they came to criticise hadīths, the first step was to inquire about their *isnāds*, in order to ensure that they were transmitted through a connected chain of transmitters on the authority of the Prophet. Ibn 'Abbās remarked that knowledge of Hadīth was a part of religion, and advised Muslims to accept hadīths only if they were transmitted together with their *isnād* [*ajīzū al-hadīth mā usnid ilā nabiyyikum*][2].

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1 For example, scholars at that time used to seize opportunities and times which were suitable for holding their sessions, and advised their students to do the same. Several statements on the subject are ascribed to 'Abd Allāh b. Mas'ūd, 'Ā'ishah, Abū al-'Āliyah al-Riyāhī and al-Hasan al-Basrī, see D., vol. 1, p. 119; Kh., 2, vol. 1, pp. 518f, and vol. 2, pp. 180-83. Students of Hadīth were also encouraged to learn hadīths from recognised [*akābir*] scholars, see a statement of Ibn Mas'ūd on the matter, in Ibn 'Adī, 1, vol. 1, p. 157.

2 Ibn 'Adī, 1, vol. 1, p. 149. The Arabic term '*usnid*' usually means: 'to be ascribed to someone', but as Ibn 'Abbās seems to have been speaking about Hadīth, which is naturally what is ascribed to the Prophet, he should have meant hadīths which are transmitted along with their *isnāds*'. It is noteworthy that scholars of Hadīth define *al-Musnad* as a hadīth which is transmitted through a connected *isnād*, see Su., 2, vol. 1, p. 182.

However, it seems that in the first decades of the first century, and particularly before the first *fitnah* of the killing of the third Caliph, 'Uthmān, and the dissension after it, there was no need to apply this standard i.e. asking transmitters to present the *isnād* regularly. That is because most of transmitters, at that time, were from the Companions, the respected authorities, who received ḥadīths at first-hand or from their companions whom they used to trust. There were also hardly any motives which would make people invent ḥadīths. This is indicated by Ibn Sīrīn's statement: "People used not to inquire about the *isnād*, but when the *fitnah* took place, they said: 'name your informants [*rijālakum*]'; if they were of *Ahl al-Sunnah* (those adhering to the recognised doctrine) their ḥadīths were accepted, and if they were of *Ahl al-bid'ah* (those holding heretical doctrines), their ḥadīths were rejected"[1]. Arguments are raised about the genuineness of this statement and the period to which it refers. The present study confirms that scholars were heedful of ensuring the trustworthiness of transmitters from the early days of Islam – a matter that would make them request transmitters to present the *isnād*. Therefore, one tends to accept al-A'zamī's interpretation of Ibn Sīrīn's statement as it refers to the *fitnah* of the dissension between 'Alī and Mu'āwiyah, directly after the killing of the third Caliph, 'Uthmān. He points out the fact that "Ibn Sīrīn's wording suggests that he relates a practice earlier than his own period"[2]. Subsequently, there is no need to doubt its genuineness as Schacht does[3] or, as Robson suggests, to attribute it to another *fitnah* or war, which arose when 'Abd Allah b. al-Zubayr set himself up as a Caliph in 64 A.H. after the death of Yazīd b. Mu'āwiyah, [4]. Nevertheless, there is a statement

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1 Ml., introduction, vol. 1, p. 84; cf. Kh., 3, p. 122.
2 Abdul Ghaffar, p. 17, citing al-A'zamī; cf. al-'Umarī, Akram, pp. 43f. A more recent study also dates the *fitnah* to the conflict that emerged after the killing of the third Caliph, 'Uthmān, see Al-JarAllah, Ph.D. thesis, pp. 214-41.
3 See Schacht, *The origins.*, pp. 36f.
4 See Robson 8, pp. 21f. For a discussion of Robson's opinion, see al-'Umarī, Akram, pp. 47f.

attributed to <u>Khaythamah b. ʿAbd al-Raḥmān</u>, to the effect that people did not inquire about *isnād*, until the time of al-Mukhtār al-Thaqafī; thereon they began to doubt the integrity of some transmitters[1]. This statement dates the beginning of the inquiring about the *isnād* to a later period, similar to that suggested by Robson; but one should note that deciding on the beginning of a certain practice will often differ from one person to another, inasmuch as everyone will draw from his own experience and observations. Such a statement, however, indicates one of the most important factors, that gave rise to the practice in question. In my opinion, there is no practical outcome from the difference between the two preceding statements, because, as we have seen, although students of Ḥadīth, at that time, did not restrict themselves to disclosing their *isnāds* constantly, they were able to produce them when the need arose[2]. In addition to this, there were still many Companions, like ʿAbd Allah b. ʿUmar, Anas b. Mālik and others, who received ḥadīths directly from the Prophet, and from whom ḥadīths were often received. Commenting on Ibn Sīrīn's statement, al-Aʿzamī points out that it "implies that the practice of Isnād was in existence, but people usually inquire, and it was left to the transmitter whether or not to disclose his sources"[3].

The following are a series of anecdotes, in which authorities requested transmitters to present the *isnād*. <u>ʿUrwah b. al-Zubayr</u> is reported to have interrogated Abū Ḥumayd al-Sāʿidī as to whether he had heard the ḥadīth he transmitted from the Prophet directly, and Abū Ḥumayd replied: "From his mouth to my ears"[4]. Once ʿUrwah narrated a ḥadīth regarding the times of the prayers to

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1 See Kh., 2, vol. 1, p. 197. al-Mukhtār b. Abī ʿUbayd al-Thaqafī was a liar and misled person, who left al-Ḥasan b. ʿAlī and joined Ibn al-Zubayr, then left the latter and fought against him; an incident that led to his killing by Muṣʿab b. al-Zubayr, in 67 A.H. See I.H., 2, vol. 6, pp. 6f.
2 Cf. al-ʿUmarī, Akram, p. 53.
3 Abdul Ghaffar, p. 17.
4 Ml., vol. 12, pp. 221f.

'Umar b. 'Abd al-'Azīz, and 'Umar said to him: "Be sure of what you say...".

'Urwah replied: "This is what Bashīr b. Abī Mas'ūd transmitted on the authority of his father"[1]. In this incident we see how 'Umar, in order to ascertain the truth behind the transmission, asked 'Urwah to be more accurate, and subsequently 'Urwah disclosed his full *isnād* to him[2]. 'Āmir al-Sha'bī is reported to have pursued the *isnād* of a hadīth reported by al-Rabī' b. Khuthaym, until he discovered that it was reported on the authority of Abū Ayyūb al-Anṣārī[3]. A hadīth on the authority of Abū Qilābah, 'Abd Allah b. Zayd al-Baṣrī, was once transmitted to Ibn Sīrīn, whereupon the latter remarked that Abū Qilābah is a trustworthy man, but on whose authority did he transmit it?[4].

It is useful to know that as far as recognised authorities from the Successors, like Sa'īd b. al-Musayyib and others, are concerned, it should be said that some scholars accept their transmissions in the form of *Mursal*, i.e. when they quote the Prophet directly, without identifying the one from whom they received hadīths; this acceptance is on the grounds that they are trustworthy authorities, and from the praised generations, on whom one can depend[5]. To interrogate recognised scholars about their authorities was not an easy task, as this might be considered as a sign of doubtfulness concerning their transmissions. Having transmitted a hadīth, Anas b. Mālik was asked if he had heard it directly from the Prophet. This interrogation made him feel very angry, and say: "By Allah, we (the Companions) have not heard all these hadīths, which we are transmitting to you, from the Prophet (directly); but we used to transmit (hadīths) to each other, and to trust each other"[6]. Ḥabīb b. Abī

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1 See B2., vol. 1, pp. 297f, (n. 500).
2 See al-Khaṭīb's comment on this story, in *al-Kifāyah*. p. 396.
3 I.B., 2, vol. 1, p. 55.
4 See Ibn Rajab, vol. 1, p. 362; cf. Ibn 'Adī, 1, vol. 1, p. 147; I.H., 4, vol. 5, p. 225.
5 See Su., 2, vol. 1, pp. 198f
6 Kh., 2, vol. 1, p. 174.

Thābit reported that while they were attending a Ḥadīth session of <u>Saʿīd b. Jubayr</u>, he transmitted a ḥadīth to them, and a man asked him to disclose his authority; thereon, he got angry and stopped transmitting ḥadīths[1]. Once, someone asked <u>al-Ḥasan</u> to disclose his informants while transmitting ḥadīths; in reply to which al-Ḥasan pointed out that he never told lies, nor was he accused of doing so[2]. Shuʿbah b. al-Ḥajjāj, a student of Qatādah, said that he used to attend his master's sessions of Ḥadīth, and when he inquired of him about the *isnād*, the older students around him would say that Abū al-Khaṭṭāb himself was an *isnād* [*inn Qatādah sanad*], sc. there was no need for Qatādah to present his *isnāds*, since he was a recognised authority; thus he Shuʿbah was prevented from insisting on his demand. However, as Shuʿbah frequented the sessions of Qatādah regularly, requesting him to disclose his *isnāds*, Qatādah started to disclose them to him[3].

In any case, the demand for supplying the *isnād* grew towards the end of the first century, when, due to the death of the Companions, the phenomenon of the first-hand knowledge of ḥadīths began to disappear; the last one of the Companions is reported to have died not later than the end of the first decade of the second century[4]. By the time the second century had begun, 'inquiring about the *isnād*' became one of the main features of the criticism of ḥadīths.

(2) Ensuring the straightforwardness of transmitters.

As far as transmitters of ḥadīths are concerned, it seems to be natural for those who are guided by the Quran and the Ḥadīth to trust only those who are declared to be reliable by these two sources and to accept their transmissions, since they are the only

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1 D., vol. 1, p. 111.
2 Ibn ʿAdī, 1, vol. 1, p. 159.
3 al-Rāzī, ʿAbd al-Raḥmān, *taqdimah*, p. 166; cf. Ibn Saʿd, vol. 7, 2, p. 2, where a similar statement ascribed to Maʿmar b. Rāshid, a contemporary of Shuʿbah, is presented.
4 See Su., 2, vol. 2, pp. 228-32, where it is stated that ʿĀmir b. Wāthilah al-Laythī, who died in 110 A.H. according to al-Dhahabī, was the last one of them.

ones who are qualified to hand down such important, religious teachings. 'Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb is reported to have said: "People were (sometimes) judged by the revealing of a Divine Inspiration during the lifetime of Allah's Messenger, but now there is no longer any more (new revelation). Now we judge you by the deeds you practise publicly, so we will trust and favour the one who does good deeds in front of us, and we will not call him to account about what he is really doing in secret, for Allah will judge him for that; but we will not trust or believe the one who presents to us with an evil deeds, even if he claims that his intentions were good"[1]. This is not to be understood as that 'Umar was content with the evident integrity of someone; it should be understood in the light of other statements on his authority pertaining to the subject. Along with the account, adduced above, that shows how 'Umar demanded the tested integrity of the man who wanted to bear witness[2], there is a statement, in which he is reported as warning people against placing trust on, and being deceived by, someone only on the grounds of his observance of prayers and fasting; he advised them to look for the one who told the truth, whenever he spoke, who would prove to be honest, whenever he trusted, and who would prove to be straightforward, whenever he was in charge[3]. Accordingly, although one is not asked to investigate someone's inherent integrity, as this would be impossible in many cases, one should give an accurate appraisal which come after careful consideration; it is dangerous to depend on the evident characteristics which sometimes prove to be deceitful. 'Umar's statement is general and covers all aspects of life, but it certainly includes the acceptance of someone's transmissions more than anything else.

It was important, as we have already seen, to learn ḥadīths with, and to receive them from, a reliable informant [shaykh], but when the matter came to the acceptance

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1 B2., vol. 3, p. 491, (n. 809); cf. Kh., 3, p. 83.
2 See p. 130f.
3 al-A'ẓamī, p. 100, citing Ibn al-Mubārak.

of ḥadīths, in order to establish the law, the case became more important and crucial, inasmuch as only those ḥadīths reported by reliable transmitters would constitute a binding authority. Therefore, from an early period, scholars laid a great emphasis on investigating the straightforwardness of those from whom ḥadīths were received, and warned against accepting ḥadīths from unreliable transmitters. 'Alī b. Abī Ṭālib says: "Consider those from whom you receive this knowledge, since it is (related to) religion"[1]; similar statements are ascribed to Ibn 'Abbās and Abū Hurayrah[2]. It seems that because of these statements and other practices, 'Umar and 'Alī were pointed out by Abū Ḥātim to be the first to criticise transmitters of ḥadīths[3]. Nevertheless Abū Bakr, the first Caliph, is reported to have practised such a criticism and is also reckoned to be the first one to investigate transmissions; al-Dhahabī declares such, after quoting an incident in which Abū Bakr is reported to have asked al-Mughīrah to bring someone in order to testify to his transmission[4]. Dealing with this issue, al-A'ẓamī suggests that Ibn Ḥibbān's statement, regarding 'Umar and 'Alī, should be interpreted as they were the first to deal with the matter widely[5].

As regards the Successors, 'Uqbah b. Nāfi', who was born during the Prophet's lifetime[6], advised his sons to accept ḥadīths only on the authority of trustworthy transmitters[7]. Pointing out the importance of investigating transmitters of ḥadīths, Ibn Sīrīn said: "Verily, this knowledge is (related to) religion, so consider those from whom you receive your religion"[8]. His disapproval of accepting ḥadīths

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1 Kh., 3, p. 121; cf. Ibn 'Adī, 1, vol. 1, p. 149.
2 See Ibn Ḥibbān, vol. 1, p. 15; cf. Ibn 'Adī, 1, vol. 1, pp. 149f.
3 Id., Ibn Ḥibbān vol. 1, p. 28.
4 Dh., 3, vol. 1, p. 3; see H., 1, p. 46.
5 al-A'ẓamī, p. 11.
6 See Ibn al-Athīr, vol. 3, pp. 420f.
7 See al-Rāmahurmuzī, pp. 31f; I.B., 2, vol. 1, p. 45; Kh., 3, p. 31. Cf. al-Haythamī, vol. 1, p. 140, where the name is given as 'Uqbah b. 'Āmir.
8 Ml., introduction, vol. 1, p. 84; cf. *Mishkat.* vol. 1, p. 62; Kh., 3, p. 121. A similar statement is also attributed to Ibrāhīm al-Nakha'ī, see Ibn Ḥibbān, vol. 1, p. 16.

from anyone, without considering his credibility is indicated by his criticism of some

scholars who used to believe everyone that transmitted something to them[1]. It is also

reported that when someone transmitted to Ibn Sīrīn a ḥadīth of which he disapproved,

he would not listen to him and would express his dissatisfaction about the *isnād* as

follows: "I neither suspect you nor the one (on his authority the ḥadīth is transmitted),

but I do not know (those transmitters) who are between you"[2]. It seems that because

of these statements and anecdotes, Ibn Sīrīn is considered, by 'Alī b. al-Madīnī, to be

the first to criticise ḥadīths and investigate the *isnāds*[3]. This statement should be

taken to mean that Ibn Sīrīn was the first to practice such a criticism widely, inasmuch

as there are several incidents that indicate similar engagement of other scholars from an

earlier period. Understanding this statement in an exclusive way would make it

contradict other statements, regarding the beginning of this particular practice, to

which is alluded above. Scholars of Ḥadīth point out that in each generation, after the

Prophet's death, there were a number of prominent scholars who were well-

experienced in criticising ḥadīths and investigating their transmitters. From the first

generation, the names of Abū Bakr, 'Umar, 'Alī, and Zayd b. Thābit are included, and

from the second, the following names may be added: 'Urwah b. al-Zubayr, Sa'īd b.

al-Musayyib, Sa'īd b. Jubayr, Ibrāhīm al-Nakha'ī, al-Qāsim b. Muḥammad, and

others; later follows the generation of 'Aṭā', Nāfi' and al-Zuhrī[4].

Regarding the legitimacy of criticism of transmitters, al-A'mash reported that

Ibrāhīm al-Nakha'ī believed that pointing out tenets which certain heretical people hold

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1 See Kh., 3, p. 373.
2 Ibn Rajab, vol. 1, p. 362.
3 Id., vol. 1, p. 355.
4 See H., 2, p. 52; Ibn 'Adī, 1, vol. 1, pp. 51ff; Ibn Ḥibbān, vol. 1, pp. 28f. It is noteworthy that al-Dhahabī in his biographical dictionary, *Tadhkirat al-ḥuffāẓ*, (which is devoted to authorities who are experts in praising and disparaging transmitters of ḥadīths, and at declaring the genuineness and spuriousness of ḥadīths), starts with Abū Bakr, as being the first to take part in this field.

is not to be considered as back-biting[1]. al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī was asked whether pointing out evil deeds of an impious man was regarded as back-biting? He replied in the negative, declaring the admissibility of such criticism[2]. He used to say that making someone who held a heretical doctrine known to the public was not regarded as back-biting[3].

However, it seems that, in the first century of Islam, the community was one of the best in their adherence to the *Sunnah* of the Prophet and in their commitment to religion in general, as the biographies of the people at that time reflect. This is also attested by a ḥadīth in which the Prophet is reported as saying: "The best of my followers are those living in my generation (sc. his Companions), then those who come after them, and then those who come after the latter". The Prophet went on, pointing out that then there would come people, who bore witness without being asked to do so, who were treacherous and could not be trusted, and who would have vows and did not fulfil them[4]. In the early days, transmitters of ḥadīths were mainly from the Companions, who were considered to be respected authorities, or from prominent Successors, who were also held in high estimation; those who believed to be unreliable were few[5]. Accordingly, censorious remarks regarding transmitters were few in number, in comparison to the second century and afterwards. Nevertheless, one encounters several remarks, particularly concerning those who held early heretical doctrines, such as that of al-Khawārij, and those labelled as story-tellers who are reported to have started their mission, according to a statement of al-Sā'ib b. Yazīd, after the time of 'Umar, the second Caliph, or according to a statement ascribed to 'Abd Allah b. 'Umar, after the time of the third Caliph, 'Uthmān, during the *fitnah*

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1 D., vol. 1, p. 109.
2 See Kh., 3, p. 42.
3 Id., p. 43.
4 See B2., vol. 5, p. 2, (n. 2).
5 Cf. al-Sakhāwī, pp. 338f.

(i.e. the dissension between 'Alī and Mu'āwiyah)[1]. Denouncing story-tellers was a common phenomenon; concerning them there are a number of impeaching statements reported on the authority of 'Alī b. Abī Ṭālib, 'Abd Allah b. 'Umar, 'Abd Allah b. 'Abbās and Anas b. Mālik[2]. Of the Successors, Abū Qilābah is reported as saying: "The only ones who kill off [yumīt] knowledge are story-tellers", and Maymūn b. Mihrān pointed out that a story-teller deserved the rage of Allah[3]. Regarding others who upheld some heretical doctrines, one encounters several statements; when it came to the knowledge of Sa'īd b. Jubayr that Ayyūb was attending sessions conducted by Ṭalq b. Ḥabīb, he asked him to refrain from doing so[4]; this seems to be due to the fact that Ṭalq upheld the doctrine of the Murji'ah and used to summon people to it[5]. Ibn 'Awn reported that Ibrāhīm al-Nakha'ī told them: "Beware of al-Mughīrah b. Sa'īd and Abū 'Abd ar-Raḥīm, for they are liars"[6]. al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī is also reported as warning people against Ma'bad al-Juhanī, because he considered him as being led astray himself, and leading others astray [ḍāll muḍill][7]. 'Āmir al-Sha'bī is reported to have said: "al-Ḥārith al-A'war al-Hamdānī transmitted ḥadīths to me, but he was a liar"[8]. 'Āṣim al-Aḥwal reported that Qatādah issued a censorious remark concerning 'Amr b. 'Ubayd, so he said to him: "O Abū al-Khaṭṭāb! the scholars started to censure each other". Qatādah replied: "A man who invented a bid'ah should be identified rather than being left alone"[9]. When the blind Abū Dāwūd, who transmitted ḥadīths on the authority of certain Companions, was mentioned in front of Qatādah, Qatādah said: "He lied, he did not hear anything from those [Companions].

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1 See Su., 3, pp. 171f, and 195, respectively.
2 See id., pp. 177-79, 190-92.
3 Id., pp. 185f and 189, respectively.
4 D., vol. 1, p. 108.
5 See I.H., 4, vol. 5, p. 31.
6 Juynboll, "Muslim's introduction...", p. 283; cf. Ml., introduction, vol. 1, pp. 99f.
7 Ibn Rajab, vol. 1, p. 530; cf. Ibn 'Adī, 1, vol. 1, p. 53.
8 Ml., introduction, vol. 1, p. 98.
9 Kh., 3, p. 44.

He was just a beggar holding out his hand to the people at the time of the Great Plague [*ṭā'ūn al-jārif*]"[1].

As far as laudatory remarks are concerned, a number of examples are found. al-Qāsim b. Muḥammad reported that when a ḥadīth transmitted by 'Umar and his son, 'Abd Allah, was conveyed to '<u>Ā'ishah</u>, she said: "You have transmitted to me on the authority of those who are neither liars nor suspected of telling lies, but (sometimes) hearing misleads"[2]. In this incident it is explicit that 'Ā'ishah regarded 'Umar and his son as trustworthy transmitters, but she rejected this particular transmission on the grounds that they misheard this particular ḥadīth. Another account tells us that when 'Aṭā' and Mujāhid pointed out to their master, <u>Ibn 'Abbās</u>, that a particular ḥadīth was only reported on the authority of Mu'āwiyah, he remarked that Mu'āwiyah was free of suspicion in the matter of Ḥadīth[3]. There is another remark, regarding al-Anṣār in general, issued by <u>Anas b. Mālik</u>; transmitting a ḥadīth in which the Prophet interrogated al-Anṣār about something they said, Anas declared that al-Anṣār used not to tell lies[4]. Of the Successors, '<u>Āmir al-Sha'bī</u> is reported as declaring that al-Rabī' b. Khuthaym is a trustworthy transmitter [*min ma'ādin al-ṣidq*][5].

(3) Ensuring the accuracy of transmitters.

Ensuring the accuracy of transmitters is a very important standard to which the Companions and leading Successors paid considerable attention. Although the Companions considered each other as trustworthy transmitters, this belief did not prevent them from investigating a transmission adduced by one of them in order to ensure his exactness; for being a straightforward does not guarantee one's accuracy in

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1 Juynboll, "Muslim's introduction...", p. 285; cf. M1., introduction, vol. 1, pp. 104f.
2 See M2., vol. 2, p. 441, (n. 2022); cf. M1., vol. 6, p. 232; H. 2, p. 88.
3 See A., vol. 4, pp. 95, 102.
4 See B2., vol. 5, p. 80, (n. 122).
5 Kh., 2, vol. 1, p. 112.

transmission, as one is apt to forgetfulness, mishearing and misunderstanding. Therefore, one encounters several incidents in which a transmission of a Companion was subjected to investigation and criticism. 'Umar, the second Caliph, is reported to have rejected the transmission of Fāṭimah b. Qays regarding the story of her divorce, and he justified his rejection thus: "We are not going to abandon the Book of Allah and the *Sunnah* of our Prophet because of the statement of a woman, concerning whom we do not know whether she has remembered accurately (what she has reported) or forgotten [*lā nadrī a ḥafiẓat am nasiyat*]"[1]. When someone wanted to transmit ḥadīths to Ṭāwūs b. Kaysān, he would ask him to transmit only ḥadīths which were received from an accurate, reliable authority [*ḥāfiẓ malī'*][2]. al-Shāfi'ī states: "Ibn Sīrīn, Ibrāhīm al-Nakha'ī and a number of the Successors accept ḥadīths only on the authority of a transmitter who knows what he transmits and gets it by heart"; he added: "I have not known of any scholar who dissents from that"[3].

To verify the accuracy of someone's transmission, there were a number of methods used by the authorities of the first century, of which the following are worthy of note:

i- Repetition of a ḥadīth in front of a *Shaykh* from whom it was received.

This method was used by students of Ḥadīth in order to check that they received a ḥadīth correctly. Having heard a ḥadīth from the Prophet, al-Barā' b. 'Āzib repeated it in front of him, in order to memorise it. He reported that the Prophet said to him: "Whenever you go to bed perform ablution like that for the prayer, lie on your right side and say: 'O Allah! I surrender to You and entrust all my affairs to You... O Allah! I believe on Your Book (the Quran) which You revealed and in Your prophet (Muhammad) whom You sent'". al-Barā' repeated this prayer before

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1 See above p. 62.
2 Kh., 3, p. 132.
3 Ibid.

the prophet and when he reached: 'O Allah! I believe in Your Book which you revealed', He said: 'and Your Messenger [*Rasūl*]'. The Prophet corrected him, saying: "and your Prophet [*Nabī*]whom You sent"[1].

Another account tells that having heard, from Ibn 'Umar, a ḥadīth regarding the five pillars of Islam, Yazīd b. Bishr repeated it in front of Ibn 'Umar who, in his turn, corrected him[2].

ii- Demanding a transmitter to give an oath.

This method is said to be used by 'Alī b. Abī Ṭālib; he is reported to have said: "When someone of the Companions of the Prophet relates a ḥadīth to me, I will ask him to give an oath (to support his transmission); if he gives an oath, I will accept his transmission, but Abū Bakr transmitted to me, and he tells the truth…"[3].

It is notable that al-A'ẓamī has some doubts regarding this particular statement of 'Alī and, therefore, he rejects it, pointing out that Aḥmad Shākir accepted it as genuine[4]. Nevertheless, it is quite conceivable that this method was adopted by 'Alī as a device to make the transmitter more careful and exact in quoting the Prophet. However, the report indicates that this was not an invariable practice of 'Alī, as he seemed to have accepted a ḥadīth transmitted to him by Abū Bakr, without asking him to give an oath.

This particular method is also reported to have been used by 'Abīdah al-Salmānī, a scholar of Kūfah, to ascertain the accuracy of a ḥadīth reported by 'Alī, the second Caliph, in which the Prophet predicted the emergence of a certain group of people and pointed out that their distinctive sign was the existence of a man with particular characteristics. 'Alī identified this people with al-Khawārij; therefore,

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1 See B2., vol. 1, p. 155, (n. 247), and vol. 8, pp. 216f, (n. 323).
2 See Kh., 3, p. 176.
3 T., vol. 2, p. 167; cf. A.D., vol. 2, p. 180; Kh., 3, p. 83; Dh., 3, vol. 1, p. 10, where it is stated that this report is transmitted through a good [*ḥasan*] isnād.
4 al-A'ẓamī, p. 57.

Having fought them, he searched for that man, until he found him dead, whereupon he said: "Allah told the truth, and His Messenger conveyed it". Having heard this, 'Abīdah al-Salmānī asked: "By Allah, besides Whom there is no god but He, tell me whether you have heard this ḥadīth from the Messenger of Allah". 'Alī said: "Yes, By Allah, besides Whom there is no god but He"; 'Abīdah asked him to take an oath thrice, and he did so[1].

iii- Asking for someone to support a transmission.

This method was used when a receiver had some doubts regarding a certain transmission for one reason or another. Abū Bakr is reported to be one of those who used this type of criticism; once when he asked for someone to support al-Mughīrah's transmission regarding the share of a grandmother from an inheritance, and when Muḥammad b. Maslamah testified to it, he came to accept it[2]. 'Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb is also reported to have used this method on several occasions. His story with Abū Mūsā al-Ash'arī is well-known; Abū Sa'īd al-Khudrī said that when he was sitting in Madinah in the company of al-Anṣār, Abū Mūsā came trembling with fear. Having being asked the reason for that, Abū Mūsā said that he went to 'Umar and paid him salutation thrice, but as 'Umar made no response to him, he came back. Whereupon 'Umar said: "What stood in your way that you did not turn up?". Abū Mūsā said: "I did come to you and paid you salutations at your door three times but I was not given any response, so I came back as the Messenger of Allah has said: 'When anyone of you seeks permission three times and he is not granted permission, he should come back'". 'Umar said: "Bring a witness to support what you say, otherwise I shall take you to task". Having heard the story, Ubayy b. Ka'b said: "None should stand with him (as a witness) but the youngest amongst the people". As Abū Sa'īd was the youngest amongst the people, he went with Abū Mūsā and testified to his

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1 See M2., vol. 2, pp. 515f, (n. 2333).
2 See above p. 60. There is a similar incident ascribed to 'Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb, see above p. 61.

transmission[1]. In some versions of this report, 'Umar is reported to have pointed out that he did this, because he wanted to ascertain the accuracy of Abū Mūsā in ascribing this saying to the Prophet[2].

