

STEALING *ḤADĪTH* (*SARIQAT AL-ḤADĪTH*): WHAT DOES A TERM OF DENIGRATION TELL US?*

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Abstract

In a nutshell, stealing ḥadīth (sariqat al-ḥadīth) means that a narrator obtains a ḥadīth in an invalid way and narrates it, usually making some changes to it. Due to the fact that the thief of ḥadīth (sāriq al-ḥadīth) usually changes the isnād or text, stealing ḥadīth is more than an ordinary procedural error. Ḥadīth stealing is a conscious act and the narrator expects some benefits from his action.

The stealing of ḥadīth is understood as the violation of rights. This engenders some questions: How does the narrator gain these rights? How is he affected by the theft of his ḥadīth? What made the narration so valuable? In this article I try to explain the phenomenon of stealing ḥadīth and its background by answering the aforementioned questions.

Keywords: *Stealing ḥadīth, sariqat al-ḥadīth, thief of ḥadīth, sāriq al-ḥadīth, science of invalidation.*

HADİS HİRSIZI (SÂRIKU'L-HADİS): BİR CERH TERİMİNİN ANLATTIKLARI

Özet

Hadis hırsızlığı (sarikatu'l-hadîs) terimini kısaca, "Bir ravinin muteber olmayan bir yolla aldığı bir hadisi, çoğunlukla onda birtakım değişiklikler yaparak, bir başkasına rivayet etmesidir." şeklinde tanımlamak mümkündür. Hadis hırsızının (sâriku'l-hadîs) sened ve metin üzerinde gerçeği saptıran tasarruflarda bulunması, bu eylemi sıradan bir usûl hatası olmaktan çıkarmaktadır. Hadis hırsızlığı bilinçli yapılan bir fiildir ve bunu yapan ravinin bu işten bazı beklentileri bulunmaktadır.

Hadis hırsızlığı, hadisi çalınan ravi açısından bir hak ihlali sayılmıştır. Dolayısıyla bu yargı beraberinde birtakım sorular ortaya çıkarmıştır: Hak sahibi ravi, bu hakkı nasıl elde etmiştir? Hadisinin çalınması ona ne tür bir zarar vermektedir? Hadis rivayetini, hırsızlığa neden olacak kadar değerli kılan şey nedir? Bu sorular, hadis hırsızlığı teriminin arka planını öğrenmeye çalışırken araştırdığımız sorulardan bazılarıdır. Bu makalede aynı zamanda hadis hırsızlığının nasıl yapıldığı iki temel grupta, örneklerle birlikte açıklanmış ve son olarak hadis hırsızlığının hükmü üzerinde durulmuştur.

Anahtar Kelimeler: *Hadis hırsızlığı, hadis hırsızı, cerh istilahları, sarikatü'l-hadis, sâriku'l-hadis, mesruk.*

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Introduction

Many studies aim to explain the terms mentioned in the books of *ḥadīth* narrator criticism (*al-jarḥ wa'l-ta'dīl*). These studies are important in that they provide the opportunity to learn the meaning of phrases formed with a few words to criticize the narrators (*rijāl*) or the content (*matan*) of *ḥadīth*. But these studies rarely investigate the terms' background.

In this article I will review the meaning of a term of invalidation, *sariqat al-ḥadīth*, and its historical background. I also aim to clarify the meaning of stealing *ḥadīth*, while at same time finding the answers to these questions: Why does a narrator steal a *ḥadīth*? Why do scholars of *ḥadīth* consider this disruptive? How does the stealing of *ḥadīth* affect a narrator who lost his *ḥadīth*? These questions can help us understand the value of narration of *ḥadīth* in the period from the beginning of the second/eighth century until the middle of the fifth/eleventh century. From the middle of the fifth/eleventh century, the stealing of *ḥadīth* disappeared because the citing of a complete *isnād* was abandoned in this period.

