# Ideas on Hadith Matan (Matn) Analysis & related issues extracted from some books

I have rearranged text of some of the books e.g. numbering added at some places, new headings added at various places, (pbuh) added, and some minor formatting and word changes etc. have been made, but full references including page number is provided.


Pbuh = Peace be upon him


[**On Schacht's Origins of Muhammadan Jurisprudence by Muhammad Mustafa Azami.  (page 111) :** …
(**1**) Scribes made mistakes,
(**2**) memories failed,
(**3**) and there were deliberate forgeries…]


[**On Schacht's Origins of Muhammadan Jurisprudence by Muhammad Mustafa Azami.  (page 114)** :
**Comparing the hadith with related ayaat of the Qur'an:**
     We find that this method was used by 'Umar (RA) in rejecting the hadith of Fatima bint Qais concerning maintenance money for divorced women. A'isha (RA) also applied the same method in several cases.]


[**On Schacht's Origins of Muhammadan Jurisprudence by Muhammad Mustafa Azami.  (page 114)** :
**Rational Criticism.**
     …The two tests described above were applied to ascertain the validity of narrators or chains of narrators, but rationality ['Aql] was also given its proper place. According to al-Mu'allami al-Yamani, it was applied at every stage – in learning hadith, in teaching hadith, in judging narrators, and in evaluating the authenticity of hadith.
     According to Abi Hatim al-Razi, the essential rational test is that **the hadith be worthy of the Prophet** (pbuh). He says:
     "The goodness of a dinar is known when it is measured against another. Thus if it differs in redness and purity, it will be known that it is counterfeit. A diamond is evaluated by measuring it against another one. If it differs in brilliance and hardness, it will be known to be glass. The authenticity of a hadith is known by its coming from **reliable narrators and the statement itself must be worthy of being a statement of Prophethood.**"


     Ibn al-Qayyim adduced several general rules for recognizing a false hadith without going into isnad criticism. Some of the features he considered indicative of false ahadith are:

**1.** Fanciful statements that the Prophet (pbuh) could not have made. For example, a false hadith attributed to the Prophet (pbuh) was: "Whoever pronounces La ilaaha Ill-Allah, Allah creates from his sentence a bird with 70000 tongues…"

**2.** Statements that can be shown to be false empirically.

**3.** Nonsensical kind of attribution.

**4.** Contradiction of well-known Sunan.

**5.** Statements claimed to have been made by the Prophet (pbuh) in the presence of many Companions, but which are reported by none of them.

**6.** Statements that bear no resemblance to other statements of the Prophet (pbuh).

**7.** Phraseology that resembles that of sufis or medical practitioners.

**8.** Contradiction with the Qur'an.

**9.** Inadequacy of style. ]

[**Hadith Literature – Its Origins, Development and Special Features by Muhammad Zubayr Siddiqi. (pages 113-114)**

…The mere formal soundness of an isnad is not considered definite proof of the actual genuineness of the text of the traditions to which they are attached. According to the traditionists, even if the isnad is completely without fault, the text should still be analysed before the genuineness of its attribution can be established.

According to a well-known principle:
'If you encounter a hadith:
(**1**) contrary to reason,
(**2**) or to what has been established as correctly reported,
(**3**) or against the accepted principles,
then you should know that it is forged.'

Abu Bakr ibn al-Tayyib is reported to have remarked that it is a proof of the forged character of a tradition that:
(**1**) it be against:
(i) reason or
(ii) common experience;

(**2**) or that it conflicts with:

(**i**) the explicit text of the Qur'an

(**ii**) and the Mutawatir tradition,

(**iii**) or the consensus (ijma);

(**3**) or that it contains the report of an important event taking place in the presence of a large number of people (when it is related by a single individual);

(**4**) or that it lays down severe punishment for minor faults, or promises high rewards for insignificant good deeds.

Al-Hakim gives several examples of forged and weak hadiths having sound isnads {Al-Hakim, Ma'rifa 'Ulum al-Hadith (Cairo, 1937 CE), 58ff.}

Al-Suyuti remarks that such Hadiths are encountered frequently. {Suyuti; Tadrib al-Rawi. (Commentary on Al-Nawawi's al-Taqrib wa'l-Taysir), Cairo, 1307; 100.}

In fact, the only sure guidance in the determination of the genuineness of a tradition is, as remarked by Ibn al-Mahdi and Abu Zar'a, a faculty that a traditionalist develops through a long, continuous study of the hadiths, and as a result of continuous discussion of them with other scholars.

All such research, of course, must be reconciled with a historical awareness of the circumstances (asbab al-wurud) in which a given Tradition was generated, for many hadiths were relevant only to the early period of the Prophet's (pbuh) ministry, and were later abrogated by other teachings.

On the basis of the above mentioned understanding, the following general principles for the criticism of the texts of the traditions have been laid down.

(**1**) A tradition must not be contrary to the other traditions which have already been accepted by the authorities on the subject as authentic and reliable.

(**2**) Nor should it contradict:

(**i**) the text of the Qur'an

(**ii**) a Mutawatir hadith

(**iii**) the absolute consensus of the community (ijma qat'i),

(**iv**) or the accepted basic principles of Islam.

(**3**) A tradition should not be against:

(**i**) the dictates of reason,

(**ii**) the laws of nature,

(**iii**) or common experience.

(**4**) Must be rejected:

(**i**) Traditions establishing a disproportionately high reward for insignificant good deeds,

(**ii**) or disproportionately severe punishments for ordinary sins.

(**5**) Traditions describing the excellent properties of certain sections of the Qur'an may not be authentic.

(**6**) Traditions mentioning the superior virtue of:
(**i**) persons,
(**ii**) tribes,
(**iii**) and particular places
Should be generally rejected.

(**7**) Traditions containing detailed prophecies of future events, equipped with dates, should be rejected.

(**8**) Traditions containing:
(**i**) such remarks of the Prophet (pbuh) as may not be a part of his prophetic vocation,
(**ii**) or such expressions as are clearly unsuitable for him,
should be rejected.

(**9**) A matan should not violate the basic rules of Arabic Grammar and style.]

[**Hadith Literature – Its Origins, Development and Special Features by Muhammad Zubayr Siddiqi. (pages 31 to 36)**]

**The Crisis of Authenticity**
**(Hadith forgery)**

...All the Islamic authorities agree that an enormous amount of forgery was committed in the hadith literature. Imam Ahmad ibn Hanbal has said that hadith and tafsir have been more affected by forgery than any other branch of literature. The very existence of a copious literature on mawdu'at (forged traditions) reminds us of this consciousness.

It is interesting, but not easy, to try to determine the period when forgery in hadith began. The Victorian writer William Muir thought that it began during the caliphate of Uthman. It is more likely, however, that it originated during the lifetime of the Prophet (pbuh) himself. His opponents would not have missed the opportunity to forge and attribute words and deeds to him for which he was not responsible, in order to rouse the Arab tribes against his teachings. Ibn Hazm, for one, accepts this explanation, and cites one incident which took place in Prophetic Madina. After the hijra, he tells us, a man went to an outlying district of Madina

and told a tribe living there that the Prophet had given him authority over them. He resorted to this device because he was of a mind to marry a girl who was a member of that tribe, to whom he had proposed marriage before hijra, but who had not consented. The tribe sent a messenger to the Prophet (pbuh) to make enquiries concerning the 'authority' thus asserted in his name. The Prophet (pbuh) told them that the man was a pretender, and had received no warrant for what he did.

During the caliphate of Abu Bakr, too, when apostasy had raised its head, it is not unlikely that some of the apostates should have forged such traditions as suited their purpose; and it may be for this reason that Abu Bakr and 'Umar were so strict in accepting traditions which were reported to them.

During the caliphate of Uthman, this kind of dishonesty became more common. Some members of the factions into which the community was then divided forged traditions in order to advance their faction's interests.

During the first century of Islam, and also thereafter,
(1) the various political parties,
(2) the heretics,
(3) the professional preachers,
(4) and even a number of sincere Muslims,
all made their contributions to the growing rubbish-heap of false traditions.

As we have seen, during the period following the Prophet's (pbuh) death, many Companions were criticized by their friends for their seeming carelessness and want of insight into what they related of the Prophet (pbuh). Among the Successors and their Successors, with the rise of the 'jarring sects and parties', the number of careless and insincere students and teachers increased markedly. Some of these men and women were careless in their choice of teachers, others made bona fide mistakes in relating to their students what they had learnt. Still others, however, made deliberate changes to the text or the isnad of certain hadiths, and fabricated others from scratch for the sake of personal or sectarian gain, or – more perversely – with the pious intention of calling people to the path of Allah and the liberating teachings of religion.