Ibn Sa'd reported a long anecdote, in which Ubayy b. Ka'b transmitted a ḥadīth regarding the Prophet Dāwūd to 'Umar, whereupon 'Umar took Ubayy to the Mosque, where there was a group of the Companions. 'Umar asked them if anyone had heard the Prophet say this ḥadīth. A number of the Companions asserted that they had heard the Prophet say it, so 'Umar left Ubayy alone. Ubayy asked 'Umar: "Do you not trust my transmission? 'Umar said: "O Abū al-Mundhir! Certainly I do, but I do not want people to transmit many ḥadīths"[3]. In another version 'Umar is reported as saying: "I do not suspect you, but I wanted to ascertain the transmission [*wa lākinnī aḥbabt an atathabbat*]"[4]. Since 'Umar declared that he had no doubt regarding Ubayy's straightforwardness, it seems that he used this method for two reasons: the first was to ascertain the accuracy of Ubayy in ascribing this ḥadīth to the Prophet, and the second was to make people think deeply before transmitting a single ḥadīth and avoid narrating many ḥadīths when there was no need for doing so. However, it should not be understood from these examples that this method of verifying transmissions was used by these two Caliphs regularly; al-A'ẓamī points out that such an understanding is based on an incomplete investigation and supports his view by quoting a number of incidents in which 'Umar is reported to have accepted transmissions and to have given judgements according to them, without asking for confirmation from another transmitter[5]. In another report we are told that having heard Abū Hurayrah transmit a ḥadīth regarding the reward of offering prayer

1 M2., vol. 3, pp. 1175f, (n. 5354); cf. B2., vol. 8, pp. 172f, (n. 261).
2 I.H., 1, vol. 11, p. 30.
3 Ibn Sa'd, vol. 4, 1, pp. 13f.
4 Dh., 3, vol. 1, p. 8.
5 al-A'ẓamī, pp. 53-57.

for a funeral and following the coffin until the deceased is buried, Ibn 'Umar sent a messenger to 'Ā'ishah, in order to ascertain the transmission, and she is reported to have testified in favour of it[1].

This method of ensuring the accuracy of a transmitter is reported to have been used by al-Zuhrī who reported a ḥadīth regarding 'Itbān b. Mālik on the authority of Maḥmūd b. al-Rabī', and remarked that he had asked al-Ḥuṣayn b. Muḥammad al-Anṣārī about the ḥadīth of Maḥmūd b. al-Rabī', and he testified to it[2].

iv- Asking a transmitter to repeat the ḥadīth he transmitted before.

Concerning this method we have a number of reports, in which authorities of the first century are reported to have made use of it, in order to be sure of the precision of transmitters. 'Urwah reported that 'Abd Allah b. 'Amr once performed *Ḥajj*, and that he heard him transmit a ḥadīth that said: "Allah will not deprive you of knowledge after He has given it to you, but it will be taken away through the death of the religious learned people with their knowledge. Then there will remain only ignorant people who, when consulted, will give verdicts according to their opinions, whereby they will mislead others and go astray". 'Urwah added that he told 'Ā'ishah about this ḥadīth, and that when Ibn 'Amr came to perform *Ḥajj* on another occasion, she asked him to meet Ibn 'Amr again, and ask him to repeat the same ḥadīth which he had transmitted before; so 'Urwah met Ibn 'Amr and asked him to re-transmit this particular ḥadīth. Having heard Ibn 'Amr transmit the ḥadīth exactly as he had transmitted it the first time, 'Urwah went to 'Ā'ishah and informed her about that, whereupon she remarked that he remembered what he transmitted accurately[3]. In another version she is reported as saying: "I think only this, that he has certainly told the truth, and I find that he has neither made any addition to it, nor left anything out of

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1 See M2., vol. 2, p. 450, (n. 2068); cf. M1., vol. 7, p. 15; Ibn Sa'd, vol. 4, 2, pp. 57f.
2 See B2., vol. 1, pp. 249f, (n. 417); cf. M2., vol. 1, pp. 318f, (n. 1384).
3 Id., B2., vol. 9, pp. 305f, (n. 410).

it"[1]. Abū Hurayrah is reported to have been subjected to a similar test by <u>Marwān b. al-Hakam</u>[2], and <u>Ibrāhīm al-Nakhaʿī</u> is reported to have used this method, in order to scrutinise the accuracy of Abū Zurʿah b. ʿAmr b. Jarīr, a student of Abū Hurayrah[3].

v- Consulting the original source.

To consult the original source when accessible, in order to make sure of the accuracy of a transmitter, is one of the methods which were used by the Prophet himself, and as far as the Companions and the Successors are concerned, there are several examples to be adduced.

I have already mentioned that ʿUmar and his Anṣārī neighbour used to associate with the Prophet every day in turn. One day ʿUmar's neighbour returned from his visit to the Prophet; he knocked loudly on ʿUmar's door, and told him that the Prophet had divorced his wives. Having heard this, <u>ʿUmar</u> went to Ḥafṣah and asked her about the incident, about which she replied that she had no knowledge; whereupon, he went to the Prophet and asked him about the matter, to which the Prophet replied in the negative[4]. Fāṭimah is reported to have informed her father, <u>Alī</u> that the Prophet allowed her to drop the restriction of *iḥrām*, but he was not satisfied until he met the Prophet and asked him about the truth in what she said; whereupon the Prophet declared that she had told the truth[5]. There is another incident, in which we are told that a Bedouin came to the Prophet and said: "Muḥammad, your messenger came to us and told us your assertion that verily Allah had sent you (as a Prophet). The Prophet replied: "He told the truth". The Bedouin went on asking the

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1 See M2., vol. 4, p. 1405, (n. 6465).
2 See above. 68.
3 See I.H., 4, vol. 12, pp. 99f.
4 See B2., vol. 1, pp. 73f, (n. 89); cf. vol. 7, pp. 87-92, (n. 119).
5 See M2., vol. 2, p. 614.

Prophet about what the messenger had told them and the Prophet declared that his messenger had told the truth[1].

Having heard ʿĀmir b. Saʿd b. Abī Waqqāṣ transmit a ḥadīth regarding the privilege of ʿAlī, on the authority of his father, <u>Saʿīd b. al-Musayyib</u> said: "I had an earnest desire to hear it directly from Saʿd, so I met him and narrated to him what (his son) ʿĀmir had narrated to me, whereupon he said: yes, I did hear it. I said: did you hear it yourself? Thereupon he placed his fingers upon his ears and said: yes, and if not, let both my ears become deaf"[2].

<u>Marwān b. al-Ḥakam</u> is also reported to have made use of this method, when a ḥadīth of Umm Maʿqil was transmitted to him, to the effect that the Prophet recommended her to perform *ʿUmrah* during the month of Ramaḍān, since its reward equals performing *Ḥajj*[3].

(4) Criticism of the text of ḥadīths.

In addition to the scrutiny of transmitters of ḥadīths, regarding their integrity and exactness, early scholars of Ḥadīth paid a considerable attention to the criticism of the materials of ḥadīths transmitted to them. However, due to the fact that this kind of criticism needs a comprehensive knowledge, only a few of the Companions and the Successors engaged in such a difficult task, although a lot of them took part in transmitting ḥadīths; those who scrutinised ḥadīths were known by students of Ḥadīth as authorities, to whom one should refer in this field. <u>Ibn ʿAbbās</u> was one of these authorities, whom Saʿīd b. Jubayr consulted about a ḥadīth transmitted by Nawf al-Bikālī; Ibn ʿAbbās remarked that Nawf told a lie and quoted a ḥadīth, on the authority

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1 Id., vol. 1, pp. 6-8, (n. 9). The name of the Bedouin is <u>Ḍimām b. Thaʿlabah</u>, as stated in al-Bukhārī's version, B2., vol. 1, pp. 54f, (n. 63). He is said to have come to the Prophet in the fifth year of al-Hijrah, see Ibn al-Athīr al-Shaybānī, vol. 3, pp. 42f.
2 M2., vol. 4, p. 1284. (n. 5913). in the English text Saʿīd who reported this ḥadīth on the authority of ʿĀmir is erroneously printed as 'Saʿd'.
3 See al-Bayhaqī, vol. 6, p. 274. For more examples see al-Aʿzamī, pp. 7-9.

of Ubayy b. Ka'b, that supported his decision[1].   Ibn Abī Mulaykah is reported to have asked Ibn 'Abbās to write a *ṣaḥīfah* [*kitāb*] for him, and include only reports of which he approved of.   Ibn 'Abbās was pleased with Ibn Abī Mulaykah for his alertness and agreed to write some materials for him;   he sent for a *ṣaḥīfah* containing 'Alī's judgements, and began to copy from it, but when he came across certain points, he said: "By Allah, 'Alī would not have given this judgement unless he had gone astray"[2].

'Ā'ishah, the Prophet's wife, was a well-known figure in this field;   whenever she heard a ḥadīth which she did not understand, she would interrogate the Prophet about it.   She said: "Once the Prophet said: 'Whoever will be called to account (about his deeds on the day of resurrection) will surely be punished'.   I said: 'Does not Allah say: 'He surely will receive an easy reckoning" [84: 8].   The Prophet replied: 'This means only the presentation of the accounts, but whoever will be argued about his account, will certainly be ruined'"[3].   She also discussed several ḥadīths transmitted by the Companions in the light of the Quran, other ḥadīths and sometimes her own reasoning, giving her opinion regarding them.   al-Bukhārī reports her as saying: "If anyone tells you that Muḥammad has seen his Lord, He is a liar, for Allah says: "No vision can grasp Him" [6: 103]..."[4].   She is also reported to have rejected a ḥadīth reported by Ibn 'Umar to the effect that the Prophet addressed the corpses of the pagans killed at Badr, and said that they were hearing what he was saying to them;   she added that what the Prophet had said was: "Now they know very

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1 See B2., vol. 6, pp. 211-14, (n. 249). This can serve as an example of the transmission of the Companions on the authority of each other.
2 M1., introduction, vol. 1, p. 82. al-Nawawī suggests that Ibn 'Abbās meant that since 'Alī was known to be straightforward, these statements could not have been genuinely attributed to him, unless he had demonstrably gone astray, see al-Nawawī, 1, vol. 1, p. 83. Cf. Juynboll, "Muslim's introduction...", p. 277, footnote no. 25, where the elucidation of al-Nawawī is read and translated differently.
3 B2., vol. 1, p. 81, (n. 103).
4 Id. vol. 9, p. 354, (n. 477). For more examples of her criticism, see al-Zarkashī, *al-Ijābah*.

well what I used to tell them was the truth"[1], then she quoted the following verses: "So verily thou canst not make the dead to hear..." (xxx. 52), and "...but thou canst not make those to hear who are (burried) [sic] in graves" (xxxv. 22). Having heard some people claiming that the prayer is annulled by a dog, a donkey and a woman passing in front of a praying person, she said: "You have compared us (women) to donkeys and dogs. By Allah! I saw the Prophet praying while I used to lie in my bed between him and the *Qibla*..."[2]. Although the people with whom ʿĀʾishah was in disagreement did not state clearly that what they had said was a ḥadīth from the Prophet, such a thing cannot have been decided without a guidance from the Quran or Ḥadīth. It seems therefore that those people were referring to a certain saying or a practice of the Prophet, and ʿĀʾishah proved to them that they were wrong by revealing to them the practice of the Prophet himself.

ʿAbd Allah b. ʿAmr is also reported to have asked the Prophet about another ḥadīth; he said: "It was narrated to me that the Messenger of Allah had said: The prayer observed by a person sitting is half of the prayer. I came to him and found him praying in a sitting position. I placed my hand on his head. He said : O ʿAbdullah b. ʿAmr, what is the matter with you? I said: Messenger of Allah, it has been narrated to me that you said: The prayer of a man in a sitting position is half of the prayer, whereas you are observing prayers sitting. He (the Holy Prophet) said: Yes, it is so, but I am not like anyone amongst you"[3]. In this incident ʿAbd Allah compares what he had heard on the authority of the Prophet with what he saw him do, which seemed to contradict one another. He therefore asked the Prophet about this

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1 B2., vol. 5, pp. 211f, (nos. 316-17). See a discussion about ʿĀʾishah's approach to this ḥadīth in I.H., 1, vol. 7. pp. 303f.
2 Id., vol. 1, pp. 292f, (n. 493). See another example, in which she criticised a ḥadīth reported by Ibn ʿUmar, claiming that it was related to what people believed before Islam, in al-Shāṭibī, vol. 3, p. 20. Nevertheless, this very ḥadīth is accepted by other authorities and is recorded in B2., vol. 4, p. 74, (n. 110), and vol. 7, pp. 21, 435.
3 M2., vol. 1, p. 355, (n. 1600); cf. B2., vol. 2, pp. 119-21, (nos. 214-17).

evident contradiction, whereupon the Prophet told him about the authenticity of the saying reported to him, and explained his action to him.

Ka'b b. Mālik is said to have been able to identify spurious ḥadīths by listening to them; whenever he heard someone who told lies, he would say: "Keep silent; I can smell lies from your mouth"[1]. Commenting on this report, Abdul Ghaffar says: "It is quite believable that a person, after a long association with the Prophet, would have known the general way of the Prophet's speech. He would have developed such understanding as to differentiate between the saying of the Prophet and that of an impostor. Like a money-changer who can easily detect a true coin from a false one..."[2].

Amongst the Successors, al-Rabī' b. Khuthaym was famous in criticising ḥadīths. He is reported to have said: "Some ḥadīths have a light like day-light, through which we identify their genuineness; and some ḥadīths have darkness like the darkness of night, because of which we reject them"[3]. Ibrāhīm b. Yazīd al-Nakha'ī was also a famous scholar, who was experienced in criticism of ḥadīths; al-A'mash says: "Ibrāhīm was an investigator of ḥadīths; therefore whenever I heard a ḥadīth from my fellow students of Ḥadīth, I used to ask him about it"[4].

As a result of this criticism, unknown and spurious ḥadīths were rejected and only the ones which were approved of by the authorities were accepted. Once, Bushayr b. Ka'b asked Ibn 'Abbās why he would not listen to his transmission carefully, and Ibn 'Abbās said: "At one time, when we heard someone say: The Messenger of God said..., our eyes would immediately turn to him and with ears [pricked up] we would listen to him. But when the people followed [all] courses of action [possible], commendable as well as reprehensible, we no longer accepted

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1 al-Qāsimī, p. 173
2 Abdul Ghaffar, p. 72.
3 Kh., 3 p. 431; cf. Ibn al-Jawzī, vol. 1, p. 103.
4 H., 2, p. 16; cf. Kh., 2, vol. 2, p. 319; Dh., 3, vol. 1, p. 69.

traditions from the people except that [material] which we already know"[1]. Warning

people against abnormal or unknown ḥadīths, 'Ā'ishah addressed the people of Iraq,

saying: "O people of Iraq, the people of Shām are better than you; a good number of

the Companions went to them, and they transmitted to us what we know, but although

only a few of the Companions went to you, you have transmitted to us what we know

and what we do not know"[2]. Reporting on how his predecessors considered ḥadīths,

Ibrāhīm al-Nakhaʿī says: "They used to disapprove of peculiar [gharīb] sayings and

ḥadīths"[3]. He also remarked that scholars of Ḥadīth disliked anyone who would

introduce peculiar ḥadīths during their meetings[4]. al-Zuhrī is also reported to have

warned against ḥadīths from Iraq, and pointed out the need to apply scrupulous

criticism to them; he remarked that a ḥadīth started from their province, al-Ḥijāz, one

span long, and re-emerged from Iraq one cubit long[5].

These statements show how scholars of Ḥadīth, at such an early time, were

interested in criticising the contents of ḥadīths, disapproving of unknown materials

and rejecting what they thought to be falsely reported, or those which contradicted the

Quran, accepted ḥadīths and, to some extent, the dictates of reason. It seems that the

practice of this particular standard of criticism began, historically, before any other

standards, since, in many cases, there was no need to investigate the transmitters, who

came mainly from the Companions, who were taken to be respected authorities. One,

therefore, inclines to believe that although criticising both features of the transmission,

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1 Juynboll, "Muslim's introduction...", p. 276; cf. Ml., introduction, vol. 1, pp. 81f.
2 Ibn ʿAsākir, vol. 1, p. 70.
3 Kh., 3, p. 141. It seems the word 'gharīb' in this statement is used in its literal meaning which means unknown, whether the ḥadīth is transmitted by a reliable transmitter, later called shādhdh, or by a weak transmitter, later called munkar, see I.H., 3, pp. 50-52.
4 Kh., 2, vol. 2, p. 138; cf. Dh., 3, vol. 1, p. 70. Although the word used by Ibrāhīm in describing ḥadīths is aḥsan mā ʿindah, al-Khaṭīb points out that he means peculiar [gharīb or munkar] ḥadīths, since they are often more striking than the well-known ones. For more details about the older usage of the term gharīb, see Itr, p. 402.
5 Ibn ʿAdī, 1, vol. 1, pp. 56f.

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i.e. the *isnād* and the *matn*, was very important to ascertain its genuineness, more attention was paid, in practice, to the materials of hadīths [*matn*], at the beginning of the study of Hadīth[1].

C- Other issues regarding the Principles of Hadīth.

From the first century of Islam, a number of issues connected with the Principles of Hadīth were dealt with; these issues were later incorporated in books compiled on this subject. The following is an account of the most important issues discussed by scholars of the first century of Islam.

(1) Methods of receiving hadīths.

One of the main issues, which was widely discussed at that time, concerned the methods by which students of Hadīth could receive hadīths[2].

i- The most common method used by the Prophet and his Companions was *al-samā'* (hearing from a *shaykh*); the Prophet would address his Companions and they would receive hadīths from him. This process occasionally involved writing by some of them. After the death of the Prophet, the Companions, in their turn, mainly did the same with their students, who reduced hadīths to writing more frequently; All scholars at that time were in agreement about the validity of this method.

ii- In the course of time, particularly during the second half of the first century when written copies were more current, the second method which is *al-qirā'ah 'alā al-shaykh* (reciting back to a *shaykh*) arose and was used by students of Hadīth. As this was something new, one encounters several statements regarding its legitimacy. It seems that at that time there were two views; while the first believed that hearing from a *shaykh* was as valid as reading back to him, the second held that the latter was even better than the former. 'Abd Allah Ibn 'Abbās is reported to have been of the opinion

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1 Cf. Beyanouni, pp. 31f.
2 See Su., 2, vol. 2, pp. 8-63; Robson 2, pp. 26-29; Robson 15, pp. 470-74.

that reading to a *shaykh* is equal to hearing from him; 'Ikrimah transmitted on his authority: "Read back to me, since your reading back to me is the same as my reading to you"[1]. 'Urwah b. al-Zubayr is reported by his son as saying: "Reading a book back to a *shaykh* ['*ard al-kitāb*] is equivalent to hearing it read by him"[2]. al-Zuhrī also is reported to have had the same opinion[3], and al-Hasan al-Basrī is reported to have declared that it was authorised for a student of Hadīth to read hadīths back to a *shaykh*[4]. In another anecdote, we are told that a man wanted to read hadīths back to al-Hasan; the man asked him whether he authorised such a method, and al-Hasan remarked that he did not care whether he read to the man, or the man read back to him[5].

In addition to the authorities mentioned above there were others who held that reading back to a *shaykh* was better than hearing from him, because the former method caused students to be more careful and accurate. Ibn 'Abbās says: "While I was reading back to 'Abd al-Rahmān b. 'Awf, someone asked him: 'Which methods (of receiving hadīths) do you prefer; to be read back to you or to recite them (yourself)?' He said: 'I prefer (hadīths) to be read back to me if the student is careful in his reading; the *shaykh* may sometimes make mistakes or leave something out...'"[6]. It seems that the key element in this issue is the level of accuracy and

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1 Kh., 3, p. 264; cf. p. 263. See also Kh., 2, vol. 1, p. 438. It is noteworthy that al-Khatīb, in (Kh., 3, p. 262), adduces two statements ascribed to 'Alī b. Abī Tālib, which indicate that he held the same view as that of Ibn 'Abbās. These statements are of doubtful origins, according to the standards of scholars of Hadīth, because they have in their *isnāds* Nūh b. Abī Maryam, who was notorious in mendacity and fabrication of hadīths (see Ibn Rajab, vol. 1, pp. 502f); therefore, I have dismissed both of them. There is another account in (Kh., 3, p. 274), which portrays 'Alī as being of the second opinion, which prefers reading back to a *shaykh* to hearing from him; but it is reported by Abū Muqātil, a student of Sufyān al-Thawrī, who is accused of telling lies. See Ibn Rajab, vol. 1, p. 503.
2 Kh., 3, p. 264. See a similar statement ascribed to Muhammad al-Bāqir.
3 See Id., p. 265.
4 See B2., vol. 1, p. 54, (n. 61); cf. Kh., 3, p. 261.
5 Kh., 3, p. 265.
6 Id. p. 309.

carefulness in each method; whichever of the two methods proved to be more accurate would be preferred[1].

However, in practice, authorities were reported to have used the method of reading back to a *shaykh* widely, in order to hand ḥadīths down to their students. 'Āṣim al-Aḥwal declared that he read ḥadīths of *fiqh* back to al-Sha'bī and he approved of them[2]. al-Walīd b. Abī al-Sā'ib reported that he saw ḥadīths being read back to Makḥūl, Nāfi' and 'Aṭā'[3]. The same is reported about al-Zuhrī; Ma'mar said: "I read knowledge [ḥadīths] back to al-Zuhrī, then asked: 'May I transmit them on your authority?' He replied: 'From whom other than me did you receive them?'"[4].

iii- As far as *Ijāzah* (Licence to transmit ḥadīths on someone's authority) is concerned, scholars at that time, like al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī, Nāfi', Qatādah, Makḥūl and al-Zuhrī, declared that it was an authorised method of receiving ḥadīths[5]. 'Awf al-A'rābī reported that a man told al-Ḥasan that he had acquired a document which contained some of his learning, and asked for permission to transmit its contents on his authority; whereupon he was given permission[6]. 'Ubayd Allah b. 'Umar says: "I testify that one of Ibn Shihāb's books would be brought to him and he would leaf through it, look at it more closely, and then say: 'This is what I transmit; take it from me'". In another version 'Ubayd said that one of al-Zuhrī's books, which al-Zuhrī had not read, nor had it been read back to him, would be brought to him, and he would be asked if its contents could be transmitted on his authority, to which he

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1 It is noteworthy that later authorities, like Wakī' (d. 197 A.H.) and others are reported to have preferred hearing from a *shaykh* to reading back to him and, moreover, refrained from receiving ḥadīths by the latter method. See Kh., 3, pp. 271-73.
2 Kh., 3, p. 264.
3 Ibid.
4 Id., p. 266.
5 Id., p. 313.
6 See Id., p. 318.

would assent[1]. Mālik b. Anas reported a similar story and added that al-Zuhrī did not even open the book and it was neither read by him nor read back to him, stating that al-Zuhrī believed that this method was authorised. Commenting on this report, al-Khaṭīb states that it is feasible that Ibn Shihāb had examined this book beforehand, and that it was brought to him by someone whom he trusted; therefore, he found it admissible to give *Ijāzah* for transmitting its contents without re-examining them[2].

Nevertheless, other authorities held a different view; '<u>Aṭā</u>', a prominent Successor, is reported to have said: "Knowledge is nothing but hearing (from a *shaykh*)". al-Khaṭīb comments: "He means –and Allah knows best– that knowledge which should be accepted, and according to which one should act is only what is received by *al-samā'* (hearing from a *shaykh*). Accordingly, one may infer that he does not recognise *Ijāzah* as a valid method of receiving ḥadīths"[3].

iv- As regards *munāwalah* (handing over a *ṣaḥīfah* to a student), it was recognised by early authorities as a valid method of receiving ḥadīths, particularly when accompanied by *Ijāzah* for transmission. 'Ubayd Allah al-Kalā'ī said: "<u>Makḥūl</u> handed me a book which contained what was lawful and what was forbidden, and said to me: 'Take this book and transmit its contents on my authority'. I asked: 'How can I transmit its contents when I have not heard them from you?'. He said: 'I say: transmit them on my authority and you say: I have not heard them from you'"[4]. This method was later called *Munāwalah maqrūnah bi Ijāzah* (handing over a *ṣaḥīfah* with a licence for transmission); it is considered to be the highest type of this method[5]. 'Ubayd Allah b. 'Umar had a similar story concerning <u>al-Zuhrī</u>; he

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1 Ibid. In another version, the man who brought the book and asked for permission is identified as Ibn Jurayj, see p. 319
2 Id., p. 329.
3 Id., pp. 314f. For a detailed consideration of this method, see pp. 311-30.
4 Id., pp. 319f. al-Kalā'ī is 'Ubayd Allah b. 'Ubayd, d. 132 A.H.
5 See Su., 2, vol. 2, p. 45; cf. Robson 2, pp. 28f.

reported that Ibn Shihāb gave him a *ṣaḥīfah*, and said: "Copy it, and transmit its contents on my authority". When 'Ubayd asked whether this was permissible, Ibn Shihāb replied in the positive, and commented: "Do you not know that a man gives his testimony on a will without opening it (to examine its contents) and that this is lawful and accepted"[1].

v- As for *al-Kitābah* (writing down of ḥadīths to someone) as a method of handing ḥadīths down, one finds a number of anecdotes that reflect early scholars as making use of it. Having sent Anas to collect *Zakāh* from Baḥrayn, <u>Abū Bakr</u>, the first Caliph, is reported to have written to him thus: "...These are orders for compulsory charity (Zakāt) which Allah's Apostle had made obligatory for every Muslim, and which Allah had ordered His Apostle to observe..."[2]. The Successors are also reported to have practised this method; <u>Ibrāhīm al-Nakhaʿī</u> wrote to Qatādah regarding a certain issue, and <u>Qatādah</u> wrote to al-Awzāʿī[3]. Ayyūb reported that <u>Nāfiʿ</u>, a client of Ibn 'Umar, wrote to him a ḥadīth on the authority of his master[4].

vi- With regard to *al-Wiṣāyah* (to bequeath someone's books to a student of ḥadīths), there is a statement in which Ayyūb al-Sakhtiyānī reports that when Abū Qilābah died in Syria, he bequeathed him his books, and that he consulted <u>Ibn Sīrīn</u> as to whether he could transmit their contents. Ibn Sīrīn is reported to have replied in the positive, then to have rectified his answer, saying: "I neither order you nor prohibit you [*lā āmuruk wa lā anhāk*]"[5]. al-Khaṭīb comments that it is said that Ayyūb had heard these books, but he had not memorised their contents, therefore he inquired about the admissibility of transmitting them. He adds that it is not permissible for someone to transmit ḥadīths found in a book, which have been received in this

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1 Kh., 3, p. 326.
2 B2., vol. 2, pp. 307f, (n. 534); cf. pp. 303-6.
3 al-Rāmahurmuzī, pp. 441ff.
4 Kh., 3, pp. 342f.
5 Id., p. 352.

method, unless one has acquired *Ijāzah* for doing so from the *shaykh* to whom they belong, and that receiving ḥadīths in this method is considered similar to *wijādah*[1].

vii- Regarding *wijādah*, which is finding a document in the handwriting of a certain *shaykh*, there is a statement, quoted earlier, which is ascribed to 'Umar, the second Caliph, to the effect that if someone finds a copy which he did not hear from a *shaykh*, he has to soak it in water until the writing can be no longer distinguished[2]; this statement implies 'Umar's disapproval of such a method. The disapproval of 'Aṭā' of this method can be understood from his statement: "Knowledge is nothing but hearing"[3], which indicates that he only considers hearing from a *shaykh* as a valid method. Ibn 'Awn asked Ibn Sīrīn whether a man who found a document (containing someone's learning) might read it, or learn from it, and he replied: "No, until he hears its contents from a trustworthy (transmitter)"[4].

