

Part 1

The word *hadith*, according to the dictionary, has several meanings such as “new,” “novel,” “recent,” “modern,” and “speech”, “report,” “account,” and “narrative.” However, in Islamic context, the term *hadith* means “Prophetic tradition” or “narrative relating deeds and utterances of the Prophet (S).” According to some, even the account of a dream linked with the Holy Prophet (S) is also included in the category of *hadith*.

In most cases, the words *sunnah* and *hadith* are used as interchangeable synonyms by the scholars of the science of *hadith*. The author of the book *Talwih* says: “*Sunnah* is a more general term than *hadith*, and includes everything related to the Prophet (S) except the Qur'an: his speech – which is *hadith* – and his behaviour and character¹.” According to another opinion, since the majority of Sunni Muslims believe in Qur'an's being sempiternal (*qadim*), everything else except the Qur'an from the Prophet (S) came to be called *hadith*, a word closely related with *hadith* meaning “incidental” as opposed to “eternal²”.

Some are of the opinion that the sayings of the *Sahabah* (the Companions of the Prophet) and the *Tabi'un* (the second generation after the Holy Prophet (S)) can also be included under the term *hadith*³. On the other hand, for the Shi'ah authorities on *hadith*, the term can properly include only the narratives relating the speech, biographical details and deeds of the Prophet (S) and the Imams (A)⁴.

Here, we consider it necessary first to explain certain terms related to our discussion.

Sunnah: The term in general means “habitual practice” or “customary procedure,” and in particular applies to the sayings and doings of the religious leaders who are *ma'sum*⁵ (i.e. the Prophet and the Imams, who are considered as being free of sin and error). Accordingly, the term is employed by the side of the Book (Qur'an). *Sunnah* is used in a sense that is wider than that of *hadith*, although in some of the Sunni texts of tradition, such as of Ibn Maja, al-Bayhaqi and others, the term signifies *hadith*. The authorities of *hadith* differ as to meanings covered by *hadith* and *khbar* (report).

While some consider the terms as being synonymous, others are of the opinion that *khbar* is a term which is more general than *hadith*. According to them, *khbar* applies to every narrative regarding the Prophet (S), while *hadith* is taken to mean a narration quoting the Prophet (S) himself⁶. Some, as

pointed out above, apply the term *hadith* to the sayings of the *Sahabah* and *Tabi'un* in addition.

Accordingly, every *hadith* is also a *khabar*, though every *khabar* is not a *hadith*; though some regard the terms as being inter-changeable synonyms⁷.

Riwayah: This term is synonymous with *hadith*. According to the author of *Majma` al-bahrayn*, “*Riwayah* is a *khabar* that is traceable through a series of narrators to a *ma`sum*”⁸.

Athar: Shaykh Baha'i in his *Nihayat al-dirayah* considers *athar* as being identical with *hadith*. Others impute to it a wider meaning. Still others confine its meaning to narrations that go back to the *Sahabah*⁹.

Hadith-i Qudsi: *Hadith-i qudsi* is defined as the Divine communication whose revelation is not the part of the Qur'anic miracle. Sayyid Sharif Jurjani says: “ [*Hadith-i qudsi*] is from God, the Most Exalted, from the point of view of meaning, and from the Prophet (S) from the viewpoint of actual wording. It constitutes what God has communicated to the Prophet through revelation or in dreams. The Prophet – upon whom be peace – informed others of its meaning in his own words. Accordingly, the Qur'an is superior to the *hadith-i qudsi*, because it is the actual Word of God.”

There are six points of differences between the Qur'an and the *hadith-i qudsi*: Firstly, the Qur'an is a Divine miracle; this does not necessarily apply to the *hadith-i qudsi*. Secondly, *salat* (prayer) is not valid without recitation of parts of the Qur'an; this is not so in the case of the *hadith-i qudsi*. Thirdly, one who rejects the Qur'an is regarded as a *kafir* (an unbeliever); this does not hold true in the case of the *hadith-i qudsi*.