In the classical books on *ḥadīth* sciences, the subject of *sariqat al-ḥadīth* appears under the topic of *ḥadīth maqlūb* (mixed-up *ḥadīth*). However, al-Ḥākim al-Nīsābūrī, al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī, Ibn al-Ṣalāh, al-Nawawī and al-ʿIrāqī did not mention the topic of *ḥadīth masrūq* (stolen *ḥadīth*) in their books.¹ Some contemporary researchers evaluate the *sariqat al-ḥadīth* as a type of *tadlīs* (misrepresentation) or a kind of *mawḍūʿ* (fabricated) *ḥadīth*.²

I could not find a book on this topic except for *al-Bayān wa'l-taʿrīf* by Muwaffaq b. ʿAbd al-Qādir.³ In the introduction, he mentions the ways of receiving *ḥadīth* which had been established to ensure fidelity of narration from one transmitter to another, and books of *ḥadīth* sciences and of the science of invalidation and rectification (*ʿilm al-jarḥ wa'l-ta'dīl*). He also explains *sariqat al-ḥadīth* linguistically and idiomatically and gives some examples in the first chapter. After giving information about the beginning of stealing *ḥadīth* and how it spread, he explains the types and causes of stealing. Then he discusses 193 narrators who were accused of stealing *ḥadīth*. In other words, he collected information concerning the stealing of *ḥadīth* in the classical books. This information is generally given in the citations.

¹ Efendioğlu, Mehmet, “Mesrûk”, *DIA [Encyclopedia of Islam]* (Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı, Ankara 2004, vol. 24, p. 336.

² Brown, Jonathan A.C., *Hadith: Muhammad's Legacy in the Medieval and Modern World*, OneWorld Oxford 2011, p. 75.

³ Muwaffaq b. ʿAbdullah ʿAbd al-Qādir, *al-Bayān wa'l-taʿrīf bi-sariqat al-ḥadīth al-nabī al-sharīf*, Dār al-Tawḥīd, Riyadh 2007.

What is Meant by *Sariqat al-Ḥadīth*?

There are some formulaic phrases meaning stealing *ḥadīth* in books of invalidation and rectification. The most commonly used are *yasriqū ḥadīth al-nas* (“he steals people’s narration”), *yasriqū al-aḥādīth* (“he steals the narrations”), *saraqahu minhu* (“he stole the *ḥadīth* from someone”), etc. The words *saraqah minhu al-shay’a yasriqū saraqān wa sariqatan wa sarqān*⁴ means in Arabic that someone stole something from someone else. This phrase and similar ones are clearly mentioned in the following statement, which is said to criticize a narrator: *Ma zilnā naʿrifu annahu yasriqū al-aḥādīth aw yatalaqqatuhā aw yatalaqqafuhā*,⁵ i.e. we know that he is stealing or eavesdropping or capturing the *ḥadīths*.

Words used to signify stealing *ḥadīth* include *alḥaqa*, *aghāra*, *saṭā*, *akhadha*, *masakha*, *jarada*, *naqala*, *istamadda*, *salakha*, *intaḥala*, *naqala*, *ʿazā*, *ʿawwala*, *nasaba*, *sammaʿa*, *zawwara*, *kashata*, *istafāda*.⁶

The verb *saraqah*, used to criticize a narrator in the earliest period, became a technical term in the forms “*sariqat al-ḥadīth*” or “*al-ḥadīth al-masrūq*” and appeared in the *ḥadīth* terminologies. It is defined as “a narrator claims that he heard or received a *ḥadīth* in a valid way from a shaykh but in fact, he did not hear or nor receive it in a valid way from him. Another fashion of stealing *ḥadīth* is that a narrator attributed a *ḥadīth* which is known to be a *ḥadīth* of X, to another one who lived in the same period as X.”⁷

As can be understood from the definition, the characteristic of the stolen *ḥadīth* is that it is a *ḥadīth* that was not received in one of the valid ways.

