

## An Insight into the *Hadīth* Methodology of Jamāl al-Dīn Ahmad b. Tāwūs<sup>1)</sup>

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Jamāl al-Dīn Ahmad b. Mūsā b. Ja‘far b. Muḥammad b. Ahmad b. Muḥammad b. Muḥammad Ibn Tāwūs al-‘Alawī al-Ḥasani al-Ḥilli (d. 673/1274–5) was a Shi‘i theologian from the seventh/thirteenth century, a scion of the famous Āl Tāwūs from Ḥilla in central Iraq.<sup>2)</sup> Among the eighty-plus works that his biographers say he wrote is his *Binā’ al-maqāla al-fāṭimiyya* (or *al-‘alawīyya*) *fi naqḍ al-risāla al-‘uthmāniyya*.<sup>3)</sup> As the title suggests, this was a polemical work written in refutation of the *Risālat al-‘uthmāniyya* by the celebrated ninth-century belle-lettrist ‘Amr b. Baḥr al-Jāḥiẓ. In the *Binā’ al-maqāla*, Ibn Tāwūs criticizes al-Jāḥiẓ’ methodology of *ḥadīth* criticism in order to undermine the latter’s position and consequently, explains his own, so that we are afforded a unique insight into the application of his *ḥadīth* methodology.

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<sup>2)</sup> For more biographical information on Ibn Tāwūs, see al-Ḥasan b. ‘Ali b. Dā‘ūd al-Ḥilli, *Kitāb al-rijāl* (Tehran, 1342/1963–4), pp. 45–47; Ibn Zuhra, *Ghāyat al-ikhtisār* (Najaf, 1382/1963), p. 57; Ibn ‘Inaba, *Umdat al-ṭālib fi ansāb āl Abi Ṭālib*, ed. Nizār Riḍā (Beirut, 1390), pp. 156–57; Mir Muṣṭafā al-Tafrishi, *Naqḍ al-rijāl* (Qumm, n.d.), p. 35; al-Ḥurr al-‘Āmilī, *Amal al-āmīl fi tarājim ‘ulamā’ Jabal ‘Āmil*, 2 vols. (Najaf, 1385/1965), v. 2, pp. 29–30; Muḥammad Bāqir al-Majlisi, *Biḥār al-anwār*, 110 vols. (Tehran, 1956–1983), v. 1, pp. 147–48; ‘Abd Allāh Afandī, *Riyāḍ al-‘ulamā’ wa ḥiyāḍ al-fuḍalā’*, 6 vols. (Qumm, 1401/1981), v. 1, pp. 73–77; Yūsuf al-Bahrānī, *Lu’lu’at al-baḥrayn fi al-ijāzāt wa tarājim rijāl al-ḥadīth* (Najaf, 1386/1966), pp. 243–45; Muḥammad Bāqir al-Khwānsārī, *Rawḍāt al-jannāt fi ahwāl al-‘ulamā’ wa al-sādāt*, 8 vols. (Tehran, 1382/1962), v. 1, pp. 148–53; ‘Abbās al-Qummi, *al-Kunā wa al-alqāb*, 3 vols. (Najaf, 1376/1956), v. 1, pp. 334–45; Muḥsin al-Amin, *A‘yān al-shi‘a*, 56 vols. (Beirut, 1960–63), v. 10, pp. 182–83.

<sup>3)</sup> In my following analysis and commentary upon the *Binā’ al-maqāla*, I have used both the Qumm, 1411/1990 (ed. ‘Ali al-‘Adnani al-Ghurayfi) and Amman, 1985 (ed. Ibrāhīm al-Samarrā’i) editions. I have also had at my disposal microfilm copies of the Tehran and Baghdad manuscripts.

### Ibn Ṭāwūs' Methodology of *Ḥadīth* Criticism

Ibn Ṭāwūs was responsible for a significant development in *ḥadīth* criticism and classification for which he has earned himself a unique niche in Shi'ī *ʿilm al-ḥadīth*. According to his student, Ḥasan b. Yūsuf b. al-Muṭahhar al-Ḥilli, known as al-ʿAllāma al-Ḥilli (d. 726/1325), Ibn Ṭāwūs coined new terminology for traditions and his method of *ḥadīth* classification came to be widely used in Imāmi jurisprudence.<sup>4)</sup> Following Ibn Ṭāwūs' method of classification, traditions in Imāmi Shi'ism are grouped into four main categories<sup>5)</sup> (three of which are common to both Sunni and Imāmi Shi'ī *ḥadīth* criticism)<sup>6)</sup>, based on analysis of the *isnād* ("chain of transmission") as follows:

<sup>4)</sup> *A'yān*, v. 10, p. 181; Ḥasan al-Ṣadr, *Ta'sīs al-shi'a li-ʿulūm al-islām* (Tehran, n.d.) p. 270; Hossein Modarressi, *An Introduction to Shi'ī Law* (London, 1984), p. 48 and n. 2.

It was commonly assumed until recently that al-ʿAllāma al-Ḥilli himself had devised this method of classification and coined the terminology for the four types of *ḥadīth*; for example, cf. *Rawḍāt*, v. 4, p. 251; Wilferd Madelung, "Akhbāriyya", *Encyclopedia of Islam*, ed. H. Gibb et al., 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (proceeding) (hence forth referred to as EI<sup>2</sup>; Leiden, 1985-); v. 1, p. 57; Etan Kohlberg, "Akhbāriyya", *Encyclopedia Iranica*, ed. Ehsan Yarshater et al. (proceeding), (Leiden 1985-), v. I, p. 718; N. Calder, "Doubt and Prerogative: The Emergence of an Imāmi Shi'ī Theory of *Ijtihād*", *Studia Islamica*, 70 (1989), p. 67; Moojan Momen, *An Introduction to Shi'ī Islam: The History and Doctrines of Twelver Shi'ism* (New Haven, Conn., 1985), pp. 184, 185. To Professor Modarressi belongs the credit of being the first to point out in a work published in the West that this classification originated with Ibn Ṭāwūs.

<sup>5)</sup> Before this method of *ḥadīth* classification, Shi'ī scholars classified *ḥadīth* into *ṣaḥīḥ* traditions (i.e. those that were attributed to the Imams) and *da'īf* traditions (i.e. those that were not). Basically, traditions found in the four canonical *ḥadīth* compilations (*al-kutub al-arba'a*) were all considered to be *ṣaḥīḥ*; those not included in these works were considered to be *da'īf*. This remained the Akhbāri attitude towards *ḥadīth* classification while the *rijāl*-based analysis of *ḥadīth* was embraced by scholars later considered to be among the Uṣūliyyūn.

<sup>6)</sup> The reason for this overlap is that *ḥadīth* criticism in Imāmi Shi'ism was strongly influenced by Sunni methodology. Al-Ḥurr al-ʿĀmili, among others, mentions in his biographical notices on al-ʿAllāma al-Ḥilli and al-Shahid al-Thāni, two of the most important traditionists in Shi'ī Islam, that they studied under both Sunni and Shi'ī teachers (*Amal al-āmil*, v. 2, pp. 81-85 for al-Ḥilli; and v. 1, pp. 85-91 for al-Shahid al-Thāni).

It is not clear if Ibn Ṭāwūs studied with Sunni scholars which would have explained the provenance of his *ḥadīth* methodology. It is very likely he did, but his biographers list the names only of men known to be Shi'ī scholars. We know that his brother Raḍī al-Din ʿAlī b. Mūsā Ibn Ṭāwūs (d. 664/1266) studied with non-Imāmi teachers for he transmitted from them, asserting that there was benefit in

1) *al-Ṣaḥīḥ* ("sound"). According to Sunni definition, this type of tradition regarding whose soundness there is no doubt must be attributed to the Prophet and reported by men and women considered to be highly reliable transmitters in an unbroken chain of transmission. From the Imāmi Shi'ī viewpoint, a *ṣaḥīḥ* tradition can be attributed to one of the twelve Imams as well, for the Imams, like the Prophet, were infallible.<sup>7)</sup>

The chain of transmission of such traditions must without interruption reach back to a Companion of the Prophet, or, in Shi'ī Islam, also reach back to a companion of one of the Imams.<sup>8)</sup> Similar to Sunni requirements, the narrators of *ṣaḥīḥ* traditions must be of flawless reputation and of unimpeachable integrity.<sup>9)</sup>

2) *al-Ḥasan* ("good"). In both Sunni and Shi'ī *‘ilm al-ḥadīth*, these are traditions very close in rank to the above. Only minor defects are perceived in the narrators of such types of *ḥadīths*.<sup>10)</sup>

3) *al-Muwaththaq* ("trustworthy" or "reliable"). This is a category that occurs in Shi'ī *‘ilm al-ḥadīth* only. A *muwaththaq* tradition is one narrated by a non-Imāmi authority; its text might even be at variance (*mukhālif*) with that of a *ṣaḥīḥ* tradition (as defined in Imāmi Shi'ism).<sup>11)</sup> In general, *ḥasan* and *muwaththaq* reports are considered very reliable, for they are only a notch below *ṣaḥīḥ* traditions.<sup>12)</sup>

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that for the Shi'ā; see Etan Kohlberg, *A Medieval Muslim Scholar at Work: Ibn Ṭāwūs and His Library* (E. J. Brill, 1992), p. 7. One of these teachers was the Sunni traditionist and historian Muḥibb al-Din Muḥammad b. Maḥmūd, known as Ibn al-Najjār al-Baghdādi al-Shāfi'ī (d. 643/1245), the author of *Dhayl ta'rikh Baghdād*; for whom see El<sup>2</sup>, art. "Ibn al-Nadjdār", v. 3, pp. 896–97. We also know that Aḥmad Ibn Ṭāwūs' son, Ghiyāth al-Din 'Abd al-Karim, studied with Sunni teachers; see, for example, *Riyāḍ*, v. 3, p. 165; there was thus no apparent ideological bias against this practice. Why similar documentation is lacking for Ibn Ṭāwūs is somewhat puzzling since we can detect an obvious Sunni influence upon him.