Nevertheless, other scholars came to accept this method as valid, when they had no doubt that the contents of a found document belonged to a certain *shaykh*; al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī was asked: "From whom did you receive these ḥadīths? He answered: "They are from a *ṣaḥīfah* which I found". In another report al-Taymī[5] said that a *ṣaḥīfah* of Jābir was brought to al-Ḥasan and Qatādah, and they subsequently transmitted its contents, but it was brought to him and he did not transmit its contents[6].

It seems that almost all the methods of receiving ḥadīths, which later scholars of Ḥadīth thoroughly discussed, in their compilations regarding the Principles of

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1 Ibid.
2 See above, pp. 167f.
3 See above, p. 201.
4 Kh., 3, p. 353.
5 al-Taymī is Sulaymān b. Ṭarakhān, a *shaykh* of Yaḥyā b. Sa'īd al-Qaṭṭān. See I.H., 4, vol. 4, pp. 201-3.
6 See I.H., 4, vol. 4, p. 204; cf. Kh., 3, p. 354.

Ḥadīth[1], were dealt with, briefly or at length, by scholars of the first century who put forward their opinions on them.

(2) Forms used to report ḥadīths.

Early scholars also considered forms with which ḥadīths should be transmitted; these forms were later known as *turuq al-adā'* (forms of transmitting ḥadīths).

As far as reporting ḥadīths, which is received by the method of hearing from a *shaykh* are concerned, a number of forms may be used, namely *ḥaddathanī* (he told me) when there is only one receiver, *ḥaddathanā* (he told us) when there are more than one, *sami'tu* (I heard), or any other form which implies that a student has heard a ḥadīth from a *shaykh*. It seems that, in the early days, there were no certain forms to which the transmitter should restrict himself, therefore, one may encounter various forms used by early transmitters[2]. Nevertheless, it seems that the most common form used by scholars, at that time, in order to transmit ḥadīths received by hearing from a *shaykh* was 'he told us' [*ḥaddathanī or ḥaddathanā*]. Ibn 'Awn reported that when transmitting ḥadīths, Ibn Sīrīn sometimes said: "Abū Hurayrah told me", and sometimes said: "Abū Hurayrah told us". Having being asked the reason that made him say this, he remarked that he would say: 'He told me', whenever he alone received a ḥadīth from Abū Hurayrah, and he would say: 'He told us', whenever he received it, when other students were present[3]. Some scholars were careful to point out whether they had heard a certain ḥadīth they transmitted or not; Shu'bah reported that whenever Qatādah transmitted a ḥadīth which he had heard, he would say: "Sa'īd

1 See Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ, p. 140-69; Su., 2, vol. 2, pp. 8-59.
2 The verbs: *shahid, sami', ḥaddath* and *anba'* were used, see examples for their usage in al-Rāmahurmuzī, pp. 461-72, 472-75, 476-79 and 481ff, respectively.
3 See Ibn Rajab, vol. 1, p. 519.

b. al-Musayyib *haddathanā...*, and whenever he transmitted a hadīth, which he had not heard, he would say: "Sulaymān b. Ysār *haddath...*[1].

At any rate, Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ suggests that as certain forms came to be technically used for reporting hadīths received by other methods, these methods should not be used to report hadīths received by hearing from a *shaykh*.[2].

Regarding the forms to be used for reporting hadīths received by reading back to a *shaykh*, scholars of Hadīths, at that time, do not seem to have made them distinct from the forms used to transmit hadīths received by hearing from a *shaykh*. 'Awf reported al-Ḥasan as saying: "If a student reads hadīths back to a *shaykh*, he can say (in order to transmit them): *haddathanā* (he told us)"[3]. Once a man, whose house was so far away that he found it difficult to attend al-Ḥasan's sessions, asked al-Ḥasan for permission to read a *saḥīfah*, that contained hadīths which the latter transmitted, back to him. al-Ḥasan replied: "I do not mind whether you read (hadīths) back to me and I tell you that they are my hadīths, or I transmit (them) to you". The man asked: "May I say: 'al-Ḥasan *haddathanī* (told me)'? He says: "Yes, say: 'al-Ḥasan *haddathanī* '"[4]. 'Aṭā' b. Abī Rabāḥ is reported to have accepted both *haddathanī* and *akhbaranī* (he informed me) to report hadīths received by reading back to a *shaykh* [5]. al-Zuhrī also held that, in order to report a hadīth received by reading back to a *shaykh*, one could use the form *haddathanī*, provided that the *shaykh* approved of what was read to him[6].

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1 al-Rāmahurmuzī, pp. 522f; cf. Ibn Sa'd, vol. 7, 2, p. 1.
2 al- 'Irāqī, p. 140.
3 Kh., 3, p. 305
4 Ibid.; cf. 265. See pp. 292, 305, for a similar story with 'Awf himself.
5 See Id., pp. 306 and 302, respectively.
6 Id., pp. 305f. This view was held by later scholars, like Abū Ḥanīfah (d. 150 A.H.), Sufyān al-Thawrī (d. 161 A.H.) and Mālik b. Anas (d. 179 A.H.), see pp. 307f.

Regarding ḥadīths received by the method of *munāwalah* which is accompanied by *Ijāzah*, al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī is reported to have authorised transmitting of them by using the form *ḥaddathanī* as well[1].

Concerning ḥadīths received by *al-Kitābah*, early scholars are reported to have transmitted them, using a form which conveyed the method by which they were received. Transmitting a ḥadīth regarding *Zakāh*, which was received by *al-Kitābah*, Anas b. Mālik said to Thumāmah: "Abū Bakr wrote to me what was made compulsory by Allah's Apostle..."[2]. The ḥadīth reported by 'Abd Allah b. 'Ukaym may serve as an example for this practice, since he reported the ḥadīth which the Prophet wrote to them, saying: "A letter from the Prophet reached us [*atānā kitāb Rasūl Allah*]"[3].

It is notable that in order to distinguish between the methods by which ḥadīths were received, later authorities, like 'Abd al-Raḥmān al-Awzā'ī (d. 157 A.H.), Yaḥyā b. Sa'īd (d. 198 A.H.)[4] and others, become more precise regarding the forms used in transmitting ḥadīths; they assigned certain forms to be used with each method of receiving ḥadīths [5].

(3) Transmitting the verbatim words or the gist of ḥadīths.

Although people in the first century of Islam, who used to learn ḥadīths by heart, were famous for their retentive memories, it seems that it was difficult for some of them to convey the exact words of a ḥadīth, particularly when some of them engaged in collecting a vast number of them by setting off on journeys to various countries and meeting many informants. Therefore the question as to whether a

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1 Id., p. 332.
2 B2., vol. 2, p. 304, (n. 530).
3 T., vol. 1, p. 322.
4 They both disapproved of using *ḥaddathanī* to transmit ḥadīths received through methods other than hearing from a *shaykh*. See Kh., 3, pp. 302 and 299, respectively.
5 See Id., pp. 297- 304; H., 2, p. 260; Robson 15, p. 476.

transmitter should convey the exact word of a ḥadīth or whether it was permitted to convey its gist was raised. Considering materials belonging to this period, one may identify two points of view:

i- The first view holds transmitters should restrict themselves to the exact wordings of a ḥadīth, without making any addition and diminution, or even without changing the order in which sentences of a ḥadīth were received.

'Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb seems to be in favour of this view; he is reported to have said: "Whoever hears a ḥadīth and transmits it as he has heard it, he shall be safe"[1]. This statement implies that if a transmitter imparted the exact words of a ḥadīth, he would be free of any responsibility of making mistakes or causing any misunderstandings; thus he would be safe from sin.

His son, 'Abd Allah was also one of those who held this view, and considered any change in the wordings of ḥadīths to be a type of lie. This is indicated by a number of stories reported about him. Once, he heard 'Ubayd b. 'Umayr transmit a ḥadīth regarding the Hypocrites, in which 'Ubayd replaced one word with another to the same effect. He corrected him by pointing out the exact word which he had heard from the Prophet. When 'Ubayd remarked that both words had the same meaning, Ibn 'Umar replied: "This what I heard from the Prophet"[2]. In al-Khaṭīb's version, hearing the ḥadīth, Ibn 'Umar considered that making such a slight change to be the same as putting words in the mouth of the Prophet; he said: "O people, do not tell lies against the Prophet"[3]. On another occasion a man repeated a ḥadīth, regarding the five pillars of Islam, in front of Ibn 'Umar, and mentioned one pillar before the other. Ibn 'Umar said: "No, make 'fasting during the month of Ramaḍān' the last one, as I have heard the Prophet"[4]. Nāfi', a client of Ibn 'Umar, is reported as restricting

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1 Id., Kh., 3, p. 172.
2 A., vol. 2, p. 68; cf. pp. 32, 82.
3 Kh., 3, pp. 173f.
4 Id., p. 176

himself to the very wordings of ḥadīths, even if they contained grammatical mistakes, and refused to correct them, preferring to transmit them exactly as he had heard them[1]. Ṭāwūs b. Kaysān was also of the opinion that a transmitter should convey a ḥadīth exactly as he had heard it[2].

Ibn 'Awn said: "I met six authorities three of them were strict regarding the words of a ḥadīth, and the other three were content to transmit the gist; the former group consists of: al-Qāsim b. Muḥammad, Rajā' b. Ḥaywah and Muḥammad b. Sīrīn..."[3]. Having been told that al-Ḥasan and other scholars transmitted the same ḥadīth in different wordings, Ibn Sīrīn said: "It would be better if they transmit as they have heard"[4]. Moreover, he is reported to have transmitted ḥadīths exactly as he had heard them, even if he had received them with lingual mistakes[5]. However, it is important to note that 'Āmir al-Sha'bī and other later scholars were of the opinion that such mistakes should be corrected[6], and Qatādah al-Sadūsī is reported as advising his students to correct grammatical mistakes, whenever they discovered them in ḥadīths he had transmitted to them[7].

ii- The other view holds that it is permissible for transmitters to transmit only the gist of ḥadīths, particularly when the exact words have been forgotten. This view gives the opportunity for someone to transmit ḥadīths, whose wordings he no longer remembers, provided that he knows their meanings beyond the shadow of a doubt.

'Ā'ishah asked 'Urwah the reason which made him rewrite the same ḥadīths he had written before, he said: "I hear ḥadīths from you in certain wordings, then I hear them from others in different wordings". She asked whether he noticed any

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1 See Kh., 2, vol. 2, p. 5.
2 See al-Rāmahurmuzī, p. 539.
3 Kh., 3, p. 186; cf. D., vol. 1, p. 93; I.B., 1, vol. 1, p. 80.
4 Kh., 3, p. 206; cf. D., vol. 1, p. 94.
5 Kh., 3, p. 194.
6 Id., pp. 195-98; cf. I.B., 1, vol. 1, p. 78.
7 Ibn Sa'd, vol. 7, 2, p. 2.

difference regarding their meanings, and he answered in the negative; whereupon she declared the permissibility of transmitting only the gist of ḥadīths[1]. Abū Sa'īd al-Khudrī said: "We would sit and listen to ḥadīths from the Apostle of Allah; there might be ten of us (i.e. the Companions), but no two would transmit it literally, even though we all conveyed the sense"[2]. The practice of transmitting only the gist of a ḥadīth is also reported by Ibn Sīrīn; he says: "I hear a ḥadīth from ten (transmitters); the meaning is the same but the wordings are different"[3].

Having pointed out the fact that although the Quran is collected, preserved and continuously studied, people add or subtract a letter or more when they recite some of its verses from memory, Wāthilah b. al-Asqa', a Companion, said to Makḥūl: "It is sufficient, if we (the Companions) transmit to you the gist of a ḥadīth"[4]. Ibn 'Awn, in his statement adduced above pointed out three scholars who were content to transmit only the gist of ḥadīths: Ibrāhīm al-Nakha'ī, 'Āmir al-Sha'bī and al-Ḥasan al–Baṣrī[5]. 'Amr b. Dīnār al-Makkī is reported to have felt free to transmit only the gist of ḥadīths as well[6]. In the anecdote in which Ibn 'Umar corrects 'Ubayd b. 'Umayr as he uses another word to the same effect, al-Khaṭīb reports 'Abd Allah b. 'Ubayd as declaring the permissibility of replacing one word with another to the same effect, provided that one does not make lawful what is prohibited or make prohibited what is lawful, and pointing out that there is no harm in mentioning one thing before another[7].

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1 Kh., 3, p. 205.
2 Ibid.
3 Id., p. 206; cf. I.B., 1, vol. 1, p. 79.
4 D., vol. 1, p. 93; cf. Kh., 3, p. 204; I.B., 1, vol. 1, p. 79; Su., 2, vol. 2, pp. 99f.
5 See above p. 208.
6 Kh., 3, pp. 206f. Later authorities, like Sufyān al-Thawrī (d. 161), Mālik b. Anas (d. 179) and Sufyān b. 'Uyaynah (d. 198), are reported to have often transmitted only the gist of ḥadīths. See pp. 209f.
7 Id., p. 174.

Although al-Ḥasan is reported as recommending students of Ḥadīth to transmit ḥadīths as they have received them[1], there are several statements on his authority in which he approved of transmitting the gist of ḥadīths. Once it was said to him: "Why do you transmit a ḥadīth in a certain wording and on the next day transmit it in another?"; in reply, he remarked that it was authorised to transmit a ḥadīth in various wordings, provided that you understood the meaning[2]. He is also reported as having authorised a transmitter to mention one thing before another, provided that he understood the meaning of a ḥadīth[3]. In another account we are told that Ghaylān al-Miʿwalī asked him: "I hear a ḥadīth, then I do my best to transmit it exactly as I have heard it, but I find myself adding to it, or subtracting from it?" al-Ḥasan answered with surprise: "Who can possibly to do that, (sc. to transmit the verbatim text of a ḥadīth)!". In another version al-Ḥasan stated that one would not be considered as having told lies unless he did so intentionally[4]. He is also reported to have supported the idea of the permissibility of transmitting only the gist of ḥadīths by pointing out that Allah tells us in the Quran several stories of ancient peoples, and sometimes the same story is retold in various wordings that impart the same meaning. Moreover, sayings of ancient peoples are translated into Arabic, since they certainly spoke other languages – a process that would result in changing the order of words, or adding and subtracting some words, or making other changes[5]. ʿAmr b. Murrah is reported to have said: "We cannot transmit ḥadīths to you exactly as we have heard them; we transmit the sense of them, or something similar to them"[6]. al-Zuhrī, as well, is reported to have held this permissive opinion[7].

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1 Id., p. 167; cf. Kh., 2, vol. 1, p. 673.
2 Kh., 3, p. 207.
3 Ibid.
4 Id., p. 208. al-Miʿwalī is Ghaylān b. Jarīr, d. 129.
5 al-Rāmahurmuzī, pp. 530f.
6 Kh., 3, p. 208.
7 Kh., 2, vol. 2, p. 22. For more statements, see vol. 2, pp. 20-22.

It is useful to know that al-Ḥakīm al-Tirmidhī points out that if the Companions had felt it necessary to restrict themselves to the exact wordings of ḥadīths, they would have preserved them in *saḥīfahs*, as the Prophet did with the Quran; the fact that the Companions received most ḥadīths from the Prophet orally, and that they transmitted them in the same way, made them differ sometimes in the words they used to convey them, whenever they felt safe to do so. He adds that the Companions accepted such a practice and did not disapprove of it[1]. Ibn Ḥajar remarks that the most cogent argument that supports the legitimacy of transmitting only the gist of ḥadīths is that scholars are unanimously in agreement that it is lawful to translate *al-Sharī'ah* [the law] for those who cannot understand Arabic; if it is admissible to convey the meanings in another language, it will be more admissible to do so within the same language[2].

The latter opinion seems to be the dominant one, although there were a number of the Companions and the Successors who restricted themselves to the very words of ḥadīths, out of fear that doing otherwise might lead them to misrepresent the actual meaning the Prophet intended. Nevertheless, one should consider this issue in the light of the principles of transmission at that time, particularly that regarding the accuracy which was observed by early students of Ḥadīth. This will enable us to realise that although a number of scholars held that it was authorised to transmit only the gist of ḥadīths, they did their best to transmit the exact words and to keep changes in transmissions to the minimum[3]; that to transmit only the gist of a ḥadīth was considered permissible, while keeping to its exact words was the recommended practice. Bearing in mind this fact, the strength of the transmitters' memories at that time and the fact that a lot of ḥadīths were reduced to writing at an early stage, one is

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1 al-Qāsimī, p. 232.
2 Su., 2, vol. 2 p. 101.
3 For a detailed discussion of the question as to whether ḥadīths at that time were transmitted literally or not, see M. A. al-Khaṭīb, pp. 126-43.

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inclined to believe that a considerable number of ḥadīths were transmitted literally, particularly short ones and those that had a ritual nature, like the ḥadīths regarding *Adhān*, or prayers that were said on certain occasions, or before certain actions[1].

(4) Writing down of ḥadīths.

During the first century, there were several formal and informal attempts to collect ḥadīths and to write them down; these attempts gave raise to the question as to the permissibility of committing ḥadīths to writing – an issue which was discussed, in detail, by early scholars of the Companions and the Successors. As this issue is dealt with by recent Muslim and western writers, there is little need to consider it in further detail. Nevertheless, something should be said about it briefly, since it was one of the main issues discussed in the early days of Islam. On studying materials related to this issue, one can easily identify two different views:

i- The first belonged to those who disapproved of writing down of ḥadīths and deterred their students from doing so; to this group the following scholars belong: Abū Mūsā al-Ashʻarī, Abū Saʻīd al-Khudrī, and ʻAbd Allah b. ʻUmar from the Companions, and Ibrāhīm al-Nakhaʻī, ʻĀmir al-Shaʻbī, Ibn Sīrīn, Qatādah and others from the Successors[2].

ii- The second view is of those who were in favour of writing down of ḥadīths, or of those who are reported to have possessed their own *ṣaḥīfahs*. Although ʻUmar b. al-Khaṭṭāb is reported to have refused to collect ḥadīths in one book like the Quran, he is reported to have recommended reducing knowledge[3] to writing[4]. A similar statement is ascribed to ʻAlī b. Abī Ṭālib and Anas b. Mālik who

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1 al-Ṣabbāgh, p. 148.

2 See D., vol. 1, pp. 119-25; al-Rāmahurmuzī, pp. 397-81; Kh., 4, pp. 36-48; I.B., 1, vol. 1, pp. 63-68.

3 The term 'knowledge' at that time seems to have been identified with Ḥadīth in its general meaning, i.e. reports which are ascribed to the Prophet, the Companions and the Successors.

4 See D., vol. 1, p. 127; cf. Kh., 4, pp. 87f.

is reported to have recommended such action to his sons[1]. Abū Umāmah al-Bāhilī was asked about writing down of knowledge and he said that it was permissible[2]. We have already come across the serious attempt of Ibn 'Abbās to collect hadīths and write them down[3]. Ma'rūf al-Khayyāt reported that he saw Wāthilah b. al-Asqa' dictate hadīths and his students writing them down in his presence[4]. Many of the Successors, like 'Atā', Qatādah, al-Hasan al-Basrī, al-Zuhrī and many others, are also reported as being in favour of committing hadīths to writing[5]. In the practical field, the *sahīfah*, called al-Sādiqah, of 'Abd Allah b. 'Amr b. al-'Ās[6], and that of 'Alī which deals, according to a statement of 'Alī himself[7], with the wergild, the ransom for the releasing of the captives and the law that no Muslim should be killed for the killing of a disbeliever, to give but a few examples. In fact "some fifty Companions and almost as many early Followers are said to have possessed manuscripts, then called *suhuf*..."[8]. It is worthy of note that some of those who opposed to writing hadīths in the first place, like Abū Sa'īd al-Khudrī and Ibn Mas'ūd, are reported to have written down some materials other than from the Quran[9].

These statements of the early scholars, and the discussion of later scholars of Hadīth of this issue, reveal that the disapproval of writing down of hadīths happened only during the early days, and that it was due to one or more of the following reasons:

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1 See Kh., 4, pp. 89f, and D., vol. 1, p. 127, respectively.
2 D., vol. 1, p. 127.
3 See above p. 104; cf. D., vol. 1, p. 137; Kh., 4, pp. 91f.
4 Kh., 2, vol. 2, p. 56. Ma'rūf b 'Abd Allah al-Khayyāt was a client of Wāthilah.
5 See al-Rāmahurmuzī, pp. 367-87; Kh., 4, pp. 99-110.
6 See Ibn Sa'd, vol. 7, 2, p. 189; cf. B2., vol. 1, p. 86, (n. 113).
7 See B2., vol. 1, pp. 84f, (n. 111); cf. vol. 8, pp. 493f, (n. 747); Kh., 4, pp. 88f.
8 Abdul Rauf, "The development of the science of Hadīth", p. 271.
9 See M. A. al-Khatīb, p. 321. For a more detailed discussion of this issue, see al-Khatīb al-Baghdādī in his *Taqyīd al-'ilm*, pp. 36ff; M. A. al-Khatīb, pp. 309-28; Abū Zahū, pp. 125-27.

i- Allowing ḥadīths to be reduced to writing would lead to the resemblance of Hadīth to the Quran – a matter about which early authorities were very cautious, in order to keep the Quran, the supreme source of guidance, distinct from any other sources. That is because Muslims believed of the Quran as the eternal Word of God, with which people had nothing to do, while not all the sayings or actions of the Prophet had this divine nature. It seems that some early scholars felt that writing down of ḥadīths or any other materials and collecting them in a form of book, at that early time, might have lead some ignorant people not to distinguish Divine Revelation from other materials[1].

ii- Having written copies of ḥadīths may have led Muslims to engage themselves in studying and memorising them, and accordingly to pay less attention to the Quran, while the priority at that time was to concentrate on it, in order to be preserved properly[2]. 'Abd Allah b. Mas'ūd is reported to have ordered a *ṣaḥīfah*, which contained sayings of Abū al-Dardā' and some of his stories, to be wiped out, and advised people to engage themselves in studying the Quran only[3]. In another version he is reported as pointing out that the people of the Book were lead astray when they engaged themselves in studying books of their scholars and bishops, and abandoned the Book which God revealed to their Prophets[4].

iii- Having written copies of ḥadīths may have tempted students of Hadīth to depend on them, instead of learning them by heart, the favoured way of preserving knowledge at that time; this situation may have lead to the negligence in the teachings of Hadīth[5]. Therefore, a number of Hadīth students was reported to have written ḥadīths only for the sake of learning them by heart; once they achieved that, they

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1 See Kh., 4, pp. 57, 93; cf. I.B., 1, vol. 1, p. 68.
2 See Kh., 4, p. 57, 93.
3 Id., pp. 53-55.
4 Id., p. 56.
5 See al-Rāmahurmuzī, pp. 385f; cf. Kh., 4, pp. 58-60; I.B., 1, vol. 1, p. 68.

would erase them – a practice which was reported on the authority of 'Alqamah, al-Zuhrī, and others[1].

iv- The fear that one's written copies may happen to fall, after his death, into the hands of those who are not considered to be genuine students of knowledge, and who subsequently may misapprehend their contents is another reason. Because of this reason, some early scholars, like Tāwūs and others, ordered their documents to be burnt; 'Abīdah al-Salmānī is reported to have erased his documents before his death, out of fear that they might come into the hands of someone who would misunderstand them[2]. This reason seems also to account for the decision of Abū Qilābah to bequeath his books to Ayyūb, if Ayyūb was alive; otherwise he ordered that they should be burnt[3].

When one or more of these reasons applied, early scholars would disapprove of the process of committing ḥadīths to writing, and when none of them was applicable, they would allow this process to go ahead or even would recommend it; naturally enough the situation would differ from person to person and from period to period. This conclusion, which is supported by the existence of a good number of written copies of ḥadīths possessed by authorities at that time, suggests that the disapproval of writing down of ḥadīths was only due to certain circumstances and reasons noticed by the early scholars; a fact that may account for the existence of contradictory statements, regarding the writing down of knowledge, ascribed sometimes even to the same authority.

Nevertheless, at the beginning of the second century the writing down of ḥadīths became a common practice amongst students of Ḥadīth, as they felt that it

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1 Kh., 4, pp. 58-60. As far as al-Zuhrī is concerned, it seems that he adopted such a practice in his early days, since he is reported as having a considerable number of written copies of ḥadīths and taking part in collecting ḥadīths under the commission of the Caliph 'Umar b. 'Abd al-'Azīz.
2 Kh., 4, p. 61.
3 Id., p. 62.

became increasingly difficult to depend on their memories, in order to preserve the growing number of ḥadīths which had become current with a longer *isnāds*, particularly after setting off on journeys to collect them from various provinces. It is worthy of note that later scholars of Ḥadīth recommended writing down of ḥadīths and even considered it superior to learning them by heart, since it became the only way that enabled them to preserve, study and criticise ḥadīths[1].

There is an aspect related to writing of ḥadīths, that one encounters in several anecdotes; that is comparing one's copy of ḥadīths with its original whether it be the informant himself from whom ḥadīths are received, or the original copy from which ḥadīths are copied. This practice was called *al-'arḍ*, and it was aimed at verifying the written copies of ḥadīths. <u>Bashīr b. Nahīk</u> is reported to have practised this method regarding ḥadīths which he had received from his teacher Abū Hurayrah; he said: "I used to write down some of what I heard from Abū Hurayrah. When I decided to leave, I brought my copies and read them back to him, then I asked: 'Did I hear these ḥadīths from you?', and Abū Hurayrah replied: 'Yes'"[2]. Hubayrah b. 'Abd al-Raḥmān reported that whenever students of <u>Anas b. Mālik</u> insisted that he transmitted a lot of ḥadīths, he would bring documents [*majāll*], saying: "I wrote down these documents and read them over to the Prophet". In another version he is reported as saying: "These are ḥadīths which I heard from the Prophet, wrote them down and read them back to him"[3]. Other scholars are reported to have enjoined their student to compare their copies with their originals, in order to preserve the high level of accuracy. <u>'Urwah b. al-Zubayr</u> asked his son Hishām who had written down a number of ḥadīths: "Did you write down ḥadīths?" The son said: "Yes". 'Urwah asked: "Did you compare (your copy with its original)?" Hishām said: "No";

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1 See Id., pp. 70f, al-Rāmahurmuzī, pp. 385f.
2 Ibn Sa'd, vol. 7, 1, p. 162; cf. Kh., 4, p. 275.
3 al-Bukhārī, Muḥammad, 1, vol. 4, pp. 240f; cf. Fallātah, vol. 2, p. 16, citing Kh., 4, p. 95.

whereupon 'Urwah declared: "(In fact) you did not write"[1]. This anecdote shows how important it was for a student of Ḥadīth to compare what he had written with its original, in order to correct mistakes he possibly had made during the writing down of his copy, to such an extent that made 'Urwah consider writing down of ḥadīths without verifying them as if there was no writing at all. Having been told that his learning was reduced to writing, Nāfiʿ, a client of Ibn 'Umar, asked for the written copies to be brought to him, in order to revise and correct them[2].