Fourthly, whole of the Qur'an was communicated to the Prophet (S) through the agency of the Angel Gabriel; this does not apply to *hadith-i qudsi*. Fifthly, every word of the Qur'an is the Word of God, but the wordings of the *hadith-i qudsi* may be ascribed to the Prophet (S). Sixthly, the Qur'an cannot be touched without *taharah* (the condition of bodily purity as prescribed by the *Shari'ah*) and this condition does not apply to the *hadith-i qudsi*¹⁰.

Origins of the Science of Hadith

The Holy Prophet of Islam (S), for a period of 23 years from the beginning of his prophetic mission to the moment of his death, was directly involved in the process of guidance and leadership of the people. The multifarious kinds of questions that arose for the Muslims in relation with their needs converged upon the Holy Prophet. The Prophet responded to their questions through explanations and discussions whose variety increased with the progress of Islam to the extent of enveloping all aspects of the moral, social and civic affairs of Muslims.

The new society that emerged during this period was significant and important from every aspect. The Muslims who were the contemporaries of the Prophet had the advantage of personal recourse to him and chance of putting to him various questions regarding their social life. However, as long as the

Prophet lived, and the source of Divine Revelation was in the midst of the Muslims, the great importance of recording his words was not fully realized.

Nevertheless, soon after the Prophet's death, the Muslims realized the imminent need of recording the *hadith* so as to avoid the problems that would arise in the future generations.

Accordingly, from the time of the first caliph, the need for recording of *hadith* was distinctly felt by the Muslim society. It should not remain unsaid that `Ali (A), the first Imam of the Shi`ah Muslims, had with characteristic foresight, pioneered the task of recording the Prophet's sayings during the Prophet's lifetime itself. Word for word, he wrote down what he had heard from the Prophet (S). The author of *Ta'sis al-shi`ah* writes:

...Know that the Shi`ah were the first to embark on collecting the records of the acts and sayings of the Prophet (S) during the era of the caliphs. They followed in the footsteps of their Imam `Ali, Amir al-Mu'minin (A), for, he had recorded and categorized the *hadith* during the times of the Holy Prophet. Al-Shaykh Abu al-Abbas al-Najashi, in the translation of Muhammad Ibn `Adhafar, said: "I was with Hakam ibn `Ayyinah by the side of Abu Ja`far Muhammad ibn `Ali al-Baqir (A). Hakam started asking questions with Abu Ja`far reluctantly answering them.

There was a disagreement between them about one thing. Then Abu Ja`far said: "Son, get up and bring `Ali's book." He brought a big voluminous book and opened it. He looked closely in it for a while until he found the problem (which was under debate). Abu Ja`far (A) said: "This is the handwriting of `Ali and the dictation of the Messenger of Allah, upon whom be God's peace and benedictions¹¹."

This tradition is in agreement with what I found in Najashi's *Rijal*. In addition, two other sources confirm the contents of the abovementioned *hadith*¹².

Another narration that confirms the attention devoted by the Shi`ah to recording of *hadith* is that of an incident from the life of Fatimah al-Zahra'(A). One day Fatimah (A) could not find a manuscript in which *hadith* was recorded. She reportedly urged her housemaid to search for it, saying, "Look for it. It is as precious to me as my sons Hasan and Husayn¹³."

Among the Ahl al-Sunnah, the recording of *hadith* started after the Holy Prophet's death, and that too after prolonged controversies between groups who favoured and opposed it¹⁴. In this connection, `A'ishah reports: "My father Abu Bakr had collected five-hundred *hadith* of the Messenger of Allah and one day he burnt them all¹⁵."

There are several narrations regarding the second caliph which indicate that he stopped people from relating the Holy Prophet's traditions¹⁶.

The recording of *hadith* among the Sunnis started from the early second century when the Umayyad caliph `Umar ibn `Abd al-`Aziz ordered their collection and compilation¹⁷. As is widely accepted, Ibn

Jurayj was the first person to record and compile *hadith* among the Sunnis¹⁸.