In this way there developed among the Muslims a large number of forged traditions, which are conventionally attributed to 4 categories of people.

## 1. Heretics (Zanaadiqa)
Heretics (zanaadiqa), often of Manichean leanings, who flourished under various banners during early Islamic history, and who wrought havoc by willfully forging thousands of traditions and propagating them among the Muslim

community. 'The zanaadiqa', remarked Hammad ibn Zayd, 'have invented 14000 traditions in the name of the Prophet (pbuh)'. To name only a few, one could cite 'Abd al-Karim ibn Abi'l-Awja', Bayyan ibn Sam'an, and Muhammad ibn Sa'id, the first of whom alone had forged some 4000 traditions in the name of the Prophet (pbuh) of Islam. Another heretic who was actually caught, sentenced and executed by order of Harun al-Rashid is said to have confessed to the forgery of a thousand hadiths.

## 2. Sectarian and Political Fabricators

The zanaadiqa, however, proved unable to do much damage to the traditions of Islam, being known and recognized as anti-Islamic. A more malign threat to the integrity of the literature was presented by certain pious Muslims. The various factional and sectarian preachers at both the Shi'a and Khariji ends of the political spectrum, and various sycophantic seekers after caliphal favours, proved more dangerous than any outright heretics. These Muslims, with their avowed profession of the faith of Islam, could not be expected to attribute their own forgeries to their own Prophet (peace be upon him). Yet the hope of immediate gain has often proved a greater force than truth and scholarship. We are told, for instance, that al-Muhallab (d.83/702), the great general and adversary of the khawarij, confessed that he had forged traditions against them. 'Awana ibn al-Hakam (d.158/774) and others who belonged to the Umayyad party concocted pro-Umayyad traditions. Abu'l-'Ayna' Muhammad ibn al-Qasim, likewise, forged hadiths which supported the claims of the 'Alid party. Al-Talqani (d.310/922), an important member of the Murji'ite sect, forged hadiths which justified his sect's doctrines. Ghiyath ibn Ibrahim, a courtier of al-Mahdi, made intentional changes in hadith to please the caliph. Muqatil ibn Sulayman (d.150/767) expressed to the same caliph his readiness to invent some traditions eulogizing al-'Abbas, the forefather of the caliph. Muhammad ibn al-Hasan concocted a number of traditions praising A'isha and in favour of the Sunnis.

Most of the traditions which extol the virtues of
(1) certain individuals,
(2) tribes,
(3) provinces, districts or towns,
(4) or a sectarian leader,
owe their origin to some of these deliberate forgers, and have been identified by the hadith scholars as mere inventions.

## 3. The Qussaas (Storytellers)

The Qussaas (storytellers). Though much humbler in status than the leaders of parties or sects, these were scarcely less dangerous than the latter for the integrity of Islamic sources. Their main business at first was to relate moral stories following the morning and evening prayers, to encourage people to do

good deeds. Their origin may be traced back to the time of 'Umar ibn al-Khattab, who is said to have permitted either Tamim al-Dari or 'Ubayd ibn 'Umayr (different opinions exist to whether the person chosen for this task was Tamim al-Dari or 'Ubayd ibn 'Umayr) to relate edifying tales before the people. Mu'awiya, founder of the Umayyad dynasty, gave such men the title of 'ordinary storytellers' – i.e., as opposed to the 'special storytellers' who were appointed by the caliph himself in order to counteract the propaganda of his opponents.

The storytellers, among whom may be included the common street-preachers who held no official position, had to deal with the credulous common people, who appreciated amusing stories and fables more than hard facts. They soon proliferated, spreading through Iraq and Central Asia, and adapted themselves to their audiences, which contained people who found their words more congenial than the learned discourses of the scholars. At a relatively early date, they seem to have allowed themselves to degenerate into fable mongers, whose main object was to please their public and extract gold from their pockets. To this end, they invented thousands of such amusing anecdotes as might appeal to the masses, attributed them to the Prophet (pbuh), and related them publicly. One of them, for instance, related to an audience, on the authority of Ahmad ibn Hanbal and Yahya ibn Ma'in that when a man said Laa ilaaha ill Allah, ALLAH created from each letter a bird with a beak of gold and feathers of pearl. At the end of his sermon, the man was questioned by Ibn Hanbal and ibn Ma'in, who had been among his listeners, and who objected that they had never related such a tradition. The storyteller tried to silence his critics by making fun of them. Another storyteller related to a masjid audience a series of traditions on the authority of Harim ibn Hayyan (d.46/666), and when he was challenged by the latter, he claimed that he had been referring to another hadith expert by that name. 'As a matter of fact', said the undaunted storyteller, '15 persons by the name of Harim are present in this very masjid'. Kulthum ibn 'Amr al-'Attabi once collected a crowd round himself in a masjid, and related to them – with a full isnad – a hadith saying that he who touched the tip of his nose with his tongue might rest assured that he would never go to Hell. The audience showed their readiness to accept this forgery as a genuine tradition – by trying to ascertain their fate in this way.

So extreme was the self-regard of many qussas that not only did they fail to feel ashamed of forging traditions in the name of the Prophet (pbuh) for their own personal gain, but they felt no compunction in attacking other storytellers. A proverb says, 'One storyteller does not love another.' But sometimes in order to do mischief to the people and gain their own ends, two storytellers would work together to forge traditions. In this way, one of them once stood up at the end of a street narrating traditions in praise of 'Ali, while the other stood up at the other end extolling the virtues of Abu Bakr. Thus did they make money from both Shi'a

and the Nasibis, and at the end of the day divided the proceeds equally among themselves.

Their activities were so dangerous for the traditions of Islam as well as for the government, that Malik ibn Anas did not allow them into the masjid at Madina. The best-known traditionalists condemned them, and in the year 279/892 their activities were banned in Baghdad.

## 4. From among the Devout Traditionalists

But perhaps the most dangerous type of hadith forgers came from the ranks of the devout traditionalists themselves. Their sincerity and love for the traditions of Islam could not be doubted. But it has rightly been observed, by an imminent English writer, that 'everyone kills the object of his love'. Many pious traditionalists attempted, unwittingly, to kill the science of tradition by forging hadiths, ascribing them to the Prophet (pbuh), and spreading them abroad among the Muslim community.

Nuh ibn Abi Maryam, who had studied theology with scholars of great repute, was known as al-Jami on account of his vast and varied learning. He acted as judge at Merv during the reign of al-Mansur. He related traditions describing the virtues of various Surah of the Qur'an. But when he was pressed for the authorities from whom he had received these traditions, he confessed that he had forged them for the sake of Allah, and to attract people to His Book. Aban ibn Abi Ayyash, who was one of the most pious people of his time, was severely censured by Shu'ba ibn al-Hajjaj, and more than 1500 traditions narrated by him on the authority of Anas were found to have no foundation. Ahmad ibn Muhammad al-Bahili (d.275/888) was generally respected for his piety, but when Abu Daud looked into 400 traditions which were related by him, he found that they were all forged. Ahmad himself confessed to having forged traditions in order to make the hearts of people tender and soft (tarqiq al-qulub). Sulayman ibn 'Amr was a contemporary of Ibn Hanbal, and would fast by day and offer prayers by night, outdoing in this many of his contemporaries. But he is characterized none the less by the critics as a liar and forger of traditions. Wahb ibn Hafs was generally regarded as a virtuous Muslim: his asceticism was so acute that it is said that for 20 years he did not speak to anyone. Yet none the less, he did not hesitate to forge traditions. These and many other well-intentioned and outwardly pious Muslims, such as Maysra ibn 'Abd Rabbih the Persian; Ahmad ibn Harb (d.234/848), the man of piety; 'Ubad ibn Kuthayr (d.150/767); 'Abd-Allah ibn Ayyub; Hushaym ibn Bashir (d.183/799); Ziyad ibn 'Abd-Allah; and the followers of Muhammad ibn Karram al-Sijistani held that it was permissible to forge traditions in order to attract people to good deeds and warn them against evil.

**Summary:**

These 4 types of forgers, then, wrought havoc with the literature. Their activities were often very extensive indeed: we are told that Muhammad ibn 'Ukkasha and Muhammad ibn Tamim forged more than 10000 traditions. Abu Sa'id ibn Ja'far forged more than 300 traditions in the name of Abu Hanifa alone. Ahmad al-Qaysi concocted more than 3000 traditions. Ahmad al-Marwazi forged more than 10000. Ahmad ibn 'Abd-Allah al-Jubari forged thousands of traditions. Furthermore, a large number of forgers – like Ziyad ibn Maymun, Shurayk ibn 'Abd-Allah, and Talha ibn 'Amr – invented thousands of false hadiths, **some of which are quoted in sermons and declaimed from the pulpits even today**.]