Summing up.

From the previous discussion one may conclude the following:

(1) During the first century of Islam, the scholars of Ḥadīth, guided by the Quran and the Ḥadīth, developed a number of principles regarding the transmission of ḥadīths, and a number of standards regarding their criticism, which suited their time and met their needs. Generally speaking, they observed these principles, and made great use of the standards of criticism, which enabled them to preserve ḥadīths, as far as they possibly could do, from addition, diminution and alteration. It is not necessary to find each principle or standard expressed in specific terms as happened later, but it is sufficient to know that these principles and standards were observed and noticed by the sincere and honest students and scholars of Ḥadīth, who devoted themselves earnestly to this field of study. Accordingly, students and scholars of Ḥadīth, in the second century onwards, did not start from the beginning, in order to establish principles of transmission or standards of criticism of transmission, but they in fact built on the approach of their predecessors, discussing certain issues and elaborating others according to their special needs and circumstances.

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1 Kh., 3, p. 237.
2 I.B., 2, vol. 1, p. 191; cf. Ibn 'Adī, 2, p. 235.

(2) Criticism of ḥadīths on the virtue of the *isnād* and the *matn* was in process, whenever the need for it arose, during the first century of Islam. al-Dāraquṭnī declares that it was the practice of the Prophet and the four Rightly-Guided Caliphs to protect the *Sunnah*, to purify it from falsification, to criticise its transmitters and to divulge the forgeries of those who tell lies[1]. There is a reason, however, to believe that, in practice, the criticism of the *matn* preceded the criticism of men, inasmuch as the Companions, who used to consider each other as trustworthy transmitters, laid great emphasis on criticising the texts of ḥadīths. Moreover, there are incidents which prove that criticising the text actually began during the lifetime of the Prophet himself, who was interrogated about certain ḥadīths by his wife 'Ā'ishah and other Companions[2].

(3) Towards the end of the first century and the beginning of the second, when the number of transmitters increased and the Companions, the trusted authorities, were by no means the only transmitters of ḥadīths, the criticism of transmitters became more common, in order to distinguish between those who were reliable and those who were not, to the extent that request for the *isnād* and the criticism of transmitters became the first step towards the criticism of transmissions. It is noteworthy that due to the divine nature that much of the sayings and actions of the Prophet have, and due to the fact that Ḥadīth was considered a basic source of Islam, Muslim scholars laid great emphasis on transmitters of ḥadīths, inasmuch as their integrity and precision would play a vital role in warranting the genuineness of their transmissions, particularly in such a field where the reasoning of the individuals should not be used freely.

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1 Su., 3, p. 92.
2 See above, p. 194; 'Abd Allah b. 'Amr is also reported to have had similar inquiry, see above p. 195. See an anecdote (above p. 56) regarding fasting without breaking the fast, in which the Companions inquired of the Prophet for the reason that made him prohibit them to do so, while he practised it.

(4)   As far as the issue of *isnād* at that time is concerned, one has to differentiate between two aspects: The first is 'the voluntary proffering of the *isnād*', that started at the time of the Companions and accompanied the emergence of the process of transmission – it was, nevertheless, left to the transmitter to disclose his authorities or not.   The second is 'the request for the *isnād*' which was applied whenever the need arose, in order to scrutinise transmissions, particularly after the *fitnah* that followed the killing of the third Caliph 'Uthmān, during the fourth decade of Islam.   In any case, towards the beginning of the second century, both practices became common features of the study of Ḥadīth.

(5)   The five conditions, which later scholars of Ḥadīth put forward, to determine a sound [*saḥīḥ*] or a good [*ḥasan*] hadīth, namely: (1) having a connected chain of authorities, (2) having transmitters who are straightforward, (3) having transmitters who are accurate, (4) being free from abnormality [*shudhūdh*] and (5) being free from any other defect [*'illah qādiḥah*][1], were generally observed by early scholars of Ḥadīth.   This conclusion is supported by the above presentation of the standards of criticism which were then observed;   the first two standards ensure the continuity of the *isnād* and the tested integrity of transmitters, the third ensures the precision of a transmitter and the fourth ensures that the text be free from any abnormality or defect.   The only difference is that later scholars improved these standards according to their requirements, expressed them in more specific terms and were able to introduce them in books devoted to this subject and to apply them more widely.

(6)   The situation which Robson portrays regarding the study of Ḥadīth may well apply to a certain group, to which I have alluded during the preceding discussion;

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1 See Su., 2, vol. 1, p. 63; al-ʿIrāqī, p. 8.

that is the story-tellers who were denounced by the scholars of that time for their ignoring of the main principles of transmission. This ignoring made them indulge in reporting ḥadīths or any other stories, enlarging some and inventing others, so that they could draw the attention of the public to them. Robson's description also fits another group of ignorant pious people, who claimed that they invented ḥadīths, in order to exhort people to avoid wrongdoing and to lead their lives in a straightforward manner; but as this group emerged only at a later time, it will not be dealt with in this thesis[1]. Unfortunately, one cannot but declare that the image, created by Robson, of the students or the scholars of Ḥadīth and the study of Ḥadīth in general, during the early days of Islam, has nothing to do with the main scholarly group which took part in this field with honest and serious effort, although it is the one which deserves greater consideration, and whose approach needs a truer appreciation.

List of the authorities quoted in this chapter.

A- The Companions.
'Abd Allah b. 'Abbās, (d. 68 A.H.).
'Abd Allah b. 'Amr b. al-'Āṣ, (d. 68 A.H.)
'Abd Allah b. Mas'ūd, (d. 32 A.H.).
'Abd Allah b. 'Umar, (d. 74 A.H.).

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1 Scholars of Ḥadīth state that there were some pious people [*zuhhād*], who invented ḥadīths, in order to exhort people to do good and refrain from wrongdoing, (see Su., 2, vol. 1, pp. 281ff), like Nūḥ b. Abī Maryam, d. 173 A.H., (see I.H., 4, vol. 10, pp. 486-89), Muḥammad b. Karrām al-Sijistānī, the head of a group called al-Karrāmiyyah, d. 255 A.H., (See I.H., 2, vol. 5, pp. 353-56), Maysarah b. 'Abd Rabbih, a student of al-Awzā'ī and Ibn Jurayj, (see I.H., 2, vol. 6, pp. 138-40), and Aḥmad b. Muḥammad al-Bāhilī, d. 275 A.H., (see I.H., 2, vol. 1, pp. 272-74). This confirms that Muslim scholars were heedful of this type of transmitters and rejected their transmissions from an early period, since they were considered to be unreliable regarding the transmission of ḥadīths. Nevertheless, this kind of transmitters could be considered to be reliable in other fields; Abū al-Zinād, 'Abd Allah b. Dhakwān al-Qurashī, (d. 130, 131 A.H.), is reported as saying: "I have met in Madinah one hundred men, although all of them are honest, ḥadīths are not accepted from them; it used to be said: 'They are not recognised as students of Ḥadīth'", (see Ml., introduction, vol. 1, p. 87). Yaḥyā b. Sa'īd al Qaṭṭān, a famous ḥadīth critic, (d. 198 A.H.), said: "We have not found the pious telling lies in anything more than in (transmitting) ḥadīths", see Ml., introduction, vol. 1, p. 94.

'Abd al-Raḥmān b. 'Awf, (d. 32 A.H.).

Abū Ayyūb al-Anṣārī, Khālid b. Zayd, (d. 52 A.H.).

Abū Bakr al-Ṣiddīq, (d. 13 A.H.).

Abū al-Dardā', (d. 32 A.H.).

Abū Hurayrah, 'Abd al-Raḥmān b. Ṣakhr al-Dawsī, (d. 57, 59 A.H.).

Abū Mūsā al-Ash'arī, 'Abd Allah b. Qays, (d. 44 A.H.).

Abū Qatādah, al-Ḥārith b. Rib'ī, (d. 54 A.H.).

Abū Sa'īd al-Khudrī, (d. 74 A.H.).

Abū Umāmah al-Bāhilī, Ṣadī b. 'Ajlān, (d. 86 A.H.).

'Ā'ishah b. Abī Bakr, (d. 57, 58 A.H.).

'Alī b. Abī Ṭālib, (d. 40 A.H.).

Anas b. Mālik, (d. 93 A.H.).

al-Barā' b. 'Āzib, (d. 72 A.H.).

Ḍimām b. Tha'labah, (d. ?).

'Imrān b. Ḥuṣayn, (d. 52 A.H.).

Jābir b. 'Abd Allah, (d. 78 A.H.).

Ka'b b. Mālik, (d. 50 A.H.).

Mu'āwiyah b. Abī Sufyān, (d. 60 A.H.)

Sa'd b. Abī Waqqāṣ, (d. 55 A.H.).

Salamah b. al-Akwa', (d. 74 A.H.).

'Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb, (d. 23 A.H.).

'Uthmān b. 'Affān, (d. 35 A.H.).

Wāthilah b. al-Asqa', (d. 85 A.H.).

Zayd b. Arqam, (d. 66, 68 A.H.).

Zayd b. Thābit, (d. 45 A.H.).

al-Zubayr b. al-'Awwām, (d. 36 A.H.).

B- The Successors.

'Abd Allah b. 'Ubayd b. 'Umayr, (d. 113 A.H.).

'Abd Allah b. 'Ukaym, (d. before 95).

'Abd al-Raḥmān b. Abī Laylā al-Anṣārī, (d. 82, 83 A.H.).

'Abd al-Raḥmān b. Yazīd b. Qays al-Nakha'ī, (d. 83 A.H.).

'Abīdah b. 'Amr al-Salmānī al-Kūfī, (d. 72, 73 A.H.).

Abū 'Abd al-Raḥmān al-Sulamī, 'Abd Allah b. Ḥabīb, (d. 73 A.H.).

Abū al-'Āliyah al-Riyāḥī, (d. 90, 93 A.H.).

Abū Qilābah, 'Abd Allah b. Zayd al-Baṣrī, (d. 104 A.H.).

'Alqamah b. Qays, (d. 62 A.H.).

'Āmir al-Sha'bī, (d. 103, 104 A.H.).

'Amr b. Dīnār al-Makkī, (d. 125, 126 A.H.).

'Amr b. Murrah, (d. 116 A.H.).

Aslam, a client of 'Umar, (d. 80 A.H.).

'Aṭā' b. Abī Rabāḥ, (d. 114, 115 A.H.).

'Awf b. Mālik al-Jushamī, (d. before 95 A.H.).

Bashīr b. Nahīk, a student of Abū Hurayrah, (d. ?).

Ḥammād b. Sulaymān, (d. 119, 120 A.H.)

Hammām b. Munabbih, (d. 132 A.H.).

al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī, (d. 110 A.H.).

Ibrāhīm b. Yazīd al-Nakha'ī, (d. 95, 96 A.H.).

Khaythamah b. 'Abd al-Raḥmān, (d. about 80 A.H.).

Maymūn b. Mihrān al-Raqqī, (d. 117 A.H.).

Makhūl al-Shāmī, Abū 'Abd Allah, (d. 113).

Muḥammad b. 'Alī al-Bāqir, (d. 118 A.H.).

Muḥammad b. Shihāb al-Zuhrī, (d. 124 A.H).

Muḥammad b. Sīrīn, (d. 110 A.H.).

Nāfi', a client of 'Abd Allah b. 'Umar, (d. 117 A.H.).

al-Qāsim b. Muḥammad, (d. 106, 107 A.H.).

Qatādah b. Di'āmah al-Sadūsī, (d. 117, 118 A.H.).

al-Rabī' b. Khuthaym, (d. 61, 63 A.H.).

Rajā' b. Ḥaywah, (d. 112 A.H.).

Sa'd b. Ibrāhīm, (d. 125 A.H.).

Sa'īd b. Jubayr al-Asadī, (d. 95 A.H.).

Sa'īd b. al-Musayyib, (d. 94 A.H.).

Sulaymān b. Mūsā al-Umawī, (d. 119 A.H.).

Ṭāwūs b. Kaysān, (d. 106 A.H.).

'Umar b. 'Abd al-'Azīz, (d. 101 A.H.).

'Uqbah b. Nāfi' al-Qurashī, (d. 63 A.H.).

'Urwah b. al-Zubayr, (d. 93, 94 A.H.).

Yazīd b. Bishr, a transmitter on the authority of Ibn 'Umar, (d. ?).

PART THREE

SOME ASPECTS OF
ROBSON'S APPROACH TO ḤADĪTH

CHAPTER ONE

ROBSON'S STANDARDS

IN CRITICISING ḤADĪTHS

CHAPTER TWO

GENERAL FEATURES

OF ROBSON'S WRITINGS ON ḤADĪTH

CHAPTER ONE

Robson's standards in criticising ḥadīths

In dealing with materials of Ḥadīth, Robson applies a number of standards as regards their criticism; this chapter will throw light on these standards, examine them and compare them with the approach of Muslim scholars in this field. Although one may identify some standards regarding the criticism of ḥadīths in the several articles written by Robson, it should be noted that there are two articles in which he deals with the materials of Ḥadīth in detail, namely, "The material of Tradition I"[1], and "The Material of Tradition II"[2]. The various standards applied by Robson may be presented as follows:

1- The Quran as a standard of criticism.

2- The Bible as a standard of criticism.

3- The historical standard.

4- The material standard.

5- The rational standard.

(1) The Quran as a standard of criticism.

Robson pays considerable attention to the Quran, and deems it to be one of the important criteria according to which ḥadīths are to be judged. This inclination seems to be a result of his belief in the historicity of the Quran, as containing Muhammad's actual words; he says: "It is worthy of note that no such anachronisms [sc. as in Ḥadīth] occur in the Koran which is universally recognised as coming from

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1 *MW*. 41, 1951, pp. 166-80. This article is referred to in this thesis as Robson 4.
2 Id., 41, 1951, pp. 257-70. This article is referred to as Robson 5.

Muḥammad"[1]. Thereafter, and in the same article, he confirms: "What can be traced to the Prophet is found in the Koran and in the Koran alone"[2].

His usage of the Quran as a standard of criticism is indicated by the following:

1- In dealing, in his article: "The Form of Muslim Tradition", with forms in which ḥadīths are presented, he presents the form of 'Repetition of Phrases' and adduces several ḥadīths in which the Prophet is reported to have used such a form. In one the Prophet says: "He who believes in God and the last day should honour his guest; he who believes in God and the last day should not annoy his neighbour; and he who believes in God and the last day should say what is good, or keep silent"[3]. Robson comments: "I have not noticed many examples of this characteristic, but there are examples of the same type in the Qur'ān, and so we may find here an authentic echo of the Prophet's method of teaching"[4].

2- Elsewhere, he deals with other ḥadīths and states: "One should be ware of deciding too readily that a tradition has a New Testament source because its language sounds like New Testament language". He adduces, as an example of this, a ḥadīth in which the Prophet says: "None of you is a believer until I am dearer to him than his father, his son and all men"[5]. He then says: "One might say that this is simply a version of Matthew x, 37, 'He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me...'. But one should remember that Qur. ix, 24 says: "If your father and your sons and your brethren and your wives and your clan... are dearer to you than Allah and His Messenger... then wait till Allah comes with His affair". He adds: "It might be argued that this verse contains an echo of the Gospel, but it seems quite

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1 Robson 6, p. 94.
2 Id., p. 102; cf. Robson 11, p. 464.
3 Robson 12, p. 46; cf. B2., vol. 8, pp. 99f, (n. 158); M2., vol. 1, p. 32, (n. 78).
4 Id., p. 47.
5 Robson 5, p. 260, citing al-Bukhārī, Imān, 7; cf. B2., vol. 1, p. 20, (n. 14); M2., vol. 1, p. 31, (n. 71).

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unnecessary to try to do so, for the idea might quite well have occurred independently"; his conclusion is: "If one is looking for a source for the tradition quoted, it seems better to look to the Qur'ān than to the Gospel"[1].

3- Drawing attention to those ḥadīths which Prof. Fück feels can clearly be called primitive, Robson says: "The most convincing of these is a tradition which tells how the Prophet had forbidden his followers in Medina to fertilise their palm trees, but later came to realise that he had made a mistake. He therefore told them that he was merely a human being like themselves whose opinions might sometimes be right and sometimes wrong. He ought to be obeyed when he gave them an order connected with religion, but not when it had to do with a matter in which their experience taught them differently"[2]. His verdict is: "The statement that he is merely a human being is also made in the Koran [xviii, 110; xli, 5], so to that extent this story is in keeping with something which can be attributed to the Prophet. But the statement that he is liable to be mistaken is not in keeping with some of the claims for obedience made in the Koran [e.g. iv, 68; xxxiii, 36]". He adds: "Certainly such claims in the Koran are later than the presumed date of this tradition, and this may be urged in favour of its genuineness"[3].

Although Robson inclines to accept the historicity of the previous ḥadīths, due to the fact that they are in keeping with the Quran, there are ḥadīths the genuine of

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1 Id., pp. 260f.
2 Robson 6, 97.
3 Id., pp. 97f. As far as this ḥadīth is concerned, one should note that it was not an order of the Prophet to the people to stop fertilising the Palm-trees, but it was rather a suggestion, as the wording of the report indicates (see M2., vol. 4, pp. 1259f, nos. 5830-32). Even in the case that it was understood as a command, the Companions were instructed, as far as worldly matters were concerned, to bear in mind that he was an ordinary man. They were asked to make a clear distinction between such matters, which did not fall under the orbit of his mission, and accordingly the Prophet might have made an incorrect decision regarding them, and other matters connected with religion, on which his decisions were considered infallible, as is elucidated earlier (above p. 28). Therefore, the verses, to which Robson alluded should be understood in the context of the ḥadīth related to this issue, and thus there is no need to suggest that they are later than its presumed date.

which he tends to reject, also by using the Quran as a basis for his judgement. A number of hadīths regarding the miracles of the Prophet are among them. Anas b. Mālik is reported to have said that "the people of Mecca asked Muḥammad for a sign, and he showed them the moon in two halves with Mount Hirā' appearing between them"[1]. Umm Sulaym is said "to have had some barley loaves with which to entertain the Prophet. He came with eighty people, who went in ten at a time, and all had enough"[2]. Robson inclines to reject such hadīths on the grounds that "in the Qur'ān there is no suggestion that Muḥammad performed miracles"; he goes on: "but this does not prevent Tradition from recounting marvels"[3]. Regarding the first hadīth, he says: "It may be that Muḥammad is here taking credit for some natural phenomenon which appeared, but the Qur'ān does not state that this was a miracle performed by Muḥammad. Tradition, however, has no doubts about it". As regards the latter hadīth and others similar to it, he proclaims: "one cannot but feel that this story, with its reference to food which was left over and collected, owes something to the New Testament". His uncertain conclusion is: "It may be that stories of this kind developed as a result of contact with Christians, and out of desire to show that Muḥammad was not inferior to Jesus in the performance of miracles"[4]. To explain the fabrication of such stories, he says: "It is not surprising that stories of the Prophet's miraculous powers should have been developed. He had done a great work in establishing the religion of Islam, and his followers had no doubt of his divine inspiration. It was, therefore, a short step to proceed to attribute miracles to him; but one would expect to find this in the sphere of popular religion rather than in a work which was destined to become so authoritative"[5].

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1 Robson 4, p. 174, citing al-Bukhārī, *manāqib al-Anṣār*, 36, *tafsīr al-Qur'ān*, liv. 1; cf. B2., vol. 5, pp. 132f, (n. 208).
2 Ibid., citing al-Bukhārī, *aṭ'imah*, 6; cf. B2., vol. 8, pp. 223-25, (n. 293).
3 Ibid.; cf. *E.I.*(2), vol. 3, p. 26.
4 Ibid.; Robson 4, P. 174.
5 Id., p. 175.

To discuss Robson's criticism of the previous ḥadīths, it should be pointed out that because Muslims believe in the historicity of the Quran, there can be no argument against adopting it as a standard according to which ḥadīths are to be judged. In fact, it has been considered to be such a standard since the time of the Prophet himself, and Muslims have taken heed of any contradictions that appear between it and ḥadīths, which are supposed to derive from the same divine source. We have seen how 'Ā'ishah asked the Prophet about a ḥadīth which seemed to be contrary to what she understood from the Quran[1]. al-Bukhārī reports her to have rejected a ḥadīth transmitted by 'Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb, regarding wailing for a deceased person; she said: "May Allah be merciful to 'Umar. By Allah, Allah's Apostle did not say that a believer is punished by the weeping of his relatives. But he said, 'Allah increases the punishment of a non-believer because of the weeping of his relatives'". She further added: "The Qur'ān is sufficient for you (to clear up this point)"[2], quoting the following verse: "Nor can a bearer of burdens bear another's burden..."[3]. Ibn Ḥajar comments that her criticism indicates that she rejected this ḥadīth because of her belief that it contradicted the Quran[4]. She is also reported to have rejected a ḥadīth, in which we are told that the Prophet saw his God during the journey of *al-Isrā'*, on the grounds of its contradiction of the following verse: "No vision can grasp Him, but His grasp is over all vision; He is Subtle well- aware [sic]" (vi. 103)[5].

Muslims throughout the centuries, have used the Quran as a standard of criticism and rejected ḥadīths that convey something that goes against the Quranic teachings; but this rule has not been applied to the extent that they have rejected

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1 See above, p. 194.
2 B2., vol. 2, pp. 210f, (n. 375); cf. M2., vol. 2, pp. 441f, (n. 2023). It is noteworthy that al-Bukhārī accepts the ḥadīth of 'Umar as genuine, applying it to those who ask their relatives to weep for them, in the event of their death.
3 xxxv. 18.
4 I.H., 1, vol. 3, p. 154; cf. al-Shāṭibī, vol. 3, p. 19.
5 See al-Shāṭibī, vol. 3, pp. 19f; cf. B2., vol. 6, p. 359, (n. 378); M2., vol. 1, pp. 111f, (n. 337).

ḥadīths that conveyed something about which the Quran remains silent, since both the Quran and the Ḥadīth were considered basic sources of guidance. As has been noted in connection with the relationship between the Quran and the Ḥadīth, the latter is thought of as an independent source of guidance. al-Shāfiʿī says: "I have known no scholar [aḥad min ahl al-ʿIlm] who would dispute that the enactments [Sunan] of the Prophet are of three types; the first, those that prescribe the same matters as prescribed in the Quran; the second, those that explain what is meant by the general command in the Quran; and the third, those that prescribe matters with which the Quran does not deal"[1]. Therefore, Muslims accept the teachings imparted by ḥadīths, as long as they are in keeping with Quranic teachings, as long as they meet the other standards put forward by Muslim scholars, which are discussed in the second part of this work. Accordingly the rejection of a certain ḥadīth on the grounds that it conveys something which does not exist in the Quran is not justifiable, from the Muslim perspective; ḥadīths will be rejected only if they contradict the Quran, or fail to meet the other standards of criticism alluded to above.

Nevertheless, there is a ḥadīth in which the Prophet is claimed to have said: "If you hear a ḥadīth, compare it with the Book of Allah; accept those which agree with it, and dismiss those which disagree with it". This ḥadīth, which has various versions, is declared to be spurious by a number of scholars[2]; ʿAbd al-Raḥmān b. Mahdī proclaims that it was fabricated by Zanādiqah and the Khawārij. Ibn ʿAbd al-Barr reports that some scholars rejected this particular ḥadīth on the grounds that it disagreed with the Quran, which enjoins Muslims to follow the Prophet and obey his orders unconditionally, warning people against acting otherwise[3]. It seems that this

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1 Khallāf, p. 40.
2 See al-ʿAjlūnī, vol. 1, p. 86; al-Shāṭibī, vol. 4, p. 18; Su. 1, pp. 20, 30, 32.
3 I.B., 1, vol. 2, p. 191; cf. Abū Zahū, p. 23.

report was invented in order to be used as an argument for rejecting ḥadīths which did not suit certain groups or individuals.

It is instructive to note that Muslim scholars usually add to the Quran, as a standard of criticism, the *Mutawātir* ḥadīths[1] and the *Ijmā*ʿ, which is what agreed upon by all Muslim scholars. In enumerating the criteria because of which ḥadīths are to be rejected, even when reported by a reliable transmitter, al-Khaṭīb states that if a ḥadīth contradicts the explicit text of the Quran or a *Mutawātir Sunnah*, or *Ijmā*ʿ, it must have been either repealed or fabricated[2]. Ibn Ḥajar mentions these standards as methods of identifying spurious ḥadīths, and al-Suyūṭī reported Ibn al-Jawzī to have approved of them[3].

Turning to the ḥadīths scrutinised by Robson and whose genuineness he inclines to reject, I would like to point out the importance, while examining ḥadīths, of making the distinction between materials pertaining to matters about which the Quran remains silent, and other materials pertaining to matters or teachings which contradict the Quranic teaching. Although the latter should be rejected even if transmitted through a sound *isnād*, one is not justified in rejecting the former, unless one has a convincing reason for doing so. Considering ḥadīths regarding miracles ascribed to the Prophet, we find that although the Quran does not present the Prophet as a miracle maker, it states clearly that he is a Messenger of God, to whom the Quran was revealed, just like other Messengers sent before him; "Muḥammad is no more than a Messenger: many were the Messengers that passed away..."[4]. Furthermore, the Quran shows us that Messengers were usually supported by a number of miracles to

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1 a *Mutawātir* ḥadīth is a ḥadīth which is transmitted, in each stage of the *isnād*, by such a large number of transmitters, who cannot be reasonably expected to agree on falsehood, or to convey it incidentally, provided that they all report what they have seen or heard. Such ḥadīths are considered to convey absolute knowledge, see I.H., 3, pp. 9-10; Su., 2, vol. 2, p. 176.
2 See Kh., 1, vol. 2, pp. 132f; cf. Kh., 3, pp. 17, 432.
3 Su., 2, vol. 1, p. 277; cf. al-Shāṭibī, vol. 4, p. 23.
4 iii. 144.

convince those who venture to disbelieve them, and tells us about a number of miracles, with which earlier Messengers were supported. Ṣāliḥ was given a she-camel as a Sign from His Lord[1]; the fire was made cool for Abraham and it did not burn him[2]; Moses got, along with other miracles, a stick which could change to a snake[3]; and Jesus was given several miracles since the time of his childhood[4]. Therefore, it is quite conceivable for a believer that Muhammad was also enabled by God to perform several miracles to help him in assuring his people that he was a true Messenger of God.

In fact the Quran itself is reckoned to be the greatest miracle the Prophet ever had, and people were challenged to compose some thing similar to it, or ten *Sūrahs*, or even one *Sūrah*, similar to its *Sūrahs*[5]. Another miracle is the split of the moon which Robson tried to explain as a natural phenomenon, of which one has never heard, dismissing all reports about it in several sources; even al-Bukhārī with his strict standards accept it as genuine[6]. In the Quran also we are told about another miracle, i.e. the incident of the journey at night from the Holy Mosque in Makkah to al-Aqṣā Mosque in Jerusalem; "Glory to (Allah) Who did take His Servant for a journey by night from the Sacred Mosque to the Farthest Mosque whose precincts We did bless,–in order that We might show him some of Our Signs: for He is the one Who hearth and seeth (all things)"[7].

In my opinion, ḥadīths pertaining to miracles ascribed to the Prophet are to be accepted provided that they meet the standards of criticism put forward by Muslim scholars regarding the *isnād* and the *matn*, and there is no need to dismiss them and

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1 vii. 73.
2 xxi. 68-69.
3 xx. 17-21. For other miracles of Moses, see ii. 60, xx. 22; xxvi. 61-67.
4 See iii. 49; v. 110, 112-115.
5 See lii. 34, xi. 13 and ii. 23, respectively.
6 See B2., vol. 6, pp. 365f, (nos. 387-90).
7 xvii. 1; cf. B2., vol. 6, pp. 195f, (nos. 232-33).

suggest any other sources for them, on the grounds that these ḥadīths are not in keeping with the Quranic teachings, while they are indeed in keeping with them – other sources should only be suggested when dealing with weak or spurious ḥadīths.

