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AN EVALUATION OF TIRMIDHĪ'S CONTRIBUTION TOWARDS ISLAMIC
TRADITION

by

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Introduction

Importance of the Traditions

The word Hadîth (pl. Aḥādîth) varies in meaning according to its context in the Arabic language. Literally it implies a conversation, speech or discussion.¹ However in the Islamic context Hadîth refers to the sayings of Prophet Muḥammad² (b. 570-d. 632 A.D.). For example, "There is no Zakât (poor-due) on less than five camels",³; or his deeds⁴: 'A'isha, (d.57 A.H.),⁵ the wife of the Prophet, said that he used to kiss some of his wives whilst fasting⁶; or his tacit approval⁷: 'A'isha reports that the Prophet did not object to her lying down in front of him whilst he was engaged in prayer⁸; or his features⁹: Anas b. Mālik (d. 91 A.H.), who was the attendant of the Prophet, describes him as a man not excessively tall or short, nor pallid or dark in complexion¹⁰; or his character¹¹: 'A'isha describes the Prophet as a man who did not take revenge for himself unless the limits of Allāh were violated.¹²

Every Hadîth consists of two parts. The first contains the names of the persons who have handed down the substance of the tradition to one another; this part is called the **Sanad**, which is the support for the reliability of the statement. The second part is the **Matn** (text)—the real substance of the report.¹³

The term Hadîth is more general in meaning than **Sunna**, since **Sunna** contains the actions, sayings, tacit approval and character of the Prophet. Hadîth, besides including the aforementioned,

also comprises statements of the Prophet which were abrogated and descriptions of his physical features.¹⁴

The Muslim scholars are unanimous that the authority of the Qur'ān is binding on all Muslims irrespective of place or time. Likewise they agree that the authority of the Prophet, which is established by the Qur'ān, is second only to that of Allāh.¹⁵

The Prophet was instructed by Allāh to explicate the Qur'ān to the masses and to provide guidance for them: Allāh says, "And We have revealed unto thee the Remembrance, that thou mayest explain to mankind that which hath been revealed for them, and that haply they may reflect". (Qur'ān 16:44)¹⁶ To accept the Prophet as a judge is one of the conditions of faith. The Qur'ān states, "But nay, by thy Lord, they will not believe (in truth) until they make thee judge of what is in dispute between them and find within themselves no dislike of that which thou decidest, and submit with full submission". (4:65)¹⁷ "The saying of (all true) believers when they appeal unto Allāh and His messenger to judge between them is only that they say: We hear and we obey. And such are the successful". (24:51)¹⁸ "O ye who believe! Obey Allāh, and obey the messenger and those of you who are in authority; and if ye have a dispute concerning any matter, refer it to Allāh and the messenger if ye are (in truth) believers in Allāh and the Last Day. That is better and more seemly in the end". (4:59)¹⁹

Furthermore, the status of the Prophet as a lawgiver is established by the following verses in the Qur'ān. Allāh says: "And obey Allāh and the Messenger, that ye may find mercy". (3:132)²⁰

"And it becometh not a believing man or a believing woman, when Allāh and His messenger have decided an affair (for them), that they should (after that) claim any say in their affair; and whoso is rebellious to Allāh and His messenger, he verily goeth astray in error manifest". (33:36)²¹ "And whatsoever the messenger giveth you, take it. And whatsoever he forbiddeth, abstain (from it)". (59:7)²² The abovementioned Qur'ānic verses entrench the Prophet's status as a lawgiver and make it binding upon Muslim individuals, communities and states to obey him.²³

The spirit of disregarding traditions or dismissing them as a fundamental source of Islamic Law would obviously amount to the dismissal of the Prophet's status as legislator and a conscious attempt to breed conspiracy against the Sunna of the Prophet.²⁴

The Present State of Research Concerning Tirmidhī

Hadīth is the second principal source of Islamic legislation after the Qur'ān and holds an important position in Islamic Studies. A number of books have been written on Hadīth, both in Muslim and Orientalist circles regarding its recording, authenticity and criticism.²⁵ However, in comparison with Arabic poetry the subject of Hadīth has not attracted many Orientalists. The number of publications on Hadīth are still within such a limit that a single compiler, with some effort, could compile most of the relevant information in the form of a bibliography.²⁶

One of the main reasons for the Orientalists paying scant attention to Hadīth is that, since Ignaz Goldziher published his

work on Hadîth entitled Muhammedanische Studien in 1889-1890, it has become a major source for Orientalists on Hadîth. Most of the Orientalists were overwhelmingly influenced by his writing. Thus, the views of the Orientalists appear to have been decided once and for all by him,²⁷ so much so that Alfred Guillaume in his preface of The Traditions of Islam wrote that Goldziher's Muhammedanische Studien must form the basis of any work on Hadîth literature.²⁸ However, new ground has been broken by modern day scholars.²⁹

It has been noticed that Orientalist and Muslim works on Islam in relation to the corpus of Hadîth literature focussed more on the compilations of Bukhârî (b.194-d.256 A.H.) and Muslim (b. 206-d.261 A.H.) rather than that of Tirmidhî (b. 209-d.279 A.H.). The only work on Tirmidhî's Jâmi' in the English language and published in 1954 is The Transmission of Tirmidhî's Jâmi' by James Robson.³⁰ In comparison, the list of contents of Sahîh Bukhârî and some select translations from Sahîh Muslim were published by Hammer Purgstall in the first few decades of the 19th century.³¹

As yet, there is no complete translation of Tirmidhî's Jâmi' in the English language, whereas a complete English translation of Sahîh Bukhârî was undertaken by Muhammad Muhsin Khân and published in nine volumes in 1971 by the Islamic University of Madina, Saudi Arabia. Likewise the entire Sahîh Muslim was rendered into English by 'Abd al-Hamîd Siddîqî and published in

four volumes in 1976 in Lahore, Pakistan. These are the well known contributions in the field of Hadīth by Muslim scholars.³²

Some Orientalists researched and or translated specific aspects from the collections of Bukhārī and Muslim. Joseph Schacht translated certain parts of Sahīh Bukhārī and Sahīh Muslim and titled them *Aus der Traditionssammlung des al-Bukhārī* and *Aus der Traditionssammlung des Muslim*, respectively.³³ Besides Schacht, Oscar Rescher also researched Sahīh Bukhārī and Sahīh Muslim. He compiled a lexicon of Bukhārī's collection and translated the traditions relating to war from Sahīh Muslim.³⁴ Other prominent Orientalists who researched Sahīh Bukhārī or Sahīh Muslim were A.J. Arberry and J. Robson. Arberry's work on Sahīh Bukhārī was named *The Teachers of Bukhārī*³⁵ and Robson's *The Transmission of Muslim's Sahīh*.³⁶

The most famous Orientalist scholar on Hadīth, I. Goldziher also researched on Sahīh Bukhārī and named it *Chatm al Buchari*.³⁷ Another Orientalist, Arthur Jeffery rendered "The Section on Fasting" from Sahīh Bukhārī into English.³⁸ The first complete translation of Sahīh Bukhārī in an European language (French) was undertaken by O. Houdas and W. Marcais and published in four volumes in Paris in 1903-1914.³⁹

The reason scholars gave Bukhārī and Muslim's collections preference over the other collections of Hadīth is their being unanimously considered as the most authentic books of Hadīth.⁴⁰ Thus, when a tradition is accepted by Bukhārī and Muslim and included in their respective collections, it is named "agreed

upon".⁴¹ However, it should be borne in mind that when scholars say that Sahîh Bukhârî and Sahîh Muslim are the most authentic compilations of Hadîth, it has a general implication and does not imply that every tradition in these books is superior to the traditions in other compilations.⁴²

E. M. Mahida and Gerrie Lubbe in their respective Bibliographies make no mention of any scholarly work on Hadîth undertaken in South Africa.⁴³ The six canonical works, namely, Sahîh Bukhârî, Sahîh Muslim, Sunan Abû Dâwûd, Sunan Nasâ'î, Jâmi' Tirmidhî and Sunan Ibn Mâja are included in the syllabi of the various Muslim Seminaries in this country. It should not be forgotten that most of the lecturers in these seminaries graduated from the Indo-Pak sub-continent. The seminaries in India and Pakistan lay more emphasis on Sahîh Bukhârî and Tirmidhî's Jâmi' than on any other compilation of Hadîth.⁴⁴ Since this is done in India and Pakistan, the same approach is adopted here. Most students who study in these seminaries understand English better than any other language. Thus, this thesis fulfils a crucial need at the present time, when Islam is becoming articulate in South Africa.

The Composition of this Thesis

This thesis consists of five chapters in addition to a glossary. Chapter one opens with a discussion on the personal life of Tirmidhî. Herein biographical details of Tirmidhî himself are discussed and the intellectual climate of his era is also mentioned. This is followed by an elucidation of his academic

career, which traces the beginning of his studies, the places he travelled to and the persons under whom he studied. Mention is also made of his students and which school of jurisprudence he aligned himself to. The survey on Tirmidhî's academic career concludes with a mention of the texts written by him. Chapter one ends with a mention of the death of Tirmidhî and comments of different scholars on him and his works. Since the Jāmi' is Tirmidhî's magnum opus, it is discussed in chapter two.

The second chapter discusses the aim of compiling the Jāmi'. This is followed by an evaluation of the seven editions of the Jāmi' available at the time of writing this thesis. An appraisal of their advantages and disadvantages has also been undertaken and is followed by an analysis of the manuscripts and commentaries of the Jāmi'. This chapter concludes with a mention of the different narrations of the Jāmi'.

After a perusal of the Jāmi' it becomes apparent that Tirmidhî is unique in his conditions for the acceptance of Aḥādīth and its terminology. Hence his conditions for acceptance in comparison with those of other traditionists is undertaken in chapter three. Prior to comparing the conditions of acceptance of other traditionists and those of Tirmidhî, the need for traditions, their authenticity and the method of determining their reliability is assessed.

The terminology of Tirmidhî is discussed in chapter four. This chapter opens with a review on the Ṣaḥīḥ (sound), Ḥasan (good) and Da'īf (weak) types of Ḥadīth, and a few principles

related to the science of Hadîth, since an understanding of these principles enhances the understanding of his terminology.

In chapter five translations of four selected Ahādîth from the Jāmi' are presented, preceded by the Arabic text, which highlights the terminology of Tirmidhî. Tirmidhî's evaluation of Hadîth has caused some concern among the traditionists, hence this chapter concludes with a review of this matter.

The Method of Transliteration

The definite article "al" has been omitted for names that are commonly used in this study. For example, the following names appear without "al": Suyûtî, Dhahabî, Shāfi'î, Nasā'î, Tirmidhî and Jāmi'. The Arabic terms will be explained at the first occurrence and in the glossary.

The Consonants in the usual sequence⁴⁵

‘, b, t, th, j, h, kh, d, dh, r, z, s, sh, s, d, t, z, ‘, gh, f, q, k, l, m, n, h, w, y.

List of Abbreviations

1. The letter "b." refers to "Ibn" which means "son of".
2. "Al-Imām al-Tirmidhî" of M.H. Mukhtār alludes to his doctoral thesis entitled "Al-Imām al-Tirmidhî Wa-takhrîj Kitāb al-Tahāra Min Jāmi'ihî".
3. "Al-Imām al-Tirmidhî" of Dr. 'Itar refers to his doctoral thesis entitled "Al-Imām al-Tirmidhî Wa-al-Muwāzana Bayna Jāmi'ihî Wa-Bayna al-Shāhīhayn".

4. Tirmidhī's *Sunan* refers to the work edited by Ahmad Muhammad Shākir, Muhammad Fu'ād 'Abd al-Bāqī and Kamāl Yūsuf al-Hūt. This work has been used throughout the text, unless otherwise specified.

5. The *Shorter Encyclopaedia of Islam* alludes to the work edited by H.A.R. Gibb and J.H. Kramers.

6. "A.H." alludes to "After Hijra", the migration of the Prophet from Makka to Madina, marking the starting point of the Islamic calendar.



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Introduction

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3. Mālik: Al-Muwatta, Cambridge, 1982, p. 121.
4. Sa'id: op. cit., p. 28.
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45. The consonant alif is not written with the usual transliterated (') when a word begins with it, for example, "**Ahādīth**".



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Chapter One

A Biography of Tirmidhî and a Brief Survey of His Works

Personal Information

Tirmidhî's¹ Ism (proper name) was Muhammad. His Nasab (full name including his genealogical chain) was; Muhammad b. 'Isâ² b. Thawra b. Mūsā b. al-Dahhak.³ Tirmidhî's⁴ kunya⁵ (honorific name) was Abū 'Isā. Certain scholars raised objections regarding his kunya, since there is a tradition in the Musannaf of Ibn Abū Shaiba,⁶ (a particular type of Hadīth book) where Prophet Muhammad reprimanded someone whose name was Abū 'Isā, by saying that 'Isā had no father, implying that it was not becoming to keep the kunya Abū 'Isā. Hence the question arises regarding Tirmidhî's doing so. The permissibility for this practice is established in Sunan Abū Dāwūd,⁷ where it is narrated that Mughīra b. Sh'uba (d.50 A.H.) who was a companion of the Prophet, had the kunya Abū 'Isā. Once, 'Umar b. Khattāb (d.24 A.H.) the second Caliph of Islam rebuked him by saying, "Does it not suffice you to be called Abū 'Abd Allāh". Mughīra replied, "It was the Prophet of Allāh who gave me this kunya". This incident proves that the prohibition was abrogated since the Hadīth in which the Prophet prohibited the usage of the kunya was prior to the one in which he gave permission for its usage, hence the permission coming after the prohibition abrogates it.⁸

Muhammad Yūsuf Binnawrī (d. 1397 A.H.), a commentator on the Jāmi', said that Tirmidhî was born in Bōgh in the year 209 A.H.⁹

He belonged to the Banū Sulaym tribe, hence he was called Sulamī. His native town Būgh is a few miles from Tirmidh and is considered a suburb of Tirmidh. Therefore he was known as Tirmidhī and Būghī,¹⁰ both places being in Khurasan, which is presently a province in North Eastern Iran,¹¹ and it is with the nisba (linking him to his place of origin) Tirmidhī, that he is well known. The aforementioned biographer of Tirmidhī does not mention any details of his parents. Tirmidhī is reported to have said that his grandfather belonged to Marw but he subsequently moved to Tirmidh.¹² Likewise, no mention is made of Tirmidhī's early life or occupation.