[**Studies in Hadith Methodology and Literature by Muhammad Mustafa Azami. (pages 75 to 78)**

**Fabrication of Hadith: Causes and Means of Elimination**

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

The attribution of false statements to the prophet (pbuh) may be divided into 2 categories:
1. **Intentional fabrication** of hadith. That is usually called hadith **mauwdu**.
2. **Unintentional attribution** of a false hadith to the Prophet (pbuh) by mistake despite due care or due to carelessness. That is usually called hadith **batil**.

The result in both conditions is the same, that is, a statement is falsely attributed to the Prophet (pbuh). Therefore, scholars who collected hadith of this sort put them together and did not make separate books for these 2 types. In many cases, they did not draw a line between mauwdu and batil and even in judgement though it would have been useful to know it.

**Intentional Fabrication of Hadith**
Those who committed this great sin belonged to different categories.

**1. Zindiqs**

Among them were Zindiqs who could not fight Islam openly, and took shelter under the cloak of scholarship. The Zindiqs included Mughira b. Sa'd al-Kufi and Muhammad b. Sa'id al-Shami who was crucified for treachery. They imitated the learned scholars, fabricated ahadith and narrated them to cast doubt in people's minds. Muhammad b. Sa'id al-Shami who was crucified reported from Humaid from Anas from the Prophet (pbuh) saying: "I am the seal of the prophets, there will be no prophet after me unless ALLAH wills." He forged this exception to support the heresy and infidelity to which he summoned people and to buttress his claim to be a prophet.

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

## 2. Weak minded people with good intentions (but still it was a misguided and deviant move to fabricate hadith.)

There were some weak-minded people who fabricated ahadith with good intentions in their mind. Abu 'Umara al-Marwazi says Abu 'Isma was asked, "Where did you get from 'Ikrima from Ibn 'Abbas ahadith about the excellence of the Qur'an surah by surah, when 'Ikrima's students do not possess this?" It ought to be noticed how the scholars were making cross references to detect the fault and falsehood. He replied, "I saw that people had turned away from the Qur'an and occupied themselves with the Fiqh of Abu Hanifa and the Maghazi of Muhammad b. Ishaq, so I forged these ahadith seeking reward in the next world."

## 3. Story Tellers (they also fabricated hadith)

There were some story tellers who used to stand in the market places or I the masjids and used to attribute ahadith falsely to the Prophet (pbuh).

## 4. Fabrications to support rulers

Scholars, mention a class of fabricators who used to fabricate for the sake of rulers...

## 5. Fabrications in some other areas

There were certain religious men who fabricated to support their sectarian attitude,

(i) either in law

(ii) or in theology,

(iii) or in politics

(iv) or due to prejudice for race or country or certain people,

(v) or those who fabricated for their personal interest.

These classes should be put under the category of the people who fabricated intentionally.

## Unintentional Fabrication of Hadith

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

## 1. Deliberate fabrication of isnad

Those who tool a well known hadith and gave it a new isnad for the sake of novelty, so that they might become a focus for learning.

## 2. Mistakes in transmission specially in isnad

Those scholars who committed mistakes in transmission, e.g., while isnad was ended with the Companions or Successors only, he erroneously attributed statements to the Prophet (pbuh) which were as a matter of fact the sayings of the Companions or Successors.

One ought to bear in mind that as every hadith consists of text (matan) and isnad, and every isnad contains many names which usually end with the Prophet (pbuh), it was quite easy to commit a mistake of this sort where the isnad stopped one step earlier.

## 3. Pious people who did not give due preciseness, attention and time to Hadith

Pious people who did not take the trouble to be exact, and did not give the time and attention required for the study of hadith, and were very busy in their 'ibadah (worship), committed many mistakes in transmitting ahadith. Yahya b. Sa'id al-Qattan, a 2nd century scholar, reported that "I have not seen more falsehood in anyone than in those who have a reputation for goodness." It implies that the Muhaddithin were well aware and not impressed by apparent worship and piety.

## 4. Scholars transmitting some indirectly learnt ahadith without clearly differentiating them from the ones they learnt directly

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

## 5. Scholars transmitting ahadith from copies which did not contain notes certifying their learning

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

It ought to be noted that scholars did not allow the transmission of ahadith from a book, say for example Sahih of Bukhari, other than the copy which one read to the shaikh with the chain going back to the author. Then it had to contain a note that a certain student studied it under a certain shaikh or that the shaikh permitted him to transmit this book, because it was quite possible that 2 copies of the same work may differ.

There is another opinion, a milder one, that a very famous book like Sahih of Bukhari, copies of which were and are very common, may be transmitted if the scholar thinks that the copy in hand, even though it does not contain a note of learning, is similar to the one from which he had learnt. However, early scholars did not agree with this, and in some similar cases they labeled the scholar a liar.

## 6. People lacking a sharp memory, alertness or a correct book

People lacked the necessary qualifications for teaching of hadith, that is, a sharp memory, alertness or a correct book. Then a student came and read ahadith to them which were not transmitted by them but they ignorantly confirmed them.

It ought to be noticed that many times students used to do this trick on their teachers to test the knowledge of their teacher. If they found that the teacher was alert and did not fall in their trap, they learned from him.

## 7. Scholars who lost their books

Scholars who traveled in search of hadith and were recognized Muhaddithin, but lost their books. Later on, when they taught students they used copies other than their own, without bearing in mind that there might be some differences between 2 copies of the same work. Or they transmitted from their

defective memories. On this account they resorted to guesswork (takhmin). No doubt the value of what they taught depended on whether their book was sound or not. ]

[**Studies in Hadith Methodology and Literature by Muhammad Mustafa Azami. (pages 78 to 79)**
**Means for Detection of Fabrication in Hadith**

Scholars who spent a great deal of their lives with the ahadith of the Prophet (pbuh) developed a sense which they could use instantly in detecting error. Their example was like that of a man who lived with a beloved friend for scores of years, knew him very well in every situation and so could easily say which statement belonged to him and which did not. Similarly a literary critic who studies a poet for a long time and becomes fully acquainted with his style can, on the basis of his perception and personal experience, easily detect a poem which does not belong to the poet. However Muhaddithin did not depend solely on personal experience as it may be counted a form of subjective criticism. In short if a hadith was not transmitted by any trustworthy scholar, and there was a liar or a person accused of lying in the chain of transmission, it was said to have been fabricated by that person.

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

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

1. If the hadith contains an exaggerated statement that the Prophet (pbuh) could not have made. For example, a false hadith attributed to the Prophet (pbuh) that when one pronounces Laa Ilaaha Ill-Allah, Allah creates from this sentence a bird with 70000 tongues.

2. Experiment rejects it.

3. Ridiculous kind of attribution.

4. Contradicts a well known Sunnah.

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

6. The statement has no resemblance to other statements of the Prophet (pbuh). Sounds like the saying of mystics or medical practioners.

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

8. Inadequate in its style.
]

[**A Textbook of Hadith Studies – Authenticity, Compilation, Classification and Criticism of Hadith by Mohammad Hashim Kamali.  (pages 194 to 197) Matan Analysis Techniques**
    With regard to the text (Matn) of Hadith, it is noted that:

**1. Hadith must be worthy of the Noble Prophet (pbuh)**
i. It must be in the familiar eloquent and dignified style of the prophetic language.
ii. If it is a report of an action of the Prophet (pbuh), it should be such that can be expected of him.
iii. The presence of obscene and objectionable words, and statements that are particularly crude, ridiculous and unbecoming of the Prophet (pbuh) are usually taken as signs of forgery in hadith and rejected.
iv. But even more important than words are the meanings and purpose, which is what the hadith critics have pointed out.
v. A certain poverty of style in the standards of expression is not given too much weight as ahadith are often in words of the narrators themselves.
vi. But if the meaning is corrupt to an extent that it cannot bear harmony with the standards of prophetic speech, it would be taken as a sign of forgery. The meaning is generally held to be corrupt when it engages in patently inreasonable (unreasonable) assertions.
vii. Al-Rabi' b. al-Khatim is widely quoted to have said that "there is light in hadith such as the broad daylight that we know it, or else it is dark like the dead of the night that we do not fail to denounce." (Related quotation from Chapter 7)

**2. Misinterpretation of the Attributes of ALLAH or Negation of HIS Attributes established in the Qur'an**
    Corruption of purpose and meaning is also caused by unwarranted expatiation in the attributes of Allah, The Absolutely High\*, His Illustrious Self, or negation of those of His Attributes which are clearly established in the Qur'an. \*\*
(\*Kamali had written God most high here)
(\*\*Kamali gave 2 fabricated hadith examples on this issue but in respect of ALLAH, I can't quote such statements even when these are clearly understood as fabricated hadith and absolute lies.)

