An example of discovery is when a student comes across someone else’s book in that individual’s own handwriting containing some hadith which he relates, and the student has never met him – or he did meet him but did not hear from him the hadith which he has found recorded in his handwriting – and he does not have a license from him or anything similar. He should say, “I found (majadda) in the handwriting of X” – or “I read in the handwriting of X,” or “In the book of X in his handwriting is” – Y b. Z, informed us.” Then he should mention his teacher and give the rest of the isnād and the text. Or he should say, “I found” – or “I read” – “in the handwriting of X from Y,” and mention the person who transmitted to him and those above him. This has been continuously practiced in early and modern times. It falls under the heading of “interrupted” (munaqf) and “loose” (mursal), however it is tainted with “cohesion” on account of the statement, “I found in the handwriting of X.” Sometimes someone commits misrepresentation (dadala) by saying regarding the individual whose handwriting he found, “From X,” or, “X said.” That is a disgraceful misrepresentation when it is such that it falsely promotes the impression that he heard the material from the teacher, as was discussed above in the Category on misrepresentation. Some people speak carelessly and unqualifiedly apply “He transmitted to us” or “He informed us” to instances of discovery. Whoever does that opens himself up for criticism.

When the student finds a hadith in someone’s composition and the composition is not in the handwriting of that individual, he should say, “X mentioned” – or “X said” – “Y informed us,” or, “X mentioned from Y.” This is interrupted and does not contain any trace of cohesion.  

All of the above applies when the student is confident that it is the handwriting of the individual mentioned or his book. If this is not the case, then let him say, “It reached me from X” (baughante ‘an falan), “I found from X” (majadda ‘an falan), or similar expressions. Or let him plainly indicate the means of transmission he relied upon in that regard by using the expressions of some earlier scholars; for example, “I read in the book of X in his handwriting and Y informed me that it was the handwriting of X” or “I found in a book which I thought was in the handwriting of X” or “In a book the writer of which says that he is X b. Y is” or “In a book which is said to be in the handwriting of X is.”

When the student wishes to transmit hadith from a book ascribed to an author, let him not say, “X said such and such,” until he becomes confident of the authenticity of the copy by his own collation of it – or some other trustworthy person’s – with numerous other texts. We indicated this earlier at the end of

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122 Although there can be no doubt about the accuracy of the text here, later writers tended to postpone the treatment of the point addressed in this passage to the general discussion below of texts not in their author’s handwriting; e.g. ʿIṣṣāʾ, al-Tahāra wa-V adākira, ed. Muḥammad b. ʿAlī b. ʿAṣqaṭ al-Ḥusayn, 3 vols (Beirut, n.d.), 2:115.
Chapter 25
ON THE WRITING OF HADITH AND THE MEANS OF FIXING AND RECORDING TEXTS
(Fi kitabat al-ḥadith wa-kayfiyat dābṭ al-kitāb wa-taqaṣydiḥt)

The earliest Muslims (God be pleased with them) differed over the permissibility of recording hadith in writing. Some disapproved of writing hadith and knowledge and ordered that they be committed to memory; some permitted writing them.

We heard that 'Umar, Ibn Mas'ud, Zayd b. Thabit, 'Abi Musa [al-Ash'ari] and 'Abi Sa'id al-Khudri were among the Companions and Followers who disliked writing hadith. We heard from 'Abi Sa'id al-Khudri that the Prophet (Peace be upon him) said, "Do not write anything from me except the Qur'an. Whoever writes anything from me other than the Qur'an should erase it." Muslim included this hadith in his Ṣahih.1

We heard that 'Ali, his son al-Hasan, Anas and 'Abd Allah b. 'Amr b. al-As' were among the Companions and Followers (God be pleased with all of them) who permitted writing hadith or did write hadith. One of the sound hadith of the Messenger of God (Peace be upon him) indicating the permissibility of this is the hadith in which Abu Shah al-Yaman2 requested the Messenger of God (Peace be upon him) to write for him something which he heard in the course of the address he made in the year Mecca was conquered. The reply of the Prophet (Peace be upon him) was, "Write for Abu Shah." Perhaps the Prophet (Peace be upon him) gave permission to write from him to those he feared would forget and he forbade it to those whose memory he trusted, out of fear of their over-reliance on books. Or perhaps he forbade it when he feared that the people would confuse his words with the pages of the excited Qur'an and he gave permission for writing his words when he felt safe from that. Abu 'l-Fath [or Abu Bakr] b. 'Abd al-Muqtat al-Furáwi informed us through recitation to him in Nishapur (May God restore it). He said, Abu 'l-Muqtat [Muhammad b. Ismail] 3

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1 'Abi Sa'id (or Abu Khatrija) Zayd b. Thabit b. al-Dakht al-Anṣārī (d. ca. 45/666) took a leading role in the recording of the Qur'an; Sengin, G.A.S., 1:401-2.
2 'Abi Sa'id Sa'id b. Malik b. Sinan al-Khudri (d. ca. 74/693) was a prolific transmitter from the Prophet and other Companions; Dhabab, Siyar, 3:166-72.
4 Abu Muslim 'Abd Allah b. 'Amr b. al-Ja'fī (d. 65/684) was a Companion who transmitted numerous hadith from the Prophet; Sengin, G.A.S., 1:84.
5 Nothing seems to be known about this Companion other than his involvement with this incident; Ibn 'Abd al-Barr, Isfahān, 4:1168.
7 Nishapur was damaged by an earthquake in 1209 and sacked by the Mongols in 1221.
al-Fārisī informed us. He said, The expert Ābū Bakr al-Bayhaqī informed us. He said, Ābū l-Ḥusayn b. Bishrān informed us. He said, Ābū 'Amr b. al-Sammāk informed us. He said, Ťanbal b. Ishaq transmitted to us. He said, Sulaymān b. Ṭālib transmitted to us. He said, al-Walīd—that is, Ibn ʿAbd Allāh—transmitted to us. He said, "Awaṭī used to say, 'This knowledge is a noble one which men received among themselves. When it went into books, those unworthy of it came among them.'" The disagreement over writing hadith has disappeared and Muslims have come to agree unanimously on allowing and permitting it. If the hadith had not been recorded in books, they would have become obliterated in later ages. God knows best.

Those who write and collect hadith are under an obligation to focus their efforts on recording clearly the transmitted material they write down—or obtain in the handwriting of someone else—exactly as the transmitters related it, using the vowel signs and diacritical points necessary to eliminate ambiguity. Often someone confident of his intelligence and attentiveness is disdainful of this and has unfortunate consequences. People are susceptible to forgetfulness and the first to forget was the first person. Providing the diacritical marks in a text prevents it from becoming unintelligible and marking the vowel signs prevents ambiguity. No one should concern himself with indicating those obvious things that are almost never doubtful. Indeed, whoever said, "Vocalize only what is obscure," spoke well. I read in the handwriting of Ālī b. ʿAbd Allāh al-Baghḍādī in his book Simāt al-khāt wa-usūlmuhā (The Characteristics and Forms of Script) that scholars dislike marking the diacritical points and inflectional vowels unless the word is ambiguous. On the other hand, someone else recounted from some people that unambiguous words should be vocalized as well as the ambiguous. That is because the beginner and the non-expert in the discipline cannot distinguish an ambiguous word from an unambiguous one, or correct inflectional vowels from incorrect. God knows best.

The following is a discussion of some useful points related to the above:

8 Abu l-Ḥusayn ʿĀlī b. Muhammad b. ʿĀbī ʿAbd Allāh b. Bishrān (328/939–415/1024) was a well-respected transmitter in Baghdad; Sezgin, G.ÁS, I:227.
9 Abu ʿAmr ʿAbd Allāh b. Ahmad b. ʿAbd Allāh al-Daqqiq (d. 344/955), known as Ibn al-Sammāk, was a hadith scholar in Baghdad; Sezgin, G.ÁS, I:185–6.
11 Abu Muhammad Sulaymān b. Ahmad b. al-Dimashqī was a respected transmitter of hadith who could count a number of very distinguished scholars as his students. Late in his life he moved to Čāḥi and died into a life of dissipation; Bukhlī, al-Tārikh al-Kabīr, 2:23; Ibn Ḥajar, Fazā, 4 (13):101.
12 Abu l-ʿAbdīb al-Walīd b. Muhammad al-Khwārizmī (119/737–195/810) lived in Damascus and was an expert in the ḥadīth of the Syriac; Sezgin, G.ÁS, I:293.
13 I have not succeeded in identifying this individual. His book is described in Ḥājī Khalīfa, Kushi, 2:col. 1001.

14 Ṣahlīaḥ explains that in this way a further degree of clarity is attained since there are a number of Arabic letters which appear similar when written in connected form but differ considerably in their unconnected form; Fass al-Mughāthir, 2:149.
16 Abu Muhammad ʿĀbī ʿAbd Allāh b. Muhammad b. Ḥusayn al-Ṭanawwār (213/826–276/889) was a polymath who made important contributions to a number of disciplines; EF, 5:844–7.; Sezgin, G.ÁS, I:861–5.
analagous unpainted letters. So they place points under ṭā, ẓā, šād, and the other unpainted letters like them. One of the practitioners of this said that the points under the unpainted sin should be spread out in a row while those which are over the pointed dāl should be arranged like a tripod. Some people make the sign indicating the absence of pointing over the unpainted letters in the shape of a nail paring resting on its back. Some put under the unpainted ḥā a small unconnected ḥā, and do the same under the dāl, ṭā, ẓā, šā, sin, ’ayn, and the rest of the ambiguous unpainted letters. These are the widespread and well-known forms of the signs indicating that a letter is unpainted. There are also signs found in numerous old books which many people do not understand, like the sign of those who make a small line over an unpainted letter and that of those who put something shaped like a ḥamza under an unpainted letter. God knows best.

6. No one should employ a personal system of signs in his book which no one else can understand and which throws others into confusion. Some who collect in their book several different transmissions of a text and signal the relation of each transmitter with one or two letters from his name and the like do this. If the writer explains in the beginning or the end of his book what he means by those signs and symbols, there is no problem. Nevertheless, it is better that the writer avoid using symbols. He should write for each transmission the name of its transmitter completely in a shortened form and not merely write a sign for some of it. God knows best.

7. The student should place a circle between two hadith to separate and distinguish them. We read that Abu 'l-Zinād, Abūmad b. Ḥanbal, Ibrahim b. ʿAbbās al-Ḥaribī and Muḥammad b. Jarīr al-Taḥbīrī (God be pleased with them) were among the authorities who did that. The expert al-Khāṭib al-Bağdādī recommended that the circles be hollow. When he collated the text, he put a dot in the circle that followed each hadith he had finished collating or he drew a line through its center. He said, “Some scholars did not use to count something as part of what they had heard unless it was marked that way,” or words to that effect.” God knows best.

8. It is reprehensible for someone to write a name like “ʿAbd Allāh, the son of X, the son of Y” with ʿAbd at the end of a line and the rest at the beginning of the next line. In the same way, it is reprehensible with “Abū al-Raḥmān, the son of X” – and the rest of the names containing ʿAbd with a name of God (He is exalted) – that the ʿAbd be written at the end of a line with the name of God and the rest of the lineage of the beginning of the next line. Similarly, it is undesirable for “The Messenger . . . said” (qāla Rasūl at-Tsāla) to be written at the end of a line with “of God, May God – He is exalted – bless and save him and his family (Allāhu ʿalaih wa-rasūlihi wa-sallām), and the like, being written at the beginning of the next line. God knows best.”

9. The student should make sure to write “May God bless and save him” upon the mention of the name of the Messenger of God (Peace be upon him) and not tire of repeating the invocation upon each repetition of it. Indeed, that is one of the greatest benefits which the collectors and copyists of hadith can readily accrue and whoever neglects it misses a great opportunity. We have heard some good dreams regarding those who did that. Every time someone writes the invocation it is a prayer which he invokes anew, rather than words which he just transmits. For that reason, in this matter the copyist is not bound by what he is relating and is not limited to what appears in the original text. The same is true for praising God (He is praised) upon the mention of His name with “He is mighty and great” (ʿazza wa-jalla), “He is blessed and exalted” (taḥāraka wa-taḥāla) and similar expressions. When it is found that one of these invocations already appears in the relation, the care to set it down and make it clear should even be greater.

Surviving documents in the handwriting of Abu ʿAbd Allāh Ahmad b. Ḥanbal (God be pleased with him) show that he sometimes neglected to write the invocation after the mention of the name of the Prophet (Peace be upon him). The reason for that may have been that in this matter he preferred to limit himself to the text as it appeared in the transmission and attaching the invocations for every transmitter who preceded him was too much for him. Abu Bakr al-Khāṭib said, “I read that he used to invoke blessings on the Prophet (Peace be upon him) verbally rather than in writing. Other early authorities disagreed with Abūmad b. Ḥanbal in that matter. It is related that ʿAli b. al-Madīnī and ʿAbd b. ʿAbbās b. ʿAbd al-Qāzīm al-Anbārī said, ‘We never gave up invoking the blessing on the Messenger of God (Peace be upon him) in every hadith we heard. Sometimes we were in a hurry and we would then leave spaces for the invocations in each hadith in the book, so we could go back later to write them in.’ God knows best.