Tirmidhī was a man of strong memory. James Robson¹³ mentions an interesting story which illustrates his power of committing traditions to memory. Once on the way to Makka, Tirmidhī met a traditionist from whose traditions he had previously copied out two parts. Thinking he had these notes with him, he questioned the traditionist about the traditions, which he had noted, but discovered that instead of his notes, he had brought some blank sheets of paper. Nonetheless he continued his questions with these sheets in his hand, and after a while the traditionist noticed that they were blank and rebuked him, whereupon Tirmidhī assured him that he knew the traditions by heart. The traditionist was not convinced of his genuineness, even though Tirmidhī recited the traditions to him, so Tirmidhī asked him to recite some other traditions. The traditionist recited forty traditions which Tirmidhī repeated without making a single error,

thus showing his remarkable power of committing traditions to memory.

Rashīd Ahmad Gangohī (d. 1323 A.H.), a commentator on the *Jāmi'*, said that Tirmidhī was born blind.¹⁴ This opinion is erroneous since Dhahabī (d. 748 A.H.) and the majority of the scholars agree that his blindness occurred during the latter portion of his life and he remained blind for two years. Hence he was commonly referred to as al-Darīr (blind). His blindness is usually attributed to his weeping over Bukhārī's death (d. 256 A.H.) or his excessive weeping for the fear of Allāh.¹⁵

The Socio-Political Context of Tirmidhī's Work

Tirmidhī was born during the Abbasid Caliphate, when al-Ma'mūn b. Hārūn al-Rashīd (d. 218 A.H.) was the ruler of the Muslim Empire. According to Suyūṭī (d. 911 A.H.), Ma'mūn himself was an eminent scholar having great skills in Arabic, History, Philosophy and Islamic Jurisprudence.¹⁶

The Abbasid period, despite its brilliant contributions to the Islamic culture, its consolidation, institutionalisation and centralisation, brought along thorny problems. The translations of the Greek scientific and philosophical works, which started from the second century continued until the fourth century A.H. From Caliph Manṣūr (d. 158 A.H.) down to al-Ma'mūn (d. 218 A.H.), Greek philosophy had a free flow in the Islamic world for it enjoyed the royal patronage under the latter who declared the Mu'tazilite school as the state religion and regarded its

opposition as treason against the state. The works of Plato, Hippocrates, Galen, Euclid, Ptolemy and others were sent to him at his request by the kings of Greece. Muslim scholars were instructed by Ma'mūn to advocate and promote Greek philosophy in the kingdom. All the Greek works translated into Arabic were subsequently transmitted to Europe through Latin translations.¹⁷ Thus Greek philosophy by its total rejection of religious eschatology posed the greatest challenge to the Islamic Sharī'a (law) and created scepticism and uncertainty in the existence of Allāh, revelation, resurrection and in the institution of Prophethood, as a liaison between man and Divinity. Neither the scholars nor the laity remained unaffected by these sceptical ideas.¹⁸

Some of the Muslim philosophers started equating the Prophetic teachings with those of the metaphysical speculations of Greek philosophy. Ibn Sīnā equated the soul of the Prophets with common souls, granting it, although grudgingly, certain extra faculties. Farabī, unfortunately, considered Prophethood as a kind of dream and he was followed by other Muslim philosophers who also tried to reconcile reason and revelation. Some of the philosophers did not distinguish between the teachings of the Prophet and those of philosophers. Such duplicity and confusion can be discerned in the works of Ibn Sīnā and his followers. These ideas, consequently, misled many innocent believers and shook the faith of many others in Allāh and His Prophet.¹⁹

Many sects which claimed to be Muslims, were in fact hypocrites and always remained on the borderline of faith. The most threatening and all pervasive was the Mu'tazilite sect, an offshoot of Greek philosophy formed by Wāsil b. 'Atā (d. 131 A.H.), which separated from the resurgent school of Hasan al-Basrī (d. 110 A.H.) in the first century of Islam. Wāsil founded his own school in order to challenge the fundamentals of Islam. The Mu'tazilites did not merely deny the eternal attributes of Allāh but regarded the Qur'ān as being created and liable to perish.²⁰

The nonconformist movements gave rise to the resurgent movements which came to the fore to defend the Sharī'a. The Sharī'a is a combination of the teachings of the Qur'ān, the traditions of the Prophet and a way of life chosen by Allāh for mankind. The Qur'ān and the Prophetic Traditions, being the primary sources of Islamic Law, are guides for man. The major conformist sect in Islam was called the Ahl-al-Sunna-wa-al-Jamā'a (people who follow the way of the Prophet).²¹

The war between reason and revelation continued unceasing. The legitimate fear of interpolations and distortions of the Islamic Sharī'a by both the rationalists and heretics was quite prominent. Forgeries were already committed to the corpus of Prophetic Traditions by the heretics and corrupt politicians, including the caliphs and rulers, in order to further their personal aims and ambitions.²²

Scholars and fundamentalists came to the fore to safeguard Islamic learning and to make distinctions between the spurious

and the genuine traditions. A movement was initiated in the first century by Caliph 'Umar b. 'Abd al-'Azīz (d. 101 A. H.), who was known as 'Umar II for his justness, for the compilation of Prophetic Traditions. This gigantic task was further undertaken by six towering scholars of Islam, namely;

1. Muḥammad b. Ismā'il al-Bukhārī (b.194-d.256 A.H.)
2. Muslim b. Hajjāj (b.206-d.261 A.H.)
3. Abū 'Abd Allāh Muḥammad b. Māja (b.209-d.273 A.H.)
4. Abū Dāwūd al-Sajastānī (b.202-d.275 A.H.)
5. Abū 'Isā Muḥammad al-Tirmidhī (b.209 -d.279 A.H.)
6. Abū 'Abd al-Rahmān al-Nasā'ī (b.214-d.304 A.H.)

The aforementioned personalities compiled the six authentic collections of Aḥādīth which subsequently became the final and authentic version for general guidance.²³

Major Centres of Learning

Kufa was considered as a major centre for Hadīth Sciences from the time Caliph 'Umar (d. 24 A.H.) sent 'Abd Allāh Ibn Mas'ūd (d. 32 A.H.), the sixth person to embrace Islam, as a tutor to the people of Kufa. The approximate number of students who attended Ibn Mas'ūd's discourses were 4,000. Besides Ibn Mas'ūd, there were other illustrious companions of the Prophet who resided in Kufa, prominent among them being Abū Mūsā al-Ash'arī (d. 31 A.H.), Salmān al-Fārsī (d.35 A.H.), 'Ammār b. Yāsir (d.37 A.H.),

Huzaifa b. Yamān (d.35 A.H.) and S'ad b. Abū Waqqās (d.55 A.H.). Therefore, on one occasion referring to Kufa, Alī b. Abū Tālib (d. 40 A.H.), the fourth Caliph of Islam remarked, "The companions of Ibn Mas'ūd are the lanterns of this Umma (muslim community)".²⁴ Since the famous traditionists were stationed in Kufa, Bukhārī said that he cannot even count how often he accompanied the traditionists to Kufa and Baghdad.²⁵ That Kufa was a major centre of learning and contained many scholars is evidenced from the fact that Tirmidhī reported traditions from forty-two Kufan teachers. More teachers from Kufa were reported by him than from any other town.²⁶

Baghdad was also considered as a major centre of learning. A.J. Wensinck has mentioned that Ahmad b. Hanbal (d.241 A.H.) was Tirmidhī's teacher.²⁷ According to the most reliable sources,²⁸ Tirmidhī never went to Baghdad and did not attend any lectures of Ahmad b. Hanbal. Furthermore, Tirmidhī, whenever narrating a Sanad wherein the name of Ahmad b. Hanbal is mentioned, always names a transmitter between himself and Ahmad b. Hanbal, that is, Tirmidhī never directly narrated from Ahmad b. Hanbal anywhere in the Jāmi'. Hence, a meeting between the two was highly improbable.

Another great centre of learning was Basra. The companions of the Prophet who resided here, were Anas b. Mālik (d.91 A.H.) Abū Allāh b. 'Abbās (d. 68 A.H.) and 'Imrān b. Husain (d. 52 A.H.). During the time of Tirmidhī, Zayd b. Akhzam (d.257 A.H.) was the famous traditionist of Basra. He was the teacher of Bukhārī,

Nasā'ī, Abū Dāwūd, Tirmidhī and Ibn Māja. Other famous traditionists of Basra were 'Abbās 'Anbarī (d.246 A.H.), Muḥammad b. Bashshār Bundār (d.252 A.H.), Ziyād b. Yahyā (d.254 A.H.), Muḥammad b. al-Muthanna (d. 252 A.H.) and Muḥammad b. M'amar (d.250 A.H.). Each of the six canonical traditionists attended the discourses of the abovementioned traditionists.²⁹

Tirmidhī's native land Khurasan was also considered as an intellectual capital. It was known as Madīna al-Rijāl - "The City of Men", referring to the large number of traditionists who resided there.³⁰

The Academic Career of Tirmidhī

Tirmidhī began his studies of Hadīth in Khurasan at the age of sixteen,³¹ and from the year 235 A.H. he travelled widely, in pursuit of learning Hadīth, to Hijāz, Kufa and Basra.³² Tirmidhī heard Hadīth from the following most eminent traditionists, Qutaiba b. Sa'id (d. 240 A.H.), Bukhārī (d.256 A.H.), Muslim (d. 261 A.H.) and Abū Dāwūd (d.275 A.H.).³³

Bukhārī's extreme regard for Tirmidhī is evidenced in his statement, "I have benefitted more from you than you have benefitted from me".³⁴ The high respect in which Tirmidhī was held, is evident by the fact that Bukhārī received a few traditions from him.³⁵ Tirmidhī narrated one tradition from Muslim in the "Chapter on Fasting" in his Jāmi'.³⁶ Tirmidhī also received a tradition from Abū Dāwūd, which is in the "Chapter on Hagiology" in his Jāmi'.³⁷

Bukhārī's influence on Tirmidhī is apparent in the field of jurisprudence in that he (Tirmidhī), generally abstained from mentioning Abū Hanīfa's (d.150 A.H.) name. This procedure was used by Bukhārī in his Sahīh.³⁸ Furthermore, Tirmidhī used Bukhārī's Kitāb al-Tārīkh as a source and standard for mentioning the discrepancies in the text of the traditions or the transmitters. Tirmidhī in a personal statement lavished great praise upon Bukhārī by declaring him as being the most learned person in Iraq or Khurasan in the science of discrepancies of Hadīth.³⁹

Tirmidhī's debt to Bukhārī is evidenced by his mentioning Bukhārī's name 114 times in his Jāmi', specifically:⁴⁰

- 13 Times in the Chapter on Cleanliness
- 21 Times in the Chapter on Prayer
- 4 Times in the Chapter on Zakāt (Poor-due)
- 6 Times in the Chapter on Fasting
- 5 Times in the Chapter on Pilgrimage
- 7 Times in the Chapter on Prayer for the Deceased
- 7 Times in the Chapter on Marriage
- 4 Times in the Chapter on Penal Law
- 6 Times in the Chapter on Virtues of Holy War
- 5 Times in the Chapter on Clothes
- 5 Times in the Chapter on Seeking Permission for Entering
- 5 Times in the Chapter on Shortcomings
- Thrice in the Chapter on Business
- Twice in the Chapter on International Law
- Once in the Chapter on 'Id (Festival)

Thrice in the Chapter on Oaths and Vows
 Twice in the Chapter on Eating
 Once in the Chapter on Drinking
 Once in the Chapter on Piety
 Once in the Chapter on Calamities
 Thrice in the Chapter on Paradise
 Once in the Chapter on Hell
 Thrice in the Chapter on Virtues of the Qur'ān
 Thrice in the Chapter on Supplications
 Twice in the Chapter on Hagiology

Tirmidhī had a large number of disciples. The famous among them were: Al-Haytham b. Kulayb al-Shāshī (d.335 A.H.), Abū al-'Abbās al-Mahbūbī Muḥammad b. Aḥmad (d.346 A.H.) and Nasā'ī (d. 304 A.H.).⁴¹

Al-Haytham is the transmitter of Tirmidhī's Shamā'il. Abū al-'Abbās al-Mahbūbī is the most famous and reliable transmitter of the Jāmi' as will be explained in chapter two. Nasā'ī, is the only one amongst the six canonical traditionists who attended the lectures of Tirmidhī.⁴²

There is a dispute over the school of jurisprudence to which Tirmidhī belonged. Anwar Kashmīrī (d. 1353 A.H.), a commentator on the Jāmi', considers him a Shāfi'ī jurist, for he concurred with Shāfi'ī on a number of issues. Shāh Walī Allāh (d.1180 A.H.), Ashraf 'Alī Thānwī (d.1362 A.H.) and Mubārakfūrī (d.1352 A.H.) are of the opinion that he was an independent jurist.⁴³ This second opinion is preferred as Tirmidhī states in several

places, "the practice on this is according to Shāfi'ī and our companions" (the chapter on whoever performs a rak'ah (unit) of 'Asr (late afternoon prayer) before sun set).⁴⁴ He also criticized Shāfi'ī in the "chapter on cooling the noon prayer".⁴⁵ This proves that he was an independent jurist.

The Writings of Tirmidhī

The biographers have mentioned the following works that were written by Tirmidhī; Al-Jāmi', Tawārīkh, Al-'Ilal, Al-'Ilal al-Kabīr, Shamā'il, Al-Asmā wa-al-Kunā, Al-āthār Al-Mauqūfa, Tasmiya Ashāb Rasūl Allāh and Al-Zuhd. According to 'Uthmānī and other authorities, only the Shamā'il, Al-'Ilal, Al-Jāmi' and Tasmiya Ashāb Rasūl Allāh are extant, the other works having perished.⁴⁶

A discussion on the works that are available follows:

Shamā'il (character)

It consists of 400 Ahādīth and has fifty-six sub-books. This is a collection of Ahādīth concerning the person and character of the Prophet.⁴⁷ The Shamā'il is generally printed as an appendix to the Jāmi' of Tirmidhī in India and Pakistan. In 1985 an abridgement of the Shamā'il was undertaken by Muhammad Nāsir al-Dīn al-Albānī and published in Jordan, in which he omitted the chains of transmission by only mentioning the final transmitter. Professor M. H. F. Quraishī translated the Shamā'il of Tirmidhī into English, which was published in 1980 in India.

Al-'Ilal (defects)

This book is a discussion of complicated discrepancies and weaknesses of Ahādīth. Tirmidhī was one of the few scholars who was an expert in this branch of Hadīth Sciences.⁴⁹ The 'Ilal is added as an appendix to the Jāmi' in India, Pakistan and the Arab States. Recently, in 1985 a commentary on the 'Ilal of Tirmidhī by Ibn Rajab Hanbalī (d.795 A.H.) was published in Beirut.

Tasmiya Ashāb Rasūl Allāh (names of the Prophet's companions)

In his Tasmiya, Tirmidhī arranged those names of the Prophet's companions he was familiar with in an alphabetical order. It was published in 1986 by the Institute for Cultural Books in Beirut.

Al-Jāmi' (consisting of eight topics)

The Jāmi' is Tirmidhī's magnum opus. Occasionally it is called Al-Jāmi' al-Kabīr⁵⁰ or Sunan al-Tirmidhī. He began compiling it after the year 250 A.H. and completed it on the 10 Dhū-al-Hijja 270 A.H. It contains 3,956 Ahādīth, and has been divided into fifty chapters.⁵⁰ It is also classified as a Sunan, which implies that the book has been chapterised according to legal chapters, such as Purification, Prayer, Poor-due and Fasting, narrated on the authority of the Prophet, while the opinions of the companions are usually not mentioned.

Tirmidhī's method was that of placing the heading first, then mentioning one or two Aḥādīth which were related to the heading. These Aḥādīth are followed by his opinion as to the status of the Hadīth. Subsequently, he mentions the opinions of the different jurists. He also indicates if there were other narrations transmitted by other companions on the same subject.⁵¹ His principal aim was to discuss the legal opinions of early jurists. Tirmidhī mostly mentioned those Aḥādīth which the jurists used as the basis for their legal decisions and he mentioned which school used which tradition/s. Hence this book became an important source for the different view-points of the various legal schools. The Jāmi' thus bears the distinction of being one of the oldest texts dealing with the difference of opinion amongst the various jurisprudential schools.⁵² Although Shāfi'ī (b. 150-d. 204 A.H.) wrote his Kitāb al-Umm before Tirmidhī's Jāmi', the Kitāb al-Umm is less comprehensive and rarely authentic in comparison to the Jāmi' of Tirmidhī.⁵³

The Relationship of Al-Jāmi' to the Other Five Canonical Works of Hadīth

It is an accepted fact that certain Hadīth books were already in existence when Tirmidhī decided to compile his Jāmi' such as, the compilations of Abū Dāwūd Jayālsī (d.203 A.H.) and Aḥmad b. Hanbal (d. 241 A.H.) These compilations consisted of authentic and weak Aḥādīth. Thereafter, Bukhārī (d.256 A.H.) compiled his Sahih and omitted the traditions that were weak or doubtful in his opinion. His main aim was to derive laws from the Aḥādīth,

whereas Muslim's (d.261 A.H.) main aim was to mention the different chains of narrators on a particular subject. By comparison, the aim of Nasā'ī (d.303 A.H.) was to mention the discrepancies of a Hadīth and Abū Dāwūd (d.275 A.H.) compiled a work which subsequently became the basis for the jurists. Ibn Māja (d.273 A.H.) compiled a work that dealt almost entirely with legal traditions and was lenient in the criticism of the doubtful traditions. Tirmidhī (d.279 A.H.) combined the styles of Bukhārī, Muslim, Abū Dāwūd and Nasā'ī, by mentioning the discrepancies regarding the transmitters or the text of the Hadīth, the various narrators, and making his collection a basis for the jurists.⁵⁴

The Special Characteristics of Al-Jāmi'

1. It is a Sunan and a Jāmi'.⁵⁵
2. Only eighty-three traditions are repeated, whilst two of the chapters are particularly extensive, namely, Hagiology and Exegesis of the Qur'ān; which are lacking in the other Sunan, namely, Abū Dāwūd, Ibn Māja and Nasā'ī.⁵⁶
3. Usually Tirmidhī omits the major portion of the Hadīth and mentions only that part which is relevant to the heading. Tirmidhī's abridgement of the Hadīth to agree with the heading does not remove it from its context, since he mentions the jurisprudential ruling which is contained in the Hadīth.⁵⁷
4. The format and headings are simple and can be easily memorised. This is important as memorizing is a traditional form of learning among Muslims.⁵⁸

5. Tirmidhî, after mentioning a Hadîth, classifies it, that is, whether it is a sound, good or weak tradition.⁵⁹

6. He specifies the narrator's names, for example, if the narrator's kunya was mentioned, he would then mention the proper name or vice-versa.⁶⁰

7. Generally the number of transmitters between Tirmidhî and the Prophet range from four to ten, however there is one such Hadîth where the number of transmitters are only three (Thulâthî).⁶¹ This tradition will be mentioned in chapter five.

Conclusion

Tirmidhî died in Bûgh on the 13 Rajab 279 A.H. at the age of seventy.⁶² That Tirmidhî was considered by the scholars to be Bukhârî's successor is distinct in the words of the traditionist 'Umar b. 'Alaq, "When Bukhârî died he left no one in Khurasan who compared with Tirmidhî in knowledge, memory, piety and asceticism".⁶³

Tirmidhî's Jâmi' is an important collection of Hadîth. A few statements of eminent scholars of Hadîth regarding the worth of his collection are mentioned. Tirmidhî said that he compiled this book and presented it to the learned of Hijâz, Iraq and Khurasan, and they were pleased with it, and whosoever has this book in his home, it is as though he has the Prophet speaking to him there.⁶⁴ 'Abd Allâh b. Muḥammad al-Anṣārî (d.481 A.H.), the Shaikh- al-Islam (teacher) of Herât,⁶⁵ is reported to have said that, in his opinion Tirmidhî's Jâmi' is more beneficial than Bukhârî and Muslim's collections, since their compilations are for the

scholars, whereas Tirmidhī's Jāmi' is for both the scholars and the laity.⁴⁶ Baijūnī, the author of Tawdīh (a famous work on Shāfi' jurisprudence), said that, the Jāmi' is sufficient for the independent jurist and liberates a follower of a particular school of jurisprudence.⁴⁷

From the biography of Tirmidhī, which has been discussed, the spotlight falls on his magnum opus, the Jāmi', and chapter two is devoted to Tirmidhī's great work.



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Chapter One

References and Footnotes

1. There were two other persons who were famous by the name of Tirmidhî.
 - a) Abû al-Hasan Muḥammad b. Husain (d.243 A.H.), who was also a traditionist. He was known as Tirmidhî al-Kabîr.
 - b) Muḥammad b. 'Alî b. Husain (d.295 A.H.), who was known as Hakîm Tirmidhî, a mystic, the author of Nawâdir al-Uṣûl which consists mostly of weak Aḥadîth.

Mukhtâr: M.H. Al-Imâm al-Tirmidhî, Karachi, 1986, pp. 90-91.
2. The circumflex on the "I" of 'Isâ has been omitted due to technical reasons.
3. Mukhtâr: op.cit., p. 26.
4. The word Tirmidhî has four variant pronunciations, (i) Turmudh, (ii) Tarmidh, (iii) Tarmadh, (iv) Tirmidh. The last pronunciation is the most famous and commonly accepted.

Mukhtâr: op. cit., pp. 32-33.
5. This term will be explained in the glossary.
6. This term will be explained in the glossary.
7. Abû Dâwûd: Sunan, Multan, N.D. Part Two, p. 330.
8. Mukhtâr: op. cit., pp. 29-31.
9. Binnawrî: M.Y. Al-Tirmidhî Sâhib al-Jâmi' fî al-Sunan, Majalla al-Majm'a al-'Ilmî al-'Arabî, Damascus, 1957, p. 308.
10. Mukhtâr: op. cit., pp. 32-34.
11. Brice: W.C. An Historical Atlas of Islam, Leiden, 1981, p. 20.

12. Robson: J. The Transmission of Tirmidhî's Jāmi', **Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies**, London, 1954, p. 258.
13. Ibid, p. 258.
14. Mukhtār: op. cit., pp. 36-37.
- 'Uthmānî: M.T. **Dars Tirmidhî** (Urdu), Karachi, 1983, 1: p. 133.
15. Robson: op. cit., p. 258.
- Mukhtār: op. cit., pp. 36-37.
16. Suyûtî: J. **Tarîkh al-Khulafā**, Beirut, N.D. pp. 284-285.
17. Nadvi: S H.H. **The Dynamics of Islam**, Durban, 1982, pp. 5-6.
18. Ibid, p. 6.
19. Ibid, p. 7.
20. Ibid, p. 8.
21. Ibid, p. 11.
22. Ibid, p. 13.
23. Ibid, pp. 13-14.
24. 'Uthmānî: op. cit., pp. 89-90.
25. N'omānî: M.A.R. **Ibn Māja awr 'Ilm Hadîth** (Urdu), Karachi, N.D. pp. 9-10.
26. Gangohî: M.H. **Zafr al-Muhassilîn** (Urdu), Deoband, N.D. p. 145.
27. **Shorter Encyclopaedia of Islam**, Leiden, 1961, p. 595.
28. Mukhtār: op. cit., p. 37.
- Binnawrî: op. cit., p. 309.
29. N'omānî: op. cit., pp. 54-55.
30. 'Uthmānî: op. cit., p. 131.

31. A'zamî: M.M. Studies in Hadîth Methodology and Literature, Indiana, 1977, p. 103.
32. Mukhtâr: op. cit., p. 37.
33. Ibid, pp. 39-50.
34. Ibid, p. 78.
35. Tirmidhî is reported to have said that Bukhârî heard two traditions from him, one of which is in the chapter "The Exegesis of the Qur'ân" from the Jâmi'. It is reported on the authority of 'Abd Allâh Ibn 'Abbâs (d. 68 A.H.) concerning the word of Allâh, "Whatsoever palm-trees ye cut down or left standing on their roots". He said, "Al-lîna refers to the palm-trees".
Tirmidhî: Sunan, Delhi, N.D. p. 445.
The second Hadîth is also in the Jâmi', from the chapter "The Hagiology of 'Alî". It is reported on the authority of Abû Sa'id (d. 74 A.H.) that the Messenger of Allâh said to 'Alî, "O 'Alî, it is not permissible for anyone except you and I to be in the state of impurity in this mosque".
Tirmidhî: Sunan, Beirut, N.D. 5: p. 598.
36. It is reported on the authority of Abû Huraira that the Messenger of Allâh said, "Determine the crescent of Sh'abân (eight month) for Ramadân (ninth month)".
Tirmidhî: op. cit., 3: p. 71.

37. It is reported on the authority of Anas that the Messenger of Allāh said, "Each one of you should beseech his Sustainer for all his needs, so much so that he asks (Him) for his shoelace when it breaks".

Tirmidhī: op. cit., 5: p. 782.

38. Binnawrī: op. cit., pp. 319-320.

39. Tirmidhī: op. cit., 5: pp. 693-694.

40. Mukhtār: op. cit., 74.

41. Ibid, pp. 65-67.

42. Ibid, pp. 65-67.

Maqdasī: M. Shurūṭ al-A'imma al-Sitta, Beirut, 1984, p. 12.

43. Mukhtār: op. cit., pp. 81-82.

Mubārakfūrī: A.R. Muqaddama Tuhfa al-Ahwadhī, Multan, 1962, pp. 173-175.

44. Tirmidhī: op. cit., 1: p. 354.

45. Ibid, pp. 396-397.

46. 'Uthmānī: op. cit., p. 134.

Mukhtār: op. cit., pp. 86-87.

47. Zakarīyyā: M. Khasā'il Nabawī (Urdu), Karachi, 1974, pp. 9-10.

48. Mukhtār: op. cit., p. 79.

Sa'id: H.A.R. Al-Fikr al-Manhajī 'Inda al-Muhaddithīn, Qatar, 1988, pp. 104-105.

49. Robson: op. cit., p. 259.

50. A'zamî: op. cit., pp. 103-104.

Wensinck makes mention of only forty-six chapters, since he omitted "the chapter on examples" and the three subsidiary "chapters on hunting".