**3. Hadith Violates the Basic Principles of Shari'a**

Corruption in purpose is also noted when a so called hadith violates the basic positions of Shari'a such as by declaring permissible the lives and properties of people and validating attack on their personal dignity.

### 4. Hadith having Sectarian Bias

The Prophet (pbuh) can similarly not be expected to take assertive positions and speak either for or against sectarian movements and factions that never existed in his lifetime nor was the subject of any relevance to his mission and purpose. **There is so much forgery on this and similar other themes that are patently corrupt, partisan and incredible.**

### 5. Being Consistent and Compatible with the Qur'an

The text and message of the hadith must be consistent with the Qur'an. Should there be a clear case of conflict in such a way that no reasonable compromise and interpretation can remove it, the hadith is rejected.

The so called hadith, for example, that "The offspring of adultery (zina) shall not enter Paradise down to 7 generations" was rejected by the Prophet's (pbuh) widow, Aisha, as it violated the clear text of the Qur'an that "No soul shall carry the burden of another soul" (Qur'an Translation: 6. Al-An'aam : 164)

Similarly the report that "whoever begets a child and names him Muhammad, he and his offspring shall go to Paradise" is clearly in conflict with the Qur'anic principle that "Anyone who has done a particle's weight of good shall see its reward, and anyone who has done a particle's weight of evil shall see its recompense" (Qur'an Translation: 99. Al-Zalzala: 7,8)

(AI2's Note: I have replaced atom with particle in the above translation as science is even less than a little child compared to the Divine and Miraculous Qur'an and current scientific level must not be incorporated into the translation unless the text itself clearly says that. Atom is no longer the smallest particle, it too is composed of even smaller particles and these smaller particles themselves are made of even smaller particles. These particles are called quarks. So even if some one uses the word quark, it may turn out that there are even smaller particles than quarks.)

Another example is the so-called hadith that specifies the lifespan of the world at 7000 years, which stands in contrast to the Qur'anic declaration: "Truly Allah has knowledge of the Hour…" (Qur'an translation: 31:34) (Related quotation from Chapter 7).

(People will ask you about the Last Hour. Say: 'Only Allah has knowledge of it. What will make you understand? It may be that the Last Hour is very near.' (Qur'an 33:63))

### 6. Conflict with the Ruling of Ijma'

A clear conflict with the ruling of ijma' is also taken as a sign of forgery in hadith.

The so called hadith, for example, that "One who performs the obligatory prayer (salah), on the last Friday of Ramadan would have made up for all the prayers he has missed throughout his life for 70 years" – is contrary to the ruling of ijma' that no other form of worship replaces a salah that has been missed out.

## 7. When it conflicts with another hadith

And lastly, when a hadith conflicts with another well-known hadith that is proven by a superior isnad, it is seen as a sign of forgery. This last instance of conflict is a wider subject that the 'ulama' have looked into under the general heading of Mukhtalif al-Hadith (also known as Mushkil al-Hadith) which is the subject of a separate chapter in this work (i.e. Chapter 11 Conflict in Hadith of Kamali's book).

This branch of hadith studies is concerned mainly with discrepancies and conflicts which are, however, reconcilable by recourse to the normal rules of interpretation, and it is in this respect where Mukhtalif al-Hadith differs from the study of abrogation in hadith. This latter branch of hadith studies, known as al-Nasikh wa'l-Mansukh fi'l-Hadith, is on the other hand concerned exclusively with conflicts that cannot be reconciled on grounds of interpretation. Mukhtalif al-Hadith was the subject of a particular work bearing the title Ikhtilaf al-Hadith by Imam al-Shaf'i, who was the first to discuss this subject in the 7th volume of his Kitab al-Umm. This was followed by Ta'wil Mukhtalif al-Hadith of Ibn Qutayba al-Daynuri (213-267) and many other contributions ever since. The branch of hadith studies which is concerned with abrogation in hadith stipulate a number of requirements that must be met before abrogation can occur, but this too is the subject of a separate chapter of this book.

Similarly the so-called hadith "when someone conveys to you my hadith which is in conformity with the truth, follow it even if I have actually not said it." This is contrary to a clear Mutawatir hadith that "one who attributes a lie to me deliberately must prepare himself for a place in Hell." (Related quotation from Chapter 7)

## 8. Hadith that fails the historical evidence tests

Hadith which is not historical and fails to qualify the test of historical evidence that was known during the time of the Prophet (pbuh) is rejected.

The hadith, for example, reported by Sa'd b. Mu'adh and Mu'awiya b. Abu Sufyan that "the Prophet (pbuh) levied the jizya (poll tax) on the Jews of Khaybar and relieved them of hardship" is discredited on account of the historical fact that jizya was not known at that time, that is, the year of Khaybar, and that the Qur'anic ruling on jizya was only revealed later in the year of Tabuk, and that Sa'd b. Mu'adh had also died before the year of Khaybar.

...

## 9. If Hadith is illogical in purpose and meaning or is not in agreement with reason

The text must be in agreement with reason. If it is illogical in purpose and meaning, it is suspected of being a forgery.

Anything that is:
- **(i)** totally superstitious, or
- **(ii)** in clear conflict with accepted norms, or
- **(iii)** contradictory in itself or
- **(iv)** totally incredible vis-à-vis the clear principles of the nusus

would come under suspicion.

The so called hadith, for example, that "the ark of Nuuh (Noah) circumambulated the Ka'ba 7 times and then prayed 2 units of prayer at the end", is evidently irrational and therefore rejected.

...

Ibn al-Jawzi is quoted as having said: "when you see a hadith that is irrational, or in conflict with the text or basic principles then know that it is a forgery." (Related quotation from Chapter 7)

## 10. Disproportionately big reward or punishment for trivial acts

When the hadith in question promises a disproportionate reward or warns of an exceedingly severe punishment for a trivial act, it would be suspected of being a forgery. Numerous reports are on record of spurious hadith under the general heading of al-targhib wa'l-tarhib (encouragement and warning) that promises, for instance, permanent abode in Paradise for recitation of an Ayat of the Qur'an, or for a simple act which may be mandub (recommendable), or even omitting something in the nature of a makruh (reprehensible).

## 11. Scholastic Fanaticism

When the hadith smacks of scholastic factionalism such as the report by Hibban b. Juwayn that "I heard 'Ali saying that I and the Prophet (pbuh) worshipped Allah 6 or 7 years before anyone of this 'umma." It is known on the other hand that Hibban was a fanatical Shi'i and careless in the treatment of hadith. (Related quotation from Chapter 7)

## 12. Only one person reported a Hadith supposed to have been known and practiced by a vast number of people

When a hadith is supposed to have been known to vast numbers of people and yet only one person has reported it. The fact that no one else has confirmed it is taken as a sign of forgery. ... It is thus stated that if this were a true hadith,

the entire umma would have known it and practiced it. Since this is not the case, it is likely to be a forgery.  (Related quotation from Chapter 7)
]


[**A Textbook of Hadith Studies — Authenticity, Compilation, Classification and Criticism of Hadith by Mohammad Hashim Kamali.  (Chapter 07 Hadith Forgery (Wad' al-Hadith), pages 66-79)**

### 1. Extensive Forgery in Hadith is a well known fact
Extensive forgery in hadith was commonly known and acknowledged to have occurred in the early decades of the advent of Islam.

### 2. The Beginning of Hadith Forgery
It is believed to have begun following the turmoil over the murder of the 3rd Caliph, 'Uthman, which dealt a heavy blow to the unity of the umma. This momentous event is held responsible for the emergence of serious political differences and partisan groups such as Shi'a, Kharijites, and Mu'tazila, as well as the onset of forgery in hadith. Hadith forgery was to a large extent an epiphenomenon of these developments and the conflicts they precipitated eventually led to the collapse of the early caliphate barely 40 years after its inception.

 (AI2: Following text has been placed here as I rearranged it to come under this heading instead of coming a few paragraphs later)
Hadith forgery has not been confined to isolated cases but took rather a wide dimension barely before the end of the 1st generation Muslims in Madina. A part of this phenomenon has been associated with the expansion of the territorial domains of the Islamic state and the ever-increasing number of new immigrants of Persians, Romans, Egyptians, Syrians and others who were easy prey to misguided influences against hadith.