17 Abū Jaʿfar Muḥammad b. Jarīr al-Taḥbīrī (ca. 224/839-318/923) was one of the greatest religious scholars in Islam. He composed significant works in a number of fields, including history, Qur'ān commentary, law and hadith, 87, 10.11-15; Senge in, G/AS, 1:322-8.
18 ʿAmāni, 136.
19 The fear here is that a reader could inadvertently interpret the expressions in an impioun fashion. In the first case, if the reader did not see the previous line with ʿAbd, he would read the blasphemous phrase, “God, the son of X, the son of Y.” In the second case, if he did not see “The Messenger of – said,” he would read the formula, “God, may God – He is exalted! – bless him and save him and his family,” which at best is theologically confusing.
20 Abu Ṣ-Fāiq ʿAbd Allāh b. ʿAbd al-Qāzīm al-Anbārī (d. 266/876) was a hadith expert from al-Bayr, Dībāk, Ṣayyūb, 1:302-3.
21 ʿAmāni, 135-6.
In writing the invocations, the student should avoid two deficiencies: (a), writing them abbreviated in form, representing them symbolically with a couple of letters, or something similar; (b), writing them abbreviated in sense, not writing “and save him” (wa-sallama), although examples of this are found in the handwriting of some early scholars.

I heard Abu 'l-Qasim [or Abu 'l-Fath or Abu Bakr] Mansur b. 'Abd al-Mun'im and Umm al-Mu'ayyad hint Abu 'l-Qasim,22 through my recitation to them. They said, We heard Abu 'l-Barakat 'Abd Allah b. Muhammad al-Fur'awi verbally say, I heard the Qur'an reciter Zarif b. Muhammad saying, I heard the expert 'Abd Allah b. Muhammad b. Isma'il say, I heard my father saying, I heard Hamza al-Kinā'ī saying, "I used to write hadith and upon the mention of the Prophet, I wrote, 'May God bless him,' without writing 'and save him.' Then, I saw the Prophet (Peace be upon him) in a dream and he said to me, 'Why do you not complete the invocation of blessings on me?' After that I never wrote 'May God bless him,' without writing 'and save him.'" This is also detestable for the student to limit himself to writing "May peace be upon him" (ta'liyha 'l-salam). God knows best.

10. The student should collate his book with the book that he actually heard (aš/samā'īhī) and the book of his teacher (aš/shaykhīhī) which he is actually relating from him, even in a case of licensing. We heard that Urwa b. al-Zubayr (God be pleased with him) asked his son Hishām, "You wrote?" and he answered yes. Then Urwa asked, "Did you collate your book?" He answered no, and Urwa replied, "You did not write!" We heard that the ītimād Shāfi'i and Yahyā b. Abī Kathīr said, "Someone who writes and does not collate is like someone who uses the privy and does not wash afterwards." We heard that al-Akhfashī said, "When a book is copied without collation and then another uncopied copy is made from that copy, the text stops being Arabic."

The best collation is the student's personal collation of his book against that of his teacher, in the presence of the teacher while he is transmitting the text to him from his own book, on account of the elements of care and exactitude which

22 Umm al-Mu'ayyad Zaynab hint Abu 'l-Qasim 'Abd al-Rahīm (d. 615/1218) was transmitter of hadith from Nisābūr who was sought out by her contemporaries; Duhahbī, Sībur, 22:85-6.

23 Abu 'l-Barakat 'Abd Allah b. Muhammad al-Fur'awi was the grandfather of Ibn al-Saḥā's teacher Mansur b. 'Abd al-Mun'im. He was a respected transmitter and died of starvation and exposure in 549/1153 during the attack of the Ghuzz on Nisābūr; Duhahbī, Sībur, 20:227-8.

24 Abu 'l-Hassan Zarif b. Muhammad al-Hawī was a scholar of hadith from Nisābūr who died in 517/1124 at the age of eighty-eight; Duhahbī, Sībur, 19:373-6.

25 This appears to be Abu 'l-Hassan 'Abd Allah (or 'Abdayn Allah) b. Muhammād b. Isḥāq (d. 462/1070), the son of Abū 'Abd Allah Mūsā, EF, 3:863; Duhahbī, Sībur, 18:355.

26 This al-Akhfashī (literally, "dim-eyed") appears to have been Abū 'Abd Allah Ahmad b. Sinā'ī b. Salāma (d. c. 260/874), a grammarian, lexicographer and poet from Syria; Sūrijī, G45, 1:241.

that procedure brings together from the two sides [that is, the student's eyes and his ears]." The collation lacking these characteristics falls short of the level of the prescribed collation to the extent that it lacks them. What we mentioned is superior to the blanket declaration of the expert Abu 'l-Fadl al-Jāridī al-Harawi.23 "The most truthful collation is alone by yourself."

The auditors who do not possess a copy of the text should sit with someone else and look into his copy, especially if they want to transmit from it. Indeed, it has been related that Yahyā b. Ma'm was asked about someone who did not look in the book while the transmitter was reciting: "Is it permissible for him to transmit that book from his teacher? He said, "In my opinion it is not permissible, however the audience of the generality of teachers is that way." This one of the dictates of those strict in transmission and their doctrine will be mentioned below (God - He is exalted - willing). The correct view is that this is not stipulated and the audience is valid, even if the student does not look at the book at all the time of the recitation. Furthermore, it is not stipulated that the student personally collate his text. Rather, it is enough for him that his copy be collated with the original text of the transmitter, even if that does not take place at the time of the recitation and even if someone else does the collating, if that person is reliable and one may be confident that he will be accurate.

It is also permissible for the student's text to be collated against a copy (farṣ) which had been collated in the prescribed manner with the text of his teacher, the text used in the audience. The same is true if he collates his text with the original text which the text of his teacher was collated with, because the desired aim is that the text of the student be in conformity with the text heard at his audition and the text of his teacher, irrespective of whether that occurs through an intermediary or not. "This is not enough for those who say, "The student's collation with anyone but himself is not valid. He may not rely on anyone else and there must not be any intermediary between him and the book of the teacher. So let him personally collate his copy with the original, letter by letter, so that he becomes confident and certain that his copy agrees with the teacher's." This is an abandoned doctrine. It is one of the doctrines of strict scholars that is repudiated in our age. God knows best.

When the student does not collate his book against the original: the professor Abu Ishaq al-Isfahānī was asked about the permissibility of a student's relation from a text of this description and he permitted it. The expert Abū Bakr al-Khaṭṭāb also permitted it and explained his condition. He stated that it is stipulated that the student's copy must be transmitted from the original and that, when he relates


28 Despite the inherent implausibility, the sources maintain that there were two hadith scholars named "Abu 'l-Fadl Muhammad b. Ahmad b. Muhammad al-Jāridī al-Harawi" living a century apart. The first is known as "al-Shābī" (the martyr) because he supposedly died a heroic-death at the hands of the Qarmatians in Mecca in 317/930; Duhahbī, Sībur, 14:338-40. The second is said to have died in 413/1023; Duhahbī, Sībur, 17:284-6.
it, he must make clear that he did not collate it. He related that his teacher Abū Bakr al-Barqūnī asked Abū Bakr al-Ismā‘īlī, “May someone transmit something he wrote from a teacher and did not collate with his original text?” He said, “Yes, but he must make clear that he did not collate it.” Al-Khaṭṭābī said, “This is the doctrine of Abū Bakr al-Barqūnī. He transmitted to us many hadīth for which he said, “I informed us, and I did not collate it with his original text.” A third condition is also necessary and this is that the transmitter of the copy made from the original should not be poor in transmitting but should rather be a sound transmitter who makes few mistakes. (God knows best.) The student should also direct his attention to his teacher’s book vis-à-vis those above him, in a fashion similar to what we described in reference to his own book. He should also not be like certain students who regard as valid the audition of a book recited to a teacher from any copy which happens to be at hand. God knows best.

11. The preferred method of supplying a textual omission in the margins—and it is called an “addendum” (ilhaq)—is for the student to make a line going up from the spot of the omission in the line of text and then curve it for a short distance between the two lines of text in the direction of the spot in the margin where he will write the addendum. He should begin writing the addendum in the margin opposite the curved line. Let that be in the right margin. If it is near the middle of the page, let the addendum be written—if there is room for it—going up toward the top of the page, and not down toward the bottom. When the addendum is two or more lines long, the student should not begin the lines going from the bottom to the top, but rather begin them going from the top to the bottom, so that the end of the lines is in the direction of the center of the page, when the insertion is on the right margin; and when they are on the left margin, their end is toward the edge of the page. “It is correct” (ṣabba) should be written at the end of the addendum. Some people write “It returned” (raj'a) with “It is correct.”

At the end of the addendum, some people write the word which occurs next to it at the place of the insertion inside the text to indicate the continuity of the passage. This is the preference of some of the North African practitioners of this craft and that of an Easterner, the judge Abū Muḥammad b. Khalādī— the author of the book al-Ṣaḥīḥ hayn al-raws wa‘-l-wālī—among certain others. That is not satisfactory, since many times words are actually repeated in a passage, so this repetition sometimes causes some people to think mistakenly that this is an instance of that. The judge Ibn Khalādī also recommended in his book that the curve of

the line for supplying the omission be extended from its place in the text to connect it with the beginning of the addendum in the margin.32 This is also unsatisfactory. While it does more clearly indicate where the addendum belongs, it blackens the book and marks it up, especially if there are many addenda. God knows best.

We recommended that the addendum be written going toward the top of the page, lest another omission should have to be supplied later. If the student were to write the first addendum going down toward the bottom, he would not find the margin opposite the next omission free for its addendum. When he writes the first addendum going up, he finds the opposite margin free for whatever omissions he encounters after that. We also said that he should supply the addendum on the right side, because, if he were to put it on the left, often another omission appears further on in the same line.33 If he also puts the second addendum on the left side opposite the line, the two addenda will become mixed-up. If he supplies the second addendum on the right side, the curve for supplying the addendum on the left side and the one on the right side will meet or face each other such that it will look like the words between them are being struck out. On the other hand, when the student supplies the first addendum on the right side and then supplies the second on the left, they do not meet and no confusion is entailed. However, if the omission occurs at the end of the line, there is no reason then for not supplying it on the left, because of the proximity of the omission to the margin and because the above-mentioned justification no longer holds, since we do not fear the appearance of another omission further on in the same line. When the omission is at the beginning of the line, the necessity of supplying it on the right side is further confirmed on account of the issue of proximity we brought up, in addition to the other reasons discussed above.

Commentary, the notation of errors and variant readings from different transmissions or different copies of the text or similar material not part of the original text which is to be supplied in the margins: the expert al-Ḥāḍirīyā (God bless him) held the view that a line of insertion should not be used for this kind of material. This way ambiguity does not arise with this foreign material being considered part of the original text. The line is to be used only for what belongs to the original text itself. However, to mark the word for which the additional material was intended, a sign like the “latch” (dabba) or the one indicating that the word is correct (taṣīb)34 is sometimes placed over it.35 I say: the line of insertion is better and clearer. The character of this supplementary material inherently eliminates any ambiguity. This supplement differs from the other kind belonging to the original text in that the line of the latter comes between the two words

32 Muḥaddith al-fusul, 606-7.
33 Arabīc is written from right to left.
34 For these signs, see the next section.
35 Ummā, 164.
12. One of the concerns of skillful and exact students is to take care in “marking as correct” (tāfṣīḥ), “latching” (tāfṣīḥ) and “marking as faulty” (sunraḍ). “Marking as correct” consists of writing “It is correct” (ṣabha) above the reading or in its vicinity. This is done only for something that is correct in regard to transmission and sense but that is open to doubt or dispute. “It is correct” is written above it so that it be known that it has not been overlooked and that it has been accurately written and that it is correct in that form.36

The symbol of “latching” – it is also termed “marking as faulty” – is placed over a reading which is established as appearing that way from the standpoint of transmission, but is corrupt in form or sense, or is weak or defective. It may, for instance, be impermissible in terms of Arabic usage or seem odd to speakers of Arabic, with most of them rejecting it. It may also have been misread (muṣāḥḥa) [by a previous copyist]; or one word or more may have been omitted from the passage; or something along those lines. A line, the beginning of which is like the letter sād, is extended above something like this. It is not written on the indicated word lest it be thought that the word is being struck out. It is like the letter sād of the word sāḥa with an extension rather than the ḥād. It is written in this way to distinguish between what is absolutely correct, from the standpoint of transmission and in other ways, and what is correct from the standpoint of transmission but not in any other way. For this reason, “It is correct” is not written in complete form over it. Writing the word “defective” (ṣaqq) over a defective word also indicates its faultiness and deficiency, despite the soundness of its transmission and relation. This alerts anyone who looks in the book that the copyist noticed the defective word and has conveyed it as he found it. Perhaps, someone else will give him a correct reading or the reading which does not now seem correct to him will seem correct later on. If he had changed the word and corrected it to the best of his understanding at the time, he would be liable to what has befallen more than one imprudent scholar who changed a text and the correct reading turned out to be the one they rejected and the corrupt reading the one they “corrected” it to.