Here it is worth mentioning that apart from the Household of the Prophet (S), their Shi`ah followers preceded the Sunnis in their effort to record the *hadith*. Abu Rafi` was the first man to begin the task along with the members of the Prophet's Household (A)¹⁹. However, there were also several others who took up this task at the time of Abu Rafi`, or after him. Among them were: `Ubayd Allah ibn Abi Rafi`, `Ali ibn Abi Rafi`, Salman al-Farisi, Abu Dharr al-Ghifari, Asbagh ibn Nubatah and others²⁰.

The Shi`ah recorders of *hadith* can be divided into four groups:

1. In the first group, besides `Ali ibn Abi-Talib (A) and Fatimah al-Zahra' (A), were Abu Rafi`, Salman al-Farisi, Maytham al-Tammar, Asbagh ibn Nubatah, Mujashi`i al-Kufi, `Ubayd Allah ibn Abi Rafi`, Harth ibn `Abd Allah al-A`war al-Hamdani, Rabi`ah ibn Sami`, Salim ibn Qays, `Ali ibn Abi Rafi`, `Abd Allah ibn Hurr, Muhammad ibn Qays al-Bajali, Ya`la ibn Murrah, Jabir ibn `Abd Allah al-Ansari.
2. In the second group were Imam `Ali ibn al-Husayn Zayn al-`Abidin (A), Ja`far ibn Yazid al-Ju`fi, Zayd ibn `Ali, Husayn ibn Thawr, Ziyad ibn al-Mundhir.
3. In the third group can be said to belong Yahya ibn Qasim, `Abd al-Mu'min, Zurarah ibn A`yun, Muhammad ibn Muslim, Bassim al-Sayrafi, Abu `Ubaydah al-Hadhdha', Zakariyya ibn `Abd Allah, Thawrab ibn Qamamah, Majd ibn Mughirah, Muhammad ibn Za'idah al-Khadrami, Mu`awiyah ibn `Amarah, Matlab al-Zahri, `Abd Allah ibn Maymun.
4. This group of recorders of the *hadith* comprised of more than four-thousand of the people of Iraq, Hijaz, Khurasan and Sham (Syria), who related traditions from Imam Muhammad al-Baqir (A) or Imam Ja`far al-Sadiq (A)²¹.

The pioneers in recording of the *hadith* among the Sunnis were Ibn Jurayj in Mecca; Ibn Ishaq and Malik in Medina; Rabi` ibn Sabih, Sa`id ibn Abi `Urubah, Hammad ibn Salamah in Basra; Sufyan ibn Thawri in Kufa; al-Awza`i in Syria, Haytham in Wasit; Mu`ammar in Yemen, Jarir ibn `Abd al-Hamid in Rey, and Ibn Mubarak in Harran²².

However, there is a disagreement among the Sunni scholars about who first started recording *hadith*. According to Ibn Hajr, Rabi` ibn Sabih (died 160/777) and Sa`id ibn Abi `Urubah (died 156/773) were pioneers in this field; they were followed by Malik in Medina and `Abd al-Malik ibn Jurayj in Mecca, who pursued the task of recording *hadith*²³. But according to Haji Khalifah, `Abd al-Malik ibn Jurayj and Malik ibn Anas were the first ones to do so, and the first man to classify them and divide them into chapters was Rabi` ibn Sabih²⁴.

In any case, regardless of who it was to first record *hadith* among the Ahl al-Sunnah, whether Rabi` ibn Sabih or Malik or Sa`id ibn Abi `Urubah, all of them belong to the second century of Hijra, and lived one hundred years after the Shi`ah had already started this work.

As we mentioned above, the Muslims recognized the need to record the words of the Prophet (S) right after his demise; because they knew that it was the only way to safeguard the future generations against various problems. The realization of the significance of this work grew gradually.

After the Prophet (S) his close companions formed the primary source of *hadith*. During their lifetimes, the solution of various problems that arose could still be found and the narrations of the *Sahabah* served as the guiding torch for the generation that followed them, the *Tabi'un*. It was during the generation of the *Tabi'un* that the *Sahabah* were questioned about various issues and their narrations were committed to writing.