The historical origins of forgery in hadith are somewhat uncertain. While some observers have given the caliphate of 'Uthman as a starting point, others have dated it a little later, at around the year 40 hijra, when political differences between the 4th caliph, 'Ali, and the governor of al-Sham, Mu'awiya, led to military confrontation and the division of Muslims into various factions. According to a 3rd view, forgery in hadith started even earlier, that is, during the caliphate of Abu Bakr when he waged the war of apostasy (ridda) against the refusers of Zakah. But the year 40 is considered the more likely starting point for the development of serious and persistent differences in the community.

Muslims were thus divided and hostility between them acquired a religious dimension when they began to use the Qur'an and Sunna in support of their

claims. When the misguided elements among them failed to find any authority in the sources for their views, they either imposed a distorted interpretation on the source materials, or embarked on outright fabrication. Ahadith that were transmitted by the advocates of bid'a (pernicious innovation) and those who were embroiled in controversy thus came under suspicion and were, for the most part, isolated or abandoned as a result of these developments.

### 3. Defining Forged Hadith

A forged hadith or al-mawdu', may be defined as a report, invented by a liar, who has attributed it to the Prophet (pbuh) and it may include either the text or both the text and isnad of the report.

Even if this is done with a pious purpose in order to promote what is deemed to be a good cause, it would still count as a forgery and no credibility would be given to the motive and purpose of a deliberate forgery.

### 4. Major Types of Hadith Forgery

Hadith forgery may be divided into 2 types:
**i. Deliberate Forgery**, which is usually referred to as hadith mawdu'
**ii. Unintentional Fabrication**, which is usually referred to as hadith batil and is due mainly to error and recklessness in reporting.

For example, (an isnad fabrication example) in certain cases it is noted that the chain of narrators ended with a Companion or a Successor only but the transmitter instead extended it directly to the Prophet (pbuh).

The result is the same and fabrication whether deliberate or otherwise must in all cases be abandoned.

The present discussion is, however, mainly concerned with deliberate fabrication in hadith.

### 5. Some major Areas where Hadith fabrication occurred

### 1. Personality Cults – Crediting or Discrediting leading political figures

Forgery in hadith is believed to have begun in the context of personality cults (fada'il al-ashkhas) which aimed to credit or discredit leading political figures with exaggerated claims.

An example of this is the following statement attributed to the Prophet (pbuh) : "Whoever wishes to behold Adam for his knowledge, Nuuh (Noah) for his piety, Ibrahim (Abraham) for his gentleness, Muusa (Moses) for his commanding presence and 'Eesa (Jesus) for his devotion to worship – let him behold 'Ali."

### 2. Political Differences

Political differences between 'Ali abd Abu Bakr, 'Ali and Mu'awiya, 'Ali and 'A'isha, between 'Abullah b. Zubayr and 'Abd al-Malik b. Marwan, and generally between the Umayyads and 'Abbasids were among the causes of hadith forgery.

Numerous fabricated ahadith have thus been recorded in the condemnation of Mu'awiya including, for example, the one in which the Prophet (pbuh) is quoted to have ordered the Muslims "When you see Mu'awiya on my pulpit, kill him." The fanatical supporters of Mu'awiya and the Umayyad dynasty are, on the other hand, known to have fabricated hadith such as "The trusted ones are 3: I, Jibra'eel (Gabriel) and Mu'awiya."

Political motives also seem to be behind the so-called hadith, for example, that "When the caliphate reaches bani al-'Abbas, it will not leave them until they surrender it to 'Eesa the son of Maryam (Jesus the son of Mary)."

The Kharijites are on the whole considered to have avoided fabricating hadith, which is due mainly to their belief that the perpetrator of a grave sin is no longer a Muslim. Since they saw the fabrication of hadith in this light, they avoided indulgence in forgery as a matter of principle and a requirement of their doctrine.

### 3. Heretics — Al-Zanadiqa
The heretic faction known as al-Zanadiqa, (pl. of Zindiq), owing to their hatred of Islam, fabricated hadith which discredited Islam in the view of its followers.

Included among such are: "eggplants are a cure for every illness"; and "beholding a good-looking face is a form of 'ibada".

It is reported that just before his execution at the time of Caliph al-Mahdi, one of the notorious fabricators of hadith, 'Abd al-Karim b. Abu al-'Awja', confessed that he had fabricated 4000 ahadith in which halal was rendered haram and haram was rendered halal. It has been further reported that the Zanadiqa have fabricated a total of 14000 ahadith, a report which may or may not be credible. For a statement of this nature tends to arouse suspicion as to its veracity: even in fabricated matters, it is not a facile task to invent such a vast number of hadith on the subject of halal and haram.

### 4. Racial, Tribal and Linguistic Factionalism
Racial, tribal and linguistic factionalism is yet another context in which ahadith have been fabricated.

Ahadith were thus fabricated on the superiority of Arabs over non-Arabs, which were then reciprocated by forgeries on the superiority of Persians and Romans, Abyssinians and Turks over Arabs.

Note for example the following: "Whenever God was angry, He sent down the revelation in Arabic but when contented, He chose Persian for this purpose." The Arab fanatic too matched this anathema by claiming that "Whenever God was angry, He sent down the revelation in Persian, but when contented He chose to speak in Arabic."

## 5. On the virtues of certain tribes, cities and periods of time over others

These and similar other forgeries relating to the virtues or superiority of certain tribes, cities and periods of time over others have been isolated by the 'ulama' of hadith and placed under the category of al-mawdu'at.

## 6. Professional Storytellers and Preachers

Known among the classes of forgers are also professional story-tellers and preachers (al-qussas wa al-wa'izun) whose urge for popularity through arousing an emotional response in the audience led them to indulge in forgery. They made up stories and attributed them to the Prophet (pbuh). Included in these are the so called hadith:

- "The first thing that Allah created was the light (nur) of the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh)"
- "Allah revived the Prophet's (pbuh) parents and they embraced Islam before him."
- "Intercession is obligatory for one who is named by the name Muhammad"

It is reported that once a story-teller cited a hadith to an audience in the al Rusafa masjid of Baghdad on the authority of Ahmad b. Hanbal and Yahya b. Ma'in that 'Abd al-Razzaq b. Ma'mar reported from Qatada from Anas that the Prophet, peace be upon him, said: "Whoever says 'there is no god but Allah', Allah will reward him, for each word uttered, with a bird in Paradise, with its beak of gold and feathers of pearls." At the end of his long sermon, the speaker was confronted by Ahmad b. Hanbal and Yahya b. Ma'in who were present on the occasion and told the speaker that they never related any hadith of this kind. They were ridiculed and told that there were many reporters by those names and that he had come across "17 Ahmad b. Hanbal and Yahya b. Ma'in"

Another example is the so-called hadith: "There is no tree in Paradise without the following being written on every one of its leaves: laa ilaaha illAllah, Abu Bakr al-Siddiq, 'Umar al-Faruq wa 'Uthman Dhu'l-Nurayn"

## 7. Juristic and Theological Differences

Juristic and theological differences constitute another theme of forgery in hadith. The 'ulama' were thus divided into the Ahl al-Sunna, Mu'tazila, Jabriyya, Murji'a, etc., and they disagreed over many issues, such as the attributes of Allah, the definition of faith (iman), whether faith is only a state of mind or that it relates to both belief and conduct, whether faith is liable to increase of decrease, whether the Qur'an is created or uncreated and so forth. Some of these differences are known to have led to exaggerated statements, even forgery, in hadith.

This may be illustrated by the following statement attributed to the Prophet (pbuh) that "Whoever raises his hands during the performance of salah, his salah is null and void."

In yet another statement, we read: "Whoever says that the Qur'an is the created speech of Allah becomes an infidel … and his wife stands divorced from him as of that moment."

## 8. One of the worst forms of forgery on promoting good and forbidding evil using fake, fabricated and false reward and punishment descriptions

Another category of fabricated hadith is associated with the religious zeal of individuals whose devotion to Islam led them to careless ascription of hadith to the Prophet (pbuh).

This is illustrated by the forgeries committed by one, Nuh b. Abi Maryam on the virtues of the various Surahs of the Qur'an. He is said to have later regretted what he did and explained that he fabricated such hadith because he saw people who were turning away from the Qur'an and occupying themselves with the fiqh of Abu Hanifa and the battle stories of Muhammad b. Ishaq and that he did so as part of carrying out hisba, that is promoting good and forbidding evil, and that he "lied for the Prophet (pbuh) and not against him".

This is considered as one of the worst forms of forgery as it almost succeeds to be convincing and becomes difficult to isolate.