In regard to calling that symbol a ṣabha [literally, a door latch or the piece of material patched over a crack or break; for example, in a vessel or a piece of wood], we read from the lexicographer Abu ‘l-Qāsim Ibrāhīm b. Muhammad – known as Ibn al-Fihīm – that this is because the word is “locked up” by it and not readable, as if the door latch were locked. (God knows best.) Because the ṣabha occurs over a reading containing imperfections, it is also like the piece of material which is placed over a crack or break. So the name of this symbol was taken from that word. Borrowings of this kind are not unheard of.

One of the other places for “latching” is the point in an isnād where “looseness” (ṣanṣ) or “interruption” (ṣināf) occurs. “Latching” the point of looseness and interruption is customary for scholars. That is similar to what was mentioned above about “latching” a defective reading.

In some old hadith manuscripts in isnāds containing a number of transmitters whose names are placed in conjunction with one another, one finds a symbol similar to the ṣabha between the names. Someone with little experience may mistakenly believe that it is a ṣabha when it is not. It seems that it is the symbol of connection between them which was written to confirm their conjunction for fear that “ṣanṣ” (from) would be put in the place of ṣināf (and). (Knowledge belongs to God. He is exalted). Some copyists occasionally abbreviate the symbol “It is correct” so that its shape comes to resemble that of the “ṣabha.” Perspicacity is one of the best things that can be bestowed on a person. God knows best.

13. When something that does not belong occurs in a book, it is eliminated by striking out (qasib), scratching out (hakk), erasure38 or some other way. Striking out is superior to scratching out and erasing. We heard that the judge Abu Muhammad b. Khallād (God bless him) said, “Our colleagues say, ‘Scratching out is an accusation.’”39 Someone informed me that al-‘Aqīq Ṣiyād said, “I heard our teacher Abu Bahr Sufyān b. al-‘Aṣī al-Ṣasī” relating that one of his teachers used to say, “The teachers of old used to disapprove of bringing a knife to a hadith class, in order that nothing be peeled away, because sometimes something that is peeled away in one class is established as sound in another transmission. The book may be heard another time from a different teacher with what was peeled off or scratched away from the transmission of the first teacher being correct in the transmission of the other. So then the student needs to restore it after it was peeled off. When a line is drawn over the reading on account of the transmission of the first teacher and it is established as being correct by the second teacher, the symbol standing for the second teacher above it is enough to establish its correctness.”40

38 Ṣaḥāwī defines “ṣināf” as “the removal of words without scooping, where that is possible because the writing is on a tablet or on parchment or freshly written on very polished paper.”

This he explains is done with one’s fingers or a rag; Faṣḥ al-Mughīth, 2:180.

39 Muḥammad al-Ṣafī, 606.

40 Abu Bahr b. al-‘Aṣī was an Andalusian grammarian who died in 520/1126 at over eighty years of age; Dhahabī, Siyar, 19:515–16.

41 Ḳūfā, 179.
There is disagreement over the best method of striking out. We heard that Abū Muḥammad b. Khalil said, "The best striking out does not obliterate the word being struck out. Rather writing a good clear line above the word indicates that it is invalid and the word can still be read under the line." We heard from al-Qāḍī ʿIyāḍ something to the effect that the preferences of precise writers differ regarding striking out. Most of them favor extending a line over the portion of the text to be struck out, through the struck-out words. That is also called "splitting" (shqūq). Others do not draw the line through the portion of text, but rather fit it above it. However, they curve the ends of the line over the beginning and the end of the passage to be struck out. Some others regard that as a disfigurement and view it as marking up and defacing the page. Instead, they enclose the beginning of the passage to be struck out with half a circle and do the same at the end. When the passage to be struck out is long, sometimes they do that at the beginning and the end of each line of the passage. However, sometimes it suffices entirely to enclose the beginning of the passage and its end. There are some teachers who regard both striking out and bracketing the passage with half circles as disfiguring. They are content with a small circle at the beginning and the end of the superfluous passage. They call the small circle a "zero" (ṣifr), as the arithmeticians do. Occasionally some scholars wrote "no" (lā) at the beginning of the passage to be deleted and "until" (lā) at the end of it. Something like this works well for what is established in one relation and omitted in another. God knows best.

The striking out of unintentionally repeated words: the judge Abū Muhammad b. Khalil al-Ramahurūtī (God bless him for his precedence) has anticipated us in the discussion of this. We heard that he said, "Some of our colleagues stated, 'Of the two occurrences of the word, the one more deserving of being invalidated is the second, because the first was properly written and the second was written by mistake. So the mistake is more deserving of invalidation.' Others said, 'The book is a symbol of what is to be read. The occurrence of the word more clearly indicative of what is to be read and the finer of them in terms of shape is more deserving of preservation.'" Finally, al-Qāḍī ʿIyāḍ came and made an excellent distinction. He opined that, if the repetition of the word is found at the beginning of a line, let the second occurrence be struck out, to protect the beginning of the line from markings and defacement. If the repetition is found at the end of a line, the first occurrence should be struck out, to protect the end of the line. Keeping the beginnings and the ends of the lines free from that is

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42 Muḥaddith al-fiqḥ, 606.
43 Ḥanafī, 171.
44 For writing the zero in Arabic as a circle instead of the more usual dot, see Franz Rosenthal, The Technique and Approach of Muslim Scholarship (Rome, 1947), 16, n. 1. This fundamental study contains a translation (pp. 8–18) of the chapter concerning books and writing from Ṭabārī’s al-Maṣād fi adab al-mufīd wa-l-muṣtafīd, which amplifies many of the points discussed in this category.
45 Muḥaddith al-fiqḥ, 607.
in the supplementary relation of the text of the book, the student writes it in red. If there is an omission in the supplementary relation and the additional material is in the relation recorded in the main text of the book, he brackets that material in red. Whoever does this must make clear at the beginning or the end of the book to whom the relation marked with red belongs, as was stated above. God knows best.

15. For the most part, the writers of hadith have come to confine themselves to using symbols for hadāthānā (He transmitted to us) and akhbarānā (He informed us). That has spread and taken over to the point where it is hardly ever confusing. For hadāthānā the last half is written, that is, thā, nūn, alif; and sometimes only the pronoun is written; that is, nūn and alif. For akhbarānā, the aforementioned pronoun is written with an initial alif. It is not good the way certain scholars write akhbarānā with an alif in addition to the first symbol of hadāthānā we mentioned, even if Bayhaqī was one of those who did this. Occasionally a rā is written after the alif in the symbol for akhbarānā and a dāl at the beginning of the symbol for hadāthānā. The expert Abū 'Abd Allāh al-Ḫākim, Abū 'Abd al-Ḫaṭṭāb al-Ṣulamī5 and the expert Ahmad al-Bayhaqī (God be pleased with them) are some of those in whose handwriting I have seen a dāl in the symbol for hadāthānā. God knows best.

When a hadith has two or more isnāds, at the transition from one isnād to another some scholars write a symbol shaped like a ḍāl; that is, an unconnected, unpointed letter ḍāl. We have received no [convincing] explanation for this from any reliable person.

However, I have found in the handwriting of the professor and hadith expert Abū 'Uthmān al-Ṣābitī, the expert Abū Muslim ʿUmār b. 'Alī al-Laythī al-Bukhārī5 and the jurist and ḥadīth scholar Abū Saʿd al-Kalhī6 (God bless them) the word saḥīḥ (It is sound) unambiguously written in

place of the ḍāl, and this suggests that the ḍāl is an abbreviation of saḥīḥ. It is good to place saḥīḥ here so that no one mistakenly believes the ḥadīth that goes with the isnād has been omitted and to prevent the two isnāds from being combined into a single isnād. Someone whom I met on a journey in Khurāṣan related to me from an Isfahāni whom he described as possessing merit that it is an unpointed letter ḍāl from the word taḥwīl (transition); that is, from one isnād to another. I once consulted a North African scholar about it. I related to him from a ḥadīth scholar I had met that the unpointed ḍāl represents the word al-ḥadīth. He said to me, “The people of North Africa—and I do not know of any disagreement among them—write it as an unpointed ḍāl and when one of them encounters it in reciting, he says, ‘al-ḥadīth.’” He told me that he had heard a Baghdādi also say that it is an unpointed ḍāl and that when some of them come across it in their recitation, they say, “ḥāʾ,” and continue. I asked the well-traveled expert Abū Muḥammad ʿAbd al-Quadīr b. ʿAbd Allāh al-Ruḥwānī7 (God bless him) about it. He said that it is the ḍāl from ḍāʾīl (divisor); that is, it separates two isnāds. He said, “Nothing is said when one comes across it in reciting.” He denied that it is from the word al-ḥadīth or the other words. He was not acquainted with anything else from any of his teachers and they included a number of the ḥadīth experts of his day. I think it best—and God is the one who grants success—that the reciter say, “ḥāʾ,” when he comes across it and continue. This is the most cautious way and the most equitable. Knowledge belongs to God (He is exalted).

16. The expert al-Khaṭṭāb stated “that after the phrase ‘In the name of God, the Compassionate and Merciful,’ the student should write the name (ism) of the teacher from whom he heard the book, his paidonymic (bunga) and lineage (naṣab) and then put forth what he heard from him verbatim.” Al-Khaṭṭāb went on to add: “When he comes to write the book he heard, he should write over the words ‘In the name of God,’ and so forth, the names of those who heard the book with him and the date of the audition. If he likes, he may alternatively write that information in the margin of the first page of the book. Our teachers did it both ways.”8 Writing the list of authors (taṣmīr) where he said is safest and most likely to be hidden from those in need of it. There is also nothing wrong with writing it at the end of the book, on the outside of it or wherever it can be easily found. The list of authors should be in the script of a trustworthy person whose handwriting is not unknown. There is no harm then in the teacher granting the audition not endorsing the list of authors in his own

50 Written without pointing, the ṣad-nūn-alif of hadāthānā is identical to the ḍāl-nūn-alif of this abbreviation of akhbarānā. Sayyid (Tadhrib al-ruʿānī, 2:87) felt that alif-ḥāʾ-nūn-alif might be mistaken for the abbreviation of hadāthānā while Sakāhī (Fath al-Maghibah, 2:190) suggested that Ibn al-Salih feared that it might be read as ṣaḥṣa or an abbreviation of it.

51 Abū ʿAbd al-Ḫaṭṭāb Muḥammad b. al-Ḫuwyār al-Ṣulamī (325/936 or 330-412/1021) was one of the greatest of the early Sufis and the author of a number of important works on topics related to mysticism, including the biographical dictionary Ṭabaqāt al-Sufiyah (ed. J. Pedersen, Leiden, 1960); EF, 9:811–12; Sefīn, G-45, 1:671–74.

52 Abū ʿUthmān al-Ṣābitī b. Abū ʿAbd al-Ḫaṭṭāb al-Ṣulamī (373/983-449/1057) was a scholar famed for his piety and knowledge, Duhābi, Ṣiyār, 18:40-44.

53 Abū Muslim ʿUmār b. Abī al-Laythī al-Bukhārī (d. 466/1074 or 468) composed a work entitled Muʿānad al-Sakāhīn, Duhābi, Ṣiyār, 18:407–9.

54 This may be the Abū Saʿd Muḥammad b. Abīd b. Muḥammad b. al-Kalhī al-Kalhī (467/1075-548/1153) whom Abī Saʿd al-Ṣamʿānī identifies as one of his teachers; al-ʿĀmilī, 2:394-5; Ibn al-Aʿlār, al-Lukbī fī sakhāḥ al-ʿĀmilī, 3 vols (Beirut, n.d.), 1:158.

55 Abū Muḥammad ʿAbd al-Quadīr b. ʿAbd Allāh al-Ruḥwānī (536/1142-612/1215) was one of the greatest ḥadīth transmitters in the region of the Jazira during his lifetime, Duhābi, Ṣiyār, 22:71-5.

56 Ṣehīh, 133.
Likewise, there is nothing wrong with the owner of the book, if he is trustworthy, merely recording his handwriting in his own hand. Reliable scholars have long done this.