<sup>7)</sup> Zayd al-Din Al-Āmili, al-Shahid al-Thāni, *Sharḥ al-bidāya fi 'ilm al-dirāya* (No place or publisher, 1982 (?)), p. 79.

<sup>8)</sup> The companions of the Imams related the sayings of the various Imams, which together came to be called *al-uṣūl al-arba'umi'a*, i.e. "the four hundred bases or fundamentals". For more information on these *uṣūl* and the companions who transmitted them, see Etan Kohlberg's "*al-Uṣūl al-arba'umi'a*", in *Jerusalem Studies in Arabic and Islam*, 10 (1987), pp. 128–66; and the article by M. Khodayar Mohebbi, "Les Principes Essentiels de la Theologie Chiite", in *Studies in the History of Religions (Supplements to Numen)*, 22 (1972), pp. 126–33.

<sup>9)</sup> *Sharḥ al-bidāya*, p. 88.

<sup>10)</sup> *El<sup>2</sup>* v. 3, p. 25; *Sharḥ al-bidāya*, p. 83.

<sup>11)</sup> *Sharḥ al-bidāya*, p. 86.

<sup>12)</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 88, where al-Shahid al-Thāni refers to the *ḥasan* and *muwaththaq* traditions as "its (i.e. the *ṣaḥīḥ* tradition's) two brothers" (*akhawayh*).

4) *al-Da'if* ("weak"). In both Sunni and Shi'ī *ḥadīth* criticism, when a report cannot be attributed to an infallible source, or it is transmitted by authorities of questionable integrity, or its chain of transmission is interrupted, it is considered weak and unreliable. Such traditions are not considered valid for forming legal decisions.<sup>13)</sup>

In fully developed Shi'ī *'ilm al-ḥadīth*, traditions are further analyzed with regard to the nature of the *isnād* and the number of *ḥadīth* transmitters. Many of these categories were added to Ibn Ṭāwūs' basic system of classification in the post-Safavid period.<sup>14)</sup> Some of these categories, however, are already adumbrated in the *Binā' al-maqāla* and are of the following principal types:

1) *al-Mursal*. Among the Sunnis, this type of tradition was narrated by one of the *Tābi'ūn*; i.e. the Successors to the Companions of the Prophet, directly from the Prophet himself. Therefore, in the *isnād* of this kind of tradition, there is no mention of the Companion who would have been the direct link between the Successor and the Prophet.<sup>15)</sup> According to the Imāmi perspective, such a tradition is also attributable to a successor of a companion of the Imam (*tābi' muṣāḥib al-imām*). On this account, this type of tradition is considered defective.<sup>17)</sup>

2) *al-Marfū'*. Among the Sunnis, this is a tradition directly "raised" or attributed to the Prophet. In Shi'ī *ḥadīth* terminology, a *marfū'* tradition can also be attributed to an Imam. A tradition is *marfū'* regardless of whether its *isnād* is broken or uninterrupted, and whether its narrators are explicitly named or are obscure (*mubham*).<sup>18)</sup> When a *marfū'* tradition has an uninterrupted chain of transmission, it is known as *muṭṭasīl marfū'* (also referred to as *musnad* in Sunni terminology).

3) *al-Mutawātir*. Among both Sunnis and Shi'īs, a *mutawātir* tradition is one that has numerous transmitters in every generation of its transmission, all considered reliable, and one that is so widely-disseminated and well-

<sup>13)</sup> Al-Baghawī, Abū Muḥammad b. al-Farrā', *Mishkāt al-maṣābiḥ*, tr. James Robson, 2 vols. (Lahore: 1975), v. 1, p. X; *Sharḥ al-bidāya*, pp. 88, 94.

<sup>14)</sup> *A'yān*, v. 10, p. 181. Muḥsin al-Amin refers to this period as the period of the two Majlisīs (*zaman al-majlisiyayn*), which gets its name from two influential theologians, Muḥammad Taqī Majlisi (d. 1070/1659) and his famous son, Muḥammad Bāqir Majlisi (d. 1110/1699), author of the voluminous *ḥadīth* collection *Bihār al-anwār*; see also Momen, *Introduction to Shi'ī Islam*, pp. 114–19.

<sup>15)</sup> EI<sup>2</sup>, v. 3, p. 26.

<sup>16)</sup> *Sharḥ al-bidāya*, p. 139.

<sup>17)</sup> See *infra*, for Ibn Ṭāwūs' opinion concerning the *mursal* tradition and its eligibility as a *ḥujja*.

<sup>18)</sup> *Sharḥ al-bidāya*, p. 100; EI<sup>2</sup>, v. 3, p. 25.

known that it is above suspicion. There is no consensus regarding the number of concurrent chains required to make a report *mutawātir*. Few traditions exist that are *mutawātir bi al-lafz* (i.e. identical in wording); relatively more exist that are *mutawātir bi al-ma' nā* (i.e. identical in meaning only.<sup>19</sup>) Ibn Ṭāwūs considers *mutawātir* traditions to constitute the best proofs (*hujaj*, sing. *hujja*) in polemical disputations.

4) *al-Wāḥid* (pl. *Āḥād*). This is an isolated tradition transmitted by one narrator (or only a few narrators) in contrast to the *mutawātir* traditions. A distinction is sometimes made between a tradition that is transmitted by a single authority, when it is called *khābar al-wāḥid*, and a tradition that is narrated by more than one but less than the number that would make it *mutawātir* (roughly between two and five), in which case it is called *khābar al-āḥād*.<sup>20</sup>) In general, the terms are used quite interchangeably. Ibn Ṭāwūs expresses his view quite clearly regarding the use of the isolated tradition as polemical proof, a point which will be discussed later.

5) *al-Maqbūl*. In Sunni Islam, these are traditions considered acceptable because they fulfill the requirements for *ṣaḥīḥ* or *ḥasan* traditions.<sup>21</sup>) Al-Shahīd al-Thāni maintains that these kind of *ḥadīths* can be of the four main categories mentioned above, i.e. any type ranging from *ṣaḥīḥ* to *ḍa'if*. In the case of a *ḍa'if* tradition, if the Companions were known to have endorsed its *matn* and acted according to it, then such a tradition would be considered *maqbūl*.<sup>22</sup>) According to Ibn Ṭāwūs, the *ṭā'ir* tradition could be considered a *maqbūl* tradition for polemical purposes.<sup>23</sup>)

After Ibn Ṭāwūs, his student al-'Allāma al-Ḥilli implemented the quadripartite system of *ḥadīth* classification widely in his legal works, which met with strong resistance from the Akhbāriyyūn.<sup>24</sup>) Some of the Akhbāriyyūn detested this innovation so much that they went so far as to claim

<sup>19</sup>) See the art. "Mutawātir" in EI<sup>2</sup>, v. 7, p. 781.

<sup>20</sup>) See the art. "Khabar al-Wāḥid" in EI<sup>2</sup>, v. 4, p. 896; see also Hossein Modarresi, *Crisis and Consolidation in the Formative Period of Shi'ite Islam* (Princeton, 1993), p. 127 ff. for a discussion of how the concepts of *mutawātir* and *āḥād* traditions evolved over time.

<sup>21</sup>) EI<sup>2</sup> v. 3, p. 26.

<sup>22</sup>) *Sharḥ al-bidāya*, pp. 133–34.

The above classification of *ḥadīths* as developed by Ibn Ṭāwūs is also outlined (with further additions) in the *Shorter Islamic Shi'ite Encyclopaedia*, ed. Ḥasan al-Amin (Beirut, 1969), pp. 202–3.

<sup>23</sup>) See *infra*.

<sup>24</sup>) One of the most vocal opponents of this new *ḥadīth* system was Muḥammad Amin b. Muḥammad Sharif al-Akhbāri al-Astarabādi (d. 1036/1627). He is recognized as the founder of the later Akhbāri school and author of the work *al-Fawā'id al-madaniyya* (see *Rawḍāt*, v. 1, pp. 308–36). He inveighed against the four-part *ḥadīth*

that religion had been destroyed on two occasions: the first being when this novel method of *ḥadīth* classification had been introduced, and the second being the day when al-‘Allāma al-Ḥilli had been born.<sup>25</sup>) This system, however, was to survive this opposition to become very popular.

Ibn Ṭawūs utilizes these principles of ‘*ilm al-ḥadīth* in the *Binā’ al-maqāla* to establish the validity of traditions which demonstrate the supremacy of ‘Ali’s position in Islam after the Prophet and his superior qualifications for the caliphate over Abū Bakr. This counters the polemical arguments advanced by al-Jāḥiẓ in his *Risālat al-‘uthmāniyya* and the tradition-based evidence that he presents to establish the validity of Abū Bakr’s claim to the caliphate.

Ibn Ṭawūs, first and foremost, is concerned with establishing the reliability of transmitters and the nature of the chain of transmission, i.e. essentially whether it is broken or continuous for a particular *ḥadīth* and to establish its *tawātur*. This kind of analysis, according to Ibn Ṭawūs, is crucial for determining the reliability of *ḥadīths* and their acceptability for use as polemical proofs. In his refutation of the proofs that al-Jāḥiẓ presents in the ‘*Uthmāniyya*, Ibn Ṭawūs takes the former to task severely for having departed from this stringent methodology of establishing the validity of *ḥadīths*.

The importance of *ḥadīth* in the religious sciences is emphasized by Ibn Ṭawūs. He states that traditions serve two useful purposes; firstly, for the derivation of (legal) principles from them, and secondly, as proofs against one’s polemical opponent who may thereby be compelled to acknowledge the validity of one’s position.<sup>26</sup>) A tradition can serve this two-fold beneficial purpose when its narrator(s) are known to possess moral probity (‘*adāla*) and the tradition itself is widely-disseminated (*mutawātir*).<sup>27</sup>)

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system of classification made popular by the rationalists (whom he refers to as “*al-muta’akhhirūn*”), namely al-‘Allāma al-Ḥilli, al-Shahid al-Awwal (d. 786/1384), al-Shahid al-Thāni (d. 965/1558), his son Ḥasan b. Zayn al-Dīn al-‘Āmili (d. 1011/1602), and al-Shaykh Bahā’ al-Dīn al-‘Āmili (d. 1030/1621) (*Rawḍāt*, v. 1, p. 313; Art. “*Aḵbāriyya*”, *Encyclopedia Iranica*, v. 1, p. 717). He states (*Rawḍāt*, v. 1, p. 313) that the one who initiated this system (this would be Ibn Ṭawūs although it is not clear if this was known to al-Astarabādi) did so because he had no regard for the sayings of past generations (*al-qudamā’*) and the reason for his lack of regard was that “his mind was steeped [only] in the books of the commonalty (*al-‘amma*, i.e. the Sunnis)” [as opposed to the books containing the sayings and practices of the Imams].

<sup>25</sup>) See Muḥammad al-Mahdi Baḥr al-‘Ulūm al-Ṭabāṭabā’i, *Rijāl* [known as *al-Fawā’id al-rijāliyya*], 4 vols. (Najaf, 1965), v. 2, p. 260; *A’yān*, v. 10, p. 181.

<sup>26</sup>) This is more succinctly rendered in Arabic as, “*inna al-ḥāl fī al-riwāyāt wa al-intifā’ bihā yanqasim qismayn aḥaduhumā fimā yarji’ ilā al-binā’ ‘alayhā wa al-thāni fimā yarji’ ilā al-īlām bihā (Binā’* [Amman ed.], p. 140; [Qumm ed.], p. 292).

<sup>27</sup>) Ibid. (Amman ed.), pp. 140–41; (Qumm ed.), pp. 292–93).

In his discussion of *ḥadīth* material, Ibn Ṭāwūs thus emphasizes the following criteria, deemed indispensable in determining the acceptability of *ḥadīth*:

- 1) The reliability of the transmitters (*al-ruwāt*) of the *ḥadīth* in question.
- 2) The nature of the transmission of the *ḥadīth*: a) continuity in the chain of *ḥadīth* transmitters (*iṭṭisāl al-isnād*) and b) the wide-spread dissemination and attestation (*al-tawātur*) of the *ḥadīth*.

Each of these points will now be illustrated with examples drawn from the *Binā' al-maqāla*.

### 1) The Reliability of *Ḥadīth* Transmitters

The most important of the above two criteria is the reliability of the *ḥadīth* transmitters.<sup>28)</sup> According to Ibn Ṭāwūs, it is not enough for one's adversary to advance in support of his position a tradition with an impeccable *isnād muttasil*, and one that is, furthermore, widely-attested and widely-disseminated, i.e. *mutawātir*. If on close inspection, the *isnād* of such a tradition is found to contain the name of a narrator whose veracity can be impugned, the tradition cannot be used as proof for polemical purposes. To state this positively, Ibn Ṭāwūs emphasizes the importance of this criterion by stating that only those *ḥadīths* whose transmitters are regarded as reliable and upright can serve as useful and irrefutable polemical proofs.<sup>29)</sup>

For example, in the case of the *ḥadīth* related by Abū Bakr b. Abī Shayba which affirms that Abū Bakr was the first to accept Islam, Ibn Ṭāwūs finds fault with the chain of transmission which consequently invalidates the *ḥadīth*. Abū Bakr b. Abī Shayba relates,

<sup>28)</sup> Ibn Ṭāwūs wrote a *rijāl* work in which he evaluated the reliability of certain *ḥadīth* transmitters. This work, called *Hall al-ishkāl fi ma'rifat al-rijāl* was modeled after al-Kishshī's *Rijāl* (which survives today as the *Ikhtiyār ma'rifat al-rijāl* edited by al-Shaykh al-Ṭūsi). It was completed by Ibn Ṭāwūs in the year 644 A. H. It is supposed to have been the only compendium of five principal *rijāl* works: the *Rijāl* of al-Najashī, the *Rijāl* of al-Kishshī, the *Rijāl* of al-Shaykh al-Ṭūsi and his *Kutāb al-fihrist*, and the *Rijāl* of Ibn al-Ghaḍā'iri. Al-Shahid al-Thāni obtained a copy of the *Hall al-ishkāl* written in Ibn Ṭāwūs' hand and mentions this fact in the *ijāza* he granted to al-Shaykh Ḥusayn b. 'Abd al-Ṣamad (d. 984/1576), father of the well known Shi'ī scholar al-Bahā' al-Din al-'Āmili. This copy was passed down in a poor condition to al-Shahid al-Thāni's son, Ḥasan b. Zayn al-Din al-'Āmili, known as *Ṣāhib al-Ma'ālim* (d. 1011/1602), who edited it and renamed it *al-Tahrir al-tāwūsi*, under which name it is known today; see *al-Dhari'a*, v. 7, pp. 64–65; the introduction to Ḥasan b. Zayn al-Din's *al-Tahrir al-tāwūsi*, ed. Muḥammad Ḥasan Tarḥīni (Beirut, 1408/1988), pp. 7–11; Āghā Buzurg al-Ṭīhrāni, *Muṣaffā al-maqāl fi muṣannifi' ilm al-rijāl* (Beirut, 1408/1988), pp. 71–72.

<sup>29)</sup> *Binā'* (Amman ed.), pp. 140–41; (Qumm ed.) pp. 292–93.

A *shaykh* of ours related to us from Mujālid from al-Sha‘bi from Ibn ‘Abbās that he was asked about who was the first among the people to accept Islam and he said, “Did you not hear what Ḥassān (b. Thābit) said?”, indicating Abū Bakr.<sup>30)</sup>

Ibn Ṭawūs responds that this *ḥadīth* is to be considered *ḍa‘īf* because of the weakness of the narrators involved. The identity of the *shaykh* referred to in the *isnad* is unknown and Mujālid was considered by Ibn Ḥibbān (d. 354/965)<sup>31)</sup> to have a poor memory, to list mixed-up *isnāds*, and to pass off *mursal* traditions as *marfū‘*.<sup>32)</sup> Finally, the narrator is al-Sha‘bi who “was biased against the *ahl al-bayt*, was a companion of ‘Abd al-Mālīk and an embezzler of funds...”<sup>33)</sup>

<sup>30)</sup> Ibid. (Amman ed.), p. 153; (Qumm ed.), p. 318.

<sup>31)</sup> This is al-Imām al-Ḥāfiẓ Muḥammad Ibn Ḥibbān b. Aḥmad Abi Ḥātim al-Tamīmī al-Bustī, author of the well-known *rijāl* work *Kitāb al-majruḥīn min al-muḥaddithīn*. This Abū Ḥātim al-Tamīmī is not to be confused with his contemporary, Abū Muḥammad ‘Abd al-Raḥmān b. Abi Ḥātim Muḥammad b. Idrīs b. al-Mundhir al-Tamīmī al-Ḥanzalī al-Rāzī (d. 327/938), author of another *rijāl* work *Al-Jarḥ wa al-ta‘dīl*; see Fuat Sezgin’s *Geschichte des arabischen Schrifttums*, 9 vols. (Leiden, 1967–1984; henceforth referred to as GAS), vol. 1, pp. 178–79. Al-Samarrā‘ī, the editor of *Binā’ al-maqāla*, seems to have succumbed to this confusion, and identifies Ibn Ḥibbān as the author of *Al-Jarḥ (Binā’)* [Amman ed.], p. 124, n. 350), which consequently leads to his misreading of the names of two traditionists (see *infra*, n. 49).

<sup>32)</sup> This is Mujālid b. Sa‘īd b. ‘Umayr al-Hamdānī (d. 143 or 144 A.H.), for whom see Ibn Ḥibbān’s *Kitāb al-majruḥīn min al-muḥaddithīn*, ed. Maḥmūd Ibrāhīm Zāyid, 3 vols. (Aleppo, 1396/1976), v. 1, pp. 10–11.

<sup>33)</sup> *Binā’* (Amman ed.), p. 153; (Qumm ed.), pp. 318–19. Abū ‘Amr ‘Āmir ibn Sharāḥīl, better known as al-Sha‘bi (d. 103–10/721–8), was one of the *Tābi‘ūn*. He was a traditionist, *maghāzī* scholar, and a jurist. He is believed to have heard traditions from Ibn Mas‘ūd but this has been questioned. He served under the Umayyad caliph ‘Abd al-Malik b. Marwān who sent him as his special emissary to the Byzantine emperor; see GAS, v. 1, p. 277; G. H. A. Juynboll, *Muslim Tradition: Studies in Chronology, Provenance and Authorship of Early Hadith* (Cambridge, 1983), p. 59.

The following anecdote recorded in the *Kitāb al-isti‘āb* may be related as an example of what Ibn Ṭawūs probably construed as a display of hostility by al-Sha‘bi towards the *ahl al-bayt*. Ibn ‘Abd al-Barr quotes the following tradition on the authority of Isma‘īl b. Abi Khālid who reported, “I told al-Sha‘bi that Mughīra (b. Shu‘ba) had sworn by God that ‘Alī had never erred in a legal decision”. Al-Sha‘bi replied, “Surely he has exaggerated (*laqad afrata*)”. See Ibn ‘Abd al-Barr, *Kitāb al-isti‘āb fī ma‘rifat al-aṣḥāb*, 2nd ed., 2 vols. (Hyderabad, 1336/1908), v. 2, p. 461.



Posited against this is a tradition narrated by Ibn Ishāq from ‘Abd al-Wārith b. Sufyān from Qāsīm b. Aṣḥab from Aḥmad b. Zuhayr b. Hārith from al-Ḥasan b. Ḥammād from Abū ‘Uwāna from Abū Balkh from ‘Umar b. Maymūn from Ibn ‘Abbās which states that ‘Ali was the first among the people to become a believer after Khadija. Abū ‘Umar (al-Maghribi)<sup>34</sup>) in his analysis of this *isnād* declares that none of the transmitters can be discredited (*lā maṭ‘an fih*) by anybody on account of their veracity or sincerity. This is in contrast to the *hadith* mentioned above with regard to Abū Bakr, which is also attributed to Ibn ‘Abbās, but whose *isnād* is vitiated by unreliable transmitters.

The reliability of the *hadith* transmitters is such an important criterion that Ibn Ṭāwūs states that an isolated tradition (called here *al-ḥadīth al-wāḥid*) narrated on the authority of one reliable transmitter (*al-thiqa*) who quotes from a source is better than a *mursal* tradition, i.e. a tradition with several narrators going back to a Successor only. This is true, “especially with regard to arguing with an opponent”.<sup>35</sup>)

Ibn Ṭāwūs makes the above observation during his discussion of the “*ṭā’ir*” (or “*ṭayr*”) tradition. According to this tradition, once, when the Prophet was sitting down to a meal of roasted fowl (*ṭā’ir*), he prayed that God would send to him the most beloved of all men to share this meal with him. This man turned out to be ‘Ali.<sup>36</sup>) Al-Jāḥiẓ had dismissed this tradition as unreliable, since only one man, Anas ibn Mālīk, had reported it, and, therefore, this tradition alone, according to al-Jāḥiẓ, could not constitute a proof (*wa laysa bi ḥujja*). Moreover, al-Jāḥiẓ claims that the Shi‘a repudiate Anas’ testimony, for they consider him to be an unbeliever (*kāfir*); therefore this tradition should be discounted.<sup>37</sup>)

Ibn Ṭāwūs accuses al-Jāḥiẓ of talking wilfully and recklessly with regard to prophetic traditions, for it is known that “the report (*khābar*) of one person constitutes a proof among the Muslims unless he be one who

<sup>34</sup>) He is better known as Ibn ‘Abd al-Barr, the author of *Kitāb al-isti‘āb*.

<sup>35</sup>) *Binā’* (Amman ed.), p. 156; (Qumm ed.), pp. 322–23.

Thus, his pupil al-‘Allāma al-Ḥillī, would later argue for the admissibility of the *khābar al-wāḥid* as a legal proof, “*wa-huwa ḥujja fi al-shar‘*”; see his *Mabādi’ al-uṣūl ilā ‘ilm al-uṣūl*, (Najaf, 1970), p. 204.

<sup>36</sup>) According to Wensinck, this tradition is recorded by al-Tirmidhi in chapter 20 entitled *Manāqib*; see *Concordance et indices de la tradition musulmane*, 14 vol. in 6 (Leiden, 1936–69), v. 4, p. 72.

<sup>37</sup>) *al-‘Uthmāniyya*, p. 150.

For a brief description of the proliferation of *isnāds* with Anas’ name in it, see Juynboll, *Muslim Tradition*, pp. 144–45.

deviates from them (*man shadhha‘ anhum*).<sup>38</sup>) As for Anas being considered an unreliable narrator by the Shi‘a, that is simply an unfounded claim put forward by al-Jāhiz to discredit the *tā’ir* tradition and to discredit ‘Ali.<sup>39</sup>)

Ibn Ṭāwūs then makes a statement that appears to be at odds with his staunchly maintained position that the reliability of the *hadith* transmitter is the supreme criterion in determining the acceptability of a *hadith*. This is with regard to the “*tā’ir*” tradition, which enjoys great esteem among the Shi‘a and, consequently, its validity is important to establish. Ibn Ṭāwūs states that if al-Jāhiz’ claim regarding Anas’ ambivalent status among the Shi‘a is to be accepted for the purposes of argument, the “*tā’ir*” tradition should still not be rejected on that account for the propagation of such a *hadith* would serve a good polemical purpose. Such an argument brings strongly to mind Sunni receptivity towards traditions that have an acceptable *matn* but lack a sound *isnād*, because such traditions would still serve a laudable purpose. Ibn Ṭāwūs thus considers this *khbar al-wāḥid* to be a *maqbul* tradition.<sup>40</sup>)

From the analysis of the two *hadiths* above concerning precedence in conversion to Islam, it is obvious that Ibn Ṭāwūs readily discounts the report of any narrator, like al-Sha‘bi, who is known to have harbored ill will toward the *ahl al-bayt* or is known to have consorted with the Umayyads, the sworn enemies of the ‘Alids, or was known to have committed a criminal or an immoral act.<sup>41</sup>) Al-Jāhiz is also disqualified as a *hadith* narrator on account of his malice towards ‘Ali, for “whoever is of this disposition, his claims are not to be accepted and his accounts are to be strenuously rejected”.<sup>42</sup>)

A list of narrators, who are *a priori* regarded with suspicion or deemed unreliable by Ibn Ṭāwūs, is given below. Abū Hurayra, who was considered suspect by ‘Umar and other prominent companions (*a‘yān al-ṣaḥāba*), is a

<sup>38</sup>) *Binā’* (Amman ed.), pp. 156–57; (Qumm ed.), pp. 322–23.

<sup>39</sup>) Al-Majlisi, author of the *Biḥār al-anwār*, in fact lists numerous traditions on the authority of Anas b. Mālik; see the *Fahāris biḥār al-anwār*, 10 vols. (Beirut, n.d.), v. 8, pp. 186–87 under Anas b. Mālik to get an idea of the many traditions related by Anas that were accepted as reliable among the Shi‘a.

<sup>40</sup>) *Binā’* (Amman ed.), p. 156; (Qumm ed.), p. 323.

Thus we find this view echoed by al-‘Allāma al-Ḥilli when he says, “*fa-inna khabar al-wāḥid maqbūl fī al-taḥwā wa al-shahādāt ma‘ intifā’ al-‘ilm*” (“the isolated tradition is accepted in matters of piety and in juridical testimonies in the absence of [certain] knowledge”), see *Mabādī’ al-wuṣūl*, p. 204.

<sup>41</sup>) See also *Binā’* (Amman ed.), p. 174; (Qumm ed), p. 353, where Ibn Ṭāwūs repeats these charges against al-Sha‘bi.

<sup>42</sup>) *Ibid.*, (Amman ed.), p. 33; (Qumm ed.), p. 74.

narrator whose reports are to be treated with caution.<sup>43</sup>) His reports may be relied upon only when corroborated by other companions of the Prophet.<sup>44</sup>) Mujālid's reports, as mentioned before, are to be discounted as well for he was known to have narrated weak and confused traditions.<sup>45</sup>)

Ibn Ṭāwūs further states that the narrators of tradition cited by al-Jāhīz to support the interpretation of a Qur'anic verse (5 : 54) as being laudatory of Abu Bakr are highly unreliable transmitters. One of these narrators is al-Faḍl Ibn Dalham. Ibn Ṭāwūs says that Muḥammad b. Sufyān Abū Ḥātim, also known as Ibn Ḥibbān, is an impeccable source who indicates there was considerably controversy surrounding al-Faḍl Ibn Dalham. Ibn Ḥibbān quotes al-Ḥanbali who reports that he heard Aḥmad b. Zuhayr<sup>46</sup>) say that he had asked Yaḥyā b. Ma'īn<sup>47</sup>) about al-Faḍl Ibn Dalham, and he replied that Ibn Dalham's traditions were to be regarded as weak (*da'īf*).<sup>48</sup>)

<sup>43</sup>) Ibid. (Amman ed.), p. 103; (Qumm ed.), p. 220. Ibn Shahrāshūb calls Abū Hurayra "one of the deceivers" (*fa huwa min al-khādhilīn*). He also mentions that 'Umar had struck Abū Hurayra once on account of the large number of reports that had emanated from him and called him a "liar" (*kadhūb*) see *Manāqib Āl Abi Ṭālib*, 4 vols. (Qumm, 1401/1981), v. 2, p. 5.

<sup>44</sup>) See, for example, *Binā'* (Amman ed.), p. 145; (Qumm ed.) p. 302, where Abū Hurayra, along with other Companions such as Jābir b. 'Abd Allāh, Barā' b. 'Āzib, and Zayd b. Arqam, report the *Ghadir Khumm* tradition, in which case Abū Hurayra's report is accepted.

<sup>45</sup>) See *supra*, n. 32.

<sup>46</sup>) This is Abū Bakr Aḥmad b. Abi Khaythama Zuhayr b. Ḥarb al-Nasā'i, who was born in 185/801. He lived in Baghdad and was a student of Yaḥyā b. Ma'īn, Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal, and Abū al-Ḥasan al-Madā'ini. Theologically, he was a follower of the Qadariyya. He was considered to be one of the more reliable *muhaddiths*; al-Ṭabari related reports from him and al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādi mentions in his *Ta'rikh Baghdād* that Ibn Zuhayr's work on history was very useful. He died in 279/892; see GAS, v. 1, pp. 319–20.

<sup>47</sup>) Abū Zakariyya Yaḥyā b. Ma'īn b. 'Aun al-Murri (b. 158/775) was a student of 'Abd Allāh b. Mubārak, Sufyān b. 'Uyayna, and Waki' b. al-Jarrāḥ b. Mulaḥ. He has been greatly praised for his reliability and al-Bukhāri, Muslim, and Abū Dā'ūd have related traditions from him. Yaḥyā was also renowned for his knowledge regarding biographical details and the genealogies of *hadith* transmitters. He died in 233/847 in Madina.

Yaḥyā b. Ma'īn wrote a *rijāl* work entitled *Kalām Yaḥyā b. Ma'īn fī al-rijāl* which is also known as the *Kitāb al-majrūhin*, which must not be confused with the work by Ibn Ḥibbān; see GAS, v. 1, pp. 106–7.

<sup>48</sup>) *Binā'* (Amman ed.), p. 124; (Qumm ed.), p. 261. Ibn Ḥibbān, *Kitāb al-majrūhin*, 1st ed., 3 vols. (Hyderabad, 1390/1970), v. 2, p. 204. It is interesting to note that Ibn Ḥibbān mentions that Yaḥyā b. Ma'īn's teachers, 'Abd Allāh b. al-Mubārak and Waki', narrated from Faḍl Ibn Dalham. However, Ibn Dalham must not have been

Another narrator of a tradition in favor of Abū Bakr in reference to verse 9 : 119 is called al-Ḍaḥḥāk. Ibn Ṭāwūs quotes Ibn Ḥibbān who states that there are three men with that name who narrated weak traditions. They are al-Ḍaḥḥāk b. Nibrās, al-Ḍaḥḥāk b. Zayd al-Ahwāzī, and al-Ḍaḥḥāk b. Ḥajwa al-Manbijī.<sup>49)</sup> He further states that the traditions narrated by Juwaybir b. Sa‘d, who hails from Balkh, were regarded as weak by Yaḥyā b. Ma‘īn, and Juwaybir was known to have narrated “transposed things” (*ashyā’ maqlūba*) from al-Ḍaḥḥāk.<sup>50)</sup> Ibn Ḥibbān says that Yaḥyā b. Ma‘īn and ‘Abd al-Raḥmān (al-Nasā‘i) did not relate any traditions from Juwaybir b. Sa‘d. Yaḥyā b. Ma‘īn was queried regarding Juwaybir’s reliability by Muḥammad b. Maḥmud and the former replied that his traditions were weak.<sup>51)</sup>

Moreover, any *ḥadīth* related by a member of the family of ‘Abd Allāh b. al-Zubayr is not to be trusted for the family of Zubayr was hostile to the *ahl al-bayt*.<sup>52)</sup>

Ibn Ṭāwūs stressed the point that it is irrelevant whether a narrator of *ḥadīth* is Sunni or Shi‘i. In fact, he appears to take great pains in establishing the identity of those narrators who are not “one of us” (*min ghayrinā*), i.e. those who are of the Sunni persuasion, who are beyond moral reproach, and above all, well-disposed towards the family of the Prophet. Therefore, he quotes *ḥadīths* frequently that have been transmitted and/or recorded by men like al-Tha‘labī (d. 427/1035)<sup>53)</sup>, Ibn ‘Abd

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considered completely unreliable, for Ibn Ḥibbān also mentions that “he was one of those who made mistakes but his mistakes were not so egregious as to invalidate polemical argumentation based on them” (ibid.).

<sup>49)</sup> These names are garbled in the original manuscripts; see *Binā’*, (Amman ed.), p. 124; (Qumm ed.), p. 261. The editor of the Amman edition al-Samarrā‘i was unable to find these names in the *Jarḥ* because they are listed in the *Majrūḥīn* (v. 1, p. 379) as given here.

<sup>50)</sup> *Kitāb al-majrūḥīn*, v. 1, p. 217.

<sup>51)</sup> *Binā’*, (Amman ed.), p. 124; (Qumm ed.), p. 261; cf. Ibn Ḥibbān *Kitāb al-majrūḥīn*, v. 1, p. 217.

<sup>52)</sup> *Binā’* (Amman ed.), p. 120; (Qumm ed.), p. 254.

<sup>53)</sup> He is Abū Ishāq al-Tha‘labī, the author of a well-regarded Qur’an commentary *Al-Kaṣḥ wa al-bayān fī tafsīr al-Qur’ān*. He was generally regarded as a reliable and trustworthy transmitter of *ḥadīth* (*ṣaḥīḥ al-naql mawthūq bih*); see Ibn Khallikān, *Wafayāt al-a‘yān wa anbā’ abnā’ al-zamān*, 2 vols. (Bulāq, 1299 A. H.), v. 1, p. 30; Carl Brockelmann, *Geschichte der arabischen Litteratur*, supplements, 3 vols. (Leiden, 1943–9; subsequently referred to as GAL; the supplements referred to as GAL, S) vol. 1, p. 592.

al-Barr al-Maghribi (d. 463/1070)<sup>54</sup>), Abu Nu‘aym (d. 430/1038)<sup>55</sup>), Muqātil b. Sulaymān (d. 150/767)<sup>56</sup>), ‘Abd al-Rahmān b. Abī Laylā (d. 148

<sup>54</sup>) Abū ‘Umar Yūsuf b. ‘Abd Allāh Ibn ‘Abd al-Barr was born in 368/978 into a family of Cordovan scholars. He was regarded as the best traditionist of his time and was also a distinguished jurist and genealogist. He was a contemporary of Ibn Ḥazm whom he knew personally. He was appointed *qādi* of Lisbon and Santarem.

Al-Khwānsārī describes him as a devoted Sunni, an Ash‘ari, and very partisan in his sentiments (*Rawḍāt*, vol. 8, p. 222). His well-known work *Kitāb al-isti‘āb fī ma‘rifat al-aṣḥāb* is a collection of biographies of the Prophet’s family and Companions, in which Ibn ‘Abd al-Barr’s great attachment to the Āl Muḥammad is clearly evident. See El<sup>2</sup>, vol. 3, p. 674; *Rawḍāt*, vol. 8, pp. 222–26.

<sup>55</sup>) Abū Nu‘aym Aḥmad b. ‘Abd Allāh b. Mahrān al-Isbahānī was one of the prominent *ḥuffāz* and a prolific traditionist. Ibn Khallikān reports that he related the traditions of the best authorities (*al-afāḍil*) while others narrated from him and “benefited from him” (*intaḥa‘ū bih*). (*Wafayāt*, v. 1, p. 37). One of Abū Nu‘aym’s irrefutable authorities was another Abū Nu‘aym (al-Faḍl b. Dukayn b. Ḥammād al-Taymī, d. 219/934) from whom al-Bukhārī, Muslim, and Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal also narrated *ḥadīths* (GAS, vol. 1, p. 101). See also GAL, vol. 1, pp. 445–46; S, vol. 1, pp. 616–17; al-Subkī, *Ṭabaqāt al-shāfi‘iyya* (Cairo, 1324 A. H.), v. 5, p. 17.

<sup>56</sup>) Abū al-Ḥasan Muqātil b. Sulaymān b. Bashir al-Azdi al-Khurasānī al-Balkhī was a traditionist and commentator on the Qur’ān of the second/seventh century. He wrote several commentaries on the Qur’an, among which is his *Tafsīr al-Qur’an*, surviving in the recension of Abū Ṣaliḥ al-Hudhayl al-Dandānī (fl. early ninth century).

It should be noted, however, that Muqātil b. Sulaymān has been criticized both for providing faulty *isnāds* for traditions as well as for not providing complete *isnāds* for them. His Qur’ānic exegesis has also been subject to criticism. His biographers circulated reports concerning his propensity to fabricate matters. For this he was labeled as *al-Kadhdhāb* (“the pathological liar”) and *al-Dajjāl* (“the impostor”) by his critics. Al-Bukhārī forbade anyone to narrate *ḥadīths* from him. Abū Dā‘ūd Sulaymān b. al-Ash‘ath counseled people to avoid his *ḥadīths*. ‘Abd al-Rahmān Al-Nasā‘ī remarked that those liars (*al-kadhdhābūn*) known for fabricating *ḥadīths* on the authority of the Prophet were four: Ibn Abi Yaḥyā in Madina, al-Wāqidi in Baghdad, Muqātil b. Sulaymān in Khorasān, and Muḥammad b. Sa‘id, known as “*al-Maslūb*”, in Syria. (For the specific opinions of other scholars regarding him, see Ibn Khallikān, *Wafayāt*, v. 2, p. 166).

Muqātil b. Sulaymān was linked to various sectarian groups, such as the Murji‘a and the Zaydiyya. (The latter affiliation is significant, for we know from the *Binā’ al-maqāla* that Ibn Ṭāwūs favored the views of the Jārūdiyya, also a Zaydi sect.) He was also accused of being a strong proponent of anthropomorphism (see Ibn Ḥibbān, *Kitāb al-majrūhīn*, v. 3, p. 14 where he states “*wa kān shibhiyy yushabbih al-rabb bi al-makhlūqīn*”). All of these accusations further eroded his credibility. His commentaries therefore did not gain popularity nor prestige; al-Ṭabari, for example, makes no reference to his work. Muqātil, however, enjoyed renown in his own day

A. H.)<sup>57</sup>), Yahyā b. al-Biṭriq (d. 600/1023 or 606/1210)<sup>58</sup>), Ibn al-Maghāzili (d. 483/1090)<sup>59</sup>), Aḥmad b. Mūsa b. Mardawayh (d. 410/1019)<sup>60</sup>), Razin al-‘Abdari (d. 525/1130 or 535/1140)<sup>61</sup>), Akḥṭab Khuṭabā’ Khwārazm (d. 568/1172)<sup>62</sup>), Abū al-Faraj al-Iṣfahāni (d. 356/967), the author of the *Kitāb al-*

as a prolific commentator on the Qur’ān and it is assumed that his works were utilized by later scholars but without formal acknowledgement. See El<sup>2</sup>, v. 7, Fasc. 121–22, pp. 508–9; Ibn Khallikān, *Wafayāt*, v. 2, pp. 165–66; Nabia Abbot, *Studies in Arabic Literary Papyri*, II: *Qur’anic Commentary and Tradition* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1967), pp. 92–113; GAS, vol. 1, pp. 36–37.

<sup>57</sup>) This is Muḥammad b. ‘Abd al-Raḥmān Ibn Abi Laylā, born in 74 or 76 A. H. His father Abū ‘Īsā (born 17/638) wa a supporter of ‘Alī, took part on the latter’s side in the Battle of the Camel, and related traditions from him. Ibn Abi Laylā was appointed *qādi* of Kufa in 123/741 and remained in this office under both the Umayyads and the ‘Abbasids. His contemporary was Abū Ḥanifa who was a bitter rival. Some of his traditions have been recorded in the *Musnad* of Aḥmad Ibn Ḥanbal in the section entitled “*Firdaws*”. (El<sup>2</sup>, v. 3, pp. 687–88; *Rawḍāt*, v. 7, pp. 252–57).

However, Ibn Ḥibbān has a very poor opinion of him; he states that Ibn Abi Laylā had a bad memory, was inclined to imagine things and prone to grievous mistakes (“*kān radi’ al-ḥifẓ kathīr al-wahm fāḥish al-khaṭa’*”); see *Kitāb al-majrūhin*, v. 2, p. 244). Yahyā b. Ma‘in, for example, would not narrate from him (ibid.).

<sup>58</sup>) Abū al-Ḥusayn Yahyā b. al-Ḥasan b. al-Ḥusayn b. ‘Alī b. Muḥammad b. al-Biṭriq (in the *Riyāḍ*, it is Biṭriq without the definite article) al-Ḥilli is generally accepted as a reliable transmitter of *ḥadīth*. His book, *Kitāb al-‘umda* (it’s full name: *al-‘Umda fī ‘uyūn ṣiḥāḥ al-akḥbār fī manāqib imām al-abrār*) contains many traditions in praise of ‘Alī. For his biography, consult *Riyāḍ*, v. 5, pp. 354–59; *Rawḍāt*, v. 8, pp. 196–97, *Amal al-āmil*, v. 2, p. 345.

<sup>59</sup>) Abū al-Ḥasan ‘Alī b. Muḥammad al-Jullabi Ibn al-Maghāzili was a Shāfi‘ī *qādi* with strong pro-‘Alid sentiments and author of *Kitāb al-manāqib amīr al-mu‘minīn ‘Alī b. Abī Ṭālib*; see ‘Abd al-Karīm b. Muḥammad al-Sam‘āni, *Kitāb al-ansāb*, 13 vols. (Hyderabad, 1962–82), v. 3, p. 446.

<sup>60</sup>) Abū Bakr Aḥmad b. Mūsā b. Mardawayh b. Fūrak al-Iṣfahāni b. Murdayh was a traditionist, a Qur’ān commentator, a historian, and a geographer, see GAS, v. 1, p. 225; Ibn Shahrāshūb, *Ma‘ālim al-‘ulamā’* (Najaf, 1380/1961), p. 138, # 957; Ibn al-‘Imād, *Shadharāt al-dhahab fī akḥbār man dhahab*, 8 vols. (Cairo, 1350–1 A. H.), v. 3, p. 190; al-Dhahabi, *Tadhkirat al-ḥuffāz*, 4 vols. (Hyderabad, 1955–58), v. 3, p. 238.

<sup>61</sup>) Razin b. Mu‘āwiya Abū al-Ḥasan al-‘Abdari al-Andalusi was a prominent traditionist. He is the author of the work *Tajrid al-ṣiḥāḥ*, in which he quotes frequently from al-Bukhāri and Muslim. He resided in Makka and died there in Muḥarram, 535 A. H.; see *Shadharāt al-dhahab*, v. 4, p. 106; GAL, S, v. 1, p. 630.

<sup>62</sup>) Abū al Mu‘ayyad al-Muwaffaq b. Aḥmad b. Abī Sa‘id Ishāq known as Akḥṭab Khuṭabā’ Khwārazm (or Khwārizmi) was a student of al-Zamakhshari and a Ḥanafi scholar. He is an important source for Ibn Ṭāwūs for the latter refers to him frequently; see GAL, S, v. 1, p. 623.

*aghānī*<sup>63</sup>), and the authors of the six Sunni canonical compilations of *hadith*: al-Bukhārī, Muslim, al-Nasā'ī, al-Tirmidhi, Ibn Māja, and Abū Dā'ūd as well as Aḥmad Ibn Ḥanbal.

Finally, from a close analysis of Ibn Ṭāwūs' use of *hadith* as polemical proofs, it becomes apparent that many of the traditions he quotes are ultimately attributed to the great Companion of the Prophet Ibn 'Abbās. It is clear that, on the whole, Ibn 'Abbās would meet with Ibn Ṭāwūs' overwhelming approval. He had sterling credentials as a *hadith* and Qur'ān scholar and his sympathies appear to be essentially pro-'Alid. It is not only the Shi'a who venerate him; his stature among the Sunnis is just as great for all acknowledge his voluminous knowledge and understanding of the religious sciences.<sup>64</sup>) Both Ibn Ṭāwūs and al-Jāḥiẓ quote numerous traditions on the authority of Ibn 'Abbās for no one offered legitimation for a *hadith* as readily and surely as he.<sup>65</sup>)

With regard to women narrators, 'Ā'isha is the most often quoted. The following four women who related the Ghadir Khumm tradition were also declared to be reliable transmitters:<sup>66</sup>) Fāṭima bint Ḥamza b. 'Abd al-Muṭṭalib, the Prophet's cousin; Umm Salama, the daughter of Abū Umayya b. al-Mughira and wife of the Prophet; Umm Ḥāni', the daughter of Abū Ṭālib

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<sup>63</sup>) Ibn Dā'ūd considers al-Isfahānī to be a narrator of weak *hadiths* (*min al-du'afā'*); see his *Rijāl*, v. 2, p. 568.

<sup>64</sup>) Al-Jāḥiẓ, for example, on his part states his admiration for Ibn 'Abbās in no unmistakable terms. He claims that there was none more knowledgeable regarding the interpretation of the Qur'ān than Ibn 'Abbās and that other well-known exegetes of his generation such as Mujāhid, Daḥḥāk, and 'Ikrima were a notch below him, see the *Uthmāniyya*, p. 119.

For biographies of Ibn 'Abbās, see, for example, Ibn Sa'd, *Kitāb al-ṭabaqāt al-kabīr*, ed. Edward Sachau, 8 vols, (Leyden, 1904-8), v. 2, pt. 2, pp. 119-24; al-Ṭūsi, *Ikhtiyār ma'rifat al-rijāl*, ed. al-Sayyid Maḥdī al-Rajā'ī, 5 vols. (no place or publisher, n.d.), v. 1, pp. 271-80; Ibn Kathir, *Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-'azīm*, 7 vols, (Cairo, 1356/1937), v. 1, pp. 4-5; Ibn Ḥajar al-'Asqalānī, *al-Iṣāba fī tamyiz al-ṣaḥāba*, 8 vols. (Cairo, 1328 A.H.), v. 2, pp. 807-10; Shams al-Dīn al-Dhahabī, *Tārīkh al-islām wa ṭabaqāt al-mashāhīr wa al-a'lām* (Cairo, 1367/1947), v. 3, pp. 30-33; El<sup>2</sup>, under "'Abd Allāh ibn al-'Abbās", v. 1, pp. 40-41; Claude Gilliot, "Portrait 'mythique' d'Ibn 'Abbas," *Arabica*, 32 (1985), pp. 127-83.

<sup>65</sup>) The medieval Muslim jurist, al-Shāfi'ī, had come to the conclusion that fabrications in the name of Ibn 'Abbās had been so widespread that only about a hundred traditions attributed to him could be held to be reliable; see Rashid Ahmad's "Qur'ānic Exegesis" in *Islamic Quarterly*, 12 (1960), p. 80.

<sup>66</sup>) *Binā'* (Amman ed.), p. 145; (Qumm ed.), p. 301.

and 'Ali's sister; and Asmā' bint 'Umayy al-Khath'amiyya.<sup>67</sup>) It is interesting to note that since the *Binā' al-maqāla* was written as a polemical treatise with a Sunni audience in mind, relatively few *ḥadīths* are quoted on the authority of Shi'i sources.<sup>68</sup>)

## 2) The Nature of the Transimission of *Ḥadīth*

According to Ibn Ṭāwūs, one of the principal differences between himself and al-Jāḥiẓ is that he always provides detailed *isnāds*, when available, for the traditions that he uses, whereas al-Jāḥiẓ provides either a perfunctory one or none at all. The most reliable traditions are those which have *isnāds* that are *muṭṭaṣil marfū'*, i.e. having an uninterrupted chain of transmission going back to the source, and those that are called *mutawātir*, i.e. those traditions which enjoy wide attestation and circulation so as to preclude the possibility of fabrication.

For example, the Ghadir Khumm and the *manzila* traditions are two of the most important traditions employed by the Shi'a in defense of their position that 'Ali enjoyed a unique relationship with the Prophet and was designated as the successor to Muḥammad during the latter's life-time. It is of the utmost importance therefore that these traditions be presented with their full *isnāds* and attributed to as many different sources as possible

In the case of the Ghadir Khumm tradition, Ibn Ṭāwūs thus takes great care in establishing the *ittiṣāl* or "continuity" for the different chains of

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<sup>67</sup>) Asmā' bint 'Umayy occupies a special place in *ḥadīth* transmission among the Shi'a for they believe that she was vouchsafed a special book (*kitāb*) containing prophetic traditions. She was the sister of Maymūna bint al-Ḥārith, wife of the Prophet and was one of the early converts to Islam, having accepted Islam before the Prophet entered the house of Arqam. She emigrated to Abyssinia with her first husband, Ja'far b. Abi Ṭālib, 'Ali's brother. When Ja'far died, the Prophet gave her in marriage to Abū Bakr and she gave birth to their son, Muḥammad b. Abi Bakr. She later married 'Ali and gave birth to their son, 'Aun.

Asmā' related several traditions from the Prophet. Those who have narrated traditions on her authority are Sa'īd b. al-Musayyib, 'Urwa b. al-Zubayr, her son, 'Abd Allāh b. Ja'far, her grandson, al-Qāsim b. Muḥammad b. Abi Bakr, and her nephew, the celebrated 'Abd Allāh Ibn 'Abbās, the son of her sister, Lubāba bint al-Ḥārith; see Ibn Sa'īd, *Ṭabaqāt*, v. 8, pp. 205-9; Ibn Ḥajar, *Iṣāba*, v. 4, p. 231, # 51; al-Ya'qūbī, *Ta'rikh*, ed. M. Th. Houtsma, 2 vols. (Leyden, 1883) v. 2, p. 114, 128.

<sup>68</sup>) It is interesting to note that in deference to his Sunni audience, Ibn Ṭāwūs refers to the Shi'i Imams by their actual names instead of by their *kunyas* as would be customary in a Shi'i work; for example, he refers to the sixth Imam as Ja'far b. Muḥammad al-Ṣādiq (*Binā'*, [Amman ed.], p. 125; [Qumm ed.], p. 263) and not as Abū 'Abd Allāh.



transmission he records for the *ḥadīth*, while documenting at the same time its *tawātur*. In one version of the tradition related by Aḥmad Ibn Ḥanbal (whom Ibn Ṭāwūs calls “the great learned *shaykh*, a quarter of those who are affiliated with the *sunna*”, with an *isnād* “in which I do not know of any Rāfiḍī”), Barā’ ʿĀzib, the Companion of the Prophet, states the following:

[The Prophet] took the hand of ʿAli and asked [the people present]: “Don’t you know that I am the friend and patron (*wali*)<sup>69</sup> of the believers [to a higher degree] than their own souls?” they said, “Yes, indeed”. Then he said, “Don’t you know that I am closer to (*awlā*) every believer than his own soul is?” They said, “Yes, indeed”. So he took ʿAli by the hand and said [to them], “O God, he whose friend and patron (*mawlā*) I am, ʿAli is his friend and patron too. O God, befriend those who befriend him and be hostile to those who are hostile to him”.

After that ʿUmar met him and said, “Congratulations, O son of Abū Ṭālib, you have become the friend and patron of every believing man and woman”.<sup>70</sup>)

A shorter variant of this tradition with an *isnād* that has no Rāfiḍī narrator in it is attributed to Zayd b. Arqam. Other versions of the tradition<sup>71</sup>) are attributed to Shuʿba, to Abū Ayyūb, to Zādhān, to Zayd b. Arqam (that is, in a different chain of transmission other than the one give above), to Saʿid b. Wahb, to Abū Ishāq, to Barā’ b. ʿĀzib (other than the one given above), to Zayd b. Arqam again, to Ṭāwūs from his father, to Ibn Burayda from his father, and to Ibn Burayda himself. Ibn Mardawayh has

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<sup>69</sup>) Words derived from the Arabic root *wly* are particularly problematic for translation, since as is well known, they are prone to different interpretations depending on the context and also, depending on one’s own preferences. The word *mawlā* in particular has caused much spirited discussion, since its meanings range from diametrically opposed “a master” or “a patron” to “a client” or “a protégé”.

The translation here is mine. I have used the most common interpretation of the various derivatives of *wly*, being aware that the English equivalents are deficient in capturing the full range of the semantic content of the original Arabic lexemes.

<sup>70</sup>) *Bināʾ* (Amman ed.), p. 142; (Qumm ed.), p. 293.

<sup>71</sup>) See *Ibid.* (Amman ed.), p. 143 ff., (Qumm ed.), p. 294 ff. for Ibn Ṭāwūs’ detailed documentation of this *ḥadīth*.

related this tradition in numerous ways (*min ṭuruq kathīra jiddan*). Aḥmad Ibn Ḥanbal has related six versions of this tradition. This tradition is also reported by Razin al-‘Abdari and Abū Dā’ūd al-Sijistāni in their *ḥadīth* compilations. Al-Tirmidhi records this tradition in his *Ṣaḥīḥ*, which is narrated by Abū Surayḥa from Zayd b. Arqam. Al-Dāraquṭni relates this tradition in his *Jāmi‘* from ‘Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb with two different chains of transmissions; from Ibn ‘Abbās and from ‘Adi b. Thābit with one line of transmission each. In his *Khaṣā’is amīr al-mu’minīn*, al-Nasā’i records nine versions of this tradition; two are related by Zayd b. Yuthay‘a, another two by Zayd b. Arqam, one from al-Barā’ b. ‘Azīb, and another from Ibn Ḥusayn on the authority of ‘Abd Allāh b. ‘Umar. Abū Ja‘far al-Ṭabari, the Qur’ān commentator and historian, records seventy-five chains of transmission for this tradition while Abū Bakr al-Juwayni gives one hundred twenty-five chains of transmission in his work. Ibn Manda<sup>72)</sup> narrated one hundred and five versions of the tradition. Abū al-‘Alā’ al-Hamadhāni claims to have narrated the tradition with two hundred and thirty different chains of transmission. The tradition has also been related by Muslim b. al-Ḥajjāj, by Muslim b. al-Haytham al-Nisābūri, and by Abū Nu‘aym al-Ḥāfiẓ in his work entitled *Ḥilyat al-awliyā’*. Abū al-Ḥasan ‘Ali b. Khamarawayh al-Shāfi‘i al-Wāsiṭi related the tradition in seventy-two ways, and their *isnāds* contain the names of Fāṭima bint Ḥamza b. ‘Abd al-Muṭṭalib; Umm Salama, the wife of the Prophet; Umm Hāni’, the daughter of Abū Ṭālib; and Asmā’ bint ‘Umays al-Khath‘amiyya. The tradition has also been reported by Abū al-‘Abbās Aḥmad b. ‘Uqda in hundred ways.

Another unassailable authority, Abū ‘Umar al-Shāṭibi [i.e. Ibn ‘Abd al-Barr], who is not among the Rāfiḍa, has narrated the Ghadir Khumm tradition. Many of the Prophet’s close companions such as Abū Hurayra, Jābir b. ‘Abdallāh, al-Barā’ b. ‘Azīb, and Zayd b. Arqam have reported the *ḥadīth* directly from the Prophet. Abū ‘Umar al-Shāṭibi affirms that all of the above reports are well-established.<sup>73)</sup>

This lengthy list of the chains of transmission that Ibn Ṭāwūs provides for the Ghadir Khumm tradition is meant to prove that it is a *mutawātir*

<sup>72)</sup> This name appears in both editions of the *Binā’ al-maqāla* as Ibn ‘Anda, which leads al-Ghurayfi to identify him with Qāḍi al-Quḍāt Muḥammad b. ‘Abda b. Ḥarb al-‘Abādāni al-Baṣri (d. 313/922). Al-Samarrā’i suggests the reading Ibn Manda, which seems to be the most plausible. This would refer to the traditionist Abū ‘Ali Muḥammad b. Ishāq b. Muḥammad b. Yaḥyā Ibn Manda al-‘Andi al-Iṣfahāni (d. 395/1005), a contemporary and rival of Abū Nu‘aym al-Iṣfahāni; see GAS, v. 1, pp. 214–15.

<sup>73)</sup> *Binā’*, (Amman ed.), pp. 145–46; (Qumm ed.), pp. 392–93.

tradition, the soundness of which therefore cannot be disputed. Ibn Ṭāwūs also takes care to point out that many of these reports have come down from impeccable, non-Rāfiḍi sources. This contradicts al-Jāḥiẓ' assertion and makes it impossible for someone endowed with understanding (*dhū lubb*) to reject these reports.<sup>74</sup>)

Ibn Ṭāwūs follows the same procedure for the *manzila* tradition, listing the various authorities who have affirmed its soundness. According to this tradition, the Prophet is believed to have stated to 'Alī the following,

Your position (*manzila*) with regard to me is like that of Aaron's with regard to Moses except that there is no Prophet after me.<sup>75</sup>)

Al-Jāḥiẓ remarks that the Shi'a quote the *manzila* tradition on the authority of one man only, 'Āmir b. Sa'd, who understood it differently.<sup>76</sup>) But Ibn Ṭāwūs marshalls evidence to the contrary. He quotes Ibn 'Abd al-Barr who remarked that this *ḥadīth* has been narrated by a majority of the Companions of the Prophet, and that it is one of the best documented and most reliable traditions.<sup>77</sup>) Sa'd b. Abī Waqqāṣ has related this tradition from the Prophet himself, and the tradition consequently has been passed down on Sa'd's authority through many chains of transmission, as reported by Abū Khaythama and many others. Ibn 'Abbās, Abū Sa'id al-Khudrī, Umm Salama, Asmā' bint 'Umayy, Jābir b. 'Abd Allāh, and many others besides them have narrated it. Ibn Mardawayh has documented this tradition in two tomes; Ibn al-Biṭriq in one. The great Sunni compilers of tradition, Aḥmad Ibn Ḥanbal, al-Bukhārī, and Muslim have also reported this tradition.<sup>78</sup>)

Ibn Ṭāwūs goes through the same lengthy process for the *ṭā'ir* tradition and the *mu'ākhāt* tradition<sup>79</sup>), two more traditions which also testify to the special relationship that existed between 'Alī and the Prophet. Ibn Ṭāwūs

<sup>74</sup>) Ibid., Amman ed), p. 145; (Qumm ed.), p. 292.

<sup>75</sup>) According to Wensinck, this tradition is reported by al-Bukhārī in his section on *Faḍā'il aṣḥāb al-nabī*, ch. 9; by al-Tirmidhi in his section on *Manāqib*, ch. 20; by Ibn Māja, and by Ibn Ḥanbal in his *Musnad*.

<sup>76</sup>) *al-Uthmāniyya*, p. 160.

<sup>77</sup>) *Kitāb al-isti'āb*, v. 2, p. 459.

<sup>78</sup>) *Binā'* (Amman ed.), pp. 146-47; (Qumm ed.) p. 303ff. According to Wensinck (v. 6, p. 422), this tradition is recorded by al-Bukhārī, al-Tirmidhi, Ibn Māja and Aḥmad Ibn Ḥanbal, but not by Muslim.

<sup>79</sup>) This is the tradition which states that the Prophet chose 'Alī as his brother in Madina when the Makkan Muhājirūn were being paired with the Madinese Anṣār.

meticulously documents the various sources which confirm the authenticity of these two traditions in the manner described above.<sup>80)</sup> It should be pointed out here that although the various chains of transmission documented by Ibn Ṭāwūs for the *ṭā'ir* tradition ultimately go back to only one man, Anas b. Mālik (as mentioned earlier), this has no bearing on the *tawātur* of the tradition for Ibn Ṭāwūs. A tradition is *mutawātir* because it has been transmitted by a significant number of narrators of unimpeachable reputation in several lines of transmission so as to invite belief in it and making possible the derivation of legal principles from it, regardless of whether it is ultimately attributed to one Companion only, such as Anas in the *ṭā'ir* tradition, or Ibn 'Abbās in a majority of others, or whether it is attributable to several Companions.<sup>81)</sup>

In the *Binā' al-maqāla*, Ibn Ṭāwūs engages in *ḥadīth* criticism of this nature to support on the one hand, his basic thesis that 'Alī alone enjoyed a special standing in Islam, second only to the Prophet, and that he was the designated successor to the Prophet and leader of the Muslim community, and on the other, to discredit the traditions that show Abū Bakr in a positive light.

#### Appraisal of Ibn Ṭāwūs' Methodology of *Ḥadīth* Criticism

In a final appraisal of Ibn Ṭāwūs' contribution to Shi'ī *'ilm al-ḥadīth*, the following remarks seem apposite. Ibn Ṭāwūs sets up rigorous criteria for determining the reliability of *ḥadīths*, the most important of which is the reliability of the *ruwāt* or the *ḥadīth* transmitters. To be considered reliable, *ḥadīth* transmitters must possess personal integrity and must be able to provide flawless *isnāds* for their traditions. What is also apparent from the preceding analysis is that the *ruwāt* must, above all, be favorably disposed towards the family of the Prophet, in particular towards 'Alī. As we read through the *Binā' al-maqāla*, we discover upon closer scrutiny that the last of the three requirements often outweighs the first two when it is convenient to Ibn Ṭāwūs' polemical reasoning.

For example, Ibn Ṭāwūs repudiates al-Sha'bi's commentary upon the Qur'ān and the traditions he narrates because the latter had been a close

<sup>80)</sup> See *Binā'* (Amman ed.), pp. 146–48 for the *ṭā'ir* tradition; (Qumm ed.), pp. 307–9 and (Amman ed.), p. 148; (Qumm ed.), pp. 309–11 for the *mu'ākhāt* tradition.

<sup>81)</sup> This view was also adopted by al-'Allāma al-Ḥilli who defines the *mutawātir* tradition as one leading to immediate knowledge (*inna khabar al-mutawātir yufid al-'ilm al-ḍarūrī*); see *Mabādī' al-wuṣūl*, p. 199; cf. EI<sup>2</sup>, v. 7, p. 781, where knowledge engendered by the *mutawātir* tradition is described as “‘immediate’ (*ḍarūrī*) just like senseperception and not ‘acquired’ (*muktasab*) by reasoning”.

associate of the Umayyad caliph 'Abd al-Malik. This presumably meant that al-Sha'bi was not favorably disposed towards the *ahl al-bayt*; he had also moreover been accused of embezzling funds. But similar charges could be levied against the celebrated Ibn 'Abbās, for he is believed to have consorted with the Umayyads later in his political career and, according to some accounts, had made off with the treasury of Basra.<sup>82)</sup> The important difference is that there are numerous traditions attributed to Ibn 'Abbās that speak of 'Ali and the *ahl al-bayt* in an exceptionally favorably light. Al-Sha'bi, on the other hand, is on record as having questioned 'Ali's infallibility.

It is also curious that Ibn Ṭāwūs considers Ibn Abi Laylā to be a reliable transmitter. Ibn Ḥibbān clearly indicates in his *Kitāb al-majrūhin* that Ibn Abi Laylā had an unsavory reputation as a *muḥaddith* and that he narrated from al-Sha'bi whose reports Ibn Ṭāwūs had repudiated. However, since Ibn Abi Laylā had also narrated *ḥadiths* in favor of the *ahl al-bayt*, his shortcomings as a narrator appear to have been overlooked.

I had earlier mentioned that Ibn Ṭāwūs criticizes al-Jāḥiẓ severely for not providing complete *isnāds* for the traditions the latter quotes or for providing defective *isnāds* for them. It is therefore disconcerting to find that in the *Binā' al-maqāla*, there are instances when Ibn Ṭāwūs relies on Muqātil b. Sulayman for commentary on Qur'ānic verses that reflect favorably upon 'Ali and the *ahl al-bayt*. This is significant because, as we noted earlier, Muqātil b. Sulayman had acquired notoriety among Qur'ānic scholars and traditionists for being inclined to fabricate traditions and for providing faulty or incomplete *isnāds* for the traditions he quoted in favor of his interpretations.<sup>83)</sup> Yet, Ibn Ṭāwūs shows no reluctance in relying upon the

<sup>82)</sup> See, for example, El<sup>2</sup>, under "‘Abd Allāh ibn al-‘Abbās", v. 1, pp. 40–41.

After Ibn 'Abbās' resignation from public office, he is reported to have emptied out the treasury (*bayt al-māl*) of Basra and absconded with the funds to the Ḥijāz. Al-Kishshī in his *Rijāl* gives a detailed account of the heated correspondence that took place between 'Ali and Ibn 'Abbās after this event; see al-Ṭūsī, *Ikhtiyār ma' rifat al-rijāl*, v. 1, pp. 279–80. When 'Ali reproached Ibn 'Abbās severely in a letter for this apparently criminal act, Ibn 'Abbās replied defiantly, "By my life, I have much more in God's treasury than I have taken". During a second run of correspondence, Ibn 'Abbās responded to another reproachful letter from 'Ali by saying, "It is preferable that I meet God with all the gold and carnelian on the face of the earth than meet him with the blood of Muslim men". This was a pointed reference to Muslim blood shed during the battle of Nahrawān against the Khawārij, of which Ibn 'Abbās seems to have disapproved. Ibn 'Abbās may also no longer have recognized 'Ali's right to the caliphate considering the latter to have been effectively deposed by the decision of the arbitrators at Ṣiffīn.

<sup>83)</sup> See *supra*, n. 56.

traditions cited by Muqātil to prove that a particular Qur'ānic verse was in reference to 'Ali and his virtues. Ibn Ṭāwūs could not have been unaware of the controversy surrounding Muqātil. The author of *Kitāb al-isti'āb*, Ibn 'Abd al-Barr al-Maghribī, whom Ibn Ṭāwūs quotes profusely, indicates quite plainly that Muqātil's reputation as a *muhaddith* was severely blemished as does Ibn Ḥibbān in his *Kitāb al-majrūhīn*. This requirement thus appears to have been waived in the case of an authority who can provide corroboration for Ibn Ṭāwūs' position.

The above appraisal should not, however, detract in any way from Ibn Ṭāwūs's preeminent position in Shi'ī *'ilm al-ḥadīth*. He remains the scholar who gave Shi'ī *ḥadīth* studies a whole new direction and provided the necessary groundwork and impetus for a new intellectual trend within Imāmi Shi'ism which would eventually usher in the Uṣūlī movement. An understanding of Ibn Ṭāwūs' methodology of *ḥadīth* criticism helps illumine an important realm within the evolving discipline of Shi'ī studies.