(2) The Bible as a standard of criticism.

This is another main standard used by Robson with some reservation; he says: "While it is important to be careful about ascribing to a New Testament sources everything that is reminiscent of the New Testament, there is no question that many traditions have no other sources"[1]. He continues: "It should be added that Tradition is also in debt to the Old Testament. Indeed, Goldziher has pointed out that not only the Old Testament, but anything which seemed worth while was turned into tradition"[2]. He expresses his caution again: "There is a danger of attributing everything which faintly suggests it to the Bible, and therefore it is advisable,... to be on one's guard against deciding too readily that the Bible is the source of every saying which is reminiscent of a biblical phrase"[3].

Dealing with divine ḥadīths, Robson concludes: "The divine traditions include a number which have obviously a biblical origin"[4]. He adduces several examples, which may be dealt with in the following divisions:

i- Ḥadīths in which the Bible is acknowledged as their source. As an example, Robson quotes the following ḥadīth: "It is written in the Injīl, as you judge you will be judged, and with the measures that you mete it will be meted to you"[5]. He gives as a source for this ḥadīth Matthew vii, 2: "For with what judgement ye

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1 Robson 5, p. 261.
2 Ibid., citing Ignaz Goldziher in *Muh. stud.*, vol. 2, p. 158.
3 Id., p. 263.
4 Ibid.; cf. p. 264.
5 Id., p. 264, citing Madanī, No. 731; cf. Robson 18, p. 11. al-ʿAjlūnī points out that the first part of this report is recorded by Abū Nuʿaym, al-Daylamī, Ibn ʿAdī and others, and that it has a weak transmitter in its *isnād*, see vol. 2, p. 126.

judge, ye shall be judged: and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again".

ii- Hadīths that show a certain knowledge of the Bible, but are by no means accurate in details. For this type Robson offers the following example: "If it pleases anyone to have long life and to have his provision increased, let him join ties of relationship"[1]. He compares it with Psalm xxxiv, 12ff: "What man is he that desireth life, and loveth many days, that he may see good? Keep thy tongue from evil, and thy lips from speaking guile. Depart from evil, and do good; seek peace and, and, pursue it", and then remarks that this hadīth "actually says that these words are written in the Torah, which shows that the Bible is acknowledged as the source, even though the tradition has not been very successful in quoting it"[2].

iii- Hadīths that quote the Bible, even though they are not easily recognisable as coming from there. Robson says: "A story is told of a Jew to whom Muḥammad owed money insisting on staying with him till he received payment. As a result of staying a day and watching Muḥammad at prayer he accepted Islam and gave half his property 'in God's path'. He explained that his purpose was to see how Muḥammad compared with the description of him given in the Tawrāt which says: "Muḥammad b. 'Abdallāh whose birthplace is Mecca and whose place of emigration is Taiba, he is not rough or coarse or loud-voiced, nor does he give voice to obscenity or the utterance of foul talk"[3]. Commenting on this story, Robson says: "It is easy to recognise how

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1 Robson 5, p. 263 citing Madanī, Nos. 723, 732; cf. B2., vol. 8, pp. 11f, (nos. 14-15); M2., vol. 4, p. 1359, (nos. 6202-3). For other examples, see Robson 5, pp. 264-65.
2 Robson 5, p. 263.
3 Robson 18, p. 10, citing al-'Āmilī in his *al-Jawāhir al-saniyyah*, which is a Shī'ī collection of divine hadīths, and pointing out that al-Bukhārī has a parallel to this hadīth on the authority of 'Abd Allāh b. 'Amr b. al-'Āṣ; cf. B2., vol. 3, pp. 189f, (n. 335), vol. 6, pp. 345f, (n. 362); A., vol. 2, p. 174, where 'Abd Allāh is reported to have stated that the Prophet is described in the Tawrāh just as he is described in the Quran, and to have given an account similar to the one mentioned above without any reference to the birthplace or the place of emigration.

this has in part a connection with Is. 42, 2, but it is not so easy to understand how a Jew could say he read the passage in the Tawrāt"[1].

There are other ḥadīths which refer to the personal appearance of Jesus. Having quoted a number of them which seem to be completely untraceable, Robson says: "Where all these details came from it is difficult to say, for the Gospels do not give us any information on this subject, unless the phrase 'because he was little of stature' in Luke xix, 3, refers to Jesus and not to Zacchaeus. But even if this is so, it disagrees with what the Muslim traditions say"[2].

iv- Ḥadīths that are directly dependent on the Bible without acknowledgement. Robson declares: "Tradition shows a remarkable degree of indebtedness to the New Testament, an indebtedness which is not acknowledged. Parables and words both from the Gospel and from other parts of New Testament are used. Sometimes one feels that there is a literal borrowing, but at other times it is the thought rather than the actual expression that is borrowed. In all such instances the New Testament language is given forth as if it were the utterances of Muhammad"[3]. As an example of this kind, Robson refers to several ḥadīths; to quote two of them: the first is said to have an Old Testament source, from which he quotes the following phrase: "What eye has not seen, nor ear heard, nor has entered into the heart of man"[4]. He compares it with Isaiah. lxiv, 4: "For since the beginning of the world men have not heard, nor perceived by the ear, neither hath the eye seen, O God, beside thee, what he hath prepared for him that waiteth for him"[5]. The second is said to have a New Testament source, as "it states that on the day of Resurrection God will say: "O son of man, I was sick and you did not visit me". He will reply: 'O Lord, how could I visit thee

1 Robson 18, pp. 10f.
2 Robson 5, p. 257.
3 Id., p. 260.
4 *E.I.*(2), vol. 3, p. 28; Robson 5, p. 264; cf. B2., vol. 6, pp. 288f, (nos. 302-3); M2., vol. 4, p. 1476, (nos. 6780-83). See another example in Robson 5, 264.
5 Cf. Robson 18, where he compares the same ḥadīth with I Cor. ii, 9.

when thou art the Lord of the worlds?' God will say: "Did you not know that my servant, so and so, was sick, yet you did not visit him? Did you not know that if you had visited him, you would have found me with him? It continues in the same strain regarding hunger and thirst"[1]. He comments: "One cannot fail to recognise the dependence of this tradition on Matthew xxv, 41ff"[2].

v- Ḥadīths that contain phrases reminiscent of the Bible, although they are actually independent. Regarding this type Robson adduces the following example: "O son of man, spend and it will be spent upon you, for God's right hand is full and bountiful, nothing diminishes it by night and day"[3]. He states: "One might be inclined to say that this comes from Luke vi, 38, or even that it owes something to Isaiah 1, 2, or lix, 1. But that seems to me to be carrying things too far. It is possible for similar sayings to come from sources which are quite independent of one another, and I suppose that most of us have made the disconcerting discovery that some of our most original thoughts have already been expressed by someone else"[4].

As most of the ḥadīths criticised above belong to Divine Ḥadīth, it is useful, before considering these ḥadīths and Robson's conclusions regarding their authenticity, to have a quick glance at the significance of divine ḥadīths and their position in Ḥadīth literature. A ḥadīth Qudsī (or a divine ḥadīth) is a ḥadīth in which the Prophet transmits, in his own words, teachings on the authority of God; it can be distinguished by the way in which it is transmitted, as pointed out earlier in the first chapter. Although this kind of ḥadīth is, like the Quran, received from God, there are several aspects in which they differ from each other. The main difference is that the Quran contains God's actual words, while in these ḥadīths the meanings are believed

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1 Robson 5, p. 264, citing Madanī, No. 401; cf. M2., vol. 4, p. 1363, (n. 6232).
2 Ibid.; cf. E.I.(2), vol. 3, p. 28.
3 Id., Robson 5, pp. 263f, citing Madanī, No. 113; cf. B2., vol. 6, p. 168, (n. 206); M2, vol. 2, pp. 477f, (n. 2178).
4 Id., p. 264.

to be revealed by God, by any means of revelation, to the Prophet Muhammad who used his own wordings to convey them to the people[1]. Therefore, they, unlike the Quran, are not unchallengable, can be touched without performing ablution and may not be used in ṣalāh[2]; they are messages the Prophet was told to deliver without the details of the wording of the message being described[3].

This view is held by a lot of Muslim scholars like al-Jurjānī, Abū al-Baqā' al-Kafawī, al-Taftāzānī and al-Ṭībī, but there is another view held by Ibn Ḥajar al-Haytamī, who points out that sayings attributed to God may be split into three categories: the Quran, the Books which are revealed to the Prophets other than Muhammad, before they were altered, and divine ḥadīths. Judging from his definition of divine ḥadīths, it is obvious that he believes that both their meanings and their wordings belong to God. At all events, all scholars are in agreement that the meaning of divine ḥadīths belong to God and they differ regarding their wordings whether they belong to God or to His Prophet[4]. The present writer is in favour of the first view held by the majority, because, as a number of writers suggest, if both the meanings and the words of divine ḥadīths belong to God, they should have the same status as that ascribed to the text of the Quran; accordingly they should be transmitted literally and would also be valid for being used in the five daily prayers; but scholars allow transmitters to convey only the meaning of these ḥadīths, while forbid similar approaches to the Quran, and they unanimously agree that using them during ṣalāh will invalidate it[5].

We have seen above that much of ḥadīths were believed to have divine nature, and were considered to be a type of revelation; thus the only difference between

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1 See al-Jurjānī, p. 74; al-Kafawī, p. 722.
2 See Sirāj al-Dīn, p. 21; 'Itr, pp. 323-25; E.I.(2), vol. 3, p. 28; Robson 5, p. 262.
3 Cf. Robson 5, p. 263.
4 See Sirāj al-Dīn, pp. 21- 26.
5 See Drāz, pp. 9-10; al-Ṣabbāgh, pp. 132f.

divine ḥadīths and other Prophetic ḥadīths is that the former group are attributed to God by the Prophet himself – a thing which makes us sure about their divine origin. The latter group contains ḥadīths whose meanings are revealed directly by God and other ḥadīths which are in fact the Prophet's enactments, but as the Prophet does not make a clear distinction between these two groups, they are merely called Prophetic ḥadīths[1].

It should be pointed out that describing a certain ḥadīth as a divine one does not necessarily mean that it is genuine, what it really means is that it is a ḥadīth in which the prophet is transmitting something on the authority of his God; it is usually connected to sayings, attributes and actions related to God. That is to say that divine ḥadīths, like other ḥadīths, can, according to standards put forward by Muslim scholars, be sound [ṣaḥīḥ], good [ḥasan], weak [ḍaʿīf] or even spurious, since it is feasible that someone invents a saying or picks one from the Bible or any other source and provides it with a fabricated isnād. For instance, al-ʿIrāqī declares that a report to the effect that the love of this world is the starting point of all sins, is falsely ascribed to the Prophet, and it is either a saying of Mālik b. Dīnār or the Prophet Jesus as recorded by al-Bayhaqī[2]. Therefore, it is important to scrutinise the isnād and the matn of these ḥadīths by submitting them to the standards of criticism discussed in the preceding chapter. Once a ḥadīth has passed through this criticism and proved to be genuine, it should be, according to the Muslim point of view, accepted even if there is something similar to it found in other sources; there would be no need to trace it to a particular sacred book, since it could be entirely independent.

If we accept the definition of divine ḥadīths to be those whose meanings were revealed by God, we will certainly expect them to present materials pertaining to

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1 See Drāz, pp. 10f.

2 This example is adduced by al-ʿIrāqī, whereas al-Suyūṭī, following Ibn Ḥajar, does not accept the idea that this ḥadīth, which is transmitted by al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī, is fabricated, see Su., 2, vol. 1, p. 287.

God's sayings and attributes, which do not change from time to another. Accordingly, divine ḥadīths may adduce certain materials which can be found in any of the sacred Books, i.e. the Tawrāt, the Injīl, the Quran and others, but this does not necessarily mean that they are dependent on one of them; for God who revealed teachings to Moses or Jesus, might reveal the same or similar teaching to the Prophet Muhammad as well. The idea that the teachings received by all of the Messengers from their God are essentially the same is indicated by the following verse: "The same religion has He established for you as that which He enjoined on Noah– the which We have sent by inspiration to thee– and that which we enjoined on Abraham, Moses, and Jesus..."[1].

Considering the concept of God in Islam, Vaglieri argues that it may be said that a certain concept is not independent and that it is derived from Christianity or Judaism; but what value does such a claim have, if we know that Muhammad himself declared that he did not produce any new ideas regarding the relationship between God and man, and that he was sent only to revive the religion of Abraham, which had been distorted, and to reinforce what was revealed to the earlier Messengers?[2]. It is not peculiar then, from the Muslim point of view, to find a *Qudsī* ḥadīth, like the one presented in the first division, which conveys a saying and declares that this saying is revealed in one of the ancient sacred books. It is also feasible that we find a ḥadīth, like those adduced in the fourth division, which agrees with the Bible without making any reference to it; to Muslims, this similarity is a sign of, and due to, the unity of the teachings amongst the divine religions, which is an effect of the common source, namely Divine Revelation[3]. This is not to say however that the report just presented

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1 xlii. 13, cf. iv. 163.
2 Vaglieri, p. 32. Cf. Qur. vi. 161; xvi. 120-123.
3 Cf. Esposito, p. 23.

as an example of the first division is genuine; the aim here is to discuss the idea in general rather than to determine the authenticity of a particular report.

It is significant that all the examples which Robson claims to have Biblical sources belong to divine ḥadīths on which he looks with great suspicion. This scepticism is, in my view, due to two reasons: the first is his rejection of the idea that Muhammad was a Messenger who received God's revelation, just as other Messengers sent before him; the second is the doubt he has regarding the effectiveness of Muslim criticism of ḥadīths which, according to him, started late in the second century – the issue discussed earlier in the second part. Therefore, he searches for sources of ḥadīths here and there and refers a number of them to Biblical sources, only because they contain similar phrases; a procedure whose results are not warranted in many cases. We have seen, in the fifth division, how Robson himself inclines to accept the genuineness of a ḥadīth regarding the spending of one's money, because of two reasons: the first is that its teaching is similar to that of the Quran, and the second is that such an idea could possibly have originated independently.

If one is to accept such a criterion, one can argue that the ḥadīth in the fourth division, that describes Paradise as having what the eye has never seen before and so on, and which Robson suggests to have an Old Testament source, could also have originated independently. Moreover, one finds something similar to this idea in the Quran; there is a verse which says: "Now no person knows what delights of the eye are kept hidden (in reserve) for them– as a reward for their (good) Deeds"[1]. The same applies to the report in the third division, regarding certain characteristics of the Prophet, which is said to be derived from the Tawrāh, inasmuch as there is a verse that reads: "Those who follow the Messenger, the unlettered Prophet, whom they find mentioned in their own (Scriptures),– in the Taurat and the Gospel;– for he commands

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1 xxxii. 17.

them what is just and Forbids what is evil..."[1]. It seems that this criterion has no

limits, since it depends, to a great extent, on the personal knowledge and opinions of

critics, and accordingly the results differ from one to another.

As far as authentic ḥadīths which state that their messages were written in a

certain sacred Book are concerned, we should note that these reports are by no means

dependent on this Book directly; they merely indicate, according to the Muslim belief,

that God revealed to His Messenger Muhammad something which had been revealed

to the previous Messengers, just like the Quran when it represents some previous

teachings[2]. Regarding the Tawrāh, there is a verse that says: "We ordained therein

for them: 'Life for life, eye for eye, nose for nose, ear for ear, tooth for tooth, and

wounds equal for equal'..."[3]. The present writer inclines to hold this view on the

grounds that it is supported by the following:

(1) It is a common doctrine in the Quran that the Bible was distorted by its

own people particularly the rabbis and priests; regarding the Jews and their sacred

Books the Quran says: "Can ye (O ye men of faith) entertain the hope that they will

believe in you?– seeing that a party of them heard the Word of Allah, and perverted it

knowingly after they understood it"[4]. Ibn Wahb comments that the verse refers to the

Jews who altered the Tawrāh, which had been revealed to them by God, by making

what is lawful unlawful, what is right wrong and vice versa[5]. As far as the

Christians are concerned, the Quran declares that they have altered the main doctrine

pertaining to the nature of God, and the nature of his Messenger Jesus; there is a

verse that declares: "They disbelieve who say: Allah is one of three (in a Trinity:) for

there is no god except one God. If they desist not from their word (of blasphemy),

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1 vii. 157; cf. ii. 146; vi. 20.
2 Cf. Bucaille, pp. 13f.
3 v. 45. For other examples, see v. 32; vii. 145; xxi. 105.
4 ii. 75; cf. iv. 46; v. 13, 41.
5 S., 1, vol. 1, p. 80.

verily a grievous chastisement will befall the disbelieves, among them"[1]. Another verse says: "Certainly they disbelieve who say: 'Allah is Christ the son of Mary'. But said Christ: 'O Children of Israel! Worship Allah, my Lord and your Lord'..."[2].

(2) We have seen earlier that although Muslims were allowed to report stories of the Children of Israel, they were asked neither to believe nor to disbelieve them; the Prophet is reported as saying: "Do not believe the people of the Book, nor disbelieve them, but say, 'We believe in Allah and whatever is revealed to us, and whatever is revealed to you'"[3]. Ibn 'Abbās is reported to have said: "Why do you ask the people of the scripture about anything while your Book (Qur'ān) which has been revealed to Allah's Apostle is newer and the latest? You read it pure, undistorted and unchanged, and Allah has told you that the People of the scripture (Jews and Christians) changed their scripture and distorted it, and wrote the scripture with their own hands and said, 'It is from Allah', to sell it for a little gain..."[4].

Accordingly, one can hardly argue that sincere Muslims, not to mention the Prophet and prominent scholars, would quote from these two Books as being divinely revealed; they could not be sure of their genuineness.

As to hadīths, like those adduced in the third division, which cannot be traced in the present editions of the Bible, or like those adduced in the second division, which Robson suggests to show a certain knowledge of it, one feels that this divergence between the Bible and sound hadīths regarding the same issue clearly indicates, and supports the idea, that the Bible is by no means the source of such hadīths – thus dismisses the unfounded statements which are made claiming that Muhammad took something from the Bible[5]. Concerning hadīths that meet the

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1 v. 73; cf. v. 17.
2 v. 72; cf. iv. 172; v. 75; ix. 30-31.
3 B2. vol. 9, pp. 338f, (n. 460).
4 Id., p. 339, (n. 461).
5 Cf. Bucaille, p. 228.

standards of criticism and prove to be authentic, one cannot but feel that whenever they state that something is written in one of the previous sacred Books, one should accept this as a genuine reflection of the words of the Prophet. The claim that a particular ḥadīth has a Biblical source can be accepted, and freely presumed, only when dealing with ḥadīths that do not meet the standards of criticism, and are labelled accordingly as weak or even spurious. The present writer tends to believe that adopting the Quran and sound ḥadīths pertaining to the Bible or any field related to it, like those describing the appearance of Jesus, is one of the valid criteria according to which the present Bible should be criticised. If we are to believe in the divine nature of *qudsī* ḥadīths, we may conclude that whenever the Bible diverges from what is stated in genuine ḥadīths, this will give an impression that, in these cases, the Bible departed from its original revelation.

(3) The historical standard.

There are a number of ḥadīths dismissed by Robson on the grounds of their contradiction of history. He adduces and examines five ḥadīths pertaining to the Prophet, which portray him as leading a hard life up to the end of his time[1].

i- Abū Hurayrah reported that until the Prophet died, his family never had full meals for three days[2]. In another version 'Ā'ishah is reported as saying: "The family of Muhammad never had their fill of wheaten bread with meat or soup for three successive days"[3].

ii- He is said never to have seen white bread from the time of his call till his death, but to have eaten bread made of unsifted barley[4].

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1 Robson 4, p. 173.
2 See B2., vol. 7, p. 220, (n. 287A).
3 Id., p. 255, (n. 349); cf. Robson 4, p. 173, where the translation reads: "bread seasoned with condiments".
4 See B2., vol. 7, p. 242, (n. 324).

iii- Abū Ṭalḥah is said to have told Umm Sulaym that he noticed the Prophet's voice was weak and recognised that this was due to hunger[1].

iv- 'Ā'ishah is quoted as telling how for two months no fires were kindled in the Prophet's houses. He and his people lived on dates and water, but some neighbours gave them milk from their ewes[2].

v- 'Ā'ishah is also reported as saying that when the Prophet died there was practically no food in the house; and 'Amr b. al-Ḥārith is credited with saying that all the Prophet left was his weapon, his white she-mule and some land which he left as alms[3].

Robson comments[4]:

i- "No doubt conditions in Medina were very different from those in the lands which were later conquered by the Muslims, but it is difficult to believe that the Prophet lived to the end of his days in such abject poverty".

ii- "One feels that such traditions, instead of representing conditions as they were, rather show the views of people who in later days disapproved of the luxury which was prevalent and tried to counteract it by traditions showing how the Prophet lived in penury".

iii- "There is no suggestion of asceticism in these traditions. Their whole purpose is clearly to represent the Prophet as living a hard life of necessity, and not because he chose it".

He concludes: "Indeed, asceticism as a religious practice was foreign to his nature, although this practice grew up later in Ṣūfī circles. It therefore seems better

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1 See id., pp. 223-25, (n. 293).
2 See B2., vol. 3, pp. 447f, (n. 741), where no mention is made of his people.
3 See id., vol. 4, p. 214, (nos. 329-30).
4 Robson 4, p. 173.

to seek the source of such traditions as have been quoted among people who deplored luxury than among people who advocated asceticism"[1].

There is another ḥadīth dismissed by Robson on the grounds that it is belied by subsequent events, which "tells of a war between the Byzantines and an army from Medina in which Constantinople will be taken by the Muslims. A lying rumor from the devil will lead the Muslims to return to Syria. While they are preparing to renew the struggle, Jesus will descend and lead them in prayer, and when the Dajjāl sees him he will begin to melt, but Jesus will kill him and show his blood on his spear"[2]. Elsewhere, speaking about the obvious anachronisms in ḥadīths, Robson concludes: "The very fact that they were written in a book form long after the Prophet's death and that they contain much material which obviously suits a later period is suggestive of the thought that many traditions at least do not really come from the Prophet at all, but have been attributed to him by people of later generation"[3].

Before discussing in detail Robson's approach to the reports presented above, it should be noted that Muslim scholars by no means neglected historical facts as one of the criteria according to which ḥadīths should be judged[4]. They, in fact, paid considerable attention to this kind of criticism and applied it to both features of transmission, i.e. the *isnād* and the *matn*. As far as the *isnād* is concerned, Muslim scholars considered the historical information to be of great value, in that it enabled them to examine the claims of transmitters that they heard ḥadīths from a particular informant, and accordingly to decide whether a particular *isnād* was a connected one or not – a matter of great importance as far as criticism of ḥadīths are concerned. Sufyān al-Thawrī (d. 161 A.H.) is reported to have said that scholars had recourse to

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1 Id., pp. 173f.
2 Robson 5, p. 259; cf. M2., vol. 4, p. 1501, (no. 6924).
3 Robson 6, p. 94.
4 In fact this kind of criticism is found in the Quran; see for instance how the claim of Jews and Christians that Abraham belongs to them is refuted, in iii. 65-67.

history, when they suspected transmitters of telling lies in their transmissions[1]. Ḥafṣ b. Ghiyāth (d. 194 A.H.) recommended students of Ḥadīth to consult history, whenever they had doubts a bout a certain transmitter, by checking his date of birth and the date of birth and death of the authority from whom he claimed to had heard ḥadīths[2]. Ḥassān b. Zayd declares that using historical information is one of the best ways of ascertaining the veracity of transmitters; critics ask a transmitter about the date of his birth, and thus they can determine whether he is truthful or not[3]. Abū 'Abd Allah al-Ḥumaydī recommends students of Ḥadīth to start their study with, and to pay considerable attention to, three important subjects dealing with the Principles of Ḥadīth, namely, *al-'ilal* (defects in transmissions), *al-mu'talif wa al-mukhtalif*[4] and the date of death of transmitters[5].

One interesting story tells that 'Umar b. Mūsā came to Ḥimṣ and started transmitting ḥadīths on the authority of what he called: "Your pious *shaykh*". On being asked about the name of this *shaykh*, he claimed him to be called Khālid b. Ma'dān al-Kalā'ī; he was asked about the date on which he had met Khālid, and he stated that he met him in 108 A.H., specifying a certain place where he allegedly met him. Upon this, 'Umar was told that Khālid died in 104 A.H., and was advised to fear God and to stop telling lies. It was also pointed out to him that he claimed to have met Khālid four years after his death, in a place to which Khālid never had been[6]. In the biography of Aḥmad b. Sulaymān al-Qawārīrī, al-Khaṭīb declares that he is an obvious liar; he justifies his conviction by pointing out that Aḥmad who was born, as he admitted, in 151 A.H. wrote ḥadīths on the authority of Muḥammad b.

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1 Kh., 3, p. 119.
2 Id., pp. 119f; cf. Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ, p. 382.
3 I.B., 2, p. 198, cf. Ibn al-Jawzī, vol. 1, p. 49.
4 This subject is devoted to transmitters' names which are similar in their letters, but pronounced differently, see Su., 2, vol. 2, p. 298ff; Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ, 333ff.
5 Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ, p. 382.
6 Kh., 3, p. 119; cf. Su., 2, vol. 2, p. 349; Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ, p. 382.

Isḥāq who died either in the same year in which Aḥmad was born or even before. More amazing is his claim to have heard from him in Kūfah, and afterwards in Madinah, while Ibn Isḥāq went to Kūfah during the lifetime of al-A'mash, a few years before Aḥmad was born[1]. Yaḥyā b. Ma'īn is reported as stating that 'Umar b. Hārūn al-Balkhī is a liar; although he entered Makkah after the death of Ja'far b. Muḥammad, he transmitted on his authority[2].

Another important issue, in which history plays a crucial role is in specifying the time when certain transmitters became senile; in such cases, only what they transmitted before this particular date can be accepted. Muslim scholars therefore used to distinguish between students who received ḥadīths from them before this date and other students who studied with them after that, accepting what the former group transmitted on their authorities and rejecting what is transmitted by the latter[3]. Any lack of information as to the specific date at which a certain transmitter had reached senility, or the failure to determine what he transmitted before and after he reached senility would lead to the dismissal of all ḥadīths reported on his authority. Ibn Ḥibbān remarks that Ṣāliḥ b. Nabhān reached senility in 125 A.H., and since no distinction has been made between what he transmitted before and after that date, all his transmissions were dismissed[4]. Yaḥyā b. Ma'īn approved of hearing ḥadīths from al-Mas'ūdī, 'Abd al-Raḥmān b. 'Abd Allah al-Hudhalī, during the reign of Abū

1 I.H., 2, vol. 1, p. 183. See vol. 3, p. 125, for another example regarding the claim of Suhayl b. Dhakwān that he met 'Ā'ishah, the Prophet's wife, in Wāsiṭ, although she died before this city was built.
2 I.H., 4, vol. 7, p. 503; cf. al-Rāzī 'Abd al-Raḥmān, vol. 3, p. 141. For more examples of those who were discovered to have claimed that they heard from a *shaykh* whom they did not actually meet, see Ibn al-Jawzī, vol. 1, p. 37; Fallātah, vol. 1, pp. 136-38.
3 Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ, pp. 391-412; cf. Su., 2, vol. 2, pp. 371-80.
4 Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ, p. 404. al-'Irāqī comments that this is not the case, as some scholars did make a distinction between what he transmitted before and after this date.

Ja'far, and declared those ḥadīths received from him in the reign of al-Mahdī as worthless[1].