Wensinck: A.J. A Handbook of Early Muhammadan Tradition, Leiden, 1971, pp. XIII-XIV.

51. A'zami: op. cit., pp. 103-104.

52. Shorter Encyclopaedia of Islam, op. cit., p. 595.

53. Ibid, p. 595.

54. Mukhtâr: op. cit., pp. 82-86.

'Uthmânî: op. cit., pp. 127-128.

55. This term will be explained in the glossary.

56. Shorter Encyclopaedia of Islam, op. cit., p. 595.

Mubâarakfûrî: op. cit., p. 251.

57. 'Uthmânî: op. cit., p. 135.

58. Ibid, p. 135.

59. Ibid, p. 135.

60. Ibid, pp. 135-136.

61. Mukhtâr: op. cit., pp. 130-131.

62. Ibid, pp. 88-90.

63. Ibid, p. 75.

64. Robson: op. cit., p. 259.

65. Tirmidhî: op. cit., 1: p. 87.

66. Ibid, pp. 87-88.

67. Mukhtâr: op. cit., p. 112.

Chapter Two

The Various Texts, Manuscripts and Commentaries of Al-Jāmi'

Tirmidhī's Aim in Compiling the Jāmi'

The reason for compiling the Jāmi' as stated by Tirmidhī was the encouragement he received from the scholars to mention the various verdicts of the jurists as well as the discrepancies of the traditions. Initially he did not embark on this venture, but later fulfilled this task with the hope of benefitting the people.¹

Tirmidhī says that every tradition mentioned in the Jāmi' is utilised by the jurists except for two traditions; The first one was reported on the authority of 'Abd Allāh Ibn 'Abbās (d.68 A.H.), who was a cousin of the Prophet, that the Prophet combined the Zuhr (afternoon prayer) and 'Asr (late afternoon) prayer and the Maghrib (sunset) and 'Ishā (night prayer) prayer, in Madina, even though there was no cause for fear, no journey to undertake or no inclement weather to contend with. The second tradition was narrated on the authority of Mu'āwiya b. Abū Sufyān (d.60 A.H.), founder of the Umayyid dynasty, that the Prophet said that, if one drinks alcohol, then one should be whipped and if one repeats it the fourth time then one should be killed.²

The seven editions of Al-Jāmi' that were available to the present writer at the time of writing this thesis will be mentioned hereunder. These editions are according to the

narration of Abū al-'Abbās al-Mahbūbī (d.346 A.H.) whose version of the Jāmi' is the most reliable and famous.

1. The Jāmi' edited by Muḥammad Nāsir al-Dīn al-Albānī, editor of the Shamā'il of Tirmidhī and Mishkāt al-Masābīh, is in three volumes and was published in Riyad in 1408 A.H. by the Arab Bureau of Education for the Gulf States. This copy, printed on high quality paper is devoid of printing errors and is freely available in the Arab States. The editor has shortened the Sanad by mentioning only the transmitter's names and has given his personal classification of each tradition, not mentioning Tirmidhī's. The omission of Tirmidhī's classification is disadvantageous for any scientific analysis of the text, since it leaves one totally at the mercy of Albānī's classification. It should be borne in mind that Albānī has named this copy of the Jāmi', Sahīh Sunan Al-Tirmidhī, since his main purpose was to compile all the sound traditions of Tirmidhī. Thus, all the traditions which were weak or suspect in Albānī's opinion have been omitted. Therefore the total number of traditions in this particular copy is only 3,101, a full 855 traditions less than the original text. The first volume has 388 pages including an introduction, the second volume consists of 419 pages, while the third volume has 470 pages including an index.

2. Another edition of the Jāmi', printed on poor quality paper, is in a single volume of 588 pages and was published in Delhi, India by Kutub Khāna Rashīdiyya. The date of publication is not mentioned. However, it is certain that this publication

was printed in this century. This copy is not devoid of printing errors. It includes the Shamā'il and al-'Ilal of Tirmidhī, and a brief commentary of Maḥmūd al-Ḥasan (d.1339 A.H.) in the beginning. A discussion on the principles of Hadīth by 'Alī Jurjānī is also included. This copy is freely available in India.

3. The Jāmi' was published in one volume in Karachi by H.M. Sa'id, and the date of publication is not mentioned. However, it is certain that this text was printed in this century. It is printed on mediocre quality paper and contains several printing errors. It contains marginal commentaries on Al-Jāmi' by Anwar Kashmīrī (d.1353 A.H.) and 'Alī b. Sulaimān Bajm'awī al-Mālikī (d.1298 A.H.) and ends with the Shamā'il and al-'Ilal as appendices. It also contains a brief commentary of Maḥmūd al-Ḥasan in the beginning. This copy is freely available in Pakistan.

4. Another edition of the Jāmi', printed in one volume was published in Karachi by Mīr Muḥammad and the date of publication is not mentioned. Like the above two publications it is certain that this one is also of the current century. This copy includes the above mentioned discussion on the principles of Hadīth by 'Alī Jurjānī. It begins with a brief commentary of Ashraf 'Alī Thānwī (d. 1362 A.H.) and also the treatises of Ḥāzamī (d. 584 A.H.) and Maqdasī (d. 507 A.H.) entitled The Conditions of the Imams (for the acceptance of Aḥādīth). This copy is however printed on poor quality paper and is inundated with printing errors. It is freely available in Pakistan.

5. The Jāmi', consisting of five volumes, was published in Faisalabad, Pakistan by Diya al-Sunna. This text includes the popular and widely used commentary compiled by A.R. Mubarakfuri, (d.1353 A.H.) called Tuhfa al-Ahwadhî. Four volumes consists of the text of Al-Jāmi' and Mubarakfuri's commentary upon it. The fifth volume contains a detailed exposition on the Science of Hadîth. This volume also contains a detailed discussion on Tirmidhî and the Jāmi'. It is printed on mediocre quality paper and is freely available in Pakistan. Although the date of publication is not mentioned, it is certain that this publication was also issued in this century.

6. Another edition of the Jāmi', consisting of five volumes was published by Dār al-Fikr in Beirut, 1983. The editor of the first volume was 'Abd al-Wahhāb 'Abd al-Latîf. The second to fifth volumes were edited by 'Abd al-Rahmān Muḥammad 'Uthmān, while the last volume includes the 'Ilal of Tirmidhî. The editor's only contribution in this edition was the I'rāb (declension). This publication is printed on high quality paper, free from printing errors and is freely available in the Arab States.

7. The Jāmi', consisting of five volumes, was published by Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmîyya in Beirut. In spite of the absence of the date of publication, it is certain that this print was also issued in this century. The first, second and fifth volumes were edited by Aḥmad Muḥammad Shākir (d.1377 A.H.) editor of Shāfi'i's (d. 204 A.H.) al-Risāla; the third by Muḥammad Fu'ād 'Abd al-

Bāqī, compiler of the concordance of the Qur'ān, and the fourth by Kāmāl Yūsuf al-Hūt. This particular copy will be used for the thesis, since it is the only one which corresponds with the concordance of Hadīth compiled by A.J. Wensinck, and because the editing of the entire Jāmi' was done in a scholarly fashion, as is evidenced by the references and footnotes found virtually on every page. This publication is printed on high quality paper and is freely available in the Arab States. Another distinction of this publication is that Shākir has accommodated various other texts of the Jāmi' in the footnotes.

The Manuscripts of Al-Jāmi'

Mukhtār mentions the following manuscripts:

1. A manuscript written by Hāmid b. Muslim in 609 A.H. in a single volume, begins with the "Chapter on Prayer for the Deceased", and concludes with the "Chapter on Hagiology".³
2. Muḥammad b. Maḥmūd b. Ḥasan (d. 860 A.H.) possessed a manuscript of the Jāmi' which was written in 792 A.H.⁴
3. A manuscript which is in a single volume of two parts; the first written by 'Alī b. Sayf in 774 A.H., and the second by 'Umar b. 'Abd al-Ḥamīd in 577 A.H.⁵
4. The first part of Al-Jāmi' was written by Ibn al-Jawzī (d. 597 A.H.) in 536 A.H.⁶
5. A manuscript, which was transcribed by Ibn Hajar (d. 852 A.H.).⁷

6. 'Abd al-Rahmān b. Muḥammad transcribed the second part of the *Jāmi'* in 593 A.H.⁹

It is not known whether the abovementioned manuscripts were ever published or preserved.

There are other manuscripts besides the abovementioned. For example, Subḥī Sāmīrā'ī, the editor of Tirmidhī's *'Ilal*, relied on three manuscripts of the *Jāmi'* for editing purposes.⁹ The first manuscript is extant in the library of Sultan Aḥmad III in Istanbul. This particular manuscript was read to Tirmidhī, and rectifications in his own handwriting are to be found in several places. This manuscript was written by Ibn al-Lahḥām. The second manuscript is in Al-Zāhirīyya Library in Damascus. It was written by Muḥammad b. Abū Bakr b. 'Abd al-Rahmān b. Zurāiq and consists of 102 pages. However, certain chapters of the *Jāmi'* are missing from this manuscript. The third manuscript was written by Muḥammad b. Muḥammad b. Muḥammad b. Ḥusain al-Mālikī and was completed in Makka in 899 A.H. It consists of 136 pages and is extant in the Egyptian Library. However, certain chapters of the *Jāmi'* are also missing from this manuscript.

An Abridged Version of Al-Jāmi'

Abū al-Fadl Muḥammad Tāj al-Dīn b. 'Abd al-Muḥsin had compiled a *Mujarrad* (omitting the repeated traditions) of the *Jāmi'*, which is preserved in the Khudaiwīyya Library in Egypt.¹⁰

The Commentaries of Al-Jāmi'

1. 'Aridata al-Ahwadhî

This was written by Abū Bakr b. 'al-'Arabî (d. 546 A.H.), who was a famous Mālikî scholar. This commentary is from a theological perspective and was published in Egypt in 1350 A.H.¹¹

2. Qūt al-Mughtadhî

This was compiled by Jalāl al-Dīn al-Suyūtî (d. 911 A.H.) and was published in India in 1299 A.H.¹²

3. Tuhfa al-Ahwadhî

This was written by 'Abd al-Rahmān al-Mubārakfūrî (d. 1353 A.H.), in five volumes and is an exhaustive study. He discusses the Sanad in detail and also comments from a theological perspective. The author in his approach has been critical of the Hanafî school of jurisprudence.¹³ This commentary has been reprinted several times in Pakistan and the Arab States.

4. Al-Kaukab al-Durrî

This commentary is a collection of lectures delivered by Rashīd Ahmad Gangohî (d.1323 A.H.) and compiled by his student, Muḥammad Yahyā (d.1334 A.H.). Thereafter Muḥammad Zakariyyā (d. 1401 A.H.) added his notes and it was published for the first time in India in 1354 A.H. This commentary and the following two are pro-Hanafî (one of the four schools of jurisprudence), due to the

Hanafi proofs being given preference in comparison with those of other legal schools.¹⁴

5. Al-'Arf al-Shadhî

These were the discourses delivered by Anwar Kashmîrî (d. 1353 A.H.) and was compiled by his student, Jirāgh Muḥammad. It was published in Deoband, India, and the date of publication is unknown. It contains several printing errors since no proof reading was done.¹⁵

6. Ma'ārif al-Sunan

This commentary was compiled by Muḥammad Yūsuf Binnawrî (d.1397 A.H.) in six volumes and is incomplete, ending with the chapter on pilgrimage, but nonetheless is considered to be an outstanding work on Hadîth. It was published by H.M. Sa'id in Karachi, in 1394 A.H.¹⁶

7. Al-'Arf al-Shadhî 'alâ Jāmi' al-Tirmidhî

This commentary was compiled by Sirāj al-Dīn 'Umar al-Balqīnī (d.805 A.H.).¹⁷ It is unknown whether this commentary was ever printed.

8. Al-Imām al-Tirmidhī Wa-Takhrīj Kitāb al-Tahāra Min Jāmi'ihī

This commentary by Muḥammad Ḥabīb Allāh Mukhtār was done as a doctoral thesis in the University of Karachi. It was published in 1985 consisting of a single volume. In it he presents a perspective by different traditionists on the comparative deductions of Aḥādīth relating to cleanliness.

9. Dars Tirmidhī

These are the lectures of Muḥammad Taqī 'Uthmānī, whose commentary is printed in the Urdu language in two volumes, which were published in 1983. He deals with many contemporary problems which the scholars of the past did not encounter.

10. Al-Imām al-Tirmidhī Wa-al-Muwāzana Bayna Jāmi'ihī Wa-Bayna al-Sahīhayn

This is a doctoral thesis, comparing Tirmidhī's Jāmi' to Bukhārī and Muslim's collections of Hadīth. This thesis was written by Nūr al-Dīn 'Itar in 1964 at the Al-Azhar University. It was published for the first time in Cairo in 1970.

11. Sharah Ibn Hajar

Ibn Hajar (d. 852 A.H.) states in the chapter on standing and urinating from his Fath al-Bārī (commentary on Sahīh Bukhārī) that he had also written a commentary on the Jāmi'. Unfortunately this commentary has perished.¹⁰

12. Sharah Ibn Sayyid al-Nās

Ibn Hajar states that, Ibn Sayyid al-Nās (d. 734 A.H.) began writing a detailed commentary on the Jāmi' and completed approximately ten volumes before he died. This commentary was never published.¹⁹

13. Sharah Ibn al-Mulaqqan

This commentary was written by Sirāj al-Dīn Ibn al-Mulaqqan (d. 804 A.H.). He only commented on those traditions of the Jāmi' that were not found in Sahīh Bukhārī, Sahīh Muslim or Sunan Abū Dāwūd.²⁰ It is unknown whether this commentary was ever printed.