Numerous other names occur in the relevant literature, including those of Ghulam Khalil and Ibn Abi 'Ayyash of Baghdad, who were both known as pious individuals, but who invented hadith on devotional matters. Other examples of this kind include the so-called hadith that "the superiority of Rajab over other months is like the superiority of the Qur'an over other speech, and the superiority of Sha'ban over other months is like that of mine over other Prophets, and the superiority of the month of Ramadan is like that of Allah over His servants." Furthermore, it is stated that "there is a certain day and a night in Rajab if one observes a fast on that day and offers prayer in that night, it is equivalent to fasting and prayer for 100 years. This occurs during the last 3 days of Rajab. It was on this day that Allah sent Muhammad (pbuh) as Prophet (pbuh)."

## 9. Fabrication to Please Overlords

Other themes of hadith forgery include the urge on the part of courtiers who distorted hadith so as to please and flatter their overlords.

## 10. Fabrication on themes such as varieties of food, beverages, clothes and customary practices

Similarly, the desire to establish the permissibility or virtue of certain varieties of food, beverages, clothes and customary practices has led to forgery in the hadith. A number of fabricated ahadith have thus been recorded on the virtues of certain food items such as rice, lentils, aubergines, and places such as 'Asqalan, months of the year, days and even certain times of the day, and also of personal names such as Ahmad and Muhammad, etc.

**Selected quotations from the rest of this chapter have been quoted below after re-arrangement**

## 11. Fabrication in Fiqh, Usul al-Fiqh etc.

Forgeries have infiltrated many disciplines of Islamic learning, including fiqh, usul al-fiqh and tafsir. Jurists and 'ulama' who suffered from poverty of knowledge of hadith have often quoted hadith in their discussions which were subsequently identified to be fabrications and decidedly questionable…

…Another hadith which occurs in the works of usul al-fiqh and even usul al-hadith has been identified to be a fabrication of the Zanadiqa heretics; the hadith thus reads:

> When you find a hadith from me, refer it to the Book of Allah;
> if it conforms with it, take it but reject it if it disagrees with it.

Similarly the hadith which is quoted in some fiqh works to the effect that "My judgement on one is the same as on a multitude" – this has also been identified to be a fabrication.

Abu Shahba has discussed these and drawn the conclusion that "researchers and those who base their reasoning on hadith should not rely on hadith that occur in fiqh works without verifying the authenticity and soundness thereof"…

## 12. The use of Isra'iliyat etc. and non-strict checking of material outside of Ahkam (Judgements)

Qur'an commentaries (tafasir) in both the tafsir bi'l-ma'thur (commentary based on precedent) and tafsir bi'l-ra'y varieties have not escaped forgeries especially in regard to what is known as **Jewish anecdotes (Isra'iliyat).**

It is noted in this connection that prior to Islam when the Bedouin and illiterate strata of the Arabian people wanted to learn more about certain subjects such as:

    (i) **the origins of creation and its mysteries**,

    (ii) **turmoil** and

    (iii) **fitna**,

and so forth they asked the Jews and Christians who had known of such subjects from the **Torah and the Bible.** Later when these people converted to Islam they conveyed the information they had in their commentaries and elaborations on Qur'anic passages, especially on subjects **outside the area of ahkam** (Judgements). Some of the recognized names among the ahl al-kitab such as 'Abdullah b. Salam, Ka'b al-Ahbar, and Wahb b. Munabbih were famed for their anecdotes and stories some of which then found their way into the context of the Qur'anic commentaries. Since these were stories and anecdotes **outside the ahkam, their veracity was often overlooked.** "The Qur'an commentators treated these relatively lightly and filled their tafsir works with such anecdotes ..." that were of questionable origin and content.

The 'ulama' of hadith became so critical of such indiscriminate importation of **Isra'iliyat** into the body of tafasir that some of them, like Imam Ahmad b. Hanbal and Ibn Taymiyya openly denied their authenticity. Imam Ahmad b. Hanbal thus singled out "3 subjects which are obscure of origin:

    (i) **tafsir**,

    (ii) **tumults (al-malahim)** and

    (iii) **battle stories (al-maghazi)**."

There is little of hadith in these that can be found to be based on valid and properly connected isnad. They consist mainly of disconnected and isolated reports (munqati'at wa marasil) that some Companions and Followers took from the converts among the ahl al-kitab. Some of these discredited **isra'iliyat** have been (said to have been) reported by Companions such as 'Abdullah b. 'Abbas and Abdullah b. 'Amr b. Al-'As, often in sincerity and good faith which was, however, blemished by neglect as to the veracity and origin of their reports. The rule that applies to such information is as follows: If what the Companion has said is something that could not have originated in his own opinion, then it is called as Marfu' (elevated) on condition, however, that the Companion in question is not known to have been influenced by Isra'iliyat. If he is known to have been so influenced, then his saying and report may never be attributed to the Prophet (pbuh) nor should it be classified as Marfu'.

## 13. The fabricated hadith regarding the virtues of the various Surahs of the Qur'an

In Ibn Taymiyya's assessment "a significant portion of fabricated hadith have found their way into the tafsir works such as those of 'Abd-ur-Rahman al

Tha'alibi' (d. 875 H), 'Ali b. Ahmad al-Wahidi (d. 468 H) and al-Zamakhshari's Tafsir al-Kashshaf in the context especially of **the virtues of the various surahs of the Qur'an**. The 'ulama' of hadith are generally in agreement that these are altogether forgeries". Ibn Taymiyya went on to say that he had nothing to say personally against any of these, including al-Tha'alibi who was a pious man but he was like a "wood collector in the night" who collected the sound and the weak as well as the fabricated into his tafsir. Al-Wahidi was more knowledgeable of the Arabic language but was farther away from the chosen path of the predecessors (Al-salaf). Al-Baghawi's tafsir is shorter than that of al-Tha'alibi but much to his credit "he guarded his work against fabricated hadith and bid'a-oriented views."

## 14. The fabricated hadith regarding the occasions of revelation of the Qur'anic Ayaat

Much of the literature on **the occasions of revelation (asbab al-nuzul) of the Qur'anic Ayat** is similarly affected by forgeries. Even the well-respected Tafsir al-Tabari is affected by forgeries, and al-Suyuti (d. 911) has rendered a great service to evaluate and criticize it in his Al-Durr al-Manthur fi'l-Tafsir bi'l-Ma'thur. Suyuti's other work, Al-La'ali' al-Masnu'a fi'l-Ahadith al-Mawdu'a has identified and isolated the forgeries from many of these works. Tafsir al-Zamakhshari may not contain so much of the Isra'iliyat, yet it does contain forged hadith on the virtues of the Qur'an and its occasions of revelation. Tafsir al-Nasafi is similar to that of al-Zamakhshari in this regard except that it does not quote fabricated hadith on virtues of the Surahs of the Qur'an.

## 15. Forgeries regarding stories and reports of bygone nations

Tafsir al-Khazin contains a great many stories and reports of the bygone nations and tends to indulge in repeating the discredited **stories of Harut and Marut**, and those of **the Arab idols**, "**al-gharaniq**, and **the story-teller's version of Da'ud (David) and Sulaiman (Solomon).**" Among the tafasir that are reasonably clear of forgeries are Tafsir Ibn Kathir, Tafsir al-Fakhr al-Razi, Tafsir al-Alusi, the 20th century Tafsir al-Manar, and probably also some of the more recent tafasir. Tafsir Ibn Kathir tends to stand out for its avoidance of the mawdu'at and Isra'iliyat, and also for the attempt often to identify the source of the forgeries and their context.

## 16. Hadith fabrication regarding Tasawwuf/Mysticism/Sufism and Moral Teachings

Works on **Moral Teachings** and **Mysticism (tasawwuf)** have also been affected by forgeries as they too quoted fabricated hadith of unverified origin. Many works are cited in this connection, including, for example, the renowned Ihya' 'Ulum al-Din of Abu Hamid al-Ghazali. Al-Ghazali has quoted ahadith on the superiority of intellect (al-'aql) which have come in for criticism and the critics

maintain that nothing reliable on this subject exists in the hadith. There is much evidence in the Qur'an on the superiority of reason and Islam generally subscribes to that conclusion, but not through those so-called hadith.

## 17. Forged Hadith on the virtues of prayers and fasting during various days and nights of the week.

Al-Ghazali's work is also criticized for the forged ahadith it contains on the virtues of prayers during the various days and nights of the week. Al-Hafiz b. Husayn al-'Iraqi's (d.806) Al-Mughni 'an Haml al-Asfar fi'l-Asfar fi Takhrij ma fi'l-Ihya' min al-Akhbar enquired into this and drew the conclusion that "nothing sound exists in hadith on the days and nights of the week." Al-'Iraqi has inquired into the sound and weak hadith of the Ihya' and warned that the reader of Ihya' should not accept the hadith cited therein without consulting his ('Iraqi's) enquiry into them. 2 other books that Abu Shahba has discussed in this connection are al-Jilani's Ghunyat al-Talibin which he described to be "even more hazardous – ashaddu khataran – than al-Ihya', whereas Abu Talib al-Makki's Qut al-Qulub contains the least of mawdu'at among the 3."