As regards using historical information in scrutinising the content of ḥadīths, one also encounters several incidents in which this kind of information enabled scholars of Ḥadīth to label some reports as spurious. For instance, Ibn al-Jawzī declares that all ḥadīths pertaining to the question as to whether the Quran is created or not are spurious[2], since they refer to a matter that emerged and was widely discussed during the second century. Goldziher points out how Ibn al-Jawzī dismisses a particular ḥadīth on the grounds that it speaks about public baths [ḥammāms], which were not known until a later period[3]. In another account we are told that al-Khaṭīb declared a certain letter which the Jews claimed to contain the Prophet's abolishing of the jizyah prescribed on the Jews of Khaybar as forged. Having being asked for evidence, he pointed out that this letter included the testimony of Mu'āwiyah who embraced Islam in the year 8 A.H., when Makkah was conquered, while Khaybar was conquered one year before; it also included the testimony of Sa'd b. Mu'ādh who died two years before the conquest of Khaybar[4]. Another version ascribed to Ibn Taymiyyah, has an addition to the effect that jizyah had not been prescribed yet and, moreover, was not known to both the Companions and Arabs in general[5]. In this incident we see how the historical facts were used in criticising this particular report, and how critics of Ḥadīth did not hesitate to reject it in the light of them.

Another field in which historical information plays an important rule in considering the content of ḥadīths is the determining of a case of abrogation regarding

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1 Id., p. 400.
2 Ibn al-Jawzī, vol. 1, pp. 107-9.
3 Goldziher, 1, pp. 282f, footnote n. 27.
4 Kh., 2, vol. 1, pp. 37f.
5 See Ibn Qayyim, 2, pp. 103-5. See another example for using sound, historical information in criticising the content of ḥadīths by Muslim b. al-Ḥajjāj, in al-A'ẓamī, pp. 207f.

a number of ḥadīths on a particular subject. Abrogation, according to the Principles of Ḥadīth, can be identified by one of the following means[1]:

i- A statement of the Prophet, that states clearly that a certain enactment abolishes an older one, like a ḥadīth in which the Prophet is reported to have said: "I forbade you to visit graves, but you may now visit them..."[2].

ii- A statement of a Companion to the effect that the last practice of the Prophet regarding a certain matter was such, like the example, adduced above, regarding *taṭbīq* during kneeling down in the prayer[3].

iii- Historical information which proves that one of the contradictory practices or sayings came before the other; in this case the later one of will be considered as abrogating the earlier one. al-Shāfiʿī, for instance, believes that a ḥadīth transmitted by Shaddād b. Aws, to the effect that the cupper and the one who was cupped had broken their fast, is abrogated by another ḥadīth on the authority of Ibn ʿAbbās to the effect that the Prophet was cupped while he was fasting and in the state of *iḥrām*. He based his opinion on the fact that Ibn ʿAbbās accompanied the Prophet in the farewell Pilgrimage in 10 A.H., while the ḥadīth reported by Shaddād refers to an incident that occurred two years earlier[4].

iv- Consensus [*Ijmāʿ*] to the contrary of a certain ḥadīth implies that there is another statement which can testify to its abrogation, inasmuch as consensus itself neither abrogates nor can be abrogated.

From this, we can see how important historical information was to scholars of Ḥadīth, and to what extent it was applied in criticising both the *isnād* and the *matn*. Having said that, it should also pointed out that in order to make proper use of this standard of criticism, one should be careful regarding the authenticity of the historical

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1 See Su., 2, vol. 2, pp. 189-92.
2 M2., vol. 2, p. 463, (n. 2131).
3 See above p. 83.
4 Su., 2, vol. 2, pp. 191f.

information one has, inasmuch as in many cases the credentials of ḥadīths prove to be more reliable than those of the historical reports; that is mainly due to the strict, elaborated standards of criticism applied to the former in comparison to the latter[1]. In the case where historical reports are not well-established, one is not justified in using them as bases for dismissing a particular ḥadīth that meets other standards of criticism.

Turning to ḥadīths which Robson claims are not genuine, we find that all of these are considered genuine from the perspective of Muslim scholars, who by no means neglect sound historical information as a standard for criticising ḥadīths. This gives rise to the following question: How do these reports meet the strict standards applied by Muslim scholars, while failing to meet the historical standard applied by Robson?

Considering the first set of reports, regarding the nature of the life the Prophet led, one finds that although some of them represent the Prophet as having a hard life at the beginning of his career, the first and the last, speak about the Prophet's later life, up to his death, and portray it as a life that does not change remarkably. Undoubtedly the last years were not the same as the first, particularly after the conquest of Khaybar, as indicated by Ibn 'Umar[2], that is, three years before the death of the Prophet, when his standard of living obviously got better. It seems that at that time the Prophet improved his family's standard of living; he is reported as keeping what he thought would be enough for them for a year and spending the rest for the sake of God. Nevertheless, in these days his family is reported to have had some difficulties, to the extent that they did not had their fill for three successive days. The reason for this seems to be, as noted by Ibn Ḥajar, that the Prophet used to prefer others to himself

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1 See a comparison between the historians' approach and that of Muslim scholars of Ḥadīth, in al-A'ẓamī, pp. 91-102, where he concludes that a lot of historical reports cannot stand the criticism applied to ḥadīths.

2 See I.H., 1, vol. 9, p. 527, where Ibn 'Umar is reported to have said: "We did not have our fill [mā shabi'nā], until we conquered Khaybar".

and offer them food – a procedure that led in some cases to consuming what he kept for his family[1]. However, it seems, as al-Ṭabari and Ibn Baṭṭāl suggest[2], that the Prophet chose a moderate standard of living for himself, even in circumstances where he had chances to improve it. This opinion is backed up by a statement of 'Ā'ishah recorded by al-Bayhaqī to the effect that the Prophet did not have his fill for three successive days, and that if they had wanted to do so, it would have been easy for them to do it [*wa law shi'nā la shabi'nā*], but he used to prefer others over himself [*wa lākin kāna yu'thir 'alā nafsih*][3]. This fact can also be distilled from a ḥadīth to the effect that God offered the Prophet the chance to transmute the land [*baṭḥā'*] of Makkah into gold, but the Prophet was content to be given his daily bread; thus he could have his fill one day and be hungry another, so that he thanked his God whenever he had his fill, and supplicated Him whenever he felt hungry. Another story tells us that once he was offered a woollen bed to replace the rough one he usually had, but he declined and asked 'Ā'ishah to return it[4].

Therefore, it seems reasonable to accept reports which portray the Prophet as not living in comfort until he died, since there is no other reason to dismiss them; this kind of lifestyle was one which the Prophet chose for himself, rather than one that was forced on him by the hard circumstances of the time. Accordingly we do not need to ascribe sound ḥadīths on the subject, which meet the standards required, to those who disapproved of the prevalent luxury, as Robson suggests, although we believe that it is conceivable and in fact recognisable that some of these people did invent ḥadīths to exhort others to abandon luxury. It also seems to be true that, unlike Robson's conclusion, moderate asceticism as a religious practice was not foreign to the nature of the Prophet who, whenever circumstances were good would reasonably enjoy them

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1 Id., vol. 11, p. 280.
2 See Id., pp. 291 and 280, respectively.
3 Id., p. 280.
4 Id., p. 292.

and thank God, and whenever life became hard, would supplicate Him and ask for mercy.

As for the report, recorded by Muslim[1], that tells of a war in which Constantinople will be taken by a Muslim army from Madinah, it seems that it has no connection with the conquest of the Muslim Turks of this city, as Robson seems to suggest; this opinion is attested by the following points:

i- The report refers to events which will occur shortly before the end of this world, according to the Muslim belief; this is clearly indicated by the fact that this particular ḥadīth speaks of the emergence of the Dajjāl and the descent of Jesus at that time, which are believed to be among the main signs of the Hereafter. Abū Hurayrah reported the Prophet as saying: "By Him in Whose hands my soul is, surely (Jesus) the son of Mary will soon descend amongst you as a just ruler; he will break the Cross, kill the swine and abolish the *Jizyah*. Money will be in abundance so that nobody will accept it, and a single prostration to Allah will be better than the whole world and whatever it contains"[2]. Hudhayfah b. Usayd al-Ghifārī reported the Prophet as saying that the Last Hour will not come until they see ten signs, amongst them being the Dajjāl, the rising of the sun from the west, the descent of Jesus son of Mary and Gog and Magog[3]; these incidents obviously did not take place when the Turks conquered Constantinople.

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1 M1., vol. 18, pp. 20-22; cf. M2., vol. 4, p. 1501, (n. 6924).
2 See B2., vol. 4, pp. 436f, (n. 657); cf. M2., vol. 1, p. 92, (n. 287). Having transmitted this ḥadīth, Abū Hurayrah quoted the verse iv. 159, to the effect that when Jesus descends, the people of the Book will believe in him as a Messenger of God, according to the interpretation of Qatādah, al-Ṭabarī and Ibn Kathīr, see al-Qurṭubī, vol. 6, p. 11; S., 1, vol. 1, pp. 457f.
3 See M2., vol. 4, pp. 1503f, (nos. 6931-2).

ii- The report states that al-Rūm will muster in a place called al-Aʻmāq or Dābiq, the names of two places in Syria near Aleppo[1], and this did not happen during the Turkish conquest.

What appears to make Robson associate this report with the Turkish conquest is two things; the first is the mentioning of al-Rūm, which Robson identifies with the Byzantines, and the second is that Constantinople was in fact conquered by the Turkish leader Muhammad II in 1453 A.D.[2]. As far as the first is concerned, one finds al-Rūm mentioned in a number of ḥadīths[3], and although it is a name used literally for the Byzantine Empire, it seems to refer, in this context, to non-Muslims in general, or in a more specific term to nations who are considered to be heirs of the Roman Empire and who mainly maintain its culture; thus it is by no means restricted to the Byzantines. Regarding the second, the present writer is not prepared to accept the Turkish conquest as the event alluded to in the ḥadīth for the two reasons presented above. Therefore, the ḥadīth in question cannot be dismissed as being belied, as Robson suggests, by subsequent historical events. This case draws our attention to a very important issue, that one should be careful in scrutinising the texts of ḥadīths before criticising them, inasmuch as misunderstanding them may lead one to reject their genuineness, while in fact the defect lies in one's approach to them rather in the ḥadīths themselves.

(4) The material standard.

The material standard is a way of looking at ḥadīths merely as fruits of human labour, and entirely neglecting any kind of divine nature. Although Robson, as a

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1 See al-Nawawī, 1, vol. 18, pp. 21; cf. annotation no. 3020, in M2., vol. 4, p. 1501, where Yāqūt is quoted as saying: "Dābiq is a village near Aleppo, and al-Aʻmāq is a district near Dābiq between Aleppo and Antioch".
2 E.I.(2), vol. 4, p. 224.
3 See for instance a ḥadīth in which the Prophet is reported to have said that the Last Hour would come when al-Rūm formed a majority amongst the people, see M2., vol. 4, pp. 1501f, (n. 6925).

Christian, believes in the metaphysical nature of Jesus and quotes a number of miracles ascribed to him, he dismisses this aspect completely when he deals with hadīths that represent the Prophet Muhammad as performing miracles or predicting particular incidents. It is clear that adopting such a standard is a result of the rejection of the idea that Muhammad is a Messenger of God – an idea that constitutes the key element and plays a crucial role in determining the way according to which hadīths should be approached.

Let us have a brief look at Robson's consideration of a number of hadīths using this particular standard. First he states: "Traditions represent Muhammad as being aware of what is to happen within his community after his death"[1]. He quotes several hadīths, from which I will mention the following:

i- The Prophet is reported to have said that "the Caliphate will last thirty years, and then will be followed by a kingdom"[2]. Robson remarks: "This is clearly directed against the Umayyads. But elsewhere he says that there will be twelve Caliphs, thus making allowance for the Umayyad Caliphs up to 'Umar b. 'Abd al-'Azīz"[3]. Commenting on these hadīths and others, Robson says: "There can be no doubt that such traditions have been fabricated to support particular points of view"[4].

ii- He also points out that there are "traditions regarding parties which grew up in the early period of Islām. Quite a number of traditions deal with the Khārijites"[5]. He adduces a number of hadīths on the subject from the Saḥīḥs of al-Bukhārī and Muslim[6], then adduces other reports regarding Murji'ah, Qadariyyah and Jahmiyyah.

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1 Robson 5, p. 267.
2 Ibid.; cf. T., vol. 2, p. 35.
3 Robson 5, p. 267; cf. B2., vol. 9, p. 250, (n. 329).
4 Robson 5, p. 267.
5 Id., pp. 268.
6 Ibid.; cf. B2., vol. 4, pp. 357f, (n. 558 B), and vol. 9, pp. 50-53, (nos. 64-68); M2., vol. 2, pp. 509ff, (nos. 2316-).

iii- He remarks: "Traditions are found in praise of certain countries which were not within the sphere of Islām in the Prophet's lifetime such as Egypt, Syria and al-Dailam. Towns such al-Baṣra, Constantinople, Jerusalem and Qazwīn are mentioned... One has no difficulty in recognising that traditions such as these can hardly be genuine statements of the Prophet. He could conceivably have spoken well of Jerusalem, and if it were the only town mentioned, one might not raise any objection; but it is extremely unlikely that he could have foretold the conquest of Constantinople and Qazwīn..."[1]. He continues: "It is not surprising that such traditions should have been fabricated, but they would be more appropriate in collections other than the canonical ones"[2].

iv- Elsewhere, he notes: "There is great detail regarding the tribulations before the end of the world, and regarding the last judgement. There are also elaborate description of heaven and of hell"[3].

His conclusion is: "The Western mind finds it difficult to accept such material as genuinely coming from the Prophet"[4].

Before considering Robson's criticism of the four types of ḥadīths, one should determine the premises from which one starts, in order to consider these ḥadīths, by asking oneself what Muhammad means to him, and whether one is prepared to accept the idea of Muhammad as a Messenger of God, who received divine revelation or not? This particular question will be the turning point on the subject; if the answer is in the negative, one may be justified in following Robson and accepting his criticism, inasmuch as these ḥadīths deal with matters with which an ordinary man could not possibly deal. But if the answer is in the positive, as all Muslims believe, a completely different approach will have to be taken, because in this case it is

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1 Robson 5, p. 269.
2 Ibid.; cf. *E.I.*(2), vol. 3, p. 26.
3 *E.I.*(2), vol. 3, p. 26.
4 Ibid.

conceivable that Muhammad, as a Messenger of God, speaks about hidden matters or things which are going to happen during his lifetime or even after his death, and conveys information regarding the events in the Hereafter.

We have seen earlier in this work how, from the early days of Islam, Muslims believed in Muhammad as a Messenger of God who was always under divine guidance, therefore it is enough in this chapter to consider briefly the issue of matters related to the Unseen or the Unseen world, as it is portrayed in the two main sources of Islam, namely the Quran and the Ḥadīth. The aim here is to discuss Robson's scrutiny of ḥadīths relating to this subject, rather than to establish their genuineness. The Quran states clearly that God is the only One Who knows what is going to happen in the future since He has the full knowledge and is Well-acquainted with all things ['Alīm Khabīr][1]; "Verily Allah knows (all) the hidden things of the heavens and the earth: verily He has full knowledge of all that is in (men's) hearts"[2]. It also states that the Prophet did not know the Unseen; "Say: 'I tell you not that with me are the treasure of Allah, nor do I know what is hidden. Nor do I tell you I am an angel. I but follow what is revealed to me'..."[3]. A. 'Alī comments that the Prophets "have greater insight into the higher things, but that insight is not due to their own wisdom, but to Allah's inspiration; they are of the same flesh and blood with us, and the sublimity of their words and teaching arises through Allah's grace–to them and to those whom hear them"[4]. Having heard small girls sing words to the effect that "there is a Prophet amongst us who knows what will happen tomorrow", the Prophet said: "Do not say this, but go on saying what you have spoken before"[5]. 'Ā'ishah is reported as saying: "If anyone tells you that Muhammad has seen his Lord, he is a

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1 See xxxi. 34; xlix. 13; lxvi. 3.
2 xxxv. 38; cf. ix. 94, 105; xiii. 9; xxiii. 92; xxvii. 65; xlix. 18.
3 vi. 50; cf. xi. 31.
4 A. 'Alī, p. 351.
5 B2., vol. 5, p. 225, (n. 336).

liar... And if anyone tells you that Muhammad knows the Unseen, he is a liar, for Allah says: "Non has the knowledge of the Unseen but Allah""[1].

Along with that, however, the Quran declares that God may reveal to His chosen Messengers some information connected with the absolute Unseen; "He (alone) knows the Unseen, nor does He make anyone acquainted with His secret.– Except a Messenger whom He has chosen: and then He makes a band of watchers march before him and behind him"[2]. A. 'Alī comments: "But the absolute Unseen, the absolute Mystery, is something which no creature can know or see, except in so far Allah reveals it to him. And Allah reveals such things to the extent that is good for men, through His chosen messengers..."[3]. In any case, It is stated clearly in the Quran that information concerning the Unseen was revealed to the Prophet Muhammad. In the *Sūrah* of Āl 'Imrān, there is a story regarding the birth of Mary, the daughter of 'Imrān and the mother of Jesus, and a story of the birth of Yaḥyā, the son of Zakariyyā who prayed for a son, although he and his wife were past the age of parenthood; to his surprise, he was given a son called Yaḥyā. After these two stories of the past, a verse declares: "This is part of the tidings of the things unseen, which We reveal unto thee (O Prophet !) by inspiration..."[4]. In the *Sūrah* of Hūd, there is an elaborated report regarding the Prophet Noah, his mission, his Ark and the punishment of those who did not believe in him. The story is concluded with the verse: "Such are some of the stories of the Unseen, which we have revealed unto thee: before this, neither thou, nor thy people knew them. So persevere patiently: for the End is for those who are righteous"[5].

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1 See Id., vol. 9, p. 354, (n. 477). I have replaced the expression 'has seen the Unseen' with 'knows the Unseen', as the Arabic text reads: *'wa man ḥaddathak annahu ya'lam al-ghayb'*.
2 lxxii. 26-27. See S., 2, vol. 3, pp. 461f; cf. iii, 179.
3 A. 'Alī, p. 1836.
4 iii. 44.
5 xi. 49; cf. xii. 102, after the story of Joseph.

Moreover, and as far as future events are concerned, it is noteworthy that the Quran itself contains a prediction which is considered to be one of the most cogent proofs of Muhammad's prophecy; this prediction was of an incident which is attested by later historical events. Verses in the *Sūrah* of al-Rūm declares: "The Romans have been defeated– in a land close by: but they (even) after this defeat of theirs, will soon be victorious– within a few years, with Allah is the command in the Past and in the Future: on that day shall the believers rejoice– with the help of Allah. He gives victory to whom He will, and He is exalted in Might, most Merciful: (it is) the promise of Allah. Never does Allah fail from His promise: but most men know not"[1]. These verses refer to a war broke out in 614-15 A.D. between Rome and Persia, in which the Roman Empire was defeated and lost most of its Asiatic territory. The pagan of Makkah rejoiced at the overthrow and hoped that the same would happen to the Prophet and his Companions. These verses were revealed to tell them that in a few years time the Romans would fight again and defeat the Persians – an event with which Muslims would be satisfied, because they considered the people of the Book to be ideologically nearer to them than the Persians. The promise was accomplished in 622 A.D. when Heraclius won the battle of Issus, and in 624 A.D. when he carried his campaign into the heart of Persia – an incident that took place simultaneously with the victory of the believers over the pagans at the battle of Badr[2].

Elsewhere we are told that the Prophet foretold that certain events would happen later on, and they in fact took place exactly as he foretold; in a lengthy ḥadīth 'Adī b. Ḥātim reported the Prophet as asking him: "Have you been to al-Ḥīra?"; he replied: "I have not been to it, but I was informed about it". The Prophet said: "If you should live for a long time, you will certainly see that a lady in a Howdah travelling from al-Ḥīra will (safely reach Mecca and) perform Ṭawāf of the Ka'bah,

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1 xxx. 2-6. See also liv. 45; cf. S., 2, vol. 3, p. 290.
2 See A. 'Alī, pp. 1176f, notes. 3505-8; S., 2, vol. 2, pp. 471f; Ibn 'Asākir, vol. 1, pp. 82f.

fearing none but Allah... If you should live long, the treasure of Khosrau will be opened... and if you should live long, you will see that one will carry a handful of gold or silver and go out looking for a person to accept it from him, but will find none to accept it from him...". The Prophet went on to mention some other matters related to the Unseen. 'Adī, the transmitter of the ḥadīth, says: "(Later on) I saw a lady in a Howdah travelling from al-Ḥīra till she performed the Ṭawāf of the Ka'ba, fearing none but Allah. And I was one of those who opened (conquered) the treasure of Khosrau, son of Hurmuz. If you should live long, you will see what the Prophet Abū al-Qāsim had said: 'A person will come out with a handful of gold...etc.'"[1]. Referring to five great events that took place during the lifetime of the Prophet, and that testify to his veracity, 'Abd Allah b. Mas'ūd stated that they were (1) the smoke that covered the people of Quraysh when the Prophet asked Allah to afflict them with years of drought and famine[2], (2) the splitting of the Moon, (3) the victory of al-Rūm, (4) the great defeat [al-baṭshah] inflicted on the Pagans on the day of Badr[3] and (5) the inevitable punishment [al-lizām[4]][5].

Therefore, it is not acceptable, from the Muslim perspective, to label a ḥadīth as fabricated, simply because it contains a prediction of a certain event, or an account regarding the Day of Judgement and an elaborated description of Hell and Paradise. If we recognise the historicity of the Quran, as Robson suggests, then we should recognise the historicity of its teachings, elucidated above, regarding the Unseen World, which obviously have and have had a great influence on the Islamic way of

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1 B2., vol. 4, pp. 510f, (n. 793).
2 This is the interpretation of Ibn Mas'ūd of the verses xliv. 10-11, as recorded in B2., vol. 6, pp. 331f, while Ibn 'Abbās is of the opinion that it is a sign of the Hereafter, which would appear at the end of this world, see al-Qurṭubī, vol. 16, pp. 130f; S., 2, vol. 3, p. 172.
3 This is also Ibn Mas'ūd's interpretation of the verse xliv. 16, in opposition to Ibn 'Abbās who identified it with the Day of Judgement, see S., 2, vol. 3, pp. 172f.
4 Ibn Mas'ūd identifies the word lizām in the verse xxv. 77, with the day of Badr, see B2., vol. 6, pp. 282f, (n. 297); cf. al-Nawawī, 1, vol. 17, p. 143.
5 See B2., vol. 6, p. 273, (n. 290); cf. M1., vol. 17, pp. 140-43; M2., vol. 4, p. 1467, (n. 6721).

thought. In the light of these teachings Muslims set standards of criticism which suit hadīths, as we have seen earlier. It is according to these standards that hadīths are to be judged, and to proceed any further seems to lead to misjudgements in many cases. Muslim scholars believe that examining the *isnāds* of such hadīths plays a crucial role, and that the criticism of the *matn* in this case would be applied to a restricted extent, in order to be sure that they are free from any defects or abnormality[1]. This is because such materials normally deal with Unseen information, about which one cannot make a judgement. This is why al-Shāfi'ī states that in most cases, one can only determine whether a hadīth is genuine or not by ascertaining the veracity of its transmitter, but that there are, however, a few cases in which one can determine this by other means, such as when a transmitter relates something that is impossible, or that disagrees with a more authentic account[2]. Robson himself alluded to the Muslim attitude to this kind of hadīths by stating: "I suppose that to a sincere, conservative Muslim no difficulty may arise. He may feel that the Prophet was so inspired that he could foretell the future, and therefore may not have a moment's hesitation about accepting such traditions"[3]. It is in fact the belief of Muslims in Muhammad as a Messenger of God who was under His permanent guidance, which leads them to accept such hadīths, provided that they meet other recognised standards of criticism.

It seems quite reasonable therefore for the six Books to contain such hadīths, but we have to recognise that this does not imply necessarily that all the hadīths they contain are genuine[4]. In the case of *Ṣaḥīḥs* of al-Bukhārī and Muslim, we know that

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1 Abnormality occurs when the report of a reliable transmitter disagrees with that of one or more transmitters who are considered to be more reliable than him; see I.H., 3, p. 50; Su., 2, vol. 1, pp. 232-36.
2 al-Shāfi'ī, p. 399.
3 Robson 6, p. 93.
4 This is due to the following: first, although a lot of their hadīths are considered sound, some of these books have unsound hadīths; second, scholars of Hadīth state clearly that labelling a certain hadīth as sound does not mean that it is, in fact, genuine, but that it is so according to their standards; see Su., 2, vol. 1, p. 75.

their ḥadīths are mostly recognised by Muslims as genuine; they contain a few ḥadīths which are criticised by later scholars, but even these ḥadīths are generally accepted as genuine[1]. Accordingly, any ḥadīth of a metaphysical nature recorded in one of them, including those dismissed by Robson, is accepted as genuine, according to the standards of criticism applied by their authors – a fact which made them record it in their books. As far as the other four Books and other compilations are concerned, one has to recognise that they include sound, weak and even some disapproved or fabricated ḥadīths[2], and therefore each ḥadīth has to be considered individually.

The fact that the western mind generally adopts a materialistic way of thinking makes it more unlikely to accept such reports as genuinely coming from the Prophet. It is the same materialistic outlook which does not admit the experience of God in the Quran and searches for thousands of models, influences, stimuli and contacts; the result is, as Fück puts it: "a Mosaic of innumerable little stones from the most varied sources which no internal bond held together"[3]. It seems that the problem which needs to be solved lies in the way the western mind approaches statements of a religious nature, rather than in the way Muslims approach them.

Turning to ḥadīths which are rejected by Robson according to the material standard, one can put them into three categories: those in which the Prophet is reported to have predicted certain events, those that have an elaborated description of the Unseen world and those that praise particular countries and towns. With regard to the first and the second, we have seen that from the Muslim point of view there is no inherent impossibility for Messengers in general to foretell anything in the future, as they are believed to have received such information from their Lord Who has chosen them as His bearers of His Message to mankind. As far as the second category is

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1 See Su., 2, vol. 1, pp. 134-36.
2 Id., pp. 165, 172.
3 Robson 6, p. 97, citing *Z.D.M.G.* 1939, p. 2.

concerned, one should note that this subject, namely the description of the Unseen world, particularly the part pertaining to description of Paradise and Hell, constitutes one of the subjects to which many Quranic verses are devoted; therefore, it is not peculiar that the Prophet should have spoken about them.

It is worthy of note that Muslim scholars have expressed their doubts about ḥadīths regarding the Umayyads and Abbasids and rejected many of them, because they did not meet the required standards of criticism; Robson alludes to this fact when he states: "the compilers of the six books have obviously used some degree of caution regarding the acceptance of traditions of this type, as their number is not large"[1].

It is also important to note that although there are several ḥadīths, in the two *Ṣaḥīḥs*, pertaining to al-Khawārij, they do not mention this party by name; but some of the Companions, like 'Alī, Abū Sa'īd al-Khudrī and Ibn 'Umar, are reported to have associated these ḥadīths with this party, because of certain signs which seem to apply to it. This is supported by an account in which we are told that Abū Salamah and 'Aṭā' went to Abū Sa'īd al-Khudrī and asked him whether he had heard any ḥadīths from the Prophet about al-Ḥarūriyyah, i.e. those who split up from 'Alī's party during the struggle with Mu'āwiyah. Abū Sa'īd replied: "I do not know what al-Ḥarūriyyah is, but I heard the Prophet say: 'There will appear in this nation... a group of people...'"[2], and he went on to recount their characteristics as he had heard them from the Prophet.