14. Naf'ū Qūt al-Mughtadhī

This commentary was written by 'Alī b. Sulaimān al-Mālikī (d. 1298 A.H.). It was printed by the Nizāmī Press of India in 1306 A.H.²¹

15. A commentary in 20 volumes was written by Zayn al-Dīn 'Abd al-Rahmān b. Ahmad b. al-Naqīb. This commentary was burnt in one of the civil wars, the date of which is unknown.²²

16. A commentary by Sirāj Ahmad b. Muḥammad al-Fārūqī is available in the Persian language and was published in India in the year 1299 A.H.²³

The Narrators of Al-Jāmi'

According to Robson, the chains of transmission from Tirmidhī are comparatively few in number, which seems strange in view of the

relative importance of the work; yet it is possible to suggest an explanation. Although the Jāmi' has for long been held in honour, this was not always so. At first it did not seem to have recommended itself, and it was only in the sixth century A.H. that it was accepted as one of the canonical books on Hadīth. Sahīh Bukhārī, Sahīh Muslim, Sunan Abū Dāwūd and Sunan Nasā'ī all received acceptance before Tirmidhī's Jāmi' and they all have several transmitters whose versions were handed through various transmissions. It is therefore reasonable to infer that, since the importance of Tirmidhī's work was not sufficiently realized for some time, there was a lack of interest in transmitting it.²⁴

A number of persons transmitted traditions from Tirmidhī. Sam'ānī mentions the following seven: Muhammad b. Sahl al-Ghazzāl, Yaqz b. Muhammad al-Diḥqān, Abū al-Nasr al-Rashādī (d. 290 A.H.), Abū 'Alī b. al-Harb, Hammād b. Shākir al-Nasafī (d. 290 A.H.), Abū al-'Abbās al-Mahbūbī (d. 346 A.H.) and Al-Haytham b. Kulaib al-Shāshī (d. 335 A.H.). It is not clear whether all those mentioned transmitted the whole of the Jāmi', as it is merely said that they transmitted from Tirmidhī, without any elucidation as to the extent of their transmission.²⁵ A discussion on four selected narrators follows:

Mahbūbī's Version

His name was Abū al-'Abbās Muhammad b. Aḥmad b. Mahbūb b. Fudail al-Marwazī al-Mahbūbī (d. 346 A.H.) and his method of hearing the Jāmi' is not specified, but Ibn Khair states that the Jāmi' was recited to Tirmidhī while Mahbūbī was listening.²⁶

Abū Hamīd's Version

Abū Hamīd Aḥmad b. 'Abd Allāh b. Dāwūd al-Marwazī, the merchant, is one of the recognized transmitters from Tirmidhī, but no details are mentioned about him in the biographical dictionaries.²⁷

Abū Dharr's Version

Abū Dharr Muḥammad b. Ibrāhīm b. Muḥammad al-Tirmidhī is not mentioned among the transmitters of the **Jāmi'** by Sam'ānī, Yāqūt, Dhahabī or Ibn Hajar, but Ibn Khair mentions one chain through him.²⁸

Qattān's Version

Abū Muḥammad al-Hasan b. Ibrāhīm al-Qattān, like Abū Dharr, is not mentioned among the transmitters from Tirmidhī, and there is no information available on him either; however, Ibn Khair mentions one chain through him.²⁹

Conclusion

When one examines these chains of transmissions, very few questions arise regarding the possibility of these men transmitting from those whom they quote, however, it is surprising to find that Maḥbūbī, whose version is used at the present time, should have died in 346 A.H; whereas Tirmidhī died in 279 A.H. According to Robson, Maḥbūbī's date of birth is unknown. Although there is nothing inherently impossible in his having heard the

Jāmi' from Tirmidhī, it is strange that the surviving text should come from one so much younger than the author.³⁰

According to Shākir, Mahbūbī died in 346 A.H. when he was ninety-seven years old.³¹ Hence, when Tirmidhī died Mahbūbī was thirty years old. Thus Robson's astonishment is not justified.

The preceding treatise on the various texts, manuscripts and commentaries of Al-Jāmi' reveals, amongst other things, a strong point of difference between Tirmidhī and other traditionists on the conditions for the acceptance of Ahādīth. The uniqueness of Tirmidhī's conditions for the acceptance of Ahādīth is the subject of chapter three.



Chapter Two

References and Footnotes

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7. Ibid, pp. 168-169.
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16. Ibid, p. 163.
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19. Hajar: A. Fath al-Bārî bi-Sharh Sahîh al-Bukhārî, Beirut, N.D. 1: p.330.
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Chapter Three

Tirmidhî's Conditions For the Acceptance of a Hadîth in Comparison With those of Other Traditionists

Allâh says, "He it is Who hath sent among the unlettered ones a messenger of their own, to recite unto them His revelations and to make them grow, and to teach them the Scripture and Wisdom, though heretofore they were indeed in error manifest". (Qur'ân 62:2) The four-fold objective of the apostleship of Prophet Muḥammad, specified by the Qur'ân, comprises (a) recital of Divine Revelations, (b) purification of the people from all moral and spiritual filth, (c) teaching of the scripture, and (d) teaching of wisdom.¹

Need for Traditions

History of religion is a witness to the fact that injunctions and commandments are not sufficient in themselves to make people comply to these commands. These commandments do not create the right conditions and atmosphere conducive to moral behaviour of the people. For example, the command to establish prayer, does not produce the mental awareness and conditions necessary for the preservation of its form. The act of prayer requires rules and formalities to render it effective and meritorious, thus the Qur'ân² has prescribed cleanliness and ablution for prayer.³

Those who have studied the life of the Prophet are aware that the exhortations of the Prophet coupled with his personal example have exerted such an influence, that prayer has become the most

efficacious instrument of self-purification. Likewise, the merits attached to ablution, its performance and intention, the etiquettes of entering the mosque, the blessings of the call to prayer, the reward of keeping the rows straight and many more acts make the prayer a superb and solemn means of inculcating an awareness of Allāh in ones heart. The same will apply to every other act of worship like fasting, payment of poor-due and pilgrimage to Makka. It will be difficult to visualize how these devotional exercises would be able to retain their effectiveness to stir the feeling of reverence, piety and eagerness for attaining divine consciousness, if the events of the Prophets life, his sayings and actions were not preserved. Religion is not a compendium of legal edicts, nor can any faith retain its warmth of feelings without presenting living examples of its teachings which infuse life-blood into its adherents.⁴

The Reliability of the Traditions

Allāh states in the Qur'ān, "Lo! We, even We, reveal the Reminder (dhikr), and lo! We verily are its Guardian". (15:9) In this verse the word Reminder (dhikr) refers to the Qur'ān and the Hadīth,⁵ which is wahī khafī (hidden revelation).⁶ Thus, whatever was expounded by the Prophet is Divine Revelation. The Qur'ān bears witness to this fact: "Nor doth he speak of (his own) desire. It is naught save an inspiration that is inspired". (53: 3-4) These verses were revealed to counter the three allegations made by the Quraish of Makka against the Prophet:

1. He was going astray either through the defect of intelligence or through carelessness.
2. He was being misled or deceived by evil spirits or was possessed by an evil spirit.
3. He was speaking out of his whim or impulse, or from a selfish desire to impress his own personality.

This confirms that the Prophet received direct inspiration from Allāh which guided all his thoughts and actions. The real import of the above verses is that it shows the significance of the Hadīth and the Sunna in the interpretation of the entire message of the Qur'ān.⁷ This proves that Allāh's promise to safe-guard the Reminder (dhikr) is applicable to both the Qur'ān and Hadīth, since both are Divinely inspired.

Methods to Determine the Reliability of the Traditions

According to the traditionists, a Hadīth can only be considered reliable when its Sanad offers an unbroken series of credible and veracious authorities to the Prophet. The critical investigation of the Sanad had caused the Muslim scholars to make thorough research. They endeavoured not only to ascertain the names and circumstances of the narrators in order to investigate where and when they lived, and which of them had been personally acquainted with the other, but also to test their reliability, truthfulness and accuracy in transmitting the texts, to make certain which of them were reliable. This criticism of the narrators was called "disparaging and authentication". The "knowledge of the men" was considered indispensable for every student of Hadīth, therefore

all the commentaries on the collections of tradition contain more or less copious details concerning the narrators. Special works are also devoted to this subject, among them many of the so-called Tabaqāt works (that is biographies arranged in categories of various scholars).⁹

Gradually six collections, which were compiled in the third century of Islam succeeded in gaining such general approval that later generations, tacitly accepted them as the six Canonical Collections (Sihāh Sitta). They are: Sahīh Bukhārī, Sahīh Muslim, Sunan Abū Dāwūd, Sunan Nasā'ī, Jāmi' Tirmidhī and Sunan Ibn Māja.¹⁰

In preparing their collections, these traditionists obviously used a critical technique of selection to decide what they would include and what they would reject. Their purpose was to assemble a corpus of traditions which would serve as a code of life for Muslims, so their primary interest was in selecting such traditions that would give clear guidance concerning what Muslim belief and practice should be, which things were permissible and approved, and which were not.¹⁰

In their attempt to set up tests of authenticity which would exclude unauthentic material, these traditionists chose the Isnād (chains of transmitters) as the testing point and worked out an elaborate system for testing the trustworthiness of these "chains" and of the individuals who formed the links therein, so that a Isnād could be labelled "excellent", "good", "fair", "weak" and the tradition itself rated accordingly.¹¹

The primary aim of the reporters was to establish unerring authority for laws and customs; thus the narrators devoted scrupulous attention to the Isnād.¹² Ibn Sīrīn (d.110 A.H.), the famous interpreter of dreams, said that the traditionists did not ask about the Isnād, but did so when civil war broke out, and those men who adhered to the Sunna, their traditions were accepted and those who were innovators, their traditions were rejected.¹³ 'Abd Allāh b. Mubārak (d.181 A.H.), a student of Abū Hanīfa (d. 150 A.H.), was very outspoken as regards the importance of the chains of narrators, and this is evidenced in the following statement by him, "The chains of narrators according to me are part of religion. If there were no chains of reporters, anybody would say whatever he liked and about whomsoever he wished". Ahmad Abū Wahb throws more light on the extent to which 'Abd Allāh b. Mubārak regarded the Isnād by saying that he ('Abd Allāh b. Mubārak) would consider committing highway robbery rather than narrating from a narrator accused of lying.¹⁴

Thus, there came into existence the science of criticism on Hadīth relating to the Isnād and Matn (text). The following is a summary of the principles of criticism of the Isnād:¹⁵

1. All the traditions must be traced to their original reporter through a chain of transmitters. These transmitters must be of excellent character, truthful and have a good retentive memory.
2. Every tradition which reports an event that occurred frequently in the presence of a large number of people, must have originally been reported by several narrators.

As far as the Matn is concerned, the following principles of criticism of Hadîth are laid down:¹⁶

1. The Hadîth should not be contrary to the text or the teachings of the Qur'ân or the accepted basic principles of Islam.
2. The Hadîth should not be against the dictates, reasons or laws of nature and common experience.
3. The Hadîth should not be contrary to the traditions which have already been accepted by the authorities as reliable and authentic.
4. A Hadîth which profusely extols any tribe, place or persons should be generally rejected.
5. A Hadîth that contains the dates and minute details of future events should be rejected.
6. A Hadîth that contains some remarks of the Prophet which are not in keeping with the Islamic belief of Prophethood or the position of the Prophet, should also be rejected.

According to the overwhelming majority of the traditionists,¹⁷ the rank of the six canonical works are as follows: (1) Sahîh Bukhârî (2) Sahîh Muslim (3) Sunan Abû Dâwûd (4) Sunan Nasâ'î (5) Jâmi' Tirmidhî (6) Sunan Ibn Mâja. The relative status of the canonical works on Hadîth are determined by the conditions laid down by each traditionist in his method of compiling Ahādîth.¹⁸ There is unanimity among the traditionists that every reporter must be a Muslim, sane and a just person. Together with the above qualities a reporter must not be one who commits major sins nor should he be persistent on minor sins.

Subsequently, there is a difference of opinion among the traditionists as to what the conditions will be to accept a Hadîth.¹⁹

Bukhārî's Conditions

Though Bukhārî (b. 194-d. 256 A.H.) in his magnum opus of Hadîth literature, the Sahîh Bukhārî, does not mention any special conditions for the acceptance of reporters or traditions, later scholars such as, Hāzamî (d.584 A.H.) and Maqdasî (d.507 A.H.) in their treatises under the title of Shurûṭ al-A'imma (Conditions of the Imams) have deduced such conditions that were strictly followed by Bukhārî and the other traditionists in their collections.²⁰ According to them, Bukhārî has maintained the following conditions:

1. All the reporters, beginning from the teacher/s of Bukhārî to the companions of the Prophet, should be reliable and trustworthy to the highest degree. Their reliability should also be agreed upon by the traditionists.
2. Bukhārî has given preference to the reporters of higher ranks among the students of any particular teacher. For example, the students of Zuhrî (d.124 A.H.) are classified into five categories according to their credibility and long association with their teacher. It becomes apparent by a perusal of Sahîh Bukhārî that he mostly reported from the narrators in the first category. He accepted the reports of the second and third categories as

well, but only as Mutāba'a (anotations) and not in the actual text.

3. Bukhārī followed his teacher, Ibn al-Madīnī (d.234 A.H.) in accepting a narrator reporting by usage of the particle 'an (from), if it was proven that the student had met the teacher.

4. Bukhārī does not accept a Hadīth with a discontinued Sanad.²¹

5. Earlier traditionists, from among the Kufans in particular, differ about the validity of a Hadīth reported by a boy who has not reached the age of maturity. Bukhārī presents his opinion by quoting Ahādīth reported by young companions such as 'Abd Allāh b. 'Abbās (d. 68 A.H.) and 'Abd Allāh b. 'Umar (d. 73 A.H.), under the heading, "When a child comprehends what he hears, his reporting will be valid".²²

The Conditions of Muslim

Muslim's collection of Hadīth is known as Sahīh Muslim. He compiled more than twenty-four books related to Hadīth. The principles followed by him in his collection demonstrate his method of discussing Hadīth. Some of these principles are discussed by him in his preface to Sahīh Muslim which are as follows:²³

1. Unlike Bukhārī, he has given consideration to the distinction between Haddathanā (teacher read to us) and Akhbaranā (student read to us) following the footsteps of the earlier traditionists.²⁴

2. He accepts a narration conveyed by the usage of 'an (from), if the reporter is proved to be the contemporary of the one from whom he is reporting, unlike Bukhārī who, as already mentioned, requires the meeting of both persons as well.²⁵

3. Muslim has classified the reporters in the following three categories:

- a) Those with a high standard of memory and credibility.
- b) Those who are less renowned than the first group in as far as the two qualities of memory and credibility are concerned.
- c) Reporters accused of lying and being rejected by most of the traditionists.

Muslim confirmed that he gave preference to the reporters in the first category and seldom opted for those in the second. As for the third category he did not concern himself with them.²⁶

4. Muslim said about his collection: "I have only mentioned those Ahādīth on which the consensus of the traditionists was obtained". A general consensus is not meant here, but rather that of eminent traditionists like Ahmad b. Hanbal, Ibn Ma'in, 'Uthmān b. Abū Shaiba and Sa'id b. Mansūr al-Khurāsānī as explained by Balqīnī.²⁷

Conditions of Abū Dāwūd

Abū Dāwūd's collection of Hadīth is known as Sunan Abū-Dāwūd. He compiled twenty-one books related to Hadīth and preferred those Ahādīth which were supported by the practical example of the

companions of the Prophet.²⁸ As for the contradictory Ahādīth, he states under the heading of 'Meat acquired by hunting for a pilgrim': "If there are two contradictory reports from the Prophet, an investigation should be made to know what his companions have adopted".²⁹ He wrote in his letter to the people of Makka: "I have disclosed wherever there was too much weakness in regard to any tradition in my collection. But if I happen to leave a Hadīth without any comment, it should be considered as sound, albeit some of them are more authentic than others". Hadīth Mursal (the incomplete traditions in the Sanad in which a companion is omitted and a successor narrates from the Prophet) has also been a matter of discussion among the traditionists. Abū Dāwūd states in his letter to the people of Makka: "If a Musnad Hadīth (uninterrupted tradition) is not contrary to a Mursal or a Musnad Hadīth is not found, then the Mursal Hadīth will be accepted though it would not be considered as strong as a Muttasil Hadīth (uninterrupted chain)".³⁰

The traditions in Sunan Abū Dāwūd are divided in three categories. The first category consists of those traditions that are mentioned by Bukhārī and/or Muslim. The second type of traditions are those which fulfil the conditions of Bukhārī or Muslim.³¹ At this juncture, it should be remembered that Bukhārī said,³² "I only included in my book Sahīh Bukhārī authentic traditions, and left out many more authentic ones than these to avoid unnecessary length". He had no intention of collecting all the authentic traditions. He only wanted to compile a manual of Hadīth, according to the wishes of his teacher Ishāq b. Rāhaway (d. 236

A.H.), and his function is quite clear from the complete title of his book Al-Jāmi', al-Musnad, al-Sahīh, al-Mukhtasar, Min 'Umur Rasūl Allāh Wa-Sunanihi Wa-Ayyāmihi. The word al-Mukhtasar (epitome), itself explains that Bukhārī did not attempt to compile a comprehensive collection. Muslim said that³³ he condensed his Sahīh from 300,000 Sahīh Ahādīth. This proves that there are many Ahādīth which are authentic in spite of their not being mentioned in either Sahīh Bukhārī or Sahīh Muslim.

Nasā'ī's Conditions

Nasā'ī's collection of Hadīth is known as al-Sunan al-Sughra or al-Mujtabā. He compiled five books related to Hadīth. The basic criteria of Nasā'ī to evaluate a tradition was as follows:³⁴

1. Whenever contradictory remarks are found about a reporter, Nasā'ī accepts his veracity until he is sure that all the traditionists have deserted him. What he meant by the consensus of the traditionists on deserting a reporter may be understood in the light of the following explanation; The critics among the traditionists in each period are of two types: The dogmatic and the lenient - for example, Shu'ba (d.160 A.H.) and Sufyān Thawrī (d. 161 A.H.) respectively in the first period; Yahyā al-Qattān (d. 189 A.H.) and 'Abd al-Rahmān b. al-Mahdī (d.198 A.H.) in the second period; Yahyā b. Ma'īn (d.233 A.H.) and Ahmad b. Hanbal (d. 241 A.H.) in the third period. Nasā'ī omitted a reporter if he happened to be deserted by both the dogmatic and lenient ones of that period.³⁵ Following this principle, Nasā'ī has omitted some reporters who are otherwise accepted by both Bukhārī and

Muslim. But it does not imply that his collection is more authentic than those of Bukhārī and Muslim, as is mentioned by Ibn Kathīr (d. 774 A.H.), the author of *Al-Bidāya wa-al-Nihāya*.³⁶

2. Nasā'ī, like Ahmad b. Hanbal declares a Hadīth as Munkar (rejected) if a reporter has reported something extra while other reporters have not reported it from the same teacher.³⁷

Certain Conditions of Mālik

Mālik (d. 179 A.H.) forbids reporting from four types of people. They are:³⁸

1. A man known for his stupidity.
2. A man with certain personal motives and engaged in propagating them.
3. An ascetic who does not know what he is narrating.
4. A man who speaks lies while reporting from the Prophet.

Conditions of Tirmidhī

Tirmidhī's collection of Hadīth is known as *Jāmi' al-Tirmidhī* or *Sunan al-Tirmidhī*. According to the commentators of the *Jāmi'* and *'Ilal*, Tirmidhī has maintained the following conditions:

1. The traditions of any narrator who persistently commits errors in transmitting a Hadīth or is considered weak due to his unmindfulness or weak memory, will not be cited in evidence.³⁹
2. It is not permissible to narrate a Hadīth from persons who fabricate traditions.⁴⁰

3. The Ahādīth in the Jami' are divided in four categories. The first category consists of those Ahādīth which fulfil the conditions of Bukhārī and/or Muslim. The second category consists of those Ahādīth which comply with the conditions of Abū Dāwūd or Nasā'ī. The third category are those Ahādīth that have certain discrepancies either in the text or Sanad. The fourth type of traditions are those mentioned by Tirmidhī, in spite of their weakness, as some jurists relied on them.⁴¹

Tirmidhī was the only one amongst the six canonical traditionists, who quotes Ahādīth from the fourth category unhesitatingly, whilst Abū Dāwūd also quotes from the fourth category but confines himself to the famous reporters of this category. The reporters who belong to the fourth category are persons who are truthful but have the tendency to speculate.⁴²

4. Tirmidhī has applied the term Mursal Hadīth where a reporter between the successor and the Prophet is missing or where a reporter other than a companion is missing. To the later traditionists, the second type of Hadīth is known as Munqatī' (broken). Even a Mursal Hadīth is valid according to Tirmidhī when supported by a Hadīth with an uninterrupted Sanad.⁴³ In Tirmidhī's opinion the majority of the scholars when classifying a tradition as Mursal consider it as weak. They have done so because Mursal narrations are narrated through either reliable or unreliable reporters and due to this doubt a precautionary stance is taken by classifying Mursal as weak.⁴⁴

5. Tirmidhî accepts a Hadîth conveyed by the usage of 'an (from), if the reporter is proved to be the contemporary of the one from whom he is reporting, unlike Bukhārî who as already mentioned, requires the meeting of both persons as well.⁴⁵

6. Tirmidhî did not specify several conditions for the acceptance of Ahādîth, since he included those traditions that were utilized by the jurists.⁴⁶

Having discussed Tirmidhî's conditions for the acceptance of a Hadîth in comparison with those of other traditionists, the uniqueness of Tirmidhî in the particular terminology used demands attention. What follows is an exposition on the terminology used by him.



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Chapter Three

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Chapter Four

The Terminology of Tirmidhī

Classification of the Traditions

Prior to discussing Tirmidhī's terminology it would be appropriate to mention the classification of Aḥādīth, and a few principles related to the science of Hadīth, as the terminology of the traditionists is related to the classification of the traditions and principles.

The classification of Hadīth into Sahīh (sound), Hasan (good) and Da'īf (weak) was firmly established by 'Alī b. al-Madīnī (d. 234 A.H.) and later by his student Bukhārī (d. 256 A.H.), however Tirmidhī (d. 279 A.H.) was the first traditionist to base his book on this classification.¹

With the increase in the number of the reporters between the traditionists of a particular period and the Prophet, it became necessary to define the Sahīh Hadīth. Shāfi'ī (d.204 A.H.), the founder of one of the four schools of jurisprudence, has discussed this issue in al-Risāla.² In the course of discussing the Khabar Khāssa³ (a particular type of tradition), he has specified the following conditions for the acceptance of a Hadīth as Sahīh:

1. Each reporter must be trustworthy.
2. He should be able to preserve the text of a Hadīth.

3. The Sanad should go back to the Prophet without any interruption/s.
4. His report must agree with those of other reliable reporters.
5. There should be no hidden defect in the text or Sanad.⁴

As for a Sahîh Hadîth, there is no difference of opinion between Tirmidhî and other traditionists in its application, since the overwhelming majority of traditionists including Tirmidhî meticulously followed the definition of Shâfi'î. For this reason Tirmidhî did not define the Sahîh Hadîth in his 'Ilal.⁵

Tirmidhî⁶ defined Hadîth Hasan by saying that wherever he has mentioned a Hadîth Hasan in his book, he meant a Hadîth which does not contain a reporter accused of lying and it is not Shâdh (rare) and the Hadîth has been reported through more than one Sanad.

Khattâbî (d.388 A.H.), a commentator on Sunan Abû Dâwûd,⁷ defined Hadîth Hasan as that Hadîth by saying, "It refers to a Hadîth which is known, its reporters are famous, the majority of the scholars have accepted it as evidence and the jurists utilize it". The above definitions prove that there is a difference between Tirmidhî and the other traditionists inasmuch as the definition regarding Hadîth Hasan is concerned. The difference according to Tirmidhî is that it is a prerequisite to have several chains of transmitters, whilst according to the majority of the scholars, a tradition with a single chain can also be classified as Hasan.⁸

Tirmidhī's⁹ understanding of the Gharīb Hadīth (weak tradition), concurs to a certain extent with that of the other traditionists. According to Tirmidhī a Hadīth may be classified as Gharīb for one of the following three reasons:

Firstly, a Hadīth may be classified as Gharīb since it is narrated from one chain only. Tirmidhī mentions as an example a tradition from Hammād b. Salama from Abū al-'Usharāi on the authority of his father who enquired from the Prophet whether the slaughtering of an animal is confined to the gullet and throat. The Prophet replied that stabbing the thigh will also suffice.

Secondly, ¹⁰ a tradition can be classified as Gharīb due to an addition in the text, though it will be considered a sound tradition, if that addition is reported by a reliable reporter. The example cited by Tirmidhī is a tradition narrated through the chain of Mālik (d. 179 A.H.) from Nāfi' (d.117 A.H.) on the authority of Ibn 'Umar (d.73 A.H.) who stated that the Prophet declared alms-giving at the end of Ramadān (month of fasting) obligatory upon every Muslim, male or female, whether a free person or slave from the Muslims. However, this tradition has also been narrated by Ayyūb Sakhtiyānī and 'Ubaid Allāh b. 'Umar, without the addition "from the Muslims", hence the abovementioned example due to the addition in the text "from the Muslims" is classified as Gharīb.

Thirdly, ¹¹ a tradition may be declared Gharīb since it is narrated through various chains of transmitters but having within one of its chains an addition in the Sanad. According to

Tirmidhî, these definitions prove that a Gharîb Hadîth, does not necessarily mean weak, but it might be Sahîh or Hasan, as long as it comes through a single Sanad.

The Collective Terms of Tirmidhî

According to the majority of the traditionists Sahîh and Gharîb or Hasan, Sahîh and Gharîb can never be combined, whereas according to Tirmidhî they can be combined. Tirmidhî has his own method of using collective terms like Hasan Gharîb, Hasan Sahîh Gharîb, Sahîh Gharîb and Hasan Sahîh. It should be remembered that Tirmidhî did not explain these collective terms anywhere. However, the traditionists tried to discover how these terms were used by Tirmidhî.¹²

The term Hasan Gharîb can be combined according to the majority of traditionists, since Hasan is related to the uprightness of the transmitters and Gharîb implies that he is alone in transmitting a tradition. Tirmidhî implies that this Hadîth has many chains of transmission, therefore it is considered as Hasan, but since the text or Sanad consists of an addition, it is classified as Gharîb.¹³

Hasan Sahîh Gharîb as applied by Tirmidhî implies that the Hadîth is Hasan, since it has several chains of transmitters, it is Sahîh as the chains are authentic and it is Gharîb in the manner in which Tirmidhî has narrated it.¹⁴

Sahîh Gharîb implies that the Hadîth is authentic but the Sanad is single. As previously mentioned Tirmidhî does not con-

sider it a prerequisite that an authentic Hadîth must have several chains of transmitters.¹⁵

The term Hasan Sahîh has caused great confusion among the traditionists, since Hasan is definitely lower in rank than Sahîh, how can the two classifications be combined?

Ibn Hajar (d. 852 A.H.), a commentator on Sahîh Bukhârî, said that the particle aw (or) is omitted, hence, according to him the Hadîth will be Hasan or Sahîh. Ibn Salâh (d. 642 A.H.), the author of Muqaddama Ibn Salâh, said that when a Hadîth is reported with two Isnâd (chains), one should be considered as Hasan and the other as Sahîh. Ibn Kathîr (d. 774 A.H.) has objected to the answer of Ibn Salâh, and said that some traditionists say the collective term refers to two Isnâd,¹⁶ but Tirmidhî states¹⁷ in certain places, "This Hadîth is Hasan Sahîh Gharîb, we do not know it except in this way". Ibn Kathîr¹⁸ said that the best answer to this problem is, Tirmidhî has coined a new term for a Hadîth which is between Sahîh and Hasan. When he (Tirmidhî) says Hasan Sahîh, he implies that this Hadîth is higher in rank than Hasan and lower than Sahîh. Ibn Daqîq al-Id¹⁹ (d. 702 A.H.), a commentator on Nawawî's (d. 676 A.H.) forty Hadîth, said that the relationship between a Sahîh and Hasan tradition is not that of antonyms, on the contrary they belong to the same category, although Hasan will be considered inferior to Sahîh, therefore they can be combined. The last explanation is accepted by most of the traditionists.²⁰

Principles of Hadīth

1. On several occasions a reporter is criticized by certain scholars and praised by others. Moulānā 'Abd al-Hay (d.1304 A.H.) has solved this problem in detail in his work entitled **Al-Ajwiba al-Fādila.**²¹ The summary of which is as follows:

The first method of solving the problem is; if a certain critic is lenient and the other is cautious, then preference should be given to the scholar who is cautious. An example of it is, if Hākim (d. 305 A.H.) states that a transmitter is authentic and Dhahabī (d. 748 A.H.) is of the opinion that he is weak, then preference will be given to Dhahabī, as Hākim is famous for his leniency.

Likewise, if Ibn Hibbān (d. 354 A.H.) states that a certain transmitter is reliable, whilst the other traditionists consider him to be unreliable, Ibn Hibbān's verdict will be rejected as he has included many unknown reporters in his work **The book of the Reliable.**

The second method will be to investigate which scholars criticized the transmitters and which spoke favourably of them. For example, if there are two traditionists, one being critical and the other moderate, preference will be given to the one who is moderate. For example Ibn al-Jawzī (d. 598 A.H.) is usually critical and Ibn Hajar (d. 852 A.H.) is moderate, thus preference will be given to Ibn Hajar.²²

2. If a particular tradition is weak, but substantiated with the practice of the companions of the Prophet and the successors, then that tradition will be acceptable to the jurists. For example, the Prophet is reported to have said, "The murderer will not inherit (from the murdered person)". This tradition is weak in respect of its chain of transmitters, but acceptable to the jurists as it was accepted and practiced upon by the companions.²³

3. Sometimes there exists a contradiction between two sound traditions, which are irreconcilable, in which case the jurists (like Shāfi'ī d. 204 A.H.) gave preference to the tradition which has a stronger chain of transmitters. Abū Hanīfa (d. 150 A.H.) gave preference to that tradition which is in greater agreement to the basic principles of the Islamic Law, irrespective whether that particular tradition has a strong chain or not.²⁴

4. Ibn Salāh said that after the fifth century (A.H.), nobody has the prerogative to pass any disparaging or authenticating remarks regarding the traditions or reporters. This opinion is erroneous since the majority of the traditionists hold that the science of disparaging or authenticating is not restricted to any epoch. Ibn Hajar (d.852 A.H.) and 'Irāqī (d.806 A.H.) were prominent scholars who made great contributions in the field of passing remarks concerning the traditions or transmitters, in spite of their being born after the fifth or sixth century.²⁵

Tirmidhī²⁶ mentions a principle of Hadīth by stating that whoever reports a tradition in which he memorized the chain of reporters,

it will be acceptable even if he narrates the tradition in his own words provided that he does not change the meaning of the tradition.

This principle is exemplified by the following incident of Ibn Sîrîn (d. 110 A.H.) wherein he states "I heard a tradition from ten persons and the words were different but the meaning was the same". According to Mujāhid (d.104 A.H.), decreasing the words of a tradition is admissible whilst increasing thereof is not. Sufyān Thawrî (d.161 A.H.) is reported to have said that he does not narrate a Hadîth in its entirety but only the meaning of the tradition.²⁷

Various Other Terms Used By Tirmidhî

1. One of the terms used excessively by Tirmidhî is;

هذا الحديث أصح شيء في هذا الباب

(This Hadîth is the most authentic in this chapter).

The question that arises is, whether the decree given by Tirmidhî is correct in all instances or not? Nawawî (d.676 A.H.), a commentator on Sahîh Muslim,²⁸ said that the decree does not necessitate that these Ahādîth must be Sahîh, since it is customary for the traditionists to say, "these Ahādîth are the most authentic that have appeared in these chapters", although the traditions are weak. They imply that these traditions are the most preferred irrespective of them being sound or weak.

2. Occasionally Tirmidhî, when evaluating a reporter says;

زاهب الحديث

which implies that the reporter has not preserved the text of the Hadîth.²⁹

3. He also mentions;

ليس اسناده بالقوى

which implies that this particular Isnâd is not strong.³⁰

4. Many a time Tirmidhî says;

في اسناده مقال

which connotes the traditionists have used disparaging remarks for certain reporters in the Isnâd.³¹

5. Sometimes he says;

هذا الحديث جيد

which connotes this is a sound Hadîth. It should be borne in mind that according to the majority of the scholars including Tirmidhî, there is no difference between Hadîth Jayyid and Hadîth Sahîh.³²

6. Occasionally, when evaluating an Isnād, Tirmidhī says;

هذا حديث مضطرب

which means there is a certain amount of confusion in the Hadīth. The confusion can occur either in the text of the Hadīth or in the Isnād, or in both the text and Isnād.³³

7. He also mentions;

هو شيخ ليس بذاك

which refers to Hārith b. Wajīh. 'Allāmah Tībī (d.743A.H.), a commentator on Mishkāt al-Masābīh, said that he was a traditionist of weak memory.³⁴

8. When mentioning the decrees of the jurists, on several occasions Tirmidhī says;

قول بعض اهل الكوفة

It should be remembered that Tirmidhī mentioned Abū Hanīfa's name only once in his Jāmi' when mentioning the verdicts of the various jurists.³⁵ The reason being that Tirmidhī never received a reliable chain of narrators to mention the decrees of Abū Hanīfa. Therefore, when referring to Abū Hanīfa he said "some people of Kufa".³⁶

Tirmidhī also mentions an appraisal of Jābir al-J'ufī by Abū Hanīfa and Wakī' in his 'Ilal'. Both these eminent jurists are divided in their opinion with regard to Jābir al-J'ufī. Abū Hanīfa considers Jābir as a most dishonest person whilst Wakī'

regards him as the major source of traditions in Kufa.³⁷ Ibn Rajab, a commentator on the 'Ilal of Tirmidhî, declares Wakî's opinion of Jâbir to be incorrect.³⁸

9. Another term used in several places by Tirmidhî is;

الكراهية

which does not mean abominable as usually understood, instead it refers to something which is unlawful in Islam.³⁹

10. Occasionally, when evaluating a tradition, Tirmidhî says;

ولا يمح عن النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم في هذا الباب شيء

which means that this chapter does not contain any authentic traditions. The abovementioned verdict is Tirmidhî's opinion. That is, occasionally Tirmidhî decrees there is no authentic tradition in a chapter. His opinion is not always correct as other reputed traditionists have authentic traditions.⁴⁰

The terminology of Tirmidhî, which is peculiar to him, is highlighted in chapter five, through a discussion of four selected Ahâdîth from the Jâmi'.

Chapter Four

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Chapter Five

Selected Aḥādīth from the Jāmi`

This chapter is devoted to an in-depth study of four selected Aḥādīth from the Jāmi` and their choice has been influenced by the following:

1. They highlight the terminology of Tirmidhī.
2. Tirmidhī has been criticized for including certain traditions in his compilation.
3. Tirmidhī is a true vanguard of the traditions, as is apparent in the first example.

In discussing each of the following Hadīth, the approach will be to mention the entire text in Arabic, followed by a translation of the Hadīth, which would include the appraisal of Tirmidhī, and finally, the comments of the traditionists regarding the tradition mentioned.

The traditionists have taken great pain in reducing the number of transmitters between their teachers and the Prophet. Generally the transmitters in the Jāmi` range from four to ten. However, there is one such Hadīth where the number of transmitters between Tirmidhī and the Prophet are only three (Thulāthī). This is a great distinction for Tirmidhī, since there are no Thulāthī Aḥādīth in Sunan Abū Dāwūd, Saḥīḥ Muslim and Sunan Nasā'ī. Sunan Ibn Māja contains five Thulāthī Aḥādīth and Saḥīḥ Bukhārī twenty-two.¹

Hadīth One

حدثنا اسماعيل بن موسى الفزاري ابن بنت السدي الكوفي حدثنا عمر بن
شاکر عن انس بن مالك قال : قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم :
ياتي على الناس زمان الصابر فيهم على دينه كالقايض على الجمر .
قال ابو عيسى : هذا حديث غريب من هذا الوجه ، وعمر بن شاکر
شيخ بصرى قد روى عنه غير واحد من اهل العلم .

Sanad: Tirmidhī - (ha)³ - Ismā'il b. Mūsā al-Fazārī b. Bint al-
Suddī al-Kūfī - (ha) - 'Umar b. Shākir - ('an)⁴ - Anas b. Mālik -
The Prophet said:

Text: "A time will dawn on men, when the one who perseveres in
his religion will be like one holding on to an ember".

Appraisal: Abū 'Isā (Tirmidhī) said that this Hadīth is Gharīb
in this way. 'Umar b. Shākir is a traditionist from Basra and
several traditionists narrated traditions from him. Tirmidhī
means that this tradition was narrated through one chain only and
'Umar b. Shākir is a weak narrator.⁵

Comment: The word Haddathanā was used by the traditionists in a very wide sense. If a student read a book of traditions to his teacher, he could use this word. If the teacher read to his students from a book or from memory, the same word was used to describe the channel of knowledge. Only scholars like Muslim (d. 261 A.H.) applied different terms to these two different methods of learning, for example, when the teacher read to his students, then the students would use the word Haddathanā whenever they transmitted that particular tradition, but when the student read to his teacher then Muslim would use the term Akhbaranā. Generally this difference was not strictly observed by the majority of traditionists such as Bukhārī, Mālik and Tirmidhī.⁶

The words Haddathanā and Akhbaranā imply that the persons within the chains of transmission met or were in actual physical proximity whilst the particle "an" (from) found between the links imply that such contact could or could not have taken place.⁷

Hadīth Two

حدثنا عبد الأعلى بن واصل الكوفي حدثنا الحسن بن عطية حدثنا أبو عاتكة عن أنس بن مالك قال : جاء رجل إلى النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم فقال : أفاكتحل وأنا صائم قال نعم .
قال : وفي الباب عن أبي رافع . قال أبو عيسى : حديث أنس حديث ليس أسناده بالقوى . ولا يصح عن النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم في هذا الباب شيء . وأبو عاتكة يضعف .

واختلف أهل العلم في الكحل للمائم . فكرهه بعضهم وهو قول سفيان وابن المبارك واحد وإسحاق . ورخص بعض أهل العلم في الكحل للمائم وهو قول الشافعي .

Sanad: Tirmidhī - (ḥa) - 'Abd al-A'la b. Wāsil al-Kūfī - (ḥa) - Al-Ḥasan b. Aṭiyya - (ḥa) - Abū 'Ātika - ('an) - Anas b. Mālīk said:

Text: "A man came to the Prophet and enquired: 'My eye is sore, may I use antimony whilst fasting?' He (Prophet) said: 'Yes'". Tirmidhī said that this Hadīth has also been narrated on the authority of Abū Rāfi'. This is one of the characteristics of Tirmidhī's Jāmi', that after mentioning tradition/s, he usually states who else has narrated the tradition.

Appraisal: Abū 'Isā (Tirmidhī) said that the Isnād of Anas's Hadīth is not strong, since nothing authentic is reported from the Prophet in this chapter and Abū 'Ātika has been considered as weak. In this instance Tirmidhī's evaluation is accepted by the traditionists, since they (traditionists) are unanimous that Abū 'Ātika is a weak reporter.⁹

Tirmidhī also said that the people of knowledge (jurists) have differed regarding the usage of antimony whilst fasting. Those who consider it as abominable are Sufyān, Ibn al-Mubārak, Ahmad and Ishāq. Some scholars have consented to it and this is Shāfi'ī's verdict.

Comment: This is one of those Ahādīth which is only mentioned in the Jāmi' and is not to be found in the remaining five canonical compilations. Tirmidhī has mentioned 126 traditions in the chapter on fasting of which no less than twenty-two traditions are mentioned only in his compilation.¹⁰ This proves that Tirmidhī was a true vanguard of the traditions, although Ibn Hazm (d.456 A.H.) who was the leader of the Zāhirī (literal) school in Spain, claimed that Tirmidhī was a nonentity but the majority of traditionists contradict him because his claim was unsubstantiated.¹¹

Hadîth Three¹²

حدثنا يوسف بن عيسى حدثنا علي بن عاصم قال حدثنا محمد بن سوقة عن ابراهيم عن الاسود عن عبد الله عن النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم قال : من عزى مصابا فله اجر مثله .