## 18. Reference to personal interest and motive.

…signs of forgery in transmission are also detected by reference to **personal interest and motive**. An example of this is a so-called hadith narrated by Muhammad ibn al-Hajjaj al-Lakhmi which reads that "cookies (al-harisa) strengthen the spine" and it turns out that he used to sell al-harisa.

## 19. Most Traditions concerning Mahdi, Dajjal, Khidr

… (Muhammad Zubayr) Siddiqi then commented that "most of the traditions concerning the coming of Dajjal and the Mahdi, and those concerning Khidr in the various collections of hadith are declared by the traditionists as forged ones, and are included in the works on Mawdu'at".

## 20. Guarantee of Paradise based on a selected portion of obligatory religious duty only e.g only 2 of 5 obligatory prayers

…Among the extremists were also those who held that there were only 2 obligatory prayers (morning and evening) instead of normal 5.

(AI2 Comment: Now it is easy to understand this alleged hadith in Sahih Bukhari: Narrated Abu Bakr bin Abi Musa: My father said, "Allah's Messenger said, 'Whoever prays the two cool prayers ('Asr and Fajr) will go to Paradise.' " (Sahih Bukhari, Volume 1, Book 10, Number 548))

## Use of Caution in accepting material in the name of Hadith

Without wishing to burden this discussion with further detail it may merely be added that hardly any area of Islamic learning, including the renowned histories by Ibn al-Athir, al-Tabari, al-Mas'udi, and works on theology and kalam

as well as works in Arabic language and literature have escaped the cancerous spread of forgeries. Abu Shahba has discussed these and warned in almost every part that the reader should exercise caution in accepting them in the name of hadith. Hadith should only be quoted from its reliable sources, including the 6 collections and the Muwatta' of Imam Malik.

**Some signs of forgery in transmission**

Signs of forgery in transmission are identified mainly by reference to the reputation and biography of the transmitter. There is a wealth of literature on the names and biographies of the transmitters of hadith and those who are known to have indulged in lying and forgery. This information would normally be the first point of reference in identifying the signs of forgery in a particular hadith. Another useful tool that the 'ulama' have utilized in identifying forgery in the isnad is to ascertain the time factor and dates in the transmission of hadith. This is done by verifying whether the reporter has actually met the person he has quoted as his immediate source or that personal contact between them had neither occurred nor was possible. When the transmitter mentions, for example, that he heard so and so in such and such a place reporting such a hadith then the question of geographical location and verifying the facts as to whether they lived in the same period or generation become of vital significance in ascertaining signs of forgery in the chain of transmission. Forgery in isnad is also known sometimes by admission of the forger, such as the confession made by Maysara b. 'Abd Rabbih al-Farisi who admitted forging hadith on virtues of the Qur'an. Similarly, when the transmitter is known for lying and his hadith stands alone in that no one else has reported it – this would be another way of detecting forgery in hadith. ]

[**A Textbook of Hadith Studies – Authenticity, Compilation, Classification and Criticism of Hadith by Mohammad Hashim Kamali.  (Selections from Chapter 20 Conclusion and Reform Proposals)**

**More attention paid to isnad analysis and less attention to matan analysis**

One tends to notice a certain degree of imbalance in the kind of attention that hadith scholars have paid to matters of transmission and isnad as opposed to the text or matn of hadith. Hadith experts clearly paid greater attention to the former (i.e. isnad) at the expense, to some extent, of the latter (i.e. matn). The accuracy of the hadith text and its harmony or otherwise with the Qur'an and Principles of Islam that had a wider basis of support in the hadith itself did not receive a commensurate level of attention from the hadith scholars.

Ahmad Amin wrote that the upsurge of scholarly activities during the early 'Abbasid period was particularly noted in the collection and compilation of hadith. Hadith scholars were distinguished for their untiring efforts to isolate the weak

and doubtful from the reliable narrators of hadith and as a result a careful methodology of hadith criticism was developed. A certain degree of imbalance had, however, set in, as from the early days of this movement, between the external criticism (al-naqd al-khariji) of the isnad of hadith in which the hadith scholars undoubtedly excelled, and its internal criticism (al-naqd al-dakhili). **The subject matter and content of hadith were not scrutinized in the light of the prevailing socio-political realities**. This would have helped ascertain the context, for example, concerning ahadith which **spoke for or against** the **ruling dynasties** or other **partisan movements**, and the pressure they might have generated. Had the hadith scholars undertaken the internal scrutiny of the text in conjunction with these realities, one would have expected that much of the alleged hadith in the context of **personality cult** that **praised or denigrated individuals, tribes, places and communities** would have been verified and isolated at an early stage.

**Labeling of non-mutawatir hadith as mutawatir hadith**

Mahmud Shaltut is critical of what he calls a "strange phenomenon that has become widespread among people," which is the **attribution of tawatur** to ahadith that do not fulfill the conditions of tawatur but have been included in the category of mutawatir because of their diffusion and frequent occurrence in the works of the 'ulama'. This tendency has found expression in some of the Qur'an commentaries and works on hadith and history. People have been affected by this tendency so much so that "**long lists of names of Companions and Followers**, authors and Imams who are frequently quoted by the hadith transmitters are mentioned, despite the knowledge that the reports in question are weak and cannot stand the test of scrutiny and criticism. Some of these names which are enthusiastically put together are also found in fabricated ahadith, yet they are quoted nevertheless … so as to mislead the general public and exploit their religious sentiment." The proponents of this tendency try hard to show that the reports in question are the words of the Prophet (pbuh). Since they have been quoted and re-quoted by many from a large number of Companions and Followers, they become mutawatir without any doubt. "Then anyone who criticizes the hadith in question or scrutinizes its authenticity is misguided and has deviated from the way of the believers."

Among the causes of "this phenomenon", Shaltut explains, one may be that a particular hadith became well-known in 1 or 2 of its links (tabaqat) which is then assumed for all of its links and the hadith is consequently labeled as mutawatir or mashhur without due scrutiny and investigation. It is also possible that a hadith has not become well-known at any one of the links or generations but has become the focus of attention by juristic or theological groups, and those who quoted it in support of their position labeled the hadith either as mashhur or mutawatir and their scholastic literature continued to portray it as such. The fact

that the hadith in question was neither of these to begin with was consequently ignored.

**Story-tellers** and those who occupied themselves with targhib and tarhib (**encouragement and warning**) and the narrators of **tumults and upheavals** (al-malahim wal-fitan) also played a major role in **the labeling of hadith as mutawatir and mashhur.** This has happened not only with regard to doubtful ahadith but also hadith that was neither sound nor acceptable in the first place. Shaltut has in this connection quoted a brief statement of the Imam Ahmad b. Hanbal who said that "there are **4 ahadith**, which circulate among people in towns and bazaars, which have, however, **no basis at all** (laa asla lahaa). People who took such ahadith to their hearts had no knowledge of their authenticity nor origin and simply kept repeating them until they became popular. They became careless to the extent of including "weak and even fabricated ahadith" and did not hesitate to designate solitary reports as mutawatir, and weak hadith as sound and Sahih. Shaltut goes on to specify certain themes such as those of mahdi, dajjal, splitting of the moon (inshiqaq al-qamar) in which weak reports have been ascribed the attributes of mashhur and mutawatir.

**Shi'i concept of Ahad Hadith and some other issues**

The Shi'i understanding of hadith also differs somewhat to that of their Sunni counterparts in that the Shi'is include the sayings of their recognized 12 Imams in the general body of hadith. 2 of these imams who feature most prominently in this connection are the 5th and 6th Imams, Muhammad al-Baqir and Ja'far al-Sadiq.

Shi'i scholars have also expressed reservations over the existence of questionable material in their hadith collections as well as over the reliability of Ahad hadith in religious matters. They have on the whole maintained that all obligatory duties of Islam and its injunctions concerning faith and 'ibada need to be proven as a matter of certainty either by the authority of the Qur'an or the authentic Sunna of the Prophet (pbuh). The Ahad hadith can only establish a probability which falls below the level of certainty; it can establish a decisive ruling of the Shari'a only when it can find confirmation and support in the Qur'an.