The teacher Abu 'I-Muzaffar, the son of the expert Abu Sa'd al-Marwazi [al-Samāṭi] transmitted to me in Marv from his father from an inhabitant of Isfahan who transmitted to him that in Baghdād 'Abd al-Rahmān b. Abī 'Abd Allāh b. Manda recited a hadith monograph to Abū Ahmad al-Farādi and requested that he sign it as a guarantee for it. Abū Ahmad said to him, "My son, you must be veracious. When you become known for that, no one will call you a liar and you will be regarded as truthful in what you say and transmit. When that is not the case, if they were to say to you, 'This is not the handwriting of Abū Ahmad al-Farādi,' what would you say to them?"

The writer of the list of auditors must be attentive and careful. He should make clear in unambiguous terms the identity of the auditor, the material heard and the teacher from whom it was heard. He must avoid laxity in recording the names of the auditors and beware of leaving out the name of any of the auditors for an impure motive. There is nothing wrong if the writer of the list of auditors (mutahabit al-samāṭi) does not personally attend the entire audit, but draws it up relying on information from someone who was present and whose word he can trust (God - He is exalted - willing).

It is shameful for the owner of a book to conceal it from someone whose name is inscribed in the list of auditors and to prevent him from transferring the record of his audit (ṣuqūl samāṭi) and copying the book.

When the owner does lend it to him, the borrower should not be slow in returning it. We heard that Zuhri said, "Beware of the ghulal of books!" Someone asked him, "What is 'the ghulal of books'?' He said, "Withholding them from their owners." We heard that al-Fuḍayl b. Ṣa'd (God be pleased with him) said, "It is not the act of a pious man nor that of a wise man to take the record of audit of a man and withhold it from him. Whose does this harm himself" - or according to another relation: "It is not the act of a scholar to take the record of audit and book of a man and withhold it from him."

What if he does happen to forbid this to him? We heard that a man in al-Kufa laid a claim against another man for a record of audit which he withheld from him. They took their dispute to the judge there, Ḥāfiẓ b. Ghiyath. He said to the owner of the book, "Bring us your books. We impose on you the books with the record of audit of this man recorded in your hand. We exempt you from the books with the record of audit of this man recorded in his hand." Ibn Khalid said, "I asked Abū 'Abd Allāh al-Zubayrī about this and he said, 'There is no ruling better than this on that issue, because the handwriting of the owner of the book indicates that he consented to his colleague listening with him.' Someone else said, 'It is worthless.' The expert Abū Bakr al-Khaṭīb related that the judge Ismā'īl b. Ḥishāq was consulted about this and he lowered his head in thought for a long time and then said to the defendant, 'If the record of his audit is recorded in your book in your handwriting, you are obliged to lend it to him. If his record of audit in your book is recorded in the hand of someone else, then you know best.'

Ḥāfiẓ b. Ghiyath is counted among the first generation of the followers of Abū ʿUmar. Abū 'Abd Allāh al-Zubayrī was one of the authors of the Shaffites. Ismā'īl b. Ḥishāq is the spokesman of the Malikites and their authority. Their statements back one another up in that matter and the upshot of them is that the owner of a book which contains with his acknowledgement the audit of someone else is compelled to lend the book to that person. Originally, the reason for this was not evident to me. Then I reasoned that the owner's recording the man's name in the book is equivalent to having testimony in his favor in his possession, so he has to produce on the basis of the substance of the testimony, even if it involves expending his own property. Similarly, the bearer of testimony in court is compelled to produce it, even if he has to put himself out by running to the court to do so. Knowledge belongs to God (He is blessed and exalted).

When the student copies a book, he should transfer the record of his audit to his copy only after a satisfactory collation. Likewise, one should not transfer a
list of auditors to any copy of a book until the book is collated in a satisfactory manner with the copy which was actually heard or record the list of auditors in the copy automatically at the time of the audition. That way no one will be misled by the uncollated copy. This holds unless it is made clear that the copy is uncollated during the transfer of the record of audition and upon the inscribing it. God knows best.

Many of the matters relevant to this topic have already been discussed in the previous two Categories. Some people are excessively strict in relating hadith and others are excessively lax. One example of strictness is the doctrine of those who say, “A hadith may not be cited as a proof unless the transmitter relates from his memory and recollection.” That is related from Malik and Abû Hânîfa (God be pleased with them). Abû Bakr al-Ŝaydâlîn al-Marwazî was a Shâfi'î who subscribed to this view. Another excessively strict doctrine is that of those who permit a scholar to rely on his book when transmitting, but would not view the relation from it as valid, if he had lent it out or let it out of his possession, on account of its absence from him.

We have already related the views of those who tolerate laxity and the refutation of them in the course of the preceding explication of the means of receiving and taking upon hadith. One group of lax transmitters are those who hear certain compositions and are remiss to the extent that, when they grow old and come to be needed, ignorance and greed lead them to relate the texts from purchased or borrowed copies which are unsound and have not been collated. The expert Abû ʻAbd Allâh al-ʻHâkim included those people in the ranks of discredited transmitters. He said, “They mistakenly believe that they are truthful in their relation. This happens often among people. Certain leading scholars and people known for their piety practice it.”

ʻAbd Allâh b. Laḥlîn al-Misârî was a lax transmitter. Despite his augustness, citing his relations as proofs was rejected on account of his laxity. It was said that Ţahâb b. Ťâṣîn saw a group of people who had a personal

1 Abû Bakr Muḥammad b. Dâwîd al-Ŝaydâlîn al-Dâwîdî (fl. sixth/seventh century) was known exclusively for his commentary on Mażâr’s Mubâkhar, Sukkî, Tabâqîn, 4:148-9.
2 The fear was that, while the book was out of the transmitter’s possession, it would be surreptitiously altered and he would not be able to detect the changes since he had not memorized the text; al-Khâṣîb ar-Râghîbî, Kifāya, 227; al-Qâdî ʻIyâd, Ihkâm, 136.
3 Madîkîn, 60 (Arabic), 39-40 (English).
4 Abû ʻAbd Allâh al-Ŝâhîn ʻAbd Allâh b. Laḥlîn al-Misârî (97/715-174/790) served as a judge in Egypt and was a prolific transmitter, although, as the passage indicates, his reliability was questioned; Seğîn, G: 4, 1:54.
5 Abû Zakârîya ʻAbd Allâh b. Ťâṣîn al-Đâbî (144/761-208/823) was a student of a number of popular transmitters and died in Egypt; Dîshâbî, Sûrûn, 18:127-30.

65 See Ŧabâhî, Tahârîn, 2:161.
collection of ḥadith (ṣaḥīḥ) which they heard from Ibn Laḥlāṭa. He examined the text and not a single ḥadith in it belonged to Ibn Laḥlāṭa. He went to Ibn Laḥlāṭa and told him that. He said, "What can I do? They bring a book and say, 'This contains your ḥadith,' so I transmit it to them. Something similar occurs among the teachers of our day. A student brings a personal collection or a book to a teacher and says, "This is your relation." Then the teacher lets him recite it to him, trusting him blindly, without undertaking any investigation to ascertain the truth of the ascription.

The correct view is the one the majority adhere to and it is the middle path between excessive strictness and excessive negligence. When a transmitter meets the stipulations which were explicated above for receiving and taking up ḥadith and he collates his book and fixes his audition in the fashion described above, it is permissible for him to transmit from it. This holds even if he had lent his book to someone and it was out of his possession, when it is probable that the book is free from alteration and changes. In particular, this is true when the transmitter is one of those who for the most part would recognize whether the text had been altered or changed. That is because in the field of the relation of ḥadith, we depend on likelihood. When this obtains, it is enough and nothing more than this is stipulated. God knows best.

Some Subsidiary Issues

1. When the transmitter is blind and did not memorize his ḥadith from the mouth of the teacher who transmitted to him, but instead sought the aid of some trustworthy people to make precise his audition and commit the book to memory and in transmitting the text asked for their help in the recitation of the book to him: his relation is sound when he takes care in that regard to the best of his ability, so that the likelihood is that there is no alteration. However, he is more liable to be challenged or forbidden from something like this than a person who can see. However, the expert al-Khaṭbī said, "Audition from a sighted, illiterate person who did not memorize from the transmitter the ḥadith be heard from him — rather it was written down for him — is the same as audition from a blind person who did not memorize his ḥadith from the transmitter. Some scholars have forbidden it and some have permitted it." God knows best.

2. When a student hears a book and then wants to relate it from a copy of the text which does not contain a record of his audition and was not collated with the copy he heard, although his teacher gave audition from this copy to others: it is not licit for him to relate from that copy. The authority and jurist Abū Naṣr b. al-Ḥabīb stated this unequivocally in something of his we read. In the same way, if the copy contained the record of his teacher's audition or a reliable person related from it from his teacher, it would still not be permissible for the student to relate from it, relying merely on that, since he would not be certain that it did not contain additions not present in the copy which he heard. I found that al-Khaṭbī has related corroboration of this from most of the scholars of ḥadith. He stated that when the student finds the text of the transmitter and the student's audition is not recorded in it or he finds a copy written from his teacher the authenticity of which he has no quarms about, the generality of the scholars of ḥadith forbid him to transmit from it. On the other hand, it is said that Ayyūb al-Sakhāyīnī and Muḥammad b. Bakr al-Burānī allowed it.8

That holds true unless the student has a global license (ṣaḥīḥ ... ṣamma) or something similar from his teacher for the material he relates. In this case it is permissible for him to relate from that copy, since it is nothing more than the relation of those additions [which may be found in the copy of the text the student wants to use] under the term "He informed us" or "He transmitted to me" by virtue of the license without an explanation that the additions are transmitted by license. That is a minor matter, the like of which may be tolerated. Indeed, we related above that licensing is necessary for every audition so that the words and passages which were omitted due to inattention or for some other reason may be transmitted by virtue of the license, even if they were not actually spoken.7

If the copy of the text [which the student wants to use] instead contains the record of the audition of his teacher's teacher — or it was heard from the teacher of his teacher or related from the teacher of his teacher: in that case to relate from it the student should have a comprehensive license (ṣaḥīḥ šamāla) from his teacher and his teacher should have a comprehensive license from his teacher. This is a good facilitation which God — and praise belongs to Him — led us to and the need for it is very pressing in our time. God knows best.

3. When someone who has memorized a text finds in his book something in conflict with what he memorized, the matter is examined. If he memorized the text from that book, let him go back to what is in his book. If he memorized it from the mouth of the transmitter, let him rely on his memory rather than on what is in his book, when he has no doubts about his recollection of it. It is a good idea for him to mention the two versions in his relation, saying, "My recollection is such and such and in my book it is such and such." That is what Shu'ba and others did. Likewise, when another person who memorized the text contradicts him regarding what he memorized, let him say, "My recollection is such and such and X said for it such and such," or "someone else said such and such for it," or some other phrase like that. That is what Sulaymān al-Thawri and others did. God knows best.

8 Kifāya, 257.
9 See above, p. 106.
4. When a transmitter finds a record of his audition in his book and he does not remember having heard it: it is reported that Abū Hanīfa (God bless him) and some of the followers of Shāfi‘ī (God bless him) did not permit the transmitter to relate the book. The doctrine of Shāfi‘ī and most of his followers, Abū Yūsuf and Muḥammad is that he is permitted to transmit it. This disagreement ought to be addressed in the light of the disagreement just treated above over the permissibility of the transmitter relying on his book to retain (ṣāḥib) what he heard. Retaining the text used in the audition is like retaining the material actually heard. The correct view and that of the majority of the scholars of Ḥadīth is to permit reliance on a well-guarded book to retain the material heard. Thus, the transmitter is permitted to relate the contents, even if he does not recall each and every Ḥadīth in it. So let that be true, if the following condition is met: the record of audition must be in his handwriting or in the handwriting of someone he has confidence in and the book must be well guarded to the extent that it is likely to be free from the touch of forgery and alteration, in the fashion previously described for that. This applies when he has no doubts about it10 and has no qualms regarding its correctness. If he does have doubts about it, reliance on the book is not permitted. God knows best.

5. When the student wants to relate what he has heard in paraphrase rather than verbatim: if he is not a scholar who is knowledgeable in words and what they mean, familiar with what changes their sense and in possession of insight into the shades of difference between them, there is no disagreement that he is not permitted to do that. He should relate what he heard only in the same terms in which he heard it, without any alteration. The permissibility of this, if he is a scholar who is knowledgeable in these matters, is one of the things the pious forebears, the scholars of Ḥadīth, and the greatest authorities in practical and theoretical law have disagreed about. Some of the transmitters of Ḥadīth, certain Shāfi‘ī experts in positive and theoretical law and others permitted it. Some of them forbade it for the Ḥadīth of the Messenger of God (Peace be upon him) and allowed it for other material. The most correct view is to permit it for everything, if the transmitter knows what we described and states plainly that he is passing on the sense of the words which reached him, because that is what the affairs of the Companions and early forebears testify to. They often used to transmit a single

10 Abu Yusuf Ya‘qūb b. Bahrām al-Kūfī (113/731–182/798) was one of the most prominent students of the imam Abū Hanīfa and he served as the chief judge in Baghdad, EF, 1:164–5; Sengū, G/S, 1:419–21.

11 Abū ‘Abd Allāh Muḥammad b. al-Hassan al-Shaybānī (132/750–189/905) was, like Abū Yūsuf, one of the most prominent early Ḥanafīs. His writings form the foundation of Ḥanafī law, EF, 9:392–4; Sengū, G/S, 1:421–33.

12 Sirāj al-Dīn al-Bulgārī writes that the antecedent of this pronoun may be either “the record of the audition” (ṣa‘īd) or “the touch of forgery and alteration” (ṣāḥib al-aṣar wa-l-taṣfiya sāḥib).

13 Abu ‘l-Dardā‘ al-Aṣmā‘ī al-Kūfī (the rest of his name is disputed) was an important Companion of the Prophet who died in Damascus around 32/653; Dhuhabī, Siyar, 2:235–36.

14 Firāḍ, 251.
even if transmission by paraphrasing is not permitted, because under these circumstances the part he omits [and the part which he relates] is tantamount to two separate reports on two matters, neither dependant on the other.

This applies if the transmitter's stature is so elevated that an accusation will not be lodged against him for transmitting it first completely and then in a shortened form or for transmitting it first in shortened form and then completely. If his stature is not so elevated, the expert al-Khaṭīb has said that whoever relates a ḥadīth in its complete form and is afraid that if he relates it another time with an omission he will be accused of having the first time added something he had not heard or of having the second time forgotten the rest of the hadīth on account of his lack of precision and his propensity to err, must banish this suspicion from himself. The authoritative jurist Abu ʿl-Fath Sulaym b. Ayyūb al-Razi said that this constitutes an excuse to omit and conceal the addition for whoever relates part of a report and then wants to relate it completely, if he is one of those who will be accused of having added something to his hadīth. In my opinion, someone like this should not, from the start, relate hadīth incompletely, if he has been enjoined to give it completely. This is because if he initially relates it incompletely, he excludes the rest of it from being cited as a proof. He ends up oscillating between not relating it at all, thereby forfeiting it entirely, and relating it and being accused of putting a false addition in it for doing so, thereby wasting any benefit from it because of the destruction of its value as a proof. Knowledge belongs to God (He is exalted).

If an author breaks up the text of a single hadīth and distributes its parts under various legal topics in his book, it is closer to being permitted and further from being forbidden. Indeed, Malik, Bukhārī and more than one of the other authorities in hadīth did that, although it is not completely unparsable. God knows best.

8. A transmitter should not relate his hadīth through the recitation of someone prone to grammatical mistakes and misreading. We heard that al-Nāḍr b. Shumayl4 (God be pleased with him) said, “Originally these hadīth came in good Arabic.” Abu Bakr4 or Abu ʿl-Fath or Abu ʿl-Qasim b. Abī ʿl-Maʿālit al-Furūwī informed us by recitation to him. He said, My great-grandfather, the authority Abū ʿAbd Allāh Muḥammad b. al-Fadl al-Furūwī informed us. He said, Abu ʿl-Husayn Abū ʿAbd al-Ghaffār b. Muḥammad b. al-Furūjī4 informed us. He said, The authority

55 Kāfira, 193.

4 Abu ʿl-Husayn al-Naḍr b. Shumayl al-Mazini was born in Marv around 122/740. As a boy, he traveled to al-Baqra with his father and studied under the great grammarian Khalīl b. Mānūd. He later returned to Marv, where he served as judge. He died there either on the last day of the year 203/819 or near the beginning of 204. Sargīn, G.45, 8,59.

43 Abū ʿAbd Allāh Muḥammad b. al-Fadl al-Furūwī (ca. 441/1049-530/1136) was a famous transmitter of several major hadīth collections; Dhahabī, Sīyar, 19;65–19.

48 Abu ʿl-Husayn Abū ʿAbd al-Ghaffār b. Muḥammad b. al-Furūjī (ca. 350/961-448/1056) was one of the great hadīth transmitters of his generation; Dhahabī, Sīyar, 18;19–21.

19 Abū Jaʿfar Muḥammad b. Muʿādh al-Harawi was a student of Abī Dāwūd al-Sinjī. He died in 316/928 at over ninety years of age; Dhahabī, Sīyar, 14;484–5.

20 Abī Dāwūd Sulaymān b. Muḥammad al-Sinjī (d. 257/871) is described as a litterateur and poet; Ibn al-ʿΑṭīr, Lāḥīj, 2;147.


22 Abū ʿΑḥmad Abī ʿAli Allāh b. Sākhbara al-ʿΑṣrī was a Ḥanfi transmitter of hadīth who was born during the lifetime of the Prophet and died during the governance of Uṣayn Allāh b. Ẓiyārid; Dhahabī, Sīyar, 4;133–4.

Abū Sulaymān ʿAbd b. Muḥammad al-Khaṭīb informed us. He said, Muḥammad b. Muʿādh transmitted to me. He said, One of our teachers informed us from Abī Dāwūd al-Sinjī. He, I heard ʿΑṣma ʿAbd Allāh, saying, “The greatest fear I have for a student of hadīth – if he does not know grammar – is that he fall under the general designation of the statement of the Prophet (Peace be upon him), ‘Whoever ascribes a lie to me, let him take his seat in Hell,’ because the Prophet (Peace be upon him) did not make grammatical mistakes. Whenever you relate a hadīth from him and make a grammatical mistake in it, you ascribe a lie to him.” The student of hadīth has a duty to learn enough grammar and lexicography to avoid the shame and ignominy of grammatical mistakes and miswriting. We heard that Shuʿba said, “Whoever studies hadīth and does not comprehend the Arabic language is like someone who wears a burnous without a hood,” or however he put it. We heard that ʿΑḥmad b. Salama said, “Someone who studies hadīth and does not know grammar is like a donkey wearing a nosebag with no barley in it.” The way to avoid misreading is to take hadīth from the mouth of people possessing knowledge and accuracy. Whoever is deprived of that and instead takes and learns his hadīth from books is likely to corrupt the hadīth and is unable to keep from changing and misreading the text. God knows best.

9. When a grammatical mistake or an instance of misreading occurs during the relation of a hadīth: there is a disagreement over what to do. Some people used to hold the opinion that the student should relate it with the mistake, just as he heard it. The Followers Muḥammad b. ʿΑṣrāf Abī Allāh b. Sākhbara6 subordinated to that. This is an extreme manifestation of the doctrine of adhering to the exact wording of the recitation and forbidding transmission by paraphrasing. Others recommend altering and correcting the mistake and relating it in its correct form. We heard that view from ʿΑwzāʿī, Ibn al-ʿΑṭīr and others, and it is the doctrine of beginning and advanced scholars of hadīth. Advocating this for a grammatical mistake which does not change the sense of the hadīth and similar cases is a necessity according to the doctrine which permits the transmission of hadīth by paraphrase, and, as just stated, this is the doctrine of the majority.

The right way to correct and change a mistake found in both a book and the original it was copied from is to leave it and report what occurs in the original as
it is while placing a "larch" (dabba) on it and indicating the correct form on the margin of the page. That is the most useful and least damaging way.

We heard that one scholar of hadith was seen in a dream. Something passed from his lips — or from his tongue. He was asked about this and said, "It is a word from a hadith of the Messenger of God (peace be upon him and his family) which I changed on my own volition, so this was done to me."

Often we see that something which many scholars mistakenly believe to be an error — and they often change it — is correct with sound justification, even if it is obscure and may be considered peculiar. This occurs in particular in what they consider an error from the standpoint of good Arabic. That is because of the numerousness of the dialects and the sub-dialects of the Arabs. We heard that 'Abd Allah b. Ahmad b. Hanbal said, "When my father came across a grievous error, he corrected it. When it was a minor mistake, he left it, and said, "So said the teacher."" One of our teachers informed me of something to the same effect from someone who informed him from the expert al-Qadî 'Iyâd. In a word, the practice to which most of the teachers of old adhered was to transmit the relation as it reached them, without changing it in their books. Even the variant readings of the Qur'an continue to be transmitted in books without being considered anomalous — in conflict with the universally accepted recitation. Some of that also occurs in the two Sahîhs, the Musnad and other works.

However, the more knowledgeable teachers point out these errors in these books when the text is heard and recited in the margins of the books while still reporting what is in the texts in the way it reached them.

Some, including Abu 'l-Wahid Hisâm b. Ahmad al-Kinâni al-Waqasî,† had the audacity to alter books and correct them. Because of his wide reading, his mastery of several disciplines, his penetrating intellect and his keen intelligence, he ventured to make many corrections and he did make mistakes in some instances. The same is true of others who did the same thing.

The best way is to forbid all alteration and correction so that someone who is not competent will not venture to do it. The first way [that is, reproducing the text as found] accompanied by a clarification is the safest. So at the audition, the

transmitter should give the mistake as it occurs and then state the form which is correct, either with regard to sound Arabic usage or with regard to transmission. If he wants, he may recite it first in its correct form and then say, "Such and such is the way it is found with our teacher" or "in our relation," or "by way of X." In fact this is better than the first way, since the transmitter does not ascribe to the Messenger of God (peace be upon him) something he did not say.

The most appropriate procedure to rely on when making a correction is to mend the false form with something found in other hadith. Whoever does this is safe from ascribing to the Messenger of God (peace be upon him) something which he did not say. God knows best.

10. When the correction consists of adding something that was omitted: if the addition is such that it does not change the sense, then it is treated in the fashion described above. That is similar to what is related from Malik (God be pleased with him). He was asked, "Do you view as valid a hadith of the Prophet (peace be upon him) to which the letters wâw and alif were added, while the meaning remains the same?" He said, "I hope that it will be considered insignificant."

If the correction by the addition entails a meaning different from what occurs in the text, the well-established verdict is that the transmitter to mention the wording as it appears in the text coupled with a notification of what was omitted. This way he will be safe both from the shame of the error [that is, the omission] and from ascribing to his teacher something he did not say. Abû Nu'aym al-Fadl b. Dukayn transmitted a hadith from a teacher of his in which he said, "From Buhayna." Then Abû Nu'ayn said, "He really is Ibn Buhayna," but my teacher said, "Buhayna." When someone below the occurrence of the omitted material is known to have provided the material and someone else later on omitted it, it is treated differently. The student should supply the omission in its correct place in the book with the phrase "that is" (wa'âni). This is what the expert al-Khatib did when he related from Abû 'Umar b. Mahdi from al-Qadî al-Mahâjîmî, with his isnâd, from 'Urwa from 'Amra bint Abî al-Rahmân — that is from Âshâ — that she said, "The Messenger of God (peace be upon him) used to put his head near to me so that I could comb it." Al-Khatib said, "The text of Ibn Mahdi read from 'Amra that she said, "The Messenger of God (peace be upon him) used to put his head near to me . . ."" So we added to it the mention of

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23 See below, pp. 118–9.
24 The Prophet addressed the various Arab tribes in their own dialect; al-Qâdi 'Iyâd, Durr, 183.
25 'Abd Allah (213/828–290/903), unlike his older brother al-Qâdi, remained in Baghdad with their father, the smâr Abûsîd; Dâhâbî, Siyâr, 13:518–26.
26 Itsât, 185–6.
27 Abu 'l-Wahid Hisâm b. Ahmad al-Kinâni al-Waqasî (408/1017–489/1096) was an Andalasian scholar praised for his expertise in a number of disciplines; Dâhâbî, Siyâr, 19:134–6.
When the transmitter has a hadith from two or more teachers and there is a difference in the wording between their relations, but the meaning is the same: he may join them together in a single isnād and then quote the hadith according to the particular wording of one of them and say, "X and Y informed us and the wording is that of X," or "this is the wording of X." —"he" or "they" —"said, 'Z informed us,'" or other similar expressions. Muslim — the author of the Sahih — also has another good expression for this. He says for instance, "Abū Bakr b. Abī Shaybān" and Abū Sa'īd al-Asba'ī transmitted to us, both of them from Abū Khalīl. Abū Bakr said, "Abū Khalīl al-Ahmār transmitted to us from al-A'ūmash," and he quoted the hadith. His repetition of the reference to them in particular is an indication that the wording given was his.

When the transmitter does not single out one of the two teachers for mention, but instead takes portions from each and says, "X and Y informed us and they were similar in wording. They said, 'Z informed us:'" this is not forbidden, according to the doctrine which permits relation by paraphrase. The statement of Abū Dāwūd — author of the Sunan — "Musaddad" and Abū Tawba transmitted the sense to us. They said, "Abū 'l-Awāṣī transmitted to us," and things similar to this in his book may be instances of the first method; that is, the wording is that of Musaddad and Abū Tawba agrees with him in sense. It is also possible that they are instances of the second procedure; that is, Abū Dāwūd has not given the wording of one of them in particular but rather he has related it by paraphrase from both of them. This possibility is more likely when he says, "Abū Bakr b. Ishāqīn and Mūsā b. Ismā'īl" transmitted to us. The sense is the same. They said, "Abūsī transmitted to us." When the transmitter combines a number of teachers who have given the same sense and the text he produces is not the wording of every one of them and he says nothing to clarify that: this is something which Bukhārī and others...
condemn. There is nothing wrong with it under the doctrine which permits transmission by paraphrase.

When the transmitter hears a composition from a number of teachers and then collates his copy with the text of just one of them and he wants to mention all of them in the isnād and say, “The wording is that of X,” as stated above: on the one hand, this may be permitted like the first case because he had heard the text which he gave with that particular reading from the person to whom he attributed the wording. On the other hand, it may be forbidden because he possesses no knowledge of the particulars of the relations of the others which would enable him to provide information about those relations. This is in contrast to the earlier case where the transmitter was acquainted with the relations of the teachers other than the one whom he ascribed the wording to and he knew that they agreed in regard to the sense, and so provided that information. God knows best.

12. The student should not add to the lineage (nasab) his teacher has given for the men above him in the isnād, interpolating the additional information into the isnād without any distinguishing break. If he makes a break, saying something like, “He is the son of X, from such-and-such place” (huwa ibn fulān al-fulān), or, “That is the son of X” (ya'allū ibn fulān); it is permissible. The hadith expert and authority Abū Bakr al-Barqūqī (God bless him) said in his Kitāb al-Luqat (Book of Gleanings), with his isnād, that Abī b. Abī Madīnī said, “When a man transmits to you and says, ‘X transmitted to us,’ without providing the rest of his lineage, I think it best that you provide the rest of it. So say, ‘He transmitted to us that (annā) X b. Y transmitted to him.’” God knows best.

What if his teacher gave the lineage or description of his teacher at the beginning of the book or his personal hadith collection with the first hadith from him, and for the later hadith restricts himself to giving the name of his teacher or just part of his lineage? For instance, I relate a personal hadith collection from Furāwī and I say at the beginning of it, “Abū Bakr Manṣūr b. Abī al-Munṣīm b. Abī Allāh al-Furāwī informed us. He said, ‘X informed us,’” and I say for the rest of his hadith, “Manṣūr informed us, Manṣūr informed us.” Is it licit for someone who heard that collection from me to relate separately from me some of the hadith after the first hadith and say for each of them, “X [that is, Ibn al-Salāḥ] informed us. He said, ‘Abū Bakr Manṣūr b. Abī al-Munṣīm b. Abī Allāh al-Furāwī informed us.’ He said, ‘X informed us,’” on the basis of my having mentioned Furāwī’s full name at the beginning, even if I did not give it for each of the hadith? The expert al-Khaṭīb has related that most scholars permitted this and for some the preferred way was to say, “That is the son of X.”

44 In Arabic, as in English, the nominizing particle indicates that the material which follows is not a direct quotation. By using it the transmitter shows that he is paraphrasing the words of his teacher and thus avoids falsely ascribing to him something that he did not actually say.

He related, with his isnād, that Abīnā al-Hanbal (God be pleased with him) said, “That is the son of X,” when the name of a man appeared without the lineage. Al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī related from Barqūqī, with the latter’s isnād, the statement we mentioned above from Abī b. Abī Madīnī. Then he said that he saw Abī Bakr Abīnā al-Hanbal— the sojourner in Nishapur, and he was one of the excellent experts and a pious and religious man — doing the same. Al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī asked him about many of the hadith he related to him, saying for them, “Abī Amir b. Hamādī informed us that Abī Yafā Abīnā b. Abī b. Abī al-Muṣāfi al-Mawṣili informed them,” “Abī Bakr b. Abī Muqīr informed us that Abī Ḥaqq b. Abīnā Abīnā b. Nafīb transmitted to them,” and, “The expert Abū Aḥmad b. ‘Abd informed us that Abī Yūsuf Muhammad b. Sufyān al-Saffari informed them.” He replied to him that they were hadith which he had heard by recitation to his teachers from a number of texts at the beginning of which the teachers gave the lineages of those who transmitted the hadith to them and the teachers limited themselves to mentioning just the name of the transmitters for the remainder of the hadith. Al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī said, “Others used to say in cases like this, ‘X informed us. He said, ‘Y informed us’ — he is the son of Z,’ and then quote his lineage to its end. This is what I think it is preferable because some transmitters used to say for the material licensed to them, ‘X informed us that Y transmitted to them.’”

All of these were permissible and the best is to say, “He is the son of X,” or “That is the son of X.” Next best is to say, “That X b. Y.” The third best is to provide the exact form of the name given at the beginning of the volume without any break. God knows best.

13. In writing, it has become customary to omit “He said” (gāla) and the like between the transmitters of an isnād. Nevertheless, “He said” must be pronounced out loud when the text is recited. One of the things like this which is neglected is when “It was recited to X. Y informed you” appears in the course of an isnād. The person reciting should say for it, “It was recited to X. Y informed you, was said to him.” “It was recited to X. Y informed you,” is sometimes found. “He said” should be included in this. What should be said is, “It was recited to X. He said, ‘Y transmitted to us.’” Indeed, this appears clearly written in some of the texts which have been related to us. When the word “He said” is repeated — as in the book of Bukhārī, “Salāb b. Ḥāyyān transmitted to us. He said, ‘Abī al-Shaḥīb said’” (kaddathāna Salāb ibn Ḥāyyān qaṣa ṣaḥa ṣaḥa Abī al-Shaḥīb) — they

45 Kifāya, 215.
46 Abī Bakr Abīnā b. Abī al-Islāhīn (347/958-428/1036), known as Ibn Manṣūrī, composed a number of books based on the major hadith collections; Sajīn, G.A., 1:239.
48 I have not succeeded in finding any information about this individual.
49 Kifāya, 215-16.
50 Kifāya, 216.
omit one of them in writing. Nevertheless, the reciter must pronounce both of them. God knows best.

14. The famous *nuskhās* containing a number of hadith with a single isnād, like the *nuskhā* of Hammām b. Munabbih from Abū Hurayra, by the relation of Ḥabīb ibn Muṣṭafā from Ḥabbās b. Ḥabbās, is not included in any isnād but is of such high authority. Some people mention the isnād anew at the beginning of each hadith from these works. That is found in many old texts and it is the safest course. Others are satisfied to mention the isnād at the beginning of the text with the first isnād or in the beginning of each of the sessions of audition, subsuming the rest of the hadith under it and saying for each succeeding hadith, “With the same isnād” (*bi-l-isnād*), or “With it” (*bi-ḥt*). That is the more common and predominant way.

When someone who heard the hadith this way wants to separate those hadith and relate each with the isnād given at the beginning of the text: he is allowed to do this in the view of most people, including Wākʿī b. al-Jarrāḥ, Yahyā b. Maʿṣūm and Abū Bakr al-Isḥāqī. This is because all of the hadith are attached to the first isnād so the isnād given in the beginning of the text is as good as mentioned for each hadith. It is tantamount to dividing the text of a single hadith between several subject headings under the isnād given at the beginning of the hadith. (God knows best.) Some transmitters of hadith reject presenting individually any of those hadith subsumed under an isnād mentioned in the beginning and regard it as misrepresentation. One scholar of hadith asked the professor Abū Ḥusayn al-Isfahānī – the expert in practical and theoretical law – about this and he said that it is impermissible.

The person who heard something this way should also follow the same procedure. The correct way is for him to explain and relate the hadith as it came. Muslim did this in his *Ṣaḥīḥ* for the *ṣaḥīḥ* of Hammām b. Munabbih, saying, “Muḥammad b. Ṭāfī” informed us. He said, Abū al-Razzāq informed us. He said, Maʿṣūm told us from Hammām b. Munabbih. He said, “This is what Abū Hurayra transmitted to us,” and he mentioned some of the hadith, including “The Messenger of God (Peace be upon him) said, “The lowest seat of one of you in heaven is that He says to him, ‘Hope for something,’” and so forth.” Many compilers did that. God knows best.

15. When the transmitter gives the text of a hadith – or the text of the hadith and part of the isnād – before the isnād and then gives the isnād immediately after:

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51 *Nuskhā* and *ṣaḥīḥ* appear to have been more or less interchangeable terms for the primitive hadith collections bearing a single isnād; see M.M. Azzam, *Studies in Early Hadith Literature* (Indianapolis, 1978), 29–30.
52 This famous *nuskhā* (or ṣaḥīḥ) was the hadith collection of Abū ʿUqba Hammām b. Munabbih al-Ṣanʿānī (ca. 40/660-c. 101/719); see ʿAbd al-Majīd, *ṣaḥīḥ* (1:136).
53 *ṣaḥīḥ* of Abū ʿUqba, 1:114 (K. al-ʿIrāqī, B. Maʿṣūmī, tāṭa ṣaḥīḥ al-rūʿyā).

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for instance, the transmitter says, “The Messenger of God (Peace be upon him) said such and such,” or “ʿAbd b. Ḥabīb related from Jābir from the Messenger of God (Peace be upon him) such and such,” and he then says, “X informed us of it. He said, ‘Y informed us,’” and gives the isnād to the point where it connects with what he gave before.

That is related to the case where the student places the isnād [which his teacher gave after the text] before the text so that with the isnād he makes the text “supported” rather than “loose.”

It has been reported that one of the earlier scholars of hadith permitted someone who heard a hadith from his teacher in this way to put the entire isnād in front of the text, putting the pieces together in that fashion, if he were to desire that.

It is natural that there is a difference of opinion over this like the one over placing part of the text ahead of another part of the text. Indeed, al-Khallīb related that some people forbid that on the basis of the doctrine that relation by paraphrase is impermissible and that other people permit it on the basis of the doctrine that relation by paraphrasing is permissible – for there is no difference in that regard between [rearranging the elements of the text of a hadith and moving the isnād given after the text in front of the text]. God knows best.

The practice of some of scholars of repeating the isnād at the end of the book or volume after giving it in the beginning: this does not stir up the controversy discussed above in connection with giving the isnād individually with each hadith when it is related, because here the isnād is not connected with each one of them. Rather, it serves as a confirmation and safety measure [in case the first page of the text becomes lost] and enjoys a full authorization of the highest type. God knows best.

16. When a transmitter relates a hadith with an isnād, follows it with another isnād and says at the end of that isnād, “A text like the previous one” (*muḥtāḥā*): if his student wants to give only the second isnād and provide the wording of the hadith given after the first isnād, this is most obviously forbidden. We heard that the expert Abū Bakr al-Khallīb (God bless him) said, “Shuʿba used not to permit that. Some scholars said that that is permitted, when it is known that the original transmitter was accurate, mindful and believed in recognizing differences in wording and comparing texts letter for letter. If he is not known to be so, it is not permitted. More than one scholar, when they related something like that, used
to give the isnād and say, ‘A hadith like the previous one. Its text is such and such,’ and then provide the text. This also applies when the transmitter says, ‘A text similar to the previous one’ (nawṣuṣa). This is the procedure I prefer.56

Abū Ahmad Abū al-Walāḥa b. Abū Mansūr Abū al-Baghdādi57, the leading teacher in Baghdad—informed us through my recitation to him there. He said, My father (God bless him) informed me. He said, Abū Muhammad Abū Allah b. Muhammad al-Sarifīnī informed us. He said, Abū ‘l-Qāsim Abū Allāh b. Muhammad al-Baghdāti transmitted to us. He said, ‘Amr b. Muhammad al-Nāqīd transmitted to us. He said, Waki’ transmitted to us. He said, Shuţba said, ‘X from Y: A text like the previous one’ does not work.’ Waki’ also said, ‘Suftan al-Thawri said, ‘It does work.’58

When a transmitter says, ‘a text similar to the previous one,’ in this situation, some regard it as if he had said, ‘a text like the previous one.’ It was communicated to us, with an isnād, that Waki’ said, ‘Suftan [al-Thawri] said, ‘When a transmitter says, ‘a text similar to the previous one,’ it is a valid hadith,’ while Shuţba said, ‘a text similar to the previous one’ contains doubt.”59 Yahyā b. Māţfīn permitted what we stated above in regard to ‘a text like the previous one’ and did not permit it for ‘a text similar to the previous one.’ Abū al-Khaṭāb said, ‘This statement is in accordance with the doctrine of those who do not permit relation by paraphrase. According to the doctrine of those who permit it, there is no difference between ‘a text like the previous one’ and ‘a text similar to the previous one.’60

This has a connection to what we heard from Mas‘ūd b. Abū al-Sījī’ī to the effect that he heard the expert Abū ‘Abd Allah al-Hakīm saying, ‘One of the forms of accuracy and exactitude which is incumbent on a

56 Kijjā, 212.
57 Dī‘r al-Dīn Abū Ahmad Abū al-Walāḥa b. Abū Mansūr Abū al-Baghdādi (519/1125–607/1210), known as Ibn Sukaysa, was, as indicated in the passage, a teacher of Ibn al-Salih. During his lifetime, he was famed for his elevated hadith transmissions and his piety; Dī‘r, Siyar, 21:502–5.
58 Abū Muhammad Abū Allah b. Muhammad al-Sarīfīnī (384/994–640/1076) was a preacher in the mosque of Sarīfīnī, a village near Baghdad. Many students sought him out as a transmitter of hadith; Dī‘r, Siyar, 18:330–2.
60 Abū ‘l-Qāsim al-Baghwī (214/829–317/929), also known as ‘Abn bint [Abūd b.] Matī’, was a prominent transmitter of hadith in Baghdad. He was a nephew of ‘Abn b. Abū al-Aṣṣ al-Makki; Seerīn, Gā‘r, 1:173.
62 Kijjā, 212.
63 Kijjā, 213–4.
64 Kijjā, 213.
65 Abū Sa‘īd Mas‘ūd b. Abū al-Sījī’ī was a transmitter of hadith praised for his accuracy who died in Nīshāpur in 477/1084; Dī‘r, Siyar, 18:532–5.

Hadhithologist (ḥadīth) is to differentiate between using ‘a text like the previous one’ and ‘a text similar to the previous one.’ It is not licit for him to say ‘a text like the previous one,’ until he learns that the texts are identical in wording while he may say ‘a text similar to the previous one,’ if they have the same sense. God knows best.

17. When a teacher gives the isnād of a hadith, provides only the beginning of its text and then says, ‘And he [that is, his teacher] mentioned [the rest of] the hadith’ (wa-dhakara ‘l-ḥadīth or, ‘And he mentioned the hadith in its entirety’) (wa-dhakara ‘l-ḥadīth bi-fa‘lūbi): if his student wants to relate the hadith from him in its full and complete form, it is more properly forbidden than the aforementioned case of the transmitter saying, ‘a text like the previous one,’ or, ‘a text similar to the previous one.’ The correct course is to make the situation clear by fully recounting what his teacher said, saying, ‘He said, ‘And he gave the hadith in its entirety,’ and then say, ‘The hadith in its entirety is such and such,’ quoting it to its end. One of the scholars of hadith asked Abū Ishāq ‘Ībrahim b. Muḥammad al-Shābī [al-Isfārāyīn]—the prominent expert in positive law and legal theory—about this. He said, ‘It is not permissible for someone who heard a hadith in this fashion to relate the hadith with its full wording.’ Abū Bakr al-Barqī, the expert hadith and jurist, asked the hadith expert and jurist Abū Bakr al-Isnāfī about someone who recited the isnād of a hadith to a teacher and then said, ‘And he mentioned [the rest of] the hadith.’ Is it permissible for him to relate the entire hadith? He said, ‘When the transmitter and the reciter know that hadith, I hope it will be permitted. The evidence is best that he would give it accurately.’ When we permit this, the reasoning is that the portion which the teacher did not mention is being transmitted by licensing. However, it is a certain and strong licensing in many respects. Therefore, in combination with the audition of the beginning of the text, the student is permitted to insert the remainder of the text without a license being specifically pronounced for it. God knows best.

18. It is obvious that it is not permissible to change ‘from the Prophet’ (san ‘Nabī) to ‘from the Messenger of God’ (san Rasūl Allāh) (Peace be upon him), and the reverse is also true, even if transmission by paraphrase is permitted. In transmission by paraphrase, it is stipulated that the meaning [of the original wording and the paraphrased version] should not differ, but the meaning in this case is different. It is established that when ‘the Prophet’ was in a book and the transmitter said, ‘from the Messenger of God’ (Peace be upon him), Abū Allāh b. ‘Alī b. Ḥanbal saw his father strike out ‘the Prophet’ and write ‘from the Messenger of God’ (Peace be upon him). Abū Bakr al-Khaṭāb said, ‘This is unnecessary. ‘Alī preferred adhering to the wording of the transmitter. However, his doctrine actually was to allow people to change the terms.’66 Then

66 Kijjā, 244.
19. When the audition of a student is in some way defective: he must state this during his subsequent transmission of that material, and neglecting to do so is a form of misrepresentation. We have examples of this from the past. One of these is when the teacher transmits to the student from memory in the course of an informal session. In that case, let the transmitter say, "X transmitted to us as a part of an informal session" (haddathatā fī l-mudhākaraṣtān), or, "X transmitted to us in the course of an informal session" (haddathatā fī l-mudhākara). More than one of the earlier scholars used to do this. A number of experts, including ʿAbd al-Rahmān b. Mahdī and Abū Zurʿa b. al-Razāʿī, used to forbid that anything be taken from them in an informal session. We also heard that from Ibn al-Mubāirak and others. That is because of the laxity which prevails in an informal session, coupled with the fact that the human memory is treacherous. For this reason, a number of prominent experts, including Ahmad b. Ḥanbal (God be pleased with all of them), used their books to transmit the material they had memorized. God knows best.

20. When a hadith is from two men, one of whom is discredited – for instance, a hadith from Thābit b. Qunāt and Abū ʿAbd Allāh b. Ṭabarānī, omitting the discredited transmitter from the isnād and mentioning only the reliable one is not condoned. This is out of fear that the hadith contains something from the discredited transmitter which the reliable transmitter did not give. Ahmad b. Ḥanbal and later Abū Bakr al-Khaṭṭāb said something similar to this. Al-Khaṭṭāb said, "In cases like this, Muslim b. al-Ḥajjāj sometimes omitted the discredited

transmitter from the isnād, mentioning the reliable transmitter and then saying, 'And someone else' (wu-akhar), in allusion to the discredited transmitter. This declaration is valueless."

In the same way, when the hadith is from two reliable transmitters, the student should not omit one of them, because of the aforementioned possibility affecting it, even if in this case the danger posed by the omission is less. Refraining from the omission of a transmitter in these two scenarios is not the same as reframing from something absolutely forbidden, because the presumption is that the two relations do agree and the aforementioned possibility [that one transmission contains material not included in the other] is remote and unlikely. It is a kind of interpolation the intentional commission of which is not permitted, as was discussed above in the Category on the interpolated hadith. God knows best.

21. When the student hears one part of a hadith from one teacher and the other part from another, confounds them so that he is no longer able to distinguish between the two parts and ascribes the hadith to both of them, explaining that part of it is from one of them and part from the other: this is permissible.

Zuhrū did this in the Hadith of the Lie (ḥadīth al-jīhā) which he related from ʿUrwa, Ibn al-Misṣāṣ, ʿAlqama b. Waqqāṣ, al-Laythī, and ʿAbd Allāh b. ʿAbd Allāh b. ʿUthmān (God be pleased with her). He said, "All of them transmitted to me a portion of her hadith. They said, 'She said ...'"

The entire contents of that kind of hadith is to be treated as if the teacher had related it ambiguously from one of the two men, so that when one of them is discredited, it is not permissible to cite any part of the hadith. It is also impermissible for anyone after the mixing of the contents of the hadith to omit the mention of either of the two transmitters and relate the hadith solely from the other. Rather, it is necessary to mention them both and make a clear declaration that part of the hadith is from one of them and part from the other. God knows best.

66 Kiṣwā, 244.
67 This seems to be a reference to the transmitter Abu ʿl-Awsad Bahl b. Asad al-Bajī, who died in 197/813, Dhahabi, Siyar, 9:192.
68 Kiṣwā, 244–5.
70 Abū Zurʿa ʿAbd Allāh b. ʿAbd al-Karim al-Rāzī (200/815–206/878) was a prominent authority in hadith from the city of al-Rayy; Sezgin, G-45, 1:145.
71 Abū ʿIsāmī Abū b. Abī ʿAyyash Fayruzā was a Basra transmitter of ḥadith from the second/eighth century. He was the less reliable transmitter of this pair; Bakhtārī, al-Tārīkh al-kabīr, 1(1):454; Ibn Abī Ḥātim, Jārī, 1(1):295–6.
72 Kiṣwā, 378.
74 Abū ʿAbd Allāh ʿUbayd Allāh b. ʿAbd Allāh b. ʿUthmān al-Ḥadīth (d. 98/717) was a prominent legal scholar in Medina. Dhahabi, Siyar, 4:475–9.
Category 27

GUIDELINES FOR THE TRANSMITTER OF HADITH

(Ma'rifat adab al-muhaddith)

Some of these guidelines have already been treated where required in the previous Categories. The science of hadith is a noble science consistent with good morals and virtuous habits and incompatible with bad morals and shameful habits. It is one of the sciences of the hereafter and not of this world. Let whoever seeks to take up teaching hadith and lecturing on some of its sciences first make his intention sound and pure and cleanse his heart of earthly aims and their stains. Furthermore, let him be on guard against the affliction which comes from the love and heedlessness of rank.

There used to be disagreement over the age when it becomes suitable for a transmitter to take up teaching hadith and to be appointed to relate them. Our view is that, when the need arises for the hadith in his possession, it becomes desirable for him to take up relating and spreading them, no matter what his age is. We heard that the excellent judge Abu Mu'ammad b. Khalil [al-Ramahurmuzi] (God bless him) said, “On the basis of report and reflection, it seems correct to me that the appropriate age for a transmitter to begin teaching hadith is fifty years because that is the end of middle age and when physical maturity is realized. Sulaym b. Wathil said,

[I am] fifty years old, at the height of my powers.
The trickery of events has given me experience.

There is nothing wrong with his transmitting at forty because that is the threshold of maturity and the apogee of perfection. The Messenger of God (Peace be upon him) was informed of his mission when he was forty. At forty a person’s resolution and strength reach their peak and his intellect becomes abundant and his judgement is improved.” Al-Qadi‘yaj disagreed with Ibn Khalil over this and said, “How many of the early pious forebears and other transmitters never reached that age, dying before then, but still spread hadith and knowledge beyond calculation? Umar b. 'Abd al-'Aziz died before forty and Sa'id b. Jubayr did not reach fifty,

1 The famous poet Sulaym b. Wathil al-Riyyah was born before the advent of Islam and died around the year 40/661; Sezgin, G.A.S., 2:202-3.
2 Ramahurmuzi, Makaddah al-farid, 332-3.
3 Umar b. 'Abd al-'Aziz, sometimes referred to as Umar II, was the sole representative of the Umayyad Dynasty respected by later religious scholars. He ruled in Damascus from 99/717 until his death in 101/720 at about thirty-eight lunar years of age; EF, 3:977-9; Sezgin, G.A.S., 1:594.
4 Abu 'Abd Allah Sa'id b. Jubayr al-Ausafi was a follower and expert on Qur'anic commentary. He was born in 46/665 and executed by the Umayyad governor al-Hasan in 93/714; Sezgin, G.A.S., 1:28-9.
and the same is true of Ibrahim al-Nakha'i. Malik b. Anas conducted classes for the people in his early twenties—some say at seventeen years—and the people in his class were numerous, and this was while his own teachers were still alive. Likewise, Muhammad b. Idris al-Shafi'i taught at a young age and was appointed to do that. (God knows best.) What Ibn Khalid said is not objectionable. It should be understood that he said it regarding those who take up the transmission of hadith without the necessary proficiency in the science on their own impulse which prematurely came upon them before the age he mentioned. In that case, they should teach hadith only after attaining the age mentioned, for that is the time when there will probably be a need for their hadith. As for those whom they mentioned who transmitted before that, it is obvious that this was because of their precocious proficiency in this science. In combination with this early proficiency, the need for them to teach became manifest to them or they were asked to do so, either by an explicit request or through the concatenation of circumstances, so they came to transmit before the stipulated age.

The age a transmitter should desist from relating hadith is: it is the age when it is feared that he may be senile or doting and that he will confuse hadith and relate hadith which are not his own. People differ according to personal circumstances as to when they reach this age. Likewise, let the transmitter who goes blind and fears that hadith that are not his own will be imposed on him desist from transmitting. Ibn Khalid said, “What pleases me the most is that he desist at eighty, because that is the threshold of senility. However, if his mind remains firm and his judgement intact, and if he knows his hadith and still occupies himself with them, taking care to transmit them in expectation of a heavenly reward, I wish the best for him.” The reason for what he said is that in most cases the condition of an eighty-year-old has become weakened, and confusion and erring are to be feared from him, and this will not be detected in him until after he has confounded his hadith. This happened to more than one reliable transmitter, including Abû al-Razzāq and Sa'd b. Abî ʻAbīa. Many people have taught hadith after surpassing this age and good fortune aided them and well accompanied them. These include the Companions Anas b. Malik, Sahl b. Sa'd, and Abî Allah b. Abû Awf; as well as Malik b. Anas, al-Layth b. Sa'd, al-Sufyân b. Umayya and Abî b. al-Jâdî, among a large number of early and late scholars. Their number includes several who transmitted hadith after attaining the age of one hundred, including Abû al-Hasan b. ʻArafah. Abu ʻI-Qasim al-Baghwâti, Abî Isâq al-Hajyâmî” and the judge Abu ʻI-Tâyîb al-Tabâri (God be pleased with all of them). God knows best.

A transmitter should not transmit in the presence of someone more deserving of that than he. When Ibrahim al-Nakha'i and Shafi'i met, Ibrahim did not say anything. Someone added: “He disliked relating hadith in a city where there was a transmitter more deserving than he on account of age or some other reason.” We heard that Yahyâ b. Mu'min said, “When I transmit hadith in a city containing someone like Abû Mus'îr, my beard should be shaved off [that is, his status as a scholar should be revoked].” We also heard from him, “Whoever transmits hadith in a town containing someone more deserving to transmit than him is stupid.” When a transmitter is asked for something which he knows to be in the possession of someone else in his city or elsewhere with a more elevated isnaâd than his or an isnaâd preferable for some other reason, he should tell the student about that person and guide him to him. Giving good advice is part of religion.

The transmitter should not refrain from relating hadith to someone on account of that person having an impure motive for learning hadith, for it is to be hoped that he will obtain the necessary intention later on. We heard that Mu'min said, “People used to say, ‘Knowledge should be refrained to the man who seeks it for something other than the sake of God in order that knowledge be for God (He is great and exalted).’” On the contrary, let the transmitter eagerly spread his knowledge, striving for a rich reward. Some of the pious forebears used to attract people to their hadith, including Ubârwa b. al-Zubayr (God be pleased with them). God knows best.

Let the transmitter follow the example of Malik (God be pleased with him), about which Abu ʻI-Qasim al-Farîwâ[ that is, Abû Bakr or Abu ʻI-Fath Mansûr b. Abû al-Mun'im al-Sâ'îdî] informed us in Nishâpur. He said, Abu ʻI-Mâsîlî [Muhammad b. Isâmî lî al-Fâris transmitted to us. He said, The expert Abû Bakr [Abraham b. al-Husayn] the Bayhaqi informed us. He said, The expert Abû ʻAbd Allah al-Hâkimî informed us. He said, Isâmî lî Muhammad b. al-Fâlî b.

11 The collection of the hadith of Abû ʻAli al-Husayn b. ʻArafah (150767–257787), known as ʻIbn ʻAbî ʻArafah, was one of the most popular works during the Ayyubid era. At one point in his life he claimed to be 110 years old, although none of the birthdates or death dates given for him allow this, Sezgin, G.65, 1:134.
12 When Abû al-Rahmân b. Ahmad al-Bukharî found the Bayan Abû Isâq al-Hajyâmî of Abû al-Hajyâmî (ca. 2523866–351963), he was wearing a turban made up of a cloth wrapped around his head 13 times, indicating that he was 103 years old. He claimed that Hajyâmî did not even begin to transmit until he reached the age of one hundred. Obviously there are problems with his dates, Duhâbi, Siyar, 15:325–30.
13 Abû Mâsî-lî Abû al-Hasan b. Mu'âmîr al-Dimashqî (140723728833) was one of the great critics of hadith of his day, Sezgin, G.65, 1:100–1.
Muhammad al-Sha'rawi informed me. He said, “My grandfather transmitted to us. He said, Isma'il b. Abu Uways transmitted to us. He said, “When Malik b. Anas wanted to transmit, he used to perform his ablutions, sit on the edge of his bed and comb his beard. He sat erect, displaying gravity and reverence, and transmitted. He was asked about that and said, ‘I like to honor the hadith, the Messenger of God (Peace be upon him). I transmit only in a state of ritual purity and sitting up straight.’ He used to dislike transmitting hadith in the street or while standing or in haste. He said, ‘I like to try to understand what I transmit from the Messenger of God (Peace be upon him).’ It is also related that before teaching hadith he used to perform the major ablution, fumigate his head with incense and put on scent. If someone raised his voice in his class, he scolded him saying, ‘God (He is exalted) said, ‘Those of you who believe do not raise your voice over that of the Prophet.’ Whenever someone raises his voice during the recitation of the hadith of the Messenger of God (Peace be upon him), it is as if he raised his voice over that of the Messenger of God (Peace be upon him).”

We heard, or read, that the jurist Muhammad b. Ahmad b. 'Abd Allah said, “When the reciter of the hadith of the Messenger of God (Peace be upon him) stands up for anyone [out of special respect, when that person enters the room], a sin is recorded against him.” It is better for him, as well as the participants in his class, to follow what was reported from Habib b. Abi Thabit, who said, “It is a sunna for a person to receive people, all of them, in a kindly fashion when he transmits hadith to them.” God knows best.

The transmitter should not reed the hadith in such a fashion that some of them cannot be grasped. Let the transmitter open and close his class with an invocation and prayer appropriate for the occasion. One of the most eloquent ways to open a class is by saying, “The most perfect praise belongs to God, Lord of the Worlds, under all circumstances. The most complete prayers and peace on the chief of the Messengers, whenever the heedful remember him and whenever the heedless neglect to remember him. God, pray over him, his family, the rest of the prophets, the family of each of them and the rest of the righteous to the greatest extent that it is right to ask for.”

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14 Abu 'Abd Allah Isma'il al-Sha'rawi was best known for his hadith transmissions from his father and grandfather. He died in Bayhaq in 347/958; Samah, Anasib, 3:433.

15 Abu Muhammad al-Fayj b. Muhammad al-Sha'rawi (d. 282/895) claimed that he had studied hadith in every part of the Islamic world, with the exception of al-Azhar. He was the chief transmitter of a number of significant works; Dihāšī, Siyar, 13:317–19.

16 Qur'an 49:2.

17 Abu Zayd Muhammad b. Ahmad b. 'Abd Allah al-Marwazi (301/914–371/982) was an important figure in the history of the Shafite law school, Dihāšī, Siyar, 16:313–15.

18 Abu Yahya Habib b. Abi Thabit al-Qurashi (d. ca. 120/738) was one of the chief hadith transmitters in al-Kufa; Dihāšī, Siyar, 6:286–91.

19 Fa-innaha min al'tāla marāsh al-nawāf: the meaning of his clause is unclear to me. Nawawi replaced al-nawāf with al-nawwāf (transmission) in this passage; al-Tṣāfī b. 'Ishāq Nawawī (Cairo, 1388/1968), 38.

20 Abu 'Atā' b. al-Ḍāhkhāb b. Malikbād b. al-Dhābher b. al-Shaybānī (d. 1227/74-ca. 212/827) was a respected transmitter of hadith; Dihāšī, Siyar, 9:480–5.

21 Jami', 297.
believers in hadith, transmitted to us.” More important than that is the prayer for the teacher at the mention of his name. Let the transmitter not neglect that.

There is nothing wrong with the transmitter referring to someone he relates from with a nickname (lagah) he is known by, as Ghundat (troubblemaker) is the nickname of Muḥammad b. Ja'far,22 the student of Shu'ba, and Lamayn (party-colored) is the nickname of Muḥammad b. Sulaqmān al-Miṣṣītī.23 Or he may refer to his teacher by a maternal reference he is known by. For instance, Munya was the mother — or, it was said, the paternal grandmother — of the Companion Ya' ᵉ b. Munya,24 and his father was Umayya. He may also refer to his teacher by reference to a bodily infirmity he was known for, for instance Sulaqmān al-Armaḥ (Blind-eyed Sulaqmān) and Aṣim al-Aḥwāl (Cross-eyed Aṣim). All of this may be done unless the person referred to dislikes it. That was the case with Ismā'īl b. Ibrahīm,25 known as “Ibn Ulayya.” Ulayya was his mother — or, it was said, his maternal grandmother. We heard that Yahyā b. Maʿīn used to say, “Ismā'īl b. Ulayya transmitted to us,” and Ahmad b. Ḥanbal forbade it. He said, “Say, ‘Ismā'īl b. Ibrahīm.’ I read that he did not use to like being referred to by the name of his mother.”26 Yahyā b. Maʿīn replied, “We accept that from you, teacher of what is good.”

It has been recommended that the transmitter dictate hadith from a number of his teachers, giving first the one with the most elevated isnād or the best for some other reason. He should dictate a single hadith from each of his teachers, choosing the hadith with elevated isnāds and short texts. That is best and most appropriate procedure. He should be discriminating in the hadith he dictates and carefully consider the material he is to teach. He should draw attention to the lesson and elevation of the hadith and what makes it special. He should avoid those things which the intellect of those present cannot grasp and those things he fears will introduce a misconception into their thinking.

It was the custom of some of those we have mentioned to conclude the session of dictation with stories, humorous tales and verses, with their isnāds, and that is fine. God knows best.

When the transmitter finds himself incapable of bringing forth a hadith he wants to dictate, there is nothing wrong with his asking one of the experts present at that moment for help and his bringing it forth for him. Al-Khaṭṭāb said, “A number of our teachers used to do that.”27

22 Abū ‘Abd Allāh al-Hadhābi al-Baṣri (ca. 110/728–193/809) studied with Shu’ba for twenty years; Dḥahabī, Siyār, 9:96–102. The story behind his nickname is discussed in Category 52.
23 Abū Ja’far Muḥammad b. Sulaqmān was a scholar of hadith who died in Adana around 245/859 at, it is said, over one hundred years of age; Saqī, G. A.S., 1:112.
24 Ya’ ᵉ b. Munya (d. ca. 60/680) transmitted about twenty hadith; Dḥahabī, Siyār, 3:100–1, n.b. Ya’ ᵉ b. Umayya.
26 When a person was referred to with the name of his mother, there was sometimes an implication that his birth was illegitimate and the identity of his father was unknown.
27 Al-Khaṭṭāb al-Baṣri discusses this question in Kifāya, 216–17.
Category 28
GUIDELINES FOR THE STUDENT OF HADITH
(Ma'rifat adab talib al-hadith)

Some of these have already been treated above. The first thing incumbent on the student is to achieve true sincerity and to be on guard against taking up the study of hadith as a means to gain some worldly aim. We heard that Hamza b. Salama (God be pleased with him) said, "Whoever studies hadith for a reason other than for the sake of God is deluded." We heard that Sufyan al-Thawri (God be pleased with him) said, "I know of no deed better than studying hadith for someone who seeks God through it." We also heard something similar from Ibn al-Mubarak (God be pleased with him). One of the most likely reasons for making correct one's intention in the study of hadith is the one we heard from Abu 'Amr Isma'il b. Nujayl. He asked Abu Ja'far Ahmad b. Hamdân - and they were both righteous men - "With what intention should I write hadith?" He said, "Do you not see that blessings come down at the mention of righteous people?" He said yes and Abu Ja'far said, "The Messenger of God (Peace be upon him) is the chief of the righteous people." So let the student ask God (He is blessed and exalted) for help, support, success and guidance. Let him adopt for himself pure morals and pleasing manners. Indeed, we heard that Abu Asim al-Nablî said, "Whoever studies these hadith studies the most elevated of religious matters. He needs to be the best kind of person.

There is a difference of opinion which was discussed above, at the beginning of Category 24, over the recommended age to begin hearing and writing hadith. When the student starts to study hadith, let him buckle down and work hard. He should begin by hearing hadith from the teacher in his city with the best ijmâ'm and the one most worthy from the standpoint of knowledge, fame, nobility, and so forth, and then the next most worthy. When he finishes hearing the elevated and important hadith of his own town, let him travel to other lands. We heard that Yahyâ b. Mâ'in said, "There are four people in whom you cannot detect any proper behavior: the watchman of a street, the herald of a judge, the son of a hadith transmitter and the man who writes hadith in his own land and does not travel to study hadith." We heard that Ahmad b. Hanbal (God be pleased with him) was asked, "Should a man travel to acquire elevation in hadith?" He said, "Yes, by God! Energetically!" Hadith from 'Umar b. al-Khaṭâb (God be pleased with him) used to reach 'Aqama b. Qays and al-Aswad and they were not satisfied with them until they went to 'Umar and heard them from him directly."

1 Abu 'Amr Isma'il b. Nujayl al-Sulami (272/885–365/975) was a transmitter of hadith known for his piety; Sergi, G.S., 1:183.
2 Abu Sulaim b. Aswad b. Hîlal al-Kutâb (d. 84/703) was a Follower born in pre-Islamic times; Dhahabi, Siyar, 4:257.