Lastly, as for ḥadīths that deal with certain cities which were not in the sphere of Islam during the Prophet's lifetime or did not even exist then, it is important to know that Muslim scholars make clear that the majority of this kind of ḥadīths are weak or even fabricated. Nevertheless, it is feasible, according the Muslim perspective, that the Prophet, due to his relation with divine revelation, speaks about

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1 Robson 5, p. 268.
2 B2., vol. 9, pp. 50f, (n. 64); cf. M1, vol. 7, pp. 164f.

such cities to which he has never been, or other cities which were to be built after his death; the only judgement in this case is the five standards of criticism discussed in the preceding chapter[1].

(5) The rational standard.

The ability to reason is one of the main privileges with which mankind is endowed, and one which influences all matters with which one deals, and the materials of Ḥadīth are by no means exceptional. Dealing with a number of ḥadīths, Robson uses the rational standard freely:

(1) Having quoted several reports regarding the Prophet's appearance that characterise him as being of medium stature, having a swarthy complexion, neither very white nor dark, and hair that was intermediate between short curls and hanging locks, Robson comments: "How much of this information is reliable it is impossible to say. The insistence on his not being characterised by extremes[2] sounds artificial; but one can believe that his looks were attractive, for he was a man who was able to draw others to him"[3].

(2) With regard to another report in which Gabriel is said to have led the Prophet in prayer five times, Robson declares: "This evidently being one attempt to explain how the five times of prayer were instituted"[4].

(3) Dealing with forms in which ḥadīths are presented, Robson uses this standard of criticism on several occasions, in order to raise doubt about ḥadīths presented in certain forms, rather than to scrutinise them:

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1 See above, p. 219.
2 Although Robson is citing al-Bukhārī, he seems to overlook a report in which Anas says: "The Prophet had big hands and feet, and I have not seen anybody like him...". See B2., vol. 7, p. 522, (n. 793).
3 Robson 4, p. 173, citing al-Bukhārī; cf. B2., vol. 4, pp. 485ff, and vol. 7, pp. 519ff.
4 Id., p. 177. cf. B2., vol. 1, pp. 297f, (n. 500).

- Speaking about the 'Asking or telling the Prophet something' form, he comments: "There must have been occasions when people did come to the Prophet with a question and received his answer to solve their difficulties, but one wonders whether people of a later time did not make use of this method to add to the genuine examples they had in their possession. It is an excellent way of settling a legal problem"[1].

- Commenting on the 'Enumerating details' form, he says: "One wonders how far it may be assumed that the Prophet really used this method, and how likely it may have been that a good teaching method of later times was attributed to him"[2].

- Regarding 'Asking a Companion for information' form, he says: "It is quite possible that ideas of a later period were given authoritative currency by presenting them in this way"[3].

- About the 'Doubt about some details' form, he says: "One does not quite know what make of these occurrences. Do they really represent a great desire for accuracy, and are we to understand that where no doubt is expressed we can accept the transmission as accurate? Or is this just a device to make it appear that the transmitters are very careful?"[4].

To deal with Robson's criticism, I would like first to point out that exhorting people to use their intellectual faculty constitutes an important Quranic theme; "...We have sent down unto thee (also) the Message; that thou mayest explain clearly to men what is sent for them, and that they may give thought"[5]. It is remarkable that in the Quran alone words related to human reasoning occur more than one hundred times.

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1 Robson 12, p. 41.
2 Id., p. 44.
3 Id., p. 47.
4 Id., p. 49.
5 xvi. 44.

As far as Ḥadīth is concerned, Muslim scholars, from the early days of Islam, make use of the rational standard in criticising ḥadīths with some reservation and apply it effectively to the extent that they reject a number of reports on the grounds of their contradiction to reason. 'Ā'ishah, the wife of the Prophet, was a famous critic of ḥadīths and one who used the rational standard to a great extent. She is reported to have rejected a ḥadīth to the effect that the carrying of coffins would invalidate the ritual purity of the pallbearers; she remarked that the deceased person was not ritually unclean [najis], and compared carrying coffins to carrying a stick[1]. Ibn 'Abbās is also reported to have dismissed this particular account, declaring: "We do not need to perform ablution because of carrying dry sticks"[2]. In the report in which Ibn Abī Mulaykah asked Ibn 'Abbās to write ḥadīths for him, we are told that Ibn 'Abbās dismissed accounts on the authority of 'Alī saying: "By Allah, 'Alī would not have given this judgement unless he had gone astray"[3].

Later authorities also made use of this standard, and considered it to be a useful device for criticising ḥadīths. al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī adduces several criteria that present excuses which would enable someone to reject a ḥadīth even if it was transmitted by a reliable transmitter through a connected isnād; two of these criteria can be included under this standard, as both of them represent intellectual impossibilities. The first is when a reliable transmitter is the only one to transmit something which, if true, would be universal knowledge; it would be intellectually impossible, in such a case, for the transmission to be genuine, if transmitted by nobody else. The second is when a reliable transmitter is the only one to transmit an item of information which, if true, one would expect to be transmitted by a large number of people [Ahl al-tawātur][4]. In his book, which is devoted to fabricated

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1 al-Zarkashī, pp. 121f.
2 al-Subkī, p. 95.
3 See above, p. 194.
4 Kh., 1, vol. 1, p. 133; cf. Kh., 3, pp. 17, 432.

ḥadīths, Ibn al-Jawzī adduces a report to the effect that God made the horses to run then He created Himself from their sweat, and rejects it on the grounds that it is intellectually impossible. He declares that as far as this kind of ḥadīths are concerned, one does not need to examine their transmitters; they are rejected right away, whether they are transmitted by reliable or unreliable transmitters[1]. Another report which seems to be rejected on the basis of the rational standard is the one that represents the Prophet as saying that whenever someone sneezes during his speech, it is a sign of one's veracity[2]. Ibn Ḥajar also, in his brief thesis on the Principles of Ḥadīth, believes that a ḥadīth's contradiction of reason is a valid justification for its dismissal[3].

Nevertheless, one should be on his guard against readily rejecting any ḥadīths which seem to contradict reasoning, since this may cause one to dismiss some of them that are in fact genuine. As every individual has his own reasoning and judgement, according to his knowledge and experience, it seems that such a standard should be applied with great caution and after careful consideration, inasmuch as one may feel that a lot of ḥadīths related to the Unseen world contradict the dictates of reason, although they, as Muslims believe, constitute a category that lies outside the scope of reason.

As far as ḥadīths are concerned, the usage of this standard of criticism should be, in my opinion, restricted to those who have a long association with, and experience in, Prophetic ḥadīths. The belief in the Prophet as a Messenger of God who received divine revelation will play a crucial role in limiting the extent to which such a standard is applied. In any case, all ḥadīths which are genuinely attributed to the Prophet do not, as al-Suyūṭī points out, contradict the reasoning of anyone who

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1 Ibn al-Jawzī, vol. 1, 106. See another report, to the effect that Noah's Ark went around the Ka'bah seven times and performed two *Rak'ahs* after that, which is dismissed on the same basis by Ibn al-Jawzī, in Su., 2, vol. 1, p. 278.
2 Ibn Qayyim, 2, p. 51.
3 I.H., 3, p. 79.

recognises the position that God chose for his Prophet Muhammad, and the obedience He prescribed to people to him[1].

Turning to the ḥadīths criticised by Robson above, one finds that the only example about which he is decisive is the second one, since he tends to associate the report in which we are told that Gabriel led Muhammad in prayer five times with an attempt to explain how the five times of prayer were established. One wonders how he is so definite in his conclusion, although it does not seem more than an intellectual probability, unless one regards that such an incident as impossible; this however does not coincide with the Muslim point of view which believes that in such an incident there is no inherent impossibility that justifies its dismissal, and that this kind of reports, due to their connection with the Unseen world, falls outside the scope of reason.

Regarding the other examples, the present writer feels that Robson uses the rational standard of criticism to raise doubts on these reports rather than to scrutinise them properly; this is due to the fact that he depends on intellectual probabilities which are useless in determining whether a report is genuine or otherwise, as Robson himself seems unable to decide. It is important, in my view, to differentiate between two features of the rational standard: the first is what we may call the intellectual probabilities or possibilities, and the second may be called the intellectual impossibilities. It seems that although the former may give some kind of insight into the material discussed, it can hardly help the critic to reach a positive or a negative conclusion, since, in many cases, it merely adduces various possibilities which can be used for or against any reports without a preference for any of them; therefore, it should be used only as a subsidiary argument, in order to support a particular conclusion reached by other criteria. For instance, if a report meets the five criteria of

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1 See Su., 1, p. 34.

criticism[1] put forward by Muslim scholars, then we can use such intellectual possibilities, favouring those which support its genuineness to those which indicate otherwise.

Nevertheless, bearing in mind the reservation presented above regarding the rational standard, the intellectual impossibilities may be justifiably used to dismiss reports, as this would constitute a cogent argument and make one reach a conclusion which would be unavoidable.

Summing up.

The five standards of criticism applied by Robson in criticising the materials of ḥadīths are of different values. The usage of the Quran as a standard of criticism proves to be a very important criterion, of which Muslim scholars have made great use; it has helped them to dismiss ḥadīths that went against the teachings of the Quran, but they have not applied it to the extent that makes them reject sound ḥadīths that convey something about which the Quran is silent. Although the Bible can be used as a standard of criticism for those ḥadīths that fail to meet standards put forward by Muslim scholars, it cannot be used in criticising sound ḥadīths, due to the fact that their authenticity is more established than that of the Bible. Sound historical information proves to be of great importance in the field of criticism of ḥadīths; Muslim scholars have made great use of it, with regard to the two features of a ḥadīth, i.e. the *isnād* and the *matn*. Lastly, while the material standard does not apply to ḥadīths, from the Muslim point of view, the rational standard can be used with some reservation.

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1 It is worthy of note that the standards discussed in this chapter, with the exception of the material standard, may be included under the fifth criterion applied by Muslim scholars, which is the freedom of the *matn* from any defect [*'illah qādiḥah*].

CHAPTER TWO

GENERAL FEATURES

OF ROBSON'S WRITINGS ON ḤADĪTH

This final chapter deals with the following points which appear in Robson's articles devoted to Ḥadīth and its Principles; these features are presented as follows:

(i) The influence of his predecessors.

(ii) His disagreement with his predecessors.

(iii) His general view regarding the materials of Ḥadīth.

(iv) His appreciation of some aspects of the Principles of Ḥadīth.

(v) His dependence on original sources.

The aim here is to represent these five features, rather than to discuss or criticise ideas expressed in them; however, a number of issues dealt with in the present chapter have been discussed earlier.

(I)   The influence of his predecessors.

Like other modern western writers on the subject of Ḥadīth, Robson shows, in principle, a considerable influence from his predecessors, namely Goldziher and Schacht. This influence can be seen in a number of the matters that he considers; the following are a few examples:

(1) It seems that the suggestion made by Robson to the effect that in the early days of Islam, Ḥadīth was not considered to be a basic source of guidance for the community, and that it did not gain an important status until the emergence of al-Shāfiʿī with his invented perspective, is mainly based on Schacht's hypothesis on the issue. However, I feel that Robson's representation of this hypothesis is too general. In any case, his claim that, in the early decades of Islam, the Quran was the only official source to which Muslim rulers and jurists would refer for guidance regarding

their decisions and judgements[1] is in agreement with Schacht's suggestion that ḥadīths from the Prophet do not form, together with the Quran, the original basis of the Islamic law, "but an innovation begun at a time when some of its foundations already existed"[2]. We have seen earlier how Robson takes this hypothesis for granted and proceeds from this premise to argue in its favour, in his dealing with Ḥadīth and its Principles.

As for Robson's claim that the recognition of Ḥadīth as a basis of Islam, second in importance only to the Quran, was largely a result of al-Shāfiʿī 's work[3], it appears that Robson goes some steps further than Schacht; for the latter admits that the adherents of the ancient schools of law, sc. the Madanīs and the Iraqīs, did use ḥadīths of the Prophet as an authority for their decisions. He points out that al-Shaybānī's insistence on the decisive role of a decision of the Prophet, "shows that Iraqians had indeed anticipated and explicitly formulated this essential thesis, and applied it occasionally. They are, however, still far from Shāfiʿī's unquestioning reliance on traditions from the Prophet alone"[4]. He also states: "In the time of Shāfiʿī, traditions from the Prophet were already recognised as one of the material bases of Muhammadan law"[5]. His claim is that early schools of law did not "acknowledge the absolute precedence of the traditions from the Prophet, and argued mainly from traditions from Companions and successors", and he proclaims that al-Shāfiʿī's "preference, as a matter of principle, for the traditions from the Prophet is his great systematic innovation"[6]. He concludes that al-Shāfiʿī "gave [Ḥadīth], not for

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1 See above p. 51.
2 Schacht, p. 40.
3 See above pp. 53f.
4 Schacht, p. 28. See a relevant statement of Abū Yūsuf on the same page; cf. p. 42, where Schacht enumerates the bases according to which the scholars of the ancient schools used to form their decisions.
5 Id., p. 40.
6 Id., p. 20. It is striking that Schacht himself remarks that the year 126 A.H., during which the killing of the Umayyad Caliph, Walīd b. Yazīd occurred, and with which he associates the *fitnah*

the first time, but for the first time consistently, overriding authority"[1]. Nevertheless, Robson keeps silent about this recognition of Ḥadīth by the early authorities, implying that the recognition of Ḥadīth as a basic source of guidance was a matter, which was not settled until the emergence of al-Shāfiʿī.

(2) Associating many ḥadīths, particularly those that represent the Prophet as performing miracles, with the influence that Biblical stories had on some Muslims, and specifying certain Biblical statements as a source of others, on the grounds that these ḥadīths express something to the same or similar effect to what is in the Bible, is another aspect in which Robson falls under the heavy influence of his predecessors. He states: "While it is important to be careful about ascribing to New Testament sources everything that is reminiscent of the New Testament, there is no question that many traditions have no other sources"[2]. He continues: "It should be added that Tradition is also in debt to the Old Testament. Indeed, Goldziher has pointed out that not only the Old Testament, but anything which seemed worth while was turned in to tradition"[3]. To sustain his claim, Robson adduces several examples and traces them to Biblical passages. It is worthy of note that Goldziher has a long excursus under the heading: 'The Ḥadīth and the New Testament', in which he deals with the this subject in some details[4]; Guillaume also devoted a complete chapter to the same issue[5].

This influence also accounts for the justification put forward by Robson concerning the invention of accounts that represent the Prophet as a miracle-maker; he says: "It may be that stories of this kind developed as a result of contact with

mentioned in Ibn Sīrīn's statement, was the conventional date for the end of 'the good old time' during which the *Sunnah* of the Prophet still prevailed. See p. 37; cf. p. 72.
1 Id., p. 80.
2 Robson 5, p. 261.
3 Ibid.
4 Goldziher, 2, vol. 2, pp. 346-62; cf. p. 149.
5 Guillaume, pp. 132-50.

Christians, and out of desire to show that Muḥammad was not inferior to Jesus in the performance of miracles"[1]. This is almost the same idea as that suggested by Goldziher, who says: "An unconscious tendency prevailed to draw a picture of Muhammed that should not be inferior to the Christian picture of Jesus"[2]; however, Robson acknowledges this dependence and refers to Goldziher, Guillaume and J. Sweetman. The only difference is that when Robson deals with this issue, he expresses his uncertainty by qualifying his opinion, using the words: "may be", while his predecessors were more confident in their decisions.

(3) Another matter in which Robson follows his predecessors without verifying their claims is one connected with al-Zuhrī, a prominent Successor. Commenting on ḥadīths which seem to be directed against the Umayyads, and others whose purpose, he believes, is to uphold the Abbasid cause, Robson says: "There can be no doubt that such traditions have been fabricated to support particular points of view. al-Zuhrī is said to have accused the Umayyads of compelling people to forge traditions, a statement which may possibly be quite true;..."[3]. For this understanding of al-Zuhrī's statement, Robson is in debt to Guillaume, whose texts reads: "If any external proof were needed of the forgery of tradition in the Umayyad period, it may be found in the express statement of Al Zuhrī: 'These princes have compelled us to write hadith'. Undoubtedly the hadith exalting the merit of the pilgrimage to the qubbatu-l-Sakhra at Jerusalem is a survival of the traditions Al Zuhrī composed"[4]. It is instructive to know that even Guillaume quotes other writers, namely Sprenger and Muir, for this statement and it seems that he did not have the chance to refer to the originals. It should also be noted that this very idea is held by Goldziher, who comments that the statement of al-Zuhrī can be only understood on the assumption of

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1 Robson 4, P. 174.
2 Goldziher, 2, vol. 2, p. 346; cf. Guillaume, pp. 135ff.
3 Robson 5, pp. 267f.
4 Guillaume, p. 50.

his "willingness to lend his name, which was in general esteemed by the Muslim community, to the government's wishes"[1]. In any case, Robson might be expected, due to his familiarity with Arabic sources, to refer to the original source from which this statement is cited – an action that would have helped him to find out whether the statement was presented correctly or not. However, he is content with quoting his predecessor, Guillaume, adopting his comprehension of such a statement, and he is moreover inclined to accept its genuineness. By consulting original sources, one will discover that there is no connection whatsoever between the statement of al-Zuhrī and the forgery of ḥadīths; the Arabic text represents al-Zuhrī as saying: "We used to disapprove of reducing ḥadīths to writing, until we were persuaded to do so by the Amirs; therefore, we decided not to prevent anyone from it [*Kunnā nakrah kitāb al-ʿilm ḥattā akrahanā ʿalayhi hāʾulāʾ al-umarāʾ, fa raʾaynā an la namnaʿahu aḥad-an min al-muslimīn*][2]. This statement is connected with a story, in which Hishām b. ʿAbd al-Malik, the tenth Caliph of the Umayyad dynasty[3], is reported to have asked al-Zuhrī to dictate some ḥadīths to his son, and although al-Zuhrī, like some of his contemporaries, used not to do so, he responded to his request and decided to accept any request from others to do so[4]. This is what Muslim scholars, long before Goldziher and Guillaume, understood from this statement, and accordingly Ibn ʿAbd al-Barr adduces it under a subject devoted to the permissibility of committing ḥadīths to writing[5]. It seems that Robson neglects this fact, of which he should have been aware, and understands the statement in the same way as it was understood by others[6].

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1 Goldziher, 2, vol. 2, p. 47.
2 Ibn Saʿd, vol. 2, 2, p. 135.
3 He reigned from 105-125 A.H., see *E.I.*(2), vol. 3, p. 493.
4 See al-Ṣadīq, "Mulāḥaẓāt...", p, 254, citing Ibn Saʿd and Ibn ʿAsākir.
5 See ibid., citing I.B., 1, vol. 1, p. 92.
6 For another example, which shows Robson's adoption of hypotheses of his predecessors, see Robson 3, p. 98, where he takes for granted Schacht's hypothesis pertaining to the invention of ḥadīths for establishing the law; cf. Schacht, pp. 106f, 114, 138, 149, 263 and *passim*.

(ii) His disagreement with his predecessors.

Although Robson seems to be heavily influenced in a number of issues by his predecessors, he expresses some fresh ideas, in which he departs from ideas commonly believed amongst western writers on the subject.

(1) In his early articles, Robson seems to have adopted the idea that ḥadīths reflect tendencies of later generations rather than represent the actual sayings and actions of the Prophet – an opinion held by Goldziher. Dealing with ḥadīths related to al-Khawārij, Robson says: "The virulence of the traditions on this subject shows how bitterly the community felt towards this unruly party"[1]. This belief is expressed in an earlier article, in which he declares that Ḥadīth "cannot be regarded as a possession of the community from the time of the Prophet. It is presented as if it were, but is something which grew rather than something which was preserved"[2]. So far, there is no mention of Goldziher, but in another article, he acknowledges him as a source for such an idea and quotes him directly, along with Snouck Hurgronje, who holds a similar view. He then follows this with the views of those who hold less radical ideas, and believe in the existence of an authentic nucleus, like Santillana, Vesey-Fitzgerald and Prof. Gibb[3]; he finally expresses his own uncertainty: "It may be that there is some genuine material imbedded in the mass of Tradition, but one has not the right to declare that it exists, unless one can show good reason for saying so... One must therefore preserve an attitude of scepticism regarding the whole till some convincing proofs of the existence of genuine material are offered"[4]. Notwithstanding this scepticism, Robson seems, in his later articles, to have taken a different line on the subject, since he comes to believe that the genuine core of ḥadīths must have been more extensive than is generally believed, and quotes Dr. Watt, who

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1 Robson 5, p. 268.
2 Robson 3, p. 98.
3 Robson 6, pp. 94-96.
4 Id., p. 96.

suggests that the solid core of ḥadīths is "the distinctive feature of the historical element in the tradition about Muhammad, as contrasted, for example, with the legal element". Robson concludes: "With this I am inclined to agree, although it is difficult to prove. The personality of the Prophet made such an impression on his followers that we cannot believe that the picture of him given in Tradition is purely a late development"[1].

(2) His recognition of the genuineness of at least some *isnāds* is another issue in which Robson diverges from his predecessors; he states: "Among Western scholars the tendency has been to consider *isnāds* with great caution, if not downright scepticism, the prevailing view being that they are a development of a later age to support material which had come to be accepted as genuine. That may be so in many, perhaps even in most cases, but the present writer is not prepared to deny the genuineness of all *isnāds*"[2]. Therefore, he hesitates to take Schacht's hypothesis for granted and "wonders whether the argument is not too sweeping"[3]. Having devoted an article to Ibn Isḥāq's use of the *isnād*, Robson places particular trust in *isnāds* adduced by him, and declares: "My inclination is to accept as genuine lines of transmission the *isnāds* which go back from Ibn Isḥāq to Companions or to the Prophet"[4]. In my opinion, Robson is taking a step forward in the field of the *isnād*, which deserves further consideration, inasmuch as he recognises the existence of this kind of structure from the early days of Islam.

Another issue related to the question of the genuineness of the *isnād* in which Robson diverges from his predecessors is his view regarding the implication of the fact that most ḥadīths are quoted on the authority of younger Companions, rather than the older ones, who had followed the Prophet from his early days. Robson points

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1 Robson 8, p. 20; cf. id., p. 25; *E.I.*(2), vol. 3, p. 27.
2 Robson 12, p. 39; cf. Robson 8, pp. 20, 21.
3 Robson 8, p. 20.
4 Robson 11, p. 464.

out that "this dependence on younger Companions has often been brought forward as an argument against the veracity of traditionists"[1]; nevertheless, he inclines to agree with Prof. Fück, who suggests that this very feature is rather an argument which can be adduced in favour of the veracity of students of Ḥadīth, and concludes: "If all *isnāds* were invented, it would have been easy to produce *isnāds* from early Companions in great profusion. That the traditionists did not do this makes us wonder whether there may not be more truth than we have imagined in what they transmit"[2].

(3) As far as the *fitnah* mentioned in Ibn Sīrīn's statement is concerned, Robson expresses grave doubt about Schacht's dating of the *fitnah* to the time of the Killing of the Caliph Walīd b. Yazīd in 126 A.H., towards the end of the Umayyad dynasty – a view that makes Schacht conclude that the statement could not be genuinely attributed to Ibn Sīrīn, who died in 110 A.H.[3]. Although, in one of his articles, Robson mentions the first *fitnah*, i.e. the civil war between 'Alī and Mu'āwiyah to be one of the possibilities to which Ibn Sīrīn refers in his statement, he hesitates to accept it as being the one to which the statement alludes, since it seems too early a period to be considered. "More likely", he suggests, "is the civil war which arose when 'Abdallah b. al-Zubair set himself up as Caliph... The circumstances would fit the year 64 or 72 when 'Abdallah was besieged in Mecca. As Ibn Sīrīn is said to have been born in 33, he would be old enough to speak with authority on what happened in that period"[4]. Nevertheless, in a later article he seems to have changed his opinion to some extent; he reconsiders the statement in question, and says that there were two serious civil wars before that which resulted in the killing of al-Walīd in 126 A.H., sc. the one which broke out between 'Alī and Mu'āwiyah and the other

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1 Robson 8, p. 26.
2 Ibid.
3 See id., p. 21; cf. Schacht, pp. 36f, 72.
4 Robson 8, pp. 21f.

between 'Abd Allah b. al-Zubayr and the Umayyads, allowing the possibility that the reference may be to either of them[1].

It is worthy of note that in an early article, Robson agrees with Schacht's hypothesis pertaining to the dating of the *fitnah*, and discredits the statement of Ibn Sīrīn, on which he comments: "This would throw the system of insisting on an irreproachable *isnād* back to a very early period when it is hardly likely that any regular method of transmitting traditions had developed. Indeed, one is inclined to feel that a statement of this kind is an attempt to give early authority for a practice which flourished later"[2].

(4) Robson also has a opportunity to deal with the *isnād*: 'Mālik from Nāfi' from Ibn 'Umar', which is considered, by Muslim scholars, to be one of the more highly authoritative *isnāds*; he questions Schacht's distrust of this particular *isnād* on two grounds: the first is that Mālik was too young to have heard Nāfi' directly, and the second is that this *isnād* is one of the family *isnāds*, which are generally held by Schacht to be fictitious[3]. Robson suggests that according to a biography of Mālik by Ibn al-Qaysarānī, Mālik would have been 24 years old, by the time of the death of Nāfi', i.e. old enough to have received ḥadīths from him. "Even supposing", he adds, "he was born a few years later, he would still have been old enough to have heard traditions from Nāfi'. There is therefore no occasion to suggest that he could have received his traditions only in written form"[4]. Moreover, Robson points out that Mālik in his *Muwaṭṭa'* occasionally states that he got his information by word of mouth from Nāfi', and asks: "Are we to hold that this is a piece of pretence? I prefer to believe that such passages indicate that Mālik really did meet and hear from Nāfi'"[5].

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1 See Robson 15, p. 460.
2 Robson 2, p. 30.
3 See Schacht, pp. 176f.
4 Robson 8, p. 22.
5 Id., p. 23.

With regard to the second reason, Robson remarks that Schacht argues that the family *isnāds* were used as a device to propagate spurious hadīths, and comments: "But if, as is evidently true, family *isnāds* were used to support spurious traditions, is one justified in saying that every family *isnād* is spurious?... It seems better to recognise that they are a genuine feature of the documentation, but to realise that people often copied this type of *isnād* to support spurious traditions"[1].

(5) We have seen earlier in this work how Robson expresses his reservation against readily attributing a hadīth to biblical sources only because it is reminiscent of a biblical phrase; he says: "One should beware of deciding too readily that a tradition has a New Testament source because its language sounds like New Testament language"[2], and he points out: "There is a danger of attributing everything which faintly suggests it to the Bible..."[3]. He believes that it is advisable in some cases that one should trace a hadīth to the Quran rather than to the Bible, particularly when there is a possibility that the idea may quite well have occurred independently. Dealing with a particular hadīth, he suggests: "If one is looking for a source for the tradition quoted, it seems better to look to the Qur'ān than to the Gospel"[4]. Thus, he recognises the Quran as an important device for criticising hadīths, and inclines to accept their genuineness, as long as there is something to a similar effect to be found in this commonly recognised source.

(iii) His general view regarding the materials of Hadīth.

Although Robson, at a later time at least, has a tendency to recognise the existence of a larger core of genuine hadīths than that usually believed in by his predecessors, he believes that it is very difficult, if not impossible, to distinguish this

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1 Ibid.
2 Robson 5, p. 260.
3 Id., p. 263.
4 Id., p. 261.

genuine core from a large number of spurious ones, by which the former is overshadowed. Therefore, he expresses his scepticism on ḥadīths in general, whenever he deals with their material; this scepticism may be demonstrated by the following examples:

(1) Dealing with some ḥadīths recorded by al-Bukhārī, pertaining to the characteristics of the Prophet Muhammad, Robson concludes: "We are not justified in placing trust even in the account which may appear to be historical. All we can say is that the picture of the Prophet portrayed in Tradition represents what the community felt to be true. The material is presented as though it came by a regular system of transmission from eye-witnesses and therefore gives the impression of authority"[1]. It is notable that this suggestion comes earlier than the study devoted to Ibn Isḥāq's use of the *isnād*, and other articles, in which Robson seems to have changed his attitude, to some extent, towards ḥadīths pertaining to historical information[2].