قال ابو عيسى : هذا حديث غريب لانعرفه مرفوعا الا من حديث علي بن عاصم وروى بعضهم عن محمد بن سوقة ، بهذا الاسناد مثله موقوفا ، ولم يرفعه .
ويقال : اكثر ما ابتلى به علي بن عاصم ، بهذا الاسناد نقموا عليه .

Sanad: Tirmidhî - (ḥa) - Yūsuf b. 'Isā - (ḥa) - 'Alī b. 'Āsim - (ḥa) - Muḥammad b. Sūqa - ('an) - Ibrāhīm - ('an) - Aswad - ('an) - 'Abd Allāh - ('an) - The Prophet said:

Text: "The one who condoles a grieving person, receives the same reward as that of the grieved person".

Appraisal: Tirmidhî said: "This Hadîth is Gharîb, we know this Hadîth as Marfû' (accredited to the Prophet) only through 'Alī b. 'Āsim. Some traditionists have reported this Hadîth through Muḥammad b. Sūqa as Mauqûf (accredited to a successor) without accrediting it to the Prophet. 'Alī b. 'Āsim is accused because of this Hadîth. They (the traditionists) have criticised him".

This tradition was narrated from one chain only. Hence Tirmidhî classifies it as Gharîb.

Comment: Ibn al-Jauzī (d.598 A.H.) has declared this Hadīth to be spurious.¹³ The main reason for the weakness of the Isnād is the questionable authority of 'Alī b. 'Āsim. Ibn al-Madīnī, Dhahabī, Sh'uba and Yahyā b. Ma'īn were very critical of 'Alī b. 'Āsim, particularly concerning this Hadīth.

Ibn Hajar¹⁴ (d.852 A.H.) said that similar Ahādīth in meaning are reported by Abū Shaikh in Kitāb al-Thawāb and it is a fact that if a Hadīth comes through various chains of transmitters, which help to support one another, it is groundless to suspect it. In spite of all that has been said about 'Alī b. 'Āsim, Ibn al-Jauzī appears to be too harsh in declaring this Hadīth as spurious. A Hadīth is usually classified as spurious when liars are found in the Sanad.¹⁵ The majority of the scholars such as Mubārakfūrī have stated that there are no spurious traditions in the Jāmi'.¹⁶

Hadîth Four¹⁷

حدثنا الحسن بن علي الخلال حدثنا ابو عامر العقدي حدثنا كثير بن عبد الله بن عمرو بن عوف المزني عن ابيه عن جده ان رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم قال : الصلح جائز بين المسلمين الا ملحا حرم حلالا او احل حراما . والمسلمون على شروطهم الا شرطا حرم حلالا او احل حراما .

قال ابو عيسى : هذا حديث حسن صحيح .

Sanad: Tirmidhî - (ha) - Hasan b. 'Alî al-Khallâl - (ha) - Abû 'Āmir al-'Aqdî - (ha) - Kathîr b. 'Abd Allāh b. 'Amr b. 'Awf al-Muzanî - ('an) - his father - ('an) - his grandfather - the Prophet said:

Text: "Reconciliation is permissible between Muslims, except that which makes the unlawful lawful and the lawful unlawful. And the Muslims are bound by their contracts, except that which makes the lawful unlawful or unlawful lawful".

Appraisal: Abû 'Isā (Tirmidhî) said: "This Hadîth is Hasan Sahîh". Tirmidhî's evaluation either refers to a term coined by him for those traditions that are superior to Hasan and inferior to Sahîh or refer to both Hasan and Sahîh who belong to the same category, although Hasan will be considered inferior to Sahîh.¹⁸

Comment: Dhahabî (d.748 A.H.) criticized Tirmidhî's authenticating remarks regarding this Hadîth because of Kathîr b. 'Abd Allâh who was disparaged by the traditionists. Shâfi'î and Abû Dâwûd said, "He is one of the pillars of falsehood". Nasâ'î said, "He is not reliable". Ahmad deserted him. Therefore Dhahabî said that the traditionists do not rely on the authenticating remarks made by Tirmidhî.¹⁹

The traditionists²⁰ have accepted the authenticating remarks made by Tirmidhî; in fact they have considered him as one of their major sources in this regard. Therefore, Dr. 'Itar²¹, a commentator on the Jâmi' has refuted Dhahabî's claims because of three reasons:

1. Not collaborating the different copies of the Jâmi' before reaching a conclusion.
2. Being unmindful of Tirmidhî's terminology.
3. Not considering the differences of opinion held by the traditionists insofar as the reporters and their ranks are concerned.

He also said that the Hadîth which Dhahabî has criticized is no fault of Tirmidhî, since the copies of the Jâmi' differ and in fact this Hadîth has been appraised by Tirmidhî himself as only Hasan in certain copies. It should also be borne in mind that this particular Hadîth is mentioned in Sunan Abû Dâwûd and Sunan Dâraqutnî. The latter appraised it as sound. Thus Hâfiz 'Irâqî (d.806 A.H.) remarked²², "It is Tirmidhî's habit that when a Hasan Hadîth is narrated with several chains of transmitters, it

increases in credibility to the rank of Sahîh". Hence the criticism levelled by Dhahabî against Tirmidhî is not justified.



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Chapter Five

References and Footnotes

1. Mukhtār: M.H. Al-Imām al-Tirmidhī, Karachi, 1986, pp. 130-131.
2. Tirmidhī: Sunan, Beirut, N.D. 4: p. 456.
3. "Ha" is an abbreviation of Haddathanā. See comment of Hadīth One for full explanation.
4. See comment of Hadīth One for full explanation.
5. Mubārakfūrī: A.R. Tuhfa al-Ahwadhī, Faisalabad, N.D. 3: p. 245.
6. A'zamī: M.M. Studies in Early Hadīth Literature, Indiana, 1978, pp. 293-294.
Tirmidhī: op. cit., 5: p. 706.
7. 'Abd al -Ghaffār: S.H. Criticism of Hadīth among Muslims with Reference to Sunan Ibn Māja, London, 1986, pp. 114-115.
8. Ahmad: R. Irshād al-Qārī ilā Sahīh al-Bukhārī, Karachi, 1979, p. 59.
9. Tirmidhī: op. cit., 3: p. 105.
10. Mubārakfūrī: op. cit., 2: p.47.
11. Tirmidhī: op. cit., pp. 66-172.
12. Mukhtār: op. cit., pp. 79-80.
13. Tirmidhī: op. cit., p. 385.
14. 'Abd al-Ghaffār: op. cit., pp. 183-193.
15. Ibid, pp. 194-195.
16. Ibid, p. 195.

16. Mubārakfūrī: A.R. Muqaddama Tuhfa al-Ahwadhī, Multan, 1982, p. 180.
17. Tirmidhī: op. cit., pp. 634-635.
18. 'Uthmānī: M.T. Dars Tirmidhī (Urdu), Karachi, 1983, 1: pp. 165-168.
19. Mukhtār: op. cit., pp. 131-133.
20. Ibid, p. 134.
21. 'Itar: N. Al-Imām al-Tirmidhī, Egypt, 1970, pp. 268-270.
22. Ibid, pp. 271-272.



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Conclusion

The importance of Hadîth can never be over-emphasized and the authentication of Hadîth has occupied the attention and effort of scholars of Hadîth through out the corridors of time. Traditionists, from the time of the Companions of the Prophet to the six major collectors of Hadîth, have exerted themselves to the maximum to ascertain whether or not a particular Hadîth was accredited to the Prophet.

By the third century A.H., a number of collections of Hadîth were compiled by a host of traditionists, but six canonical collections of Hadîth, namely, Sahîh Bukhârî, Sahîh Muslim, Sunan Nasâ'î, Sunan Abû Dâwûd, Tirmidhî's Jâmi' and Sunan Ibn Māja gained more popularity.

It is unfortunate that Tirmidhî's contribution to Hadîth has not received the acclaim and attention it deserves. His contribution to Hadîth is invaluable even in this modern age. Tirmidhî has perpetuated the verdicts of the various jurists. Had he not done this, several of them would have disappeared for example, Sufyân Thawrî, 'Abd Allâh b. Mubâarak and Ishâq b. Râhaway. This would have been a sad loss to the modern age.

Of the six compilers whose canonical collections of Hadîth have gained more popularity, Tirmidhî is the only one who not only mentioned traditions that were sound but also those that were weak. Thus, the modern scholar has access to these

traditions, in spite of their weakness, and the proofs of many jurists which would have been otherwise unknown.

Tirmidhî has made an evaluation of virtually every tradition in his Jâmi' and he has clarified the names or kunya of the narrators. Through this, the work of Hadîth by modern day scholars, has been facilitated.

The world at large is deeply indebted to Tirmidhî, for his compilation of Ahādîth in Al-Jâmi'.



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Glossary

- Akhbaranā** - the persons within the chains of transmission met or were in actual physical proximity.
- 'Asr** - late afternoon obligatory prayer.
- Da'if** - a weak tradition.
- Dhikr** - literally to remind, glorifying Allāh with certain fixed phrases.
- Dhū al-Hijja** - the twelfth month of the muslim calendar.
- Fajr** - obligatory pre-dawn prayer.
- Gharīb** - according to Tirmidhī it refers to a tradition whose text has only one chain of transmission or a rare expression in the text or a name which appears only once in the chain.
- Haddathanā** - the persons within the chains of transmission met or were in actual physical proximity.
- Hadīth** - pl. **Ahādīth**, refers to the sayings, actions, or tacit approval of Prophet Muḥammad.
- Hajj** - greater pilgrimage and one of the pillars of Islam.
- Hasan** - those traditions which are good but inferior to **Sahīh** with regard to the transmitters. According to Tirmidhī, a **Hadīth** which has been reported through more than one **Sanad** and is not **Shādh** will be classified as **Hasan**.

- Hijra** - the migration of the Prophet from Makka to Madina, marking the starting point of the Islamic calendar.
- 'Id** - a festival, there are two main festivals in the muslim calendar, **'Id al-Fitr** and **'Id al-Adhā**.
- 'Ishā** - obligatory night prayer.
- Isnād** - names of persons who have handed down the substance of the tradition to one another. Occasionally referred to as **Sanad**.
- Jāmi'** - a book of traditions is classified as **al-Jāmi'** when it consists of eight topics - (1) International Law, (2) Etiquettes, (3) Exegesis of the **Qur'ān**, (4) Articles of Faith, (5) Discord, (6) Signs of the Last Day, (7) Rules and Regulations and (8) Hagiology.
- Jayyid** - a sound tradition. Occasionally referred to as **Sahīh**.
- Khabar Khassa** - a tradition transmitted by a relatively small number of transmitters. Only **Shāfi'i** used this term in place of **ahād** which was utilized by the other traditionists. **Khabar Khassa** and **ahād** connote the same thing.
- Kunya** - name given to a person by addressing him as father of his eldest son, e.g. **Abū 'Isā** would be father of **'Isā**. In Arabic the **kunya** is also functional as an agnomen, associating personalities with their particular dominant characteristics, penchants or idiosyncracies,

Ma'fūq - e.g. Abū Sa'īd, literally father of happiness - said of a merry person, also Abū Huraira, literally father of the kittens - said of one with a special liking for cats.

Madīna - literally a city, famously known as al-Madīna al-Munawarra, the enlightened city.

Maghrib - the obligatory prayer just after sunset.

Marfū' - the Isnād of the Hadīth goes back to the Prophet, though it might be broken somewhere.

Matn - text, the real substance of the report.

Mauqūf - the Isnād of the Hadīth goes back to the companion only.

Mujarrad - unreported traditions.

Munkar - a Hadīth which is reported by an untrustworthy narrator against that which was reported by a host of other trustworthy reporters.

Munqat'i - an Isnād having a single link missing somewhere in the middle.

Mursal - transmission of a successor directly from the Prophet, by omitting the companion from the Isnād. According to Tirmidhī, when a reporter other than a companion is missing then also it will be classified as **Mursal**.

- Musannaf** - collections of traditions that were arranged according to the contents of the traditions.
- Musnad** - the Isnād of the Hadīth is uninterrupted and goes back to the Prophet.
- Mutāba'a** - traditionists were always in search for more witnesses in favour of a Hadīth which was reported by a single source. Once a reliable witness was found it was called **Mutāba'a**.
- Muttasil** - the Isnād of the Hadīth is unbroken.
- Nasab** - full name including the genealogical chain.
- Rak'ah** - a unit of prayer, a complete series of standing, bowing, prostrations and sitting.
- Ramadhān** - ninth month of the muslim calendar and month of fasting.
- Sahīh** - a sound tradition in whose Isnād or text there are no weaknesses.
- Sanad** - refer to Isnād.
- Sha'bān** - eighth month of the muslim calendar.
- Shādh** - a Hadīth which is reported by a trustworthy reporter but is contrary to that which was reported by a host of trustworthy reporters.
- Sharī'a** - the canon law of Islam.

Shawwāl - tenth month of the muslim calendar.

Sihāh Sitta - six canonical compilations, namely; Sahīh Bukhārī, Sahīh Muslim, Sunan Nasā'ī, Sunan Abū Dāwūd, Tirmidhī's Jāmi' and Sunan Ibn Māja

Sunan - a book that is chapterised according to legal chapters such as purification, prayer, poor-due and fasting.

Sunna - the customary practice of a person or group of people. It refers almost exclusively to the practice of Prophet Muhammad.

Tabaqāt - biographies arranged according to the categories of various scholars.

Thulāthī - the number of transmitters between a traditionist and the Prophet are only three.

Umma - the body of the muslims as one distinct and integrated community.

Zakāt - annual obligatory poor-due and one of the pillars of Islam.

Zuhr - the obligatory midday prayer.