The definition of Ahad Hadith in Shi'i jurisprudence is not different from its Sunni definition. Ahad is thus a hadith which has not reached the level of continuous testimony or tawatur even if it is narrated by several narrators, say 5 or 6, but still falls below the level of Mutawatir. Only the Mutawatir can establish positive knowledge on its own. There may be some differences of opinion among individual Shi'i scholars on the authority of Ahad, yet the majority Shi'i opinion is that no one may take a decisive stand in matters of religion on the basis only of

Ahad hadith unless there be supportive circumstantial evidence to confirm its authenticity and truth.

**The 'ulama' of hadith have generally been less critical of hadith outside ahkam (judgements)**

Yusuf al-Qaradawi has drawn attention to weak ahadith in the category especially of **encouragement and warning** (al-targhib wa'l-tarhib) that do not, on the whole, contain specific rulings (ahkam) but are nevertheless a cause for concern. This is because the 'ulama' of hadith have generally been less critical of this type of hadith, which has in turn tended to undermine the reliability of hadith generally. Although the 'ulama' of hadith have specified certain conditions for admissibility of this type of hadith, even so, an uncritical acceptance of such hadith can be seen is books and chapters of **moral teachings, spirituality and mysticism.** Al-Qaradawi then draws attention to the fact that works on Qur'an exegesis (**tafsir**) are also not free of weak hadith and even forgeries on such themes as **superiority and virtue of the Surahs and Ayaat of the Qur'an**.]

[**More Ideas:**
The ideas of Muhammad Zubayr Siddiqi, Al-Qaradawi, and Muhammad Hashim Kamali have been extracted with minor editing by me from Chapter 20, Conclusion and Reform Proposals of A Textbook of Hadith studies: Authenticity, Compilation, Classification and Criticism of Hadith by Muhammad Hashim Kamali, 2005.

**1. Compilation of a standard collection of completely authentic traditions - Muhammad Zubayr Siddiqi:**
In the very last paragraph of his book, Hadith Literature, its origins, development and special features (original unedited 1961 edition), Siddiqi wrote that there was enough material available for the "compilation of a standard collection of completely authentic traditions out of the already generally accepted compilations". This he added was "a tremendous task" but achievable by applying to each hadith the principles that have been laid down and agreed by the great scholars and compilers of hadith themselves.

**2. No less than 3 encyclopedias on Hadith - Al-Qaradawi**
In the concluding remarks in his book Kayfa Nata'amal Ma'a al-Sunna al-Nabawiya (How should we treat the Sunna of the Prophet (peace be upon him)) al-Qaradawi has stressed the need for compilation of no less than 3 encyclopedias on hadith.

**i. A comprehensive encyclopedia on the narrators of Hadith**

The 1st of these is to compile a comprehensive encyclopedia on the narrators of Hadith (mawsu'a shamila li-rijal al-hadith) and their biographies which is inclusive and exhaustive of all of the hadith narrators. Anyone who has been described and identified, whether as trustworthy or weak, including even the fabricators and liars should be included.

**ii. A comprehensive encyclopedia containing each and every Hadith attributed to Prophet (peace be upon him) with full chain of transmission:**
A 2nd encyclopedia is then proposed for the textual subject matter of hadith, including their chains of transmission, whether one or more. The work should again be comprehensive and exhaustive of all hadith that is attributed to the Prophet (peace be upon him), everything in the Sunna that is available in documented materials from the beinning down to the latter 3rd of the 5th century of the hijra.

**iii. Encyclopedia containing only Sahih and Hasan Ahadith derived after applying the strict & scientific checking and gradation criteria:**
The 3rd encyclopedia that is proposed here is devoted exclusively to sahih and hasan ahadith, which are derived from the other 2 collections proposed above in accordance with the strict and scientific criteria that have been laid down for this purpose by the leading hadith scholars and researchers of the past, and those among contemporary experts that enjoy the trust and confidence of the umma.

The 3 encyclopedias that are proposed, al-Qaradawi added, should be compiled with the new methods of classification and should have a comprehensive index. They should be compiled in line with the overriding objective of providing the basic tools and a source of benefit for research in all spheres of religion, social sciences and humanities, and practically all areas of knowledge that are addressed by the Sunna. All of this should be done with the aid of modern facilities, especially the computer, which is now a source of great benefit and enables the contemporary generation to aim at levels of accomplishment that their predecessors were not able to achieve, nor even think of achieving.

Hashim Kamali says later in this chapter... I now feel that a thorough review and comprehensive approach along the lines al-Qaradawi has suggested is preferable and would naturally demand greater credibility. This is truly a challenging task but it is necessary if one is to hope for setting aside, hopefully once and for all, the incessant controversy that has persisted over the authenticity of hadith and accuracy of its text, message and purpose. If I were to suggest an adjustment in the conventional methodology of hadith criticism, it would be to pay balanced attention to the verification of both the isnad and matn, and not the one at the expense of the other. Greater attention would thus have to be paid to the question of internal harmony between Sunna itself and then of the Sunna with

the Qur'an, and also the broad and general principles of Shari'a that are derived from the overall reading of these sources.

### 3. Muhammad Hashim Kamali's ideas:

**i.** …The need for uniformity and consensus on the basis of **a comprehensive and conveniently accessible collection of hadith**…(comments : the consensus can only be obtained after an exhaustive, all-Hadith-encompassing, open and freely and easily accessible database with tools which allow easy research e.g. with use of computer software technology)

**ii.** i. …A (separate) **Specialized collection on legal Ahadith**…especially in the sphere of legal injunctions (ahkam) and the need for uniformity and consensus on the basis of a comprehensive and conveniently accessible collection of hadith. This might mean a separate collection of ahadith al-ahkam that could be utilized as a reference work on Shari'a related themes by jurists, legislators and judges…

**iii.** Commenting after discussing various ideas proposed on Hadith, Hashim Kamali continues on to say "…The wider project that is undertaken as a result should naturally draw on the best expertise and resources as are available at the dawn of the 21st century so that it becomes a source of inspiration and invigorated learning for generations of Muslims to come. It would, in my opinion, be an act of outstanding academic and spiritual merit and a most valuable service that Islamic scholarship can give to the ummah of the 21st century. What is proposed to be undertaken in this way would bear **credible resemblance to the 3rd Caliph 'Uthmaan's (RA) initiative so long ago for the authentication of the text of the Qur'an** and the decision which he consequently took to validate only the authentic text to the exclusion of all variant versions of the Holy Book. *(my note: there were only minor reading differences and not differences in basic text, but for unity and accuracy, the most accurate of the accurate text and reading and the most authentic of the authentic text and reading was chosen after authentic research carried out on orders of the 3rd Caliph. An excellent activity, indeed under his caliphate)* . For the purpose solely of uniformity, the Caliph actually issued orders that all variant versions of the Qur'an be burnt and destroyed. Depending on the nature of the result, participation and support that is realized for this project *(on Hadith whish is proposed)*, one may even be able, in due course, to invoke the support of **general consensus (Ijma)** for it provided that the explicit approval of the learned councils, acedemies, and individuals in the Muslim world is duly solicted and obtained.

**iv. Hashim Kamali suggests more Matn analysis:** According to him: One tends to notice a certain degree of imbalance in the kind of attention that hadtith scholars have paid to matters of transmission and isnad as opposed to the text or matn of hadith. Hadith experts clearly paid greater attention to the former (i.e.

isnad) at the expense, to some extent, of the latter (i.e. matn). The accuracy of hadith text and its harmony or otherwise with the Qur'an and principles of Islam that had a wider basis of support in the hadith itself did not receive a commensurate level of attention from the hadith scholars.

The ideas by Dr Ahmed Shafaat have been taken from his site islamicperspectives.com

**4. Some ideas by Dr Ahmed Shafaat summarized by me with my own words:**

**i. Mountain Climbing Approach Idea:**
…A "mountain-climbing approach": In climbing a mountain a hiker first finds a secure place to put his foot; then from that point he searches or constructs another secure place to climb to, and so on…"
**Comments by me:**
Start with the Qur'an. Then the established Sunnah, then the strongest Ahadith and so on…

**ii. Regulatory, Teaching and Circumstantial Hadith idea:**

**Regulatory:** Those which record sayings or actions of the Prophet (pbuh) that regulated the life of the Muslim community.

**Teaching:** Those which record words and actions of the Prophet (pbuh) that were spoken/done in the presence of individuals or small groups and were aimed at their religious, spiritual and/or moral education.

**Circumstantial:** Those sayings and actions of the Prophet (pbuh) that he spoke/did in the capacity of an individual living in a certain time, place, and culture.

These extracts from the quoted books have been brought to you by:

Slave of ALLAH,
Asim Iqbal 2nd
**http://asimiqbal2nd.110mb.com**

In case the website is not accessible, email me at asimiqbal2nd @ live.com to get new site address.