(2) Considering the form of 'Demonstrating how the Prophet acted', in which some ḥadīths appear, Robson adduces a number of examples and comments: "I must confess that I view such traditions with great suspicion, as I feel that instead of demonstrating what the Prophet did they probably demonstrated methods of disagreeing with what certain sections of the community did"[3]. This kind of criticism, which is based on an intellectual probability does not seem to be of any real importance, since it cannot lead to either negative or positive decisions; the most that can be achieved, by having recourse to this kind of criticism is to raise doubts about the ḥadīths in question.

It seems that this scepticism expressed by Robson towards the material of ḥadīths is mainly due to the following reasons: the first is his hypothesis concerning

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1 Robson 4, p. 180; cf. p. 172.
2 See above, p. 274.
3 Robson 12, p. 48.

the absence, in the early days of Islam, of the principles of transmission of ḥadīths and the standards according to which they may be criticised, which caused the genuine core of ḥadīths to be overshadowed by the large number of invented ones – a matter that makes the disentangling process very difficult. He states: "The search for material which may be primitive presents great difficulty, for while one dare not venture to say that none exists, looking for it within the huge mass of the contents of Tradition is rather like the search for the proverbial needle in the haystack"[1]. Dealing with a particular form, in which some ḥadīths are presented, he comments that "there must be genuine traditions of this type, however impossible it may seem to disentangle them"[2].

The second reason is his belief in the ineffectiveness of the elaborated standards of criticism put forward by Muslim scholars regarding the two features of ḥadīth, i.e. the *isnād* and the *matn*; although Robson admits that the structure of the Principles of Ḥadīth is impressive and covers minute details, he believes that it emerged at a later period after the damage had already been done. Therefore, he dismisses this impressive structure and exclaims: "It has often been suggested that, although the main body of Tradition cannot be genuine, there is a genuine core; but no one has yet provided a method of extracting this core"[3]. Elsewhere, he declares: "What is required, and what we do not possess, is some criterion by which to form a judgement"[4]. However, according to the detailed discussion of this issue in the second part of this thesis, the principles of transmission and the standards of criticism of transmission seem to have existed along with the beginning of the process of transmission, during the first century of Islam, and genuine students and scholars of

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1 Robson 6, p. 98.
2 Robson 12, p. 47; cf. Robson 2, p. 25.
3 Robson 11, p. 464.
4 Robson 12, p. 50.

Hadīth made great use of them, in order to preserve the genuine core of hadīths in as healthy a state as they could.

(iv)   His appreciation of some aspects of the Principles of Hadīth.

There are several aspects which seem to have commended themselves to Robson, and they are rightly appreciated by him. The following are some of them:

(1) In one of his articles, Robson deals at length with various subjects related to the Principles of Hadīth: like the criticism of men who appear in the isnād ['Ilm al-jarh wa al-ta'dīl], the classes according to which transmitters are classified, different categories of hadīths, and other issues; he concludes: "One can think only with respect of the great energy and devotion which have gone to rear this impressive structure. The learned have taken every precaution to make it watertight. Whatever the non-Muslim may think of the material of Tradition... there is no question that the traditionists set themselves with serious and honest purpose to eliminate all that they considered spurious and to preserve all that they believed to be genuine"[1]. Commenting on the eight methods of receiving hadīths, Robson declares: "As a system of preserving what has been handed down and ensuring its regular transmission, this is all very impressive. But what has just been described refers rather to the transmission of recognised traditions which have been codified"[2].

(2) He expresses his wonder regarding the manner by which the compilers of the six recognised books on Hadīth dealt with hadīths they intended to record in their books, and admits that they were in fact critical men, who had their own standards of criticism, which they applied to reports they had received, despite what other, particularly western, writers, believe; he points out: "It is important to emphasise the manner in which these men have dealt with their material, for this has not commonly

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1 Robson 3, p. 112.
2 Robson 2, p. 29.

been done by western writers. It is very easy to pick out traditions which are obviously spurious, and by emphasising them, to convey the impression that the compilers were altogether uncritical men ready to accept anything which was presented to them if it seemed to magnify Islam or the Prophet. They doubtless were somewhat uncritical according to western standards, but they had their standards and tried to live up to them"[1].

It should be pointed out that Robson wrote several articles in which he presents and examines the lines of transmission through which the six books of Ḥadīth, with the exception of that of al-Bukhārī, were handed down from one generation to another from the time of their authors. In one of these articles he deals with the transmission of Abū Dāwūd's *Sunan*, and states: "While one may raise an occasional question regarding some detail of the transmission, the careful manner in which the various links in the chain are connected is very impressive. It will be noticed how seldom '*an* appears in the *isnāds*. When it does appear it is normally used where it is well known that the people concerned transmitted from one another"[2]. He concludes: "One must admire the sincerity of men in different ages which made them anxious to learn from others and pass on what they had learned by recognised methods which were calculated to guarantee the genuineness of the transmission"[3].

Nevertheless, it should be noted that this appreciation and admiration shown by Robson towards various aspects of the Principles of Ḥadīth, should not make one think that he himself believes that they were effective in preserving distinctly genuine reports about the Prophet, because these aspects, according to his theory, emerged too late. Considering the emergence of the structure of the *isnād*, Robson admits how important such a structure is, but at the same time, he declares that "much damage had

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1 Robson 4, pp. 168f.
2 Robson 7, p. 588.
3 Ibid.

already been done, so that it serves as a means of preserving much which should have been eliminated at an earlier stage"[1]. In another article, and after a detailed consideration of some aspects of the Principles of Ḥadīth, he points out: "The community was careful to reject many spurious traditions, and yet it clearly preserved many which are to be found in books which few Muslims would dare to question"; then he declares: "This makes one feel that the vast structure of learning which has been erected is something in the nature of a façade to decorate a building which is not quite so stable as appearances would suggest"[2]. This conclusion made by Robson is, as is suggested above, simply a result of his theory that the Principles of Ḥadīth emerged too late, and therefore, it was almost impossible to achieve their goal, which was the preserving of the body of Ḥadīth from alteration and fabrication. In any case, if we are to believe in the early emergence of the main lines of this impressive structure, as we have attempted to prove in this thesis, then we should consider how high was the level of accuracy in the transmission of ḥadīths, amongst the sincere students and scholars of Ḥadīth, and how large is the genuine core of ḥadīth.

(v) His dependence on original sources.

Each subject has its own original sources which should be consulted, when dealing with its various matters; to ignore this fact would be considered an outrage in the face of academic principles. Nevertheless, it seems to be the practice of some writers on Ḥadīth or other fields to consult some irrelevant works and those compiled by tendentious or even anonymous authors; there is no need to mention the misunderstandings and mistaken conclusions which may result from this practice. Traces of such a practice can be identified in western writings of the late nineteenth and the early twentieth century on a number subjects related to Islam and its civilisation. For instance, Von Kremer in his *Culturgeschichte des Orients der*

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1 Robson 2, p. 30.
2 Robson 15, p. 479.

Chalifen depends on the book of *al-Aghānī*, by Abū al-Faraj al-Iṣfahānī, who is reckoned as an impious, unreliable author, and on another work called *al-'Uyūn wa al-ḥadā'iq* of a anonymous author, in order to describe the way according to which the Umayyads used to lead their lives[1]. The same also can be said about Goldziher, who, when dealing with the Umayyads and Ḥadīth, has recourse, from time to time, to the unreliable works of Abū al-Faraj al-Iṣfahānī, al-Mas'ūdī and al-Ya'qūbī, who are considered, by Muslim scholars, to be tendentious, Shī'ī authors, and cannot be accepted as authorities on matters related to the Umayyads[2].

This feature began to disappear gradually in works of later western writers, and as far as Robson's writings on Ḥadīth is concerned, one should point out that they show a dependence on the original sources to a great extent – a fact that gives his works more credibility.

(1) In his two articles devoted to an investigation of the material of Ḥadīth[3], he restricts himself to ḥadīths recorded in the six recognised books of Ḥadīth, and justifies this by pointing out that "they are the works which are most generally recognised and they provide a representative body of material"[4]. It is also the case when he considers various reports pertaining to Jesus[5].

(2) Dealing with ḥadīths related to the Prophet, he examines only those ones recorded by al-Bukhārī, who is, as Robson remarks, "generally considered the most reliable of all"[6].

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1 al-Ṣadīq, "Mulāḥazāt...", pp. 305f.
2 Goldziher, 2, vol. 2, pp. 50f, 53f; see also pp. 26, 28 and *passim*. Cf. al-Ṣadīq, "Mulāḥazāt...", pp. 227f.
3 The reference here is to Robson 4 and Robson 5.
4 Robson 4, p. 166.
5 See Robson 5, p. 257.
6 Robson 4, p. 172.

(3) Considering recurrent forms in which ḥadīths are presented, he confines himself to Walī al-Dīn's *Mishkāt al-Maṣābiḥ*, which provides a representative body of ḥadīths from the works of al-Bukhārī, Muslim and others[1].

(4) As for dealing with the Principles of Ḥadīth, Robson usually consults recognised, original sources on the subject; his most common references are the following: *al-Jarḥ wa al-taʿdīl* of Ibn Abī Ḥātim, *Maʿrifat ʿulūm al-ḥadīth* and *al-Madkhal ilā kitāb al-iklīl* of al-Ḥākim, *al-Kifāyah* of al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī and *ʿUlūm al-ḥadīth* of Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ. For example, in discussing the different methods of receiving ḥadīths, he gives a brief account of Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ's presentation of the issue[2], and in dealing with the different words which were used to report them, he represents the opinion of al-Ḥākim, al-Khaṭīb and Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ[3]. To deal with the categories of transmitters whose transmissions may be accepted, and of those who are of a lower authority, he relies upon Ibn Abī Ḥātim's classification in his *al-Jarḥ wa al-taʿdīl*, then he quotes Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ for other information on the subject[4]. Elucidating the difference between the Quran and divine ḥadīths, he depends on *al-Aḥādīth al-Qudsiyyah* of ʿAlī al-Qārī, *al-Itḥāfāt al-Saniyyah* of al-Madanī and al-Tahānawī's *Dictionary of technical terms*[5].

(5) A quick comparison between Robson's article on Ḥadīth in the new edition of the *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, and that of W. Juynboll under the same heading in the first edition of the encyclopaedia[6], shows how the work of the former differs in terms of objectivity and references to a great extent – an example that suffices to indicate Robson's dependence, as opposed to the latter, on the original sources.

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1 See Robson 12, p. 39.
2 See Robson 15, pp. 470-74; cf. Robson 2, pp. 27-29.
3 Robson 15, pp. 476f.
4 See Id., pp. 464f; cf. *E.I.*(2), vol. 2, p. 462.
5 See Robson 5, pp. 262f.
6 See *E.I.*(2), vol. 3, pp. 23-28, and *E.I.*(1), vol. 2, pp. 189-194, respectively.

Moreover, Robson occasionally includes a full translation of the original source, in order to clarify the matter in question; in one of his articles, he gives a full translation of a section, which pertains to the following of the *Sunnah* of the Prophet, of *Jawāhir al-Qur'ān* by al-Ghazālī, in order to demonstrate his insistence on the following of the Prophet in the most minute details[1].

<u>Summing up</u>.

These are the most important features, one may encounter in Robson's articles on Ḥadīth. To sum up, they can be presented in the following points:

(1) Although Robson seems to be heavily influenced by his predecessors, particularly in his early articles, he takes the opportunity to put forward several fresh theories which deserve consideration and appreciation.

(2) Generally speaking, Robson seems to hold the same sceptical opinion, which is held by other western writers, regarding the genuineness of the material of Ḥadīth; the new issues he puts forward seem to play no role in making him recognise the authenticity of a particular body or collection of Ḥadīth, although they clearly manage to convince him to widen the scope of its genuine core.

(3) The structure of the Principles of Ḥadīth is generally appreciated by Robson as an impressive one, which emerged too late and was of no practical effect, as far as preserving primitive ḥadīths from alteration and fabrication is concerned. He ignores the fact that the fundamental bases of this structure were well-established during the first century of Islam, and that they can be identified from the two main sources of guidance at that time, i.e. the Quran and the Ḥadīth, and from statements and practices of the prominent scholars of that century.

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1 See Robson 10, pp. 326-33. The section which is translated by Robson is in fact a sub-section of a larger one called *Kitāb al-arbaʿīn fī uṣūl al-dīn*, which is published separately.

(4) Robson makes great use of the original sources on the subject – a course of action which helped him demonstrate various matters relating to the Principles of Ḥadīth, to which he devoted a number articles.

CONCLUSION

It seems that although the idea that, in the early days of Islam, Ḥadīth was not a matter of importance, and that, at the very beginning, Muslims only had the Quran as a source of guidance, does not hold true, as far as the real situation is concerned; it nevertheless constitutes the starting point from which Robson proceeds in his approach to Ḥadīth and its Principles. Accordingly, he rules out any suggestion that the interest shown by Muslims, at that time, in stories related to the Prophet was a result of their recognition of Ḥadīth as one of the important bases of Islam; instead he suggests two reasons for such interest: first is the striking personality of the Prophet, and second is the great development which he set in motion. In his opinion, the ultimate aim of such interest was merely to satisfy the natural curiosity about such a great man.

A detailed discussion of this idea, in the first chapter, reveals that in dealing with this subject, Robson neglects the implications of the Quran, although he admits that it is a genuine document that represents the time in question. By identifying the different methods in the Quran which enjoin Muslims to observe the enactments of the Prophet and warn them against turning away from his commands, and by demonstrating the great extent to which Muslims went at that time in the pursuit of reports about the Prophet, it becomes clear that although the reasons and the aims suggested by Robson can be accepted as common motives for the interest of Muslims and non-Muslims alike, they cannot justifiably account for the Muslims' particular interest. There seems to be one main reason that may account for the Muslims' interest in Ḥadīth, which is the observance of the command, prescribed in the Quran and the Ḥadīth, that enjoins the believers to follow the Prophet and obey his enactments; this observance was informed by two aims, namely to attain guidance to the right path in this world, and to obtain God's blessings in the Hereafter.

In my opinion, Robson's view is in fact an outcome of the common belief amongst western writers that Muhammad was by no means a Messenger of God who was given a particular message to deliver – a belief which contradicts that held by Muslims from the very beginning of Islam. A consideration of the common belief amongst Muslims during the Prophet's lifetime and directly after his death, proves that the prevailing idea seems to be that Muhammad was a Messenger of Allah and the bearer of His message to mankind, who lived perpetually under divine guidance, and accordingly, his sayings and actions which had a religious nature were connected with divine revelation, in one way or another. It is also pointed out that Ḥadīth constituted, in the eyes of the early Muslims, a significant, integral source of guidance, without which many commandments in the Quran could not be observed, and of which Muslims must have been in great need.

The question of the delaying of complete recognition of Ḥadīth as a basis of Islam second to the Quran, until the time of al-Shāfiʿī, is also dealt with; the findings confirm that this recognition started as early as the time of the Prophet himself, and it was clearly shown, after his death, by the statements and actions of a number of early rulers and scholars from the Companions and the Successors. Accordingly, the claim that in the early days of Islam, Muslims had only the Quran for guidance and that those who were in authority dealt with new matters, apart from the Quran, without a fixed source of guidance, cannot be accepted. On the contrary, the present research confirms that matters facing the rulers and the scholars, at that time, were dealt with according to three main bases: The Quran, the Ḥadīth and *Ijtihād* which was applied in the light of the first two – a process which enabled the scholars to take decisions concerning matters about which there was no specific guidance.

An elaborated consideration of judicial schools and other parties that emerged at that time, dismisses Robson's claim that many people before al-Shāfiʿī rejected Ḥadīth, and assures us that, generally speaking, all these parties and schools

recognised Hadīth as a basic source of guidance, although they differed in their conditions for accepting hadīths, and in the nature of the standards of their criticism – a matter that led them to dismiss a larger or smaller number of hadīths. It seems that the question was a question of authenticity, rather than a question of recognition, and that the terminology of *Ahl al-Hadīth* had nothing to do with the recognition of the main body of Hadīth as a source of Islam; it is rather a term which was applied to identify those who depended on statements available to them and preferred to restrict themselves to them, hardly having any recourse to *Ijtihād*. In contrast the terminology of *Ahl al-Ra'y* did not imply whatsoever that those who were identified with it did not recognise Hadīth as a source of guidance, or used to neglect hadīths of the Prophet in their judicial judgements; what it really implied was that the scholars of this school felt free more than others to have recourse to *Ijtihād*, whenever they met matters about which the Quran and the Hadīth remained silent.

To sustain his claim with regard to the delaying of the recognition of Hadīth, Robson adduces two arguments: the first is the absence of a collected body of Hadīth at that time, and the second is the method adopted by Mālik in his *Muwatta'*, but neither of these seems to constitute a cogent argument. The first argument does not necessarily mean that Hadīth was not adopted as a source of guidance, particularly if we bear in mind the large number of written copies of hadīths at that time, and the availability of several authorities who had firsthand knowledge of Hadīth, and whom the Caliphs used to consult whenever they faced a problem about which they were not aware of any statements in the two main sources. The second argument seems to be one in favour of the recognition of Hadīth rather than in favour of the contrary, inasmuch as Mālik is not expected in such a brief work of law to present all the authorities he has for each judgement he includes; it is enough for us to know that in many cases he presents hadīths as authorities for his judgements. It is also pointed out that the work of al-Shāfiʿī was in fact to re-establish the conventional doctrine

regarding the recognition of Ḥadīth as an important source of guidance, and to refute recently developed opinions of some parties or schools of law that had appeared in his lifetime or shortly before it.

As far as the Principles of Ḥadīth are concerned, one is inclined to hold, in the light of the consideration of statements of the Quran and the Ḥadīth, that both these sources teach the main principles of transmission, and indicate the most important standards of criticism of transmission, so that Muslims could undertake the process of handing them down from one generation to an another with great accuracy and efficiency. This fact may also serve as evidence to supports the declaration found in the following verse: "Nothing We have omitted from the Book..."[1]. It is suggested that criticism of transmitters, which was later known as 'dispraise and praise' ['Ilm al-jarḥ wa al-ta'dīl], actually started and had its base in the Quran itself, which makes a clear distinction between two kinds of people: those who are truthful, just and trustworthy, and those who are untruthful, unjust and unreliable. In fact the Principles of Ḥadīth is a completely new field of learning, whose emergence was due to the belief of early Muslims in the importance of Ḥadīth as a basic source of Islam – a belief that made Muslim scholars, from the early days of Islam, do their best to preserve it and hand it down to the next generation, free from alteration and fabrication. To achieve this exacting task, Muslim scholars, guided by the general teachings of the Quran and the Ḥadīth, developed various rules for the process of transmission and applied several standards of criticism; these rules and standards constituted the nucleus of what was later called the Principles of Ḥadīth.

Considering statements and actions of the scholars of the first century assures us that they observed the basic principles of Ḥadīth enshrined in the Quran and the Ḥadīth, adding to them some which they found of great importance. They also

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1 vi. 38.

exhorted their students to observe these principles during their pursuit and study of Ḥadīth. Having identified the standards applied by Muslim scholars at that time, we find that they paid considerable attention, in their criticism, to both features of transmission, namely the *isnād* and the *matn*. Moreover, it is suggested that, in the practical field, the criticism of the *matn* preceded the criticism of transmitters, inasmuch as the Companions used to trust each other, and there was, at the very beginning, no need to ensure the integrity of transmitters. That is not to say that criticism of transmitters was neglected altogether; in fact it had great importance, and some scholars, occasionally, had a chance to question the accuracy of certain transmitters. In the course of time, however, as some characteristics that affected the transmission of religious statements began to emerge, the emphasis gradually moved towards transmitters of ḥadīths, until it became an independent subject within the Principles of Ḥadīth. The standards of criticism in the early days of Islam show us that early Muslim scholars observed, in the essential, the five conditions of a sound ḥadīth, commonly recognised by later scholars, which are (1) the connection of the *isnād* up to the source, (2-3) the accuracy and straightforwardness of the transmitters and (4-5) the freedom of both the *isnād* and the *matn* from abnormality and defect.

Therefore, Robson's claim that the Principles of Ḥadīth emerged and developed throughout the second century, and that before that there were no such principles – a matter which resulted in the emergence of new elements falsely ascribed to the Prophet that overshadowed the genuine core, cannot be warranted. Moreover, it dismisses the enormous effort made by the early scholars, in order to preserve ḥadīths of their Prophet from alteration or even fabrication and to hand them down to following generations in as genuine a form as they could.

Examining a number of ḥadīths, Robson applies various standards that can be identified from his approach to them; these standards are: The Quran, the Bible, the historical standard, the material standard and the rational standard. An appraisal of

these standards indicates that Muslim scholars, generally speaking, by no means neglected such standards, and made great use of them, as long as they were in harmony with their belief in the nature of Prophetic ḥadīths. They did not accept the idea of tracing sound ḥadīths to biblical sources, since they believed that their authenticity was well-established, in comparison with that of the Bible. They could not apply the material standard to ḥadīths, as this would contradict the basic doctrine of their belief that the Prophet lived perpetually under divine guidance; it was not impossible, in their eyes, for the Prophet to talk about the future, or to give detailed descriptions of Paradise, Hell and other hidden things. The scholars also expressed their reservation regarding the rational standard, and restricted its usage to learned authorities who were well-acquainted with Prophetic ḥadīths. It is worthy of note that the accepted standards of criticism applied by Robson constitute some aspects which are usually discussed under the fifth condition of sound ḥadīths, put forward by Muslim scholars, namely the freedom of the *matn* from abnormality or any defect.

In the last chapter, a presentation of some general remarks in Robson's writings reveals that although Robson was heavily influenced by his predecessors, particularly in his earlier papers, he had an opportunity to offer some fresh ideas regarding Ḥadīth and its Principles, which deserve consideration and appreciation. It also indicates how Robson makes great use of the original references on the subject, and has, in many cases, a firsthand knowledge of such references rather than depending on presentations of other writers on the subject, or on irrelevant sources, as is the case with some of his predecessors.

Finally, attention should be paid to the following points:

(1) The issues discussed in this research indicate that the question as to the nature of ḥadīths of the Prophet constitutes a turning point in the subject, which has to be addressed before one deals with reports relating to the Prophet or with principles of transmission and standards of criticism put forward to deal with them, inasmuch as

without reaching an agreement on this issue, it is unimaginable that those dealing with Ḥadīth will reach a conclusion acceptable to all of them. There are two ways according to which Ḥadīth is approached: one is based on the concept that Muhammad was a Messenger of God and the bearer of His Message to mankind, who lived perpetually under divine guidance; this approach is held by Muslim scholars and has led them to adopt certain methods, and to put forward various standards, that suit their perspective. Thus, understanding the Islamic concept of the Prophet and his ḥadīths is crucial, since it enables us to have a truer appreciation of the effort made by Muslim scholars in this field, and of the nature of principles of transmission and standards of criticism put forward by them, for studying and examining ḥadīths. Accordingly, it seems that there is no point in criticising their approach to Ḥadīth, while neglecting the most important issue, which is the Muslim perspective of Ḥadīth, inasmuch as the former is completely based on the latter, and is in fact one of its features. The Principles of Ḥadīth is simply a structure that matches the territory on which it is constructed, and therefore, it may lose some of its beauty or seem peculiar if it were to be taken out from its context.

The second approach is based on the material understanding of the Prophet and his mission that is commonly held by western scholars. This approach has led its adherents to adopt different methods and standards of criticism, in order to deal with ḥadīths, and naturally enough, has made them reach different conclusions and claim that those standards put forward by Muslim scholars do not go far enough to distinguish genuine ḥadīths from spurious ones. These two approaches are completely different and it seems impossible to find a middle way between them, because what can be said in one of them cannot be accepted in the other. Therefore, I find myself in agreement with Coulson's suggestion that it must be "frankly recognised that the Muslim and the Western methods of *Ḥadīth* criticism are irreconcilable because they rest upon totally different premises. Between the dictates

of religious faith on the one hand and secular historical criticism on the other there can be no middle way of true objectivity"[1].

(2) One of the faults in the western approach to Hadīth has been its failure, when considering the process of transmission in the early days of Islam, to differentiate between the various groups who were interested in it, in particular to concentrate upon those genuine scholars and their students who devoted themselves to the study of Hadīth, and made a great effort to preserve its main body in as genuine a form as they could and to hand it down to coming generations free from alteration and fabrication. It seems, for example, that the account given by Robson of the way the early Muslim community dealt with hadīths is applicable to a great extent to two unscholarly groups: the first is those who were called story-tellers [al-Quṣṣāṣ], whose main purpose was to impress people and to entertain them. The second is those who were called the pious [al-Atqiyā']; these were ignorant people who invented hadīths, in order to exhort people to adhere to Islamic teachings and to do good. Unfortunately, the account given by Robson, regarding the transmission and the study of Hadīth during the first century of Islam seems to neglect completely the effort of a third group, who made a genuine effort to study hadīths and examine them – the group that denounced the devastating work of the two groups mentioned above and warned the community against them. The absence of a careful consideration of such a group, which represents the original approach of Muslim scholars to this field, and which seems to be the most appropriate one to be considered first, raises grave doubt about the objectivity of such an account.

It should be noted that Muslim scholars themselves divide those who deal with the subject of Hadīth into three categories[2]: The first consists of those who paid

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1 "European criticism of Hadīth literature", *Arabic literature to the end of the Umayyad period*, Cambridge, 1983, p. 321.
2 See al-Jazā'irī, pp. 74-82.

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almost all their attention to the *isnād* of a transmission, so whenever they found a ḥadīth with a connected *isnād*, they would accept it without scrutinising its *matn*, although the learned state clearly that the *isnād* being sound does not mean necessarily that the *matn* is sound as well. The second consists of those who paid almost all their attention to the *matn* of a transmission, and whenever they were satisfied with the text of a particular ḥadīth, they would accept it and ascribe it to the Prophet, whether its *isnād* was sound or not. The third group consists of those learned scholars, whose main purpose was to distinguish genuine ḥadīths from spurious ones; hence, they scrutinised, and paid careful attention to, both the *isnād* and the *matn* of transmissions reported to them. This group accepted many ḥadīths which were rejected by the second group, and rejected many others that were accepted by the first one. Muslim scholars consider the third group as the one to be followed, since it is in fact the one whose approach deserves greater consideration, and whose effort deserves truer appreciation.

(3) It is natural enough for Robson, who believes in the absence of the Principles of Ḥadīth and standards of criticism of transmission, to express his scepticism towards ḥadīths in general, pointing out that any attempt to distinguish genuine ḥadīths from spurious ones would prove to be impossible, inasmuch as the genuine core, in his view, is overshadowed by the considerable quantity of fabricated material. Therefore, he suggests different sources for ḥadīths, tracing some of them to the Old Testament, and some to the New Testament or other sources. He nevertheless inclines to accept the authenticity of a few ḥadīths that have survived his criticism, without any feeling of assurance. However, as this research indicates that the basics of the Principles of Ḥadīth, which Robson describes as impressive and detailed, were well-established even before the emergence of fabricated ḥadīths, and that the early scholars benefited from them in studying and examining ḥadīths, another approach, that takes into account this fact, should be adopted.

(4) Whatever can be said, Robson's work on Ḥadīth may be considered to be one of the more serious attempts conducted by a western scholar, and one that takes the western approach a step closer towards a truer appreciation, and better understanding of Ḥadīth and its Principles.

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