This was the beginning of the science of *hadith*. *Hadith* served as the key to the understanding of the Qur'an, and became an addendum to the Book for the Muslims. However, as pointed out earlier, the Shi'ah had felt this need earlier during the lifetime of the Prophet himself.

From the time that Muslims began to realize the need for collection and recording of *ahadith*, they took great pains in this regard. A man like Jabir ibn `Abd Allah al-Ansari would cover months on camel-back to hear a *hadith*[25](#).

The number of the Companions of the Prophet from whom traditions have been related is put somewhere near 114 in some books[26](#). The most important of them were: `Ali ibn Abi-Talib (A), `Abd Allah ibn Mas`ud, Salman al-Farisi, Ubayy ibn Ka`ab, `Ammar ibn Yasir, Hudhayfah ibn al-Yaman, `Abd al-Rahman ibn `Awf, Anas ibn Malik, Abu Musa al-Ash`ari, `A'ishah, `Umar ibn al-Khattab, Abu Hurayrah, `Abd Allah ibn al-`Abbas, `Ubadah ibn Samit, Jabir ibn `Abd Allah al-Ansari, Abu Sa`id al-Khudri.

Among the *Tabi'un*, there were such as Sha`bi, Ibn Musayyab, Ibn Sirin, and others[27](#).

The author of *Tadrib al-rawi* puts the number of traditions narrated from each of the Companions in the diminishing order as follows:

1. Abu Hurayrah: 5,374 *hadith*.
2. `Abd Allah ibn `Umar: 2,630 *hadith*.
3. `A'ishah: 2,208 *hadith*.
4. `Abd Allah ibn al-`Abbas: 1,660 *hadith*.
5. Jabir ibn `Abd Allah al-Ansari: 1,540 *hadith*.
6. Abu Sa`id al-Khudri: 1,170 *hadith*[28](#).

There is none among the rest of companions to be accredited with narration of more than one thousand traditions. Evidently, the political conditions prevalent during the Umayyad rule did not permit narration of

ahadith from `Ali (A) and his followers. It is worth mentioning that not all of the first narrators of *hadith* were equally reliable.

This issue will be discussed later in the chapter on *dirayat al-hadith* (critical examination of *hadith*). But before we enter the discussion on *dirayat al-hadith*, its origin and development, it is necessary to study the course of development of the science of *hadith* among the Shi`ah and the Ahl al-Sunnah from the point of view of style of compilation of the texts during various periods.

Hadith Among the Shi`ah: The Four-hundred Usul

As said above, the work of compilation of *hadith* among the Shi`ah started during the life of the Prophet (S). The texts which were compiled by the early Shi`ah scholars were called “*Usul*.” It should however be admitted that these texts were not without defect from the point of view of the art of writing and compilation; for, most of the authors of these texts were those who had heard the *ahadith* from one of the Imams, in particular, from Imam Muhammad al-Baqir and Imam Ja`far al-Sadiq (A), writing them down in notebooks.

These notebooks composed by the Shi`ah scholars, containing the traditions heard from one of the Imams, or heard from someone who had heard the Imam, came to be called “*Usul*.” Out of these texts compiled from the era of `Ali (A) to the time of Imam Hasan al-`Askari, the eleventh Imam, the popular ones were four-hundred in number by different authors. Each of them contained a number of *ahadith* written without any attention being paid to the sequence or classification according to the subject. Most of these traditions exist in the *al-Mahasin al-Barqi*, *al-Kafi*, *Man la Yahduruhu al-faqih*.

Some of them are found in *Tahdhib*. It appears that most of these notebooks existed in the Shahpur Karkh Library of Baghdad and were lost when Tughrul the Turk burnt the city on conquering it in the year 448/1056. Others which escaped this calamity, and other disasters, were preserved until the time of Ibn Idris and Ibn Ta`wus and were available to them. Some, more than two-hundred of them, have survived to our own times²⁹. These notebooks usually go with the prefix “*kitab*” and often “*nawadir*”. Thirteen of them exist in the library of the Tehran University in the manuscript file number 962. Twelve of them are “*kitab*” and one is “*nawadir*”. These are:

1. *Kitab Zayd al-Zad*;
2. *Kitab Ghasfari*;
3. *Kitab ibn Hamid al-Hannat*;
4. *Kitab Zayd al-Nirsi*;
5. *Kitab Ja`far al-Hadrami*;

6. *Kitab Muhammad al-Hadrami*;
7. *Kitab `Abd al-Malik ibn Hakim*;
8. *Kitab Muthanna ibn Walid al-Hannat*;
9. *Kitab Haddad al-Sindi*;
10. *Kitab Husayn ibn `Uthman*;
11. *Kitab Kahili*;
12. *Kitab Salam Khurasani*;
13. *Nawadir Abi al-Hasan `Ali ibn Asbat ibn Salim*[30](#).

The Four Books

The later Shi`ah scholars of *hadith* compiled four great collections from the aforementioned notebooks or *Usul* which became the most important texts of *hadith* in the Shi`ah world receiving hitherto unprecedented popularity. These four books were the following:

1. **Al-Kafi**: It was compiled by Shaykh Abu Ja`far Muhammad ibn Ya`qub al-Kulayni al-Razi (died 329/940) which contains 16,099 *musnad* (documented) *hadith* narrated from the Ahl al-Bayt (the Household of the Prophet)[31](#).
2. **Man la yahduruhu al-faqih**: It was compiled by Shaykh Saduq Abu Ja`far Muhammad ibn `Ali ibn Babwayhi al-Qummi (died 381/991) who is known as “Shaykh-i Ajaal” or “Saduq al-Ta’ifah”. This book contains 9,044 *hadith*[32](#).
3. **Al-Tahdhib**: It was compiled by Abu Ja`far Muhammad ibn al-Hasan al-Tusi (died 460/1068) also known as “Shaykh al-Ta’ifah” (The chief of the sect). This book contains 13,590 *hadith*[33](#).
4. **Al-Istibsar**: This book was also compiled by Shaykh Tusi, and contains 5,511 *hadith*. The book is divided into four parts[34](#).

It is necessary to mention here that the four hundred “*Usul*” were widely quoted and narrated by the Shi`ah *muhaddithin* (scholars of *hadith*) until a comprehensive compilation called *al-Mahasin* was done by Shaykh Ahmad ibn Muhammad ibn Khalid al-Barqi, who died in the second half of the third century of Hijra. His book contained a large number of *ahadith* arranged in numerous chapters. The *al-Mahasin* set an example which opened a new era in the history of the science of Shi`ah *hadith*[35](#); because it was after him that others took up the task of collection, compilation and classification of *ahadith*, which were until then scattered in hundreds of *Usul*.

This trend led to the emergence of the four authoritative compilations of *hadith* during the fourth and fifth centuries. Since then, they have been considered the greatest sources of *hadith* for the Shi`ah and served as the primary sources for the later day writers.

The Age of Exposition

After the compilation of the four great texts of *hadith*, the next stage was that of exposition. During this period, the attention of most of the scholars was devoted to writing of commentaries and exposition of these texts. A large number of commentaries were written on each of these texts. In spite of the fact that most of these commentaries have, in the course of time, been forgotten and lie buried in libraries, more than 120 of these commentaries and exegeses have come down to our times³⁶.

However, this phase of exposition should be regarded as a period of langour in the history of development of the science of *hadith*; because, instead of a gradual growth, it marked a stage when most of the discussions went round and round in a definite circle without any progress or breakthrough. This situation lasted until the time of Safavid rule. With the formal recognition of the Shi`ah faith as the state religion from the early times of the Safavis, the study of *hadith* commenced growth once again.

The Age of Great Scholars and Great Books

Great scholars of *hadith* appeared in the Shi`ah world during the period of Safavid rule. These men restored the leading role of the Shi`ah in this field, with the result that after ages of neglect and stagnation, the study of *hadith* entered its golden age. At the close of the eleventh century and the beginning of the twelfth, for once again, the study of *hadith* received the attention of great scholars.

The most prominent among them were Muhammad ibn Murtada Mulla Muhsin Fayd al-Kashani (died 1091/1680), Muhammad ibn Hasan al-Hurr al-`Amili (died 1104/1692-93) and Mulla Muhammad Baqir ibn Muhammad Taqi al-Majlisi (died 1111/1699-1700). Each of them has left behind a precious scholarly work. These works are the following:

1. **Kitab al-jami` al-Wafi:** It is the work of Mulla Muhsin Fayd al-Kashani. This book comprises of the four aforementioned classical texts of *hadith*. In this book, which is a very precious work from every aspect, the repetitive *ahadith* have been deleted and expositions have been written on the difficult ones³⁷.
2. **Wasa'il al-Shi`ah:** Its author is Shaykh Muhammad ibn al-Hasan al-Hurr al-`Amili. This book, like the above one, combines the four classical texts of *hadith* and draws upon other sources also.
3. **Bihar al-Anwar:** It is what can be called an encyclopedia of Shi`ah *hadith*. It is the work of `Allamah Muhammad Baqir al-Majlisi and is the greatest work of *hadith* compiled either among the Sunnis or the Shi`ah. In this work, in addition to the Shi`ah sources, there are plenty of *ahadith* drawn from the Sunni

sources. In spite of the great amount of labour and pain borne by al-`Allamah al-Majlisi, it should be admitted that the book is an unfinished masterpiece; since, he could not succeed in eliminating many weak traditions from his great work.

Had al-Majlisi lived for another decade, he might have been successful in producing a true “ocean of light” full of precious pearls and corals and mines of pure gold. The task of extracting its precious pearls and gold from this unfathomable ocean and clearing its treasures of their adhering mud and fungus remains for us to accomplish.

The Age of Further Research

After the age of al-Majlisi, another age followed in which the study of *hadith* made valuable progress. The scholars of this period did not abandon the pursuits of such men as Fayd al-Kashani, al-Hurr al-`Amili, and al-`Allamah al-Majlisi; rather they adhered to this path with greater care and attention to the new sophisticated criteria of authorship.

Among those who have left worthy books in the field of the science of *hadith* can be named `Allamah Muhammad Husayn ibn `Allamah al-Taqi, and Muhammad Nuri al-Mazandarani al-Tabarsi, the latter of whom wrote the *Kitab mustadrak al-wasa'il wa mustanbat al-masa'il*, which was finished in 1319/1901, adding several chapters to the *Kitab al-wasa'il al-shi'ah*. This book is the greatest compilation of the *ahadith* of the Shi`ah faith. `Allamah Nuri died in the year 1320/1902 in the city of Najaf³⁸.

In this brilliant period there lived such great men as the late Ayatullah Haj Aqa Husayn Burujardi, whose work changed the status of several thousand *hadith*. It is hoped that the Shi`ite and Sunni scholars of our times, working together, may be able to make greater achievements in this field.

Hadith Among the Ahl Al-Sunnah - The First Recorders

According to *Kashf al-Zunun*, when the Companions of the Prophet (S) began to die one after another, the need to record the *hadith* became evident. It is also maintained that the first person to compose a book in Islam was Ibn Jurayj³⁹. The next to be compiled was the *al-Muwatta'* of Imam Malik (died 179/795), and Rabi` ibn Sabih of Basra was the first man to compile a book with different chapters.

Al-Sihah al-Sittah or the 'Six Authentic Texts'

The work of compilation of *hadith* continued until the time of Imam al-Bukhari and Imam Muslim, who were followed by al-Tirmidhi, Abu Da'ud al-Sijistani, al-Nasa'i and others⁴⁰. Imam Malik, who lived in Mecca in his *al-Muwatta'* compiled the *ahadith* with a sequence based on the principles of jurisprudence⁴¹. Imam Ahmad ibn Hanbal, in his *Musnad* classified the *ahadith* in various chapters each devoted to a separate Companion of the Prophet (S) from whom the narration was quoted⁴².

After them Imam al-Bukhari classified the traditions according to region: he devoted separate sections to *ahadith* narrated by people of Hijaz, Iraq and Syria. Imam Muslim deleted the repetitive *ahadith* and put them in various chapters corresponding with various aspects of *fiqh* and other chapters dealing with biographical details. After them, Abu Da'ud, al-Tirmidhi and al-Nasa'i extended the scope of the work devoting greater attention to classification of the material⁴³.

Works Based on Al-Sihah Al-Sittah

The period of the first compilers of *hadith* was followed by those who compiled their own collections from *al-Sihah al-Sittah*, summarizing and rearranging the *ahadith* such as `Abd Allah Muhammad ibn Hamid ibn Abu Bakr, Ahmad ibn Muhammad al-Raqani and Abu Mas`ud Ibrahim ibn Muhammad al-Dimashqi who combined the books of al-Bukhari and Muslim.

After them, Abu al-Hasan Zarin ibn Mu`awiyah combined the books of *al-Muwatta'* and *al-Jami'* of al-Tirmidhi and the *Sunan* of Abu Da'ud and al-Nasa'i and the works of Muslim and Bukhari. After him Ibn Athir combined the six classical texts (*al-sihah al-sittah*) and the book of Zarin, producing a work more organized than that of Zarin. After that al-Suyuti combined *al-sihah al-sittah* and the ten *masanid* (plural of *musnad*) and called his book *Jam` al-Jawami'*, which however retains several weak *ahadith*⁴⁴.

Conclusion

To sum up, it may be said that the primary purpose of the first compilers of *hadith* was to record the narrations without any attention to the principles and techniques of compilation and bookwriting. It may even be said that in the beginning the purpose was not even that of composing a book; rather the aim was to record and preserve the *ahadith* in individual notebooks.

During the second stage, though there was a conscious purpose of composing books, the works had many defects; for the *ahadith* lacked order and classification forcing the reader to go through the whole book while searching for a certain *hadith*.

The third phase was that of classification of the *ahadith* in which every author divided them into chapters in his own way: one would classify them on the basis of *fiqhi* issues and another preferred classification according to the land of origin of the narrators.

During the fourth phase, the compilers deleted the repetitive *ahadith* making the job of the reader a bit easier.

In the fifth phase, the experts of *hadith* began to examine the traditions from various angles, such as studying them from the point of view of various jurists and for discovery of new points – a matter which we shall discuss in greater detail in a proper chapter. During this stage the whole bulk of *hadith* came under critical study and endeavour was made to collect them in a single work⁴⁵.

1. `Ilm al-hadith, Al-Sunnah qabl al-tadwin, p. 16. See also Dekhuda, Loghatnameh, vol. V, p.398; Tadrib al-rawi, pp.4-5.
2. Tadrib al-rawi.
3. Ibid, p.6; see also Kashf al-zunun and Dekhuda, Loghatnameh, vol. V, p. 398.
4. `Ilm al-hadith, p.9.
5. Nihayat al-dirayah, p.7; Al-Sunnah qabl al-tadwin, p. 16; Dekhuda, Loghatnameh vol. V.p. 399.
6. Tadrib al-rawi, p.6.
7. Ibid; see also Dekhuda, Loghatnameh, vol. V, 399; see also Tadrib al-rawi, p.6.
8. `Ilm al-hadith, p. 4.
9. Nihayat ai-dirayah.
10. Dekhudi, Loghatnameh, vol V, 398; see also The Encyclopedia of Islam, p.28.
11. Ta'sis al-Shi`ah, p. 279. See also Husayn ibn Muhammad Taqi Nuri al-Tabarsi, Fasl al-khitab, pp.5-7; 1298.
12. A`yan al-shi`ah, vol. I, p.274; Da'irat al-ma`arif al-Imamiyyah, p.70; `Ilm al-hadith; Dhahabi, Tadhkirat al-huffaz, p. 10.
13. There is no doubt that the "Four-hundred Usul", which will be mentioned later in our discussion, were based on the traditions conveyed by the Ahl al-Bayt.
14. Tadrib al-rawi, p.285.
15. Dhahabi, Tadhkirat al-Huffaz, p.5.
16. Ibid. p.7. See also Fajr al-Islam, p.265, Parto-e Islam, 245
17. Da'irat al-ma`arif al-Imamiyyah, p.69. Tadrib al-rawi. Kashf al-zunun, p. 637.
18. Kashf al-zunun, p.637. Ta'ssi al-shi`ah, pp.278-279. Dekhuda, Loghatnameh, p.298. Taqrib al-tahdhib , p. 333. Wafayat al-a`yan, p.338. Fjr al-Islam, p. 265.
19. Ta'sis al-shi`ah, p.280. Najashi, kitab al-Rijal, pp.23, Da'irat al ma`arif al-Imamiyyah, pp.69-70. Dekhuda, Loghatnameh, vol.1, p.298. Al-Dhari`ah, vol.1, p. 14.
20. A`yan al-shi`ah, vol. I, p.274. Da'irat al-ma`arif al-Imamiyyah, p.69. Ibn Sa'd, Tabaqat, vol. IV, pp.73-74
21. Da'irat al-ma`arif al-Imamiyyah, p. 70. Ta'sis al-shi`ah, pp.280-287. See also Tadrib al-rawi and Kashf al-zunun, p. 637-638.
22. Fajr al-Islam, pp.265-267. Ta'sis al-shi`ah, p.278. See also Tadrib al-rawi, Kashf al-zunun, pp.637-638.
23. Ibid, pp.266-268
24. Kashf al-zunun, p.637
25. Ilm al-hadith, p.13. Maktab-e Tashayyu', Ordibehesht 1339, pp.58-61
26. Ibid. See also Fajr al-Islam, p.265 and Parto-e Islam, p.264.
27. Tadrib al-rawi, "Introduction", `Ilm al-hadith
28. Ibid. See also Fajr al-Islam, p.262 and `Ilm al-hadith
29. Al-Dhari`ah, vol.11, pp 125-135 The Catalogue of the Library of the University of Tehran, p.1088 See also Nihayat al dirayah p 12
30. The catalogue of the Library of University of Tehran, pp. 1089-1095 See also Al-Dhari`ah which mentions 117 Usul
31. Da'irat al-ma`arif al-Imamiyyah, p. 70; Ta'sis al-shi`ah, p. 288. `Ilm al-hadith
32. Ibid. See `Ilm al-hadith, p. 56.
33. Ta'sis al-shi`ah, p.288. Tusi, al-Fihrist, `Ilm al-hadith, p. 57
34. Da'irat al-ma`arif al-Imamiyyah, p. 70. Ta'sis al-shi`ah, p. 289; `Ilm al-hadith, p.57
35. `Ilm al-hadith, p.52. See also Da'irat al-ma`arif al-Imamiyyah
36. Al-Dhari`ah, vol.11, pp.17-19. See also the Catalogue of the University of Tehran pp.82-100-154-1277. Also refer to Ta'sis al-shi`ah. p.290.
37. The catalogue of the Library of the University of Tehran, p.1628
38. Ta'sis al-shi`ah, p.289
39. This is a Sunni viewpoint not accepted by the Shi`ah as being historically correct. Nevertheless, Ibn Jurayj and/or Rabi` ibn Sabih are considered pioneers among the Ahl al-Sunnah by themselves. According to the Shi`ah, Abu Rafi`, after the Household of the Prophet, was the first man to record and compile ahadith. See Ta'sis al-shi`ah, p.280, Najashi, Rijal, pp. 2-3; Da'irat al-ma`arif al-Imamiyyah, pp. 69-70; Al-Dhari`ah, vol. I, p.14; Dekhuda, Loghatnameh, vol.1. p.298.

- [40.](#) Kashf al-zunun, p.637
- [41.](#) Ibn Khaldun, Tariq, p.798
- [42.](#) Kashf al-zunun, p.637
- [43.](#) Ibn Khaldun, Tariq, p. 798
- [44.](#) Kashf al-zunun, p.639
- [45.](#) Ibid, p. 637-639

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