This characteristic might be understood as the narrator who is accused of stealing *ḥadīth* having made a procedural mistake. But many critics of a certain narrator tell us that stealing *ḥadīth* is more than a procedural mistake because a lot of them were also accused of changing the *isnād* or text of the stolen *ḥadīths*.

In this case, the meaning of *sariqat al-ḥadīth* intersects the term *maqlūb*, mixed up *ḥadīth*, a *ḥadīth* whose *isnād* is changed or is united with a strange text. Likewise, it intersects the term *mudallas*, misrepresented *ḥadīth*, a *ḥadīth* whose narrator is hidden, and the term *mudraj*, interpolated material, a *ḥadīth* to whose text some words are added. The term *sariqat al-ḥadīth* is differentiated from these terms in that the *ḥadīth*

⁴ al-Zabīdī, Abū al-Fayḍ Murtaḍā Muḥammad b. Muḥammad (d. 1205/1791), *Tāj al-ʿarūs min jawāhir al-qāmūs*, ed. Muṣṭafā Hījāzī, Wizarat al-ʿilām, Cairo 1989, vol. 25, p. 442.

⁵ Ibn Ḥanbal, Abū ʿAbdullah Aḥmad b. Muḥammad al-Shaybānī (d. 241/855), *Kitāb al-ʿilal wa-maʿrifat al-rijāl*, ed. Waṣīyyullah b. Muḥammad ʿAbbās, Dār al-Khānī, Riyadh 2001, vol. 3, 41.

⁶ Muwaffaq, *al-Bayān wa'l-taʿrīf*, p. 46.

⁷ Aydınlı, Abdullah, *Hadis Istılahları Sözlüğü*, İFAV yay. İstanbul 2011, p. 276; Muwaffaq, *al-Bayān wa'l-taʿrīf*, p. 47.

itself is received in an invalid way. In consideration of this characteristic, it would perhaps be more appropriate to define the term *sariqat al-ḥadīth* as following: A narrator receives a *ḥadīth* in an invalid way and usually narrates it with some falsification.

In the past, by which the first/seventh to fifth/eleventh centuries is meant, a narrator was entitled to narrate only the *ḥadīth* that he had received in a valid way. Whoever received the *ḥadīth* through other than the official six ways, was called *sāriq al-ḥadīth* (thief of *ḥadīth*).

The concept of theft is directly related to the concept of ownership, so what the right of narration is, and how a narrator achieves it, must be explained.

What is the Right of Narration and How Does a Narrator Achieve It?

The subject of the valid ways of receiving *ḥadīth* usually appears in the books of *ḥadīth* methodology under the topic of receiving *ḥadīth* (*taḥammul al-‘ilm*).⁸ When a narrator received a *ḥadīth* in one of these ways, he had the right of narration, which he could transmit to another narrator. This was comparable to copyright.⁹

The Birth of the Right of Narration

At first, there was no specific requirement for receiving *ḥadīth*. After the period of the Prophet, some narrators fabricated *ḥadīth* to support their political aims. Thus sound and fabricated narrations mixed together. So the narrators began to select sound narrations. They travelled to famous Islamic cities to receive *ḥadīth* from credible narrators. Thus the *isnād* (chain of transmission) became an integral part of the narration. The relationship between shaykh and student was extremely important. The aphorism “*these ḥadīths are the Religion, so be aware from whom you receive them,*”¹⁰ was famous amongst narrators.

To ensure the certainty of the *ḥadīths*, which are the basis of Islam, against the danger of deterioration in the hands of the unqualified, the narrators carefully followed the transmission of *ḥadīths* from one narrator to another and critiqued them as to whether they were reliable or not. For easy recognition of each *ḥadīth* they also labeled it by mentioning one of its narrators.

⁸ al-Khatīb al-Baghdādī, Abū Bakr Aḥmad b. ‘Alī b. Thābit (d. 463/1071), *al-Kifāyah fī ‘ilm al-riwāyah*, ed. Abū ‘Abdullāh al-Sūrīkī, al-Maktabah al-‘Ilmiyyah, Medina, n.d. p. 52; al-Şuyūfī, Abū al-Faḍl Jalāl al-Dīn ‘Abd al-Raḥmān b. Abū Bakr (d. 911/1505), *Tadrīb al-rāwī fī sharḥ Taqrīb al-Nawawī*, ed. Nazar Muḥammad al-Fārayābī, Maktabat al-Kawthar, Beirut 1994, vol. 1, p. 26.

⁹ A‘zamī, Muḥammad Muṣṭafā, *Studies in Early Hadith Literature*, American Trust Publication, Indianapolis 1978, p. 204.

¹⁰ al-Rāmhurmuzī, Abū Muḥammad b. Khallād Ḥaşān b. ‘Abd al-Raḥmān (d. 360/970), *al-Muḥaddith al-fāşil bayn al-rāwī wa ‘l-wā‘ī*, ed. Muḥammed ‘Ajjaj al-Khatīb, Dār al-Fikr, Beirut 1971, p. 414.

The mentioning of *ḥadīth* by one of its narrators

At the end of some *ḥadīths*, there is an expression like *hadhā ḥadīthu fulān*, “this is the *ḥadīth* of so and so.” This is a kind of tag recognizing who narrated the text in this form.¹¹ This phrase was widespread at the end of second/eighth century, so there are a lot of examples in the books written at that time.

The phrase *hadhā ḥadīthu fulān* indicated the source of the narration as well as containing the meaning that it belonged to an individual narrator. In other words, it signifies ownership, reputation and competence. Every narrator desired that his name would be tagged on a sound and famous *ḥadīth* and disliked his narration being called *qalb* (mixed up or fabricated) or *mu^callal* (defective).

Muslim and Ibn Khuzaymah used the expression *hadhā ḥadīthu fulān* very often in their books. An example is the following *ḥadīth* from Ibn Khuzaymah:¹²

First *isnād*: The compiler: R₈ Abū Ṭāhir > R₇ Abū Bakr > R₆ Muḥammad b. Bashār > R₅ Yahyā b. Sa‘īd > R₄ Sufyān > R₃ ‘Alqama b. Marsad > R₂ Sulaymān b. Buraydah > R₁ Buraydah > an act of the Prophet.

Second *isnād*: The compiler: R₆ Abū Mūsā > R₅ ‘Abd al-Rahman b. Mahdī > R₄ Sufyān > R₃ Alqama b. Marsad > R₂ Sulaymān b. Buraydah > R₁ Father of Sulaymān > an act of the Prophet: “The Prophet, peace be upon him, used to offer the ablution for every prayer...”

In both *isnāds*, the common link is Sufyān,¹³ who is the fourth narrator. Ibn Khuzaymah said “this is ‘Abd al-Rahmān b. Mahdī’s *ḥadīth*”. He is the fifth narrator in the second *isnād*.

The phrase of “this is the narration of so and so” directly or indirectly states these following pointss:

¹¹ For some examples see al-Khatīb al-Baghdādī, *al-Jāmi‘ li-akhlāk al-rāwī wa-ādāb al-sāmi‘*, ed. Maḥmūd Ṭaḥḥān, Maktabat al-Ma‘ārif, Riyadh 1983, vol. 2, p. 244; Sa‘dī b. Mahdī al-Hāshimī, *Abū Zur‘a al-Rāzī wa ‘uhūduh fī al-sunnah al-nabawiyyah*, ‘Imādat al-Baḥḥ al-‘Ilmiyyah, Madina 1982, vol. 1, p. 249, 253, 257; al-Dāraquṭnī, Abū al-Ḥasan ‘Alī b. ‘Umar b. Aḥmad (d. 385/995), *al-‘Ilal al-wāridah fī al-aḥādīth al-nabawiyyah*, ed. Maḥfūz al-Rahmān al-Salafī, Dār al-Ṭaybah, Riyadh 1985, vol. 1, p. 90.

¹² Ibn Khuzaymah, Abū Bakr Muḥammad b. Ishāq b. Khuzaymah al-Sulamī (d. 311/924), *Ṣaḥīḥ*, ed. Muḥammad Muṣṭafā A‘zamī, al-Maktabah al-Islāmī, Beirut 1975, vol. 1, p. 9. For more instances see *ibid.*, vol. 1, p. 10, 11, 13, 16, 24, 38, 43, 45; Muslim b. al-Ḥajjāj Abū al-Ḥusayn al-Kushayrī al-Nisābūrī (d. 261/875), *Ṣaḥīḥ*, ed. Muḥammad Fuād ‘Abd al-Bāqī, Dār Iḥyā’ al-Kutub al-Arabiyyah, Cairo 1955, *‘Imān*, 1, 78, 158, 165, 173, 177.

¹³ That is, Sufyān al-Thawrī (d. 161/778). See Ibn Ḥanbal, *al-Musnad*, ed. Shu‘ayb al-Arna’ūt et al. Mu’assasat al-Risālah, Beirut 1997, vol. 19, p. 364 at footnote 2.

- a) The *ḥadīth*, as it appears in this form, belongs to X.
- b) The text, which is attributed to X, is different from others' texts.
- c) X is the most credible narrator of those who narrated from X's teacher.

Examining why Muslim and Ibn Khuzaymah attributed an individual *ḥadīth* to an individual narrator indicated two important points:

1. The attributions (*al-taḥwīl*)¹⁴ mentioned in the *isnāds* are usually to the fourth or sometimes to the third transmitters. In other words, two and more *isnāds* were usually unified after the fourth transmitters.

2. The transmitters whose names were tagged to the *ḥadīths*, generally lived at the end of the second/eighth or the beginning of the third/ninth centuries. Their place in the chains is usually one prior to the common links. Nevertheless, sometimes they are placed after the common links.¹⁵ For more specific results, a separate study is necessary.

These two points give us some important hints about the history of *ḥadīth*. According to this we can say that the *ḥadīths* were collected as a discipline at the beginning of the second/eighth century, and because of that the transmitters carefully noted the differences between the versions and seriously followed which text came from which narrator in this period.

The Advantages of Stealing *Ḥadīth* for the Thief

It appears that the major reason for stealing *ḥadīth* was capturing the right to narration, because if a narrator had the right to a specific narration, he could attract the attention of all the narrators living in different Islamic cities and many them would travel to him from a long way away to receive *ḥadīth*. The common people also would deeply respect to him when they saw a lot of scholars were coming to their city to see this narrator.

An anecdote clearly indicates this situation: Sufyān b. Wakī^c was a man whose *ḥadīths* were suspect, due to the carelessness of his clerks. Some people advised him to dismiss his clerks, saying: "If you dismiss them, all narrators will come to you to receive *ḥadīth*. Why not? You heard all these *ḥadīths* directly (from your father)".¹⁶

¹⁴ *al-Taḥwīl* is the passage from one cross-reference to another, transformation. See Tahanawī, Muḥammad b. A^cla b. ^cAli al-Farūqī al-Hanafī (d. 1158/1745), *Mawsū^catu Kashshāfi Iṣṭilahāt al-Funūn wa al-^cUlūm*, ed. Rafīq al-^cAcam, Maktabat Lubnan, Beirut 1996, vol. I, p. 393.

¹⁵ Ibn Khuzaymah, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, vol. 1, p. 26.

¹⁶ Ibn Abū Khātim, Abū Muḥammad ^cAbd al-Raḥmān b. Muḥammad b. Idrīs (d. 327/938), *ʿIlal*, Maktaba Malik Fahd, Riyadh 2006, vol. 1, p. 135.

The reverence of the public for the *ḥadīth* scholars was so great that it could mislead one of them who could not govern himself. So, in the books of *ḥadīth* methodology, the scholar of *ḥadīth* seriously warns the students that they should not lose the true way due to worldly hopes.¹⁷

The narrators gained the appreciation of the public due to the reputation they attained after spending a long part of their life in study. The *ḥadīths* that they collected by travelling from one city to another throughout their life were very valuable. They were greatly concerned that unqualified people would seize them. An anecdote narrated about Saʿīd b. Musayyab clearly indicates this worry: Saʿīd b. Musayyab angered Zuhri by saying “Why did you narrate my *ḥadīth* to Ibn Marwān?” His anger continued for a while till Zuhri appeased him.¹⁸ So we can say that the main reason for stealing *ḥadīth* is probably this possessiveness of the narrators toward their *ḥadīths*.

The Famous Types of Stealing *Ḥadīth*

The phrases used to denigrate (*al-jarḥ*) the narrators with stealing *ḥadīth* indicates that there were many ways of stealing *ḥadīth*,¹⁹ which could be divided into two main groups as follows:

1. A narrator receives a *ḥadīth* in an invalid way and narrates it.
2. A narrator receives a *ḥadīth* in an invalid way and narrates it after some changes.

Stealing *ḥadīth* is different in each group. In the first group, the thief does not modify the *ḥadīth*, which he received in an invalid way and thus stole the narration right of the valid narrator. In the second group, he makes the *ḥadīth* individual by modifying it and narrates it as if it were his narration. Each group is explained as follows:

1. A narrator captures a ḥadīth in an invalid way and narrates it

al-Sakhāwī explained that a narrator is an individual in the narrating of a *ḥadīth* and the thief of *ḥadīth* claims that he heard the same *ḥadīth* from the teacher of this

¹⁷ Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ, *ʿUlūm al-ḥadīth*, p. 245.

¹⁸ al-Dhahabī Abū ʿAbdullāh Shams al-Dīn Muḥammad b. Aḥmad b. ʿUthmān (d. 748/1348), *Tārīkh al-Islām wa-wafayāt al-mashāhīr wa'l-aʿlām*, ed. ʿUmar ʿAbd al-Salām Tadmūrī, Dār al-Kitāb al-ʿArabī, Beirut 1991, vol. 6, p. 372.

¹⁹ al-Dhahabī, *al-Mūqizā fī ʿilm muṣṭalaḥ al-ḥadīth*, ed. ʿAbd al-Fattāḥ Abū Ghuddah, Maktabat al-Matbuʿah al-Islāmiyyah, Aleppo 1985, p. 60; al-Sakhawī, Abū al-Khayr Shams al-Dīn Muḥammad b. ʿAbd al-Raḥmān, (d. 902/1497), *Fatḥ al-mughīth bi-sharḥ alfiyyat al-ḥadīth li'l-ʿIrākī*, ed. ʿAbd al-Karīm b. ʿAbdullah, Dār al-Minhāj, Riyadh 2004, vol. 2, p. 290; al-Ghawrī, Sayyid ʿAbd al-Majīd, *Muʿjam al-alfāz wa-ʿibārāt al-jarḥ wa'l-taʿdīl al-mashhūrah wa'l-nādirah*, Dār Ibn Kathīr, Damascus 2007, p. 385; Muwaffaq, *al-Bayān wa'l-taʿrīf*, p. 73.

narrator.²⁰ The status of Ayyūb b. Suwayd (d. 193/809), denigrated by stealing *ḥadīth*, is given as an example. His full name was Abū Masʿūd Ayyūb b. Suwayd al-Ramlī al-Ḥimyarī al-Shaybānī. It is said that Yahyā b. Maʿīn accused him of theft. The manner of his stealing is explained in a narration told by people of Ramla as following: “Some people were narrating *ḥadīths* from ʿAbdullāh b. Mubārak to Ayyūb and he was narrating them to other narrators from ʿAbdullāh’s teacher.”²¹

It appears that Ayyūb b. Suwayd was receiving ʿAbdullāh’s *ḥadīths* in an invalid way and narrating them to people as if they were from ʿAbdullāh’s teachers. The valid way would be for him to take *ḥadīths* properly from his teachers and honestly say their names.

Those who acquired *ḥadīth* books by buying or any other way and narrated from them without any change were also accused of stealing *ḥadīth* in the sense of the first group.

2. A narrator receives a *ḥadīth* in an invalid way and narrates it after some changes

In the second group of stealing *ḥadīth*, the narrator narrates *ḥadīths* received in an invalid way after some change²² or addition.²³ The ways of doing this are as following:

2.a. A narrator steals a *ḥadīth*, fabricates an *isnād* for it and then narrates it.

In this kind of theft, the narrator receives the *ḥadīth* in an invalid way then narrates it with a different *isnād*. An example of this is as follows: “When the prayer is announced (*al-qāmah*), only obligatory prayers could be offered.”²⁴ The *ḥadīth* is evaluated as sound with an *isnād* of Amr b. Dīnār > ʿAtā’ b. Yasār > Abū Hurayra. It also has another *isnād* that is criticized. This second *isnād* is as follows: The compiler:

²⁰ al-Sakhawī, *Fath al-mughīth*, vol. 2, p. 290.

²¹ al-ʿUqaylī, Abū Jaʿfar Muḥammad b. ʿAmr b. Mūsā b. Ḥammād (d. 322/934), *al-Duʿāfāʾ al-kabīr*, ed. ʿAbd al-Muʿti Amīn Kalʿajī, Dār al-Kutub al-ʿIlmiyyah, Beirut 1984, vol. 1, p. 113. The expression mentioned in this book is difficult or problematic. al-Dhahabī cited it with a more understandable expression. al-Dhahabī, *Siyar aʿlām al-nubalāʾ*, ed. Ḥassān ʿAbd al-Mannān, Bayt al-Afkār al-Duwaliyyah, Beirut 2004, vol. 1, p. 1180. The evaluation of scholars about Ayyūb was that he was weak. See al-Mizzī, Abū al-Ḥajjāj Jamāl al-Dīn Yūsuf b. ʿAbd al-Raḥmān b. Yūsuf (d. 742/1341), *Tahdhīb al-kamāl fī asmāʾ al-rijāl*, ed. Bashār Awwād Maʿrūf, Muʿassasat al-Risālah, Beirut 1983, vol. 3, p. 474.

²² al-Dhahabī, *Mūqizah*, p. 60.

²³ It is narrated from Zuhrī: “When a *ḥadīth* was stolen it was added to and improved.” Ibn ʿAdī, Abū Aḥmad ʿAbdullāh b. ʿAdī al-Jurjānī (d. 365/976), *al-Kāmil fī duʿāfāʾ al-rijāl*, ed. ʿAdil Aḥmad al-Mawjūd, Dār al-Kutub al-ʿIlmiyyah, Beirut n.d.), vol. 1, p. 138.

²⁴ Muslim, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, Ṣalāh al-musāfirīn, 63, 64.

R₆ Abū Umayyah > R₅ Sulaymān b. ʿAbd al-Rahmān al-Dimashqī > R₄ ʿAbdullāh b. Marwān al-Dimashqī > R₃ Ibn Abī Dhiʿb > R₂ Nāfiʿ > R₁ Ibn ʿUmar: The Holy Prophet: (...)²⁵

Ibn al-Qaysarānī said that Abū Shaykh ʿAbdullāh b. Marwān, the fourth narrator, stole this *ḥadīth* narrated from Abū Hurayra and attributed it to the Prophet with an *isnād* of Ibn Abū Dhiʿb. According to his comment, ʿAbdullāh b. Marwān is the narrator who narrates the *ḥadīth*, which has only one *isnād*. using the second one. Neither Nāfiʿ nor Ibn ʿUmar has a *ḥadīth* like this.²⁶

There was a debate on ʿAbdullāh b. Marwān being accused of stealing *ḥadīth*. Abū Shaykh ʿAbdullāh b. Marwