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Caliphs and their Distinctive Position

The eleventh tradition is reported by three Sunni scholars, Abd al-Wahhabi Kilabi (d. 396 AH) in his *Musnad* 1, Ibn Asakir in his *Tarikh Medina Demishq* and Khatib Baghadadi in his *Tarikh Baghadad*.

Khatib Baghadadi narrates this tradition from Abd al-Wahhab bin Hasan Demishqi from Abu al-Qasim Abdullah bin Ahmad bin Muhammad Tamimi Mu'allim – known as Ghabaghabi – from Dirar bin Sahl Dirari from Hasan bin 'Arafa from Abu Hafs Abbar Umar bin Abd al-Rahman from Hamid from Anas, from Ali bin Abi Talib who quotes the Holy Prophet (S) saying:

O Ali! Allah has ordered me to choose Abu Bakr as my father, Umar as my advisor, Uthman as my backer and you – Ali –as my supporter...

After narrating this tradition, Khatib says that this tradition is utterly unknown and only two unknown reporters named Dirar bin Sahl and Ghabaghabi – quoting Dirar bin Sahl – have report it using the said chain.2

In his *al–Ma'wdu'at*, Ibn Jawzi narrates some traditions on the virtues of caliphs. The first tradition he mentions is this tradition which is as follows:

Abu Mansur narrates from Abu Bakr Ahmad bin Ali Khatib from Abd al-Wahhab bin Hasan Demishqi from Abu al-Qasim Abdullah bin Ahmad bin Muhammad Tamimi – known as Ghabaghabi – from Dirar bin Sahl from Hasan bin 'Arafa from Abu Hafs Abbar from Hamid from Anas...

After narrating this tradition, he quotes Khatib as saying: This tradition is utterly unknown and only two unknown reporters named Dirar bin Sahl and Ghabaghabi – quoting Dirar bin Sahl – have reported it using the said chain.3

According to Dahabi Dirar bin Sahl narrates false traditions from Hasan bin Arafa. He says he does not know who this creature is! This tradition is also narrated by Ibn 'Arafa.

Abbar narrates from Hamid from Anas from Ali (S) who quotes the Holy Prophet (S) as saying:

O Ali! Allah ordered me to choose Abu Bakr as my father.

This tradition is reported by Akhu Tabuk Abd al-Wahhab Kilabi from Abdullah bin Ahmad Ghabaghabi – one of the two unknown reporters – from Dirar. 4 It has to be mentioned here that Ibn Hajar has also narrated this opinion of Dahabi.5

Evaluation of tradition

It has become thus far clear that the said tradition is among the fabricated traditions. Like Dahabi, Ibn Hajar, after quoting the said tradition, says: Akhu Tabuk Abd al-Wahhab Kilabi has narrated this tradition from Abdullah bin Ahmad Ghabaghabi.

After introducing Ghabaghabi as one of the two unknown reporters as did Dahabi, Ibn Hajar, commenting on Abdullah bin Ahmad bin Muhammad Tamimi known as Aba'abi, says: Aba'abi has narrated a tradition on the virtues of caliphs from Dirar bin Sahl through Hasan bin Arafa. Abd al-Wahhab Alaee has however also narrated this tradition from Aba'abi.

You see that Ibn Hajar mentions first 'Ghabaghabi' and then 'Aba'abi! At one time he introduces Abd al-Wahhab 'Kilabi as the reporter and at another time Abd al-Wahhab 'Alaee!

Ibn Hajar quotes Khatib as saying: This is an utterly unknown tradition. No one other than Dirar has narrated this tradition using the said chain. Both Dirar and Aba'abi are unknown. According to Ibn Asakir he is from the race of Faras bin Habis Tamimi, brother of 'Aqra' bin Habis. 'Aba'abi was a teacher at al–Jasiyya in Damascus and died in 425 AH.

According to Ibn Hajar, 'Aba'abi was a popular reporter whereas there are doubts concerning Dirar.6

A critique of Ibn Hajar's opinion

Based on what was said though Ibn Hajar is skeptic about the title of 'Aba'abi and his reporter (Abd al-Wahhab), he tries to introduce 'Aba'abi as a popular person. It has however to said that he is not successful in his endeavor. This is because to prove that he was popular he did not present any document. The fact that he was a teacher at a certain location and died in such and such year does not solve the problem. Otherwise, Dahabi, Khatib Baghadadi – who narrates from him through one medium –, Ibn Jawzi – who narrates from Khatib through one medium– would not have introduced him as unknown!

- 1. It has to mentioned that Musnad Abd al-Wahhab Kilabi contains Musnad Demishq.
- 2. Tarikah Baghadad, vol. 9, p. 348.
- 3. Al-Mawdu'at, vol. 1, pp. 301 and 302.
- 4. Mizan al-Itidal, vol. 1, pp. 301 and 302.
- 5. Lisan al-Mizan, vol. 3, pp. 238 and 239.
- 6. = Ibid, p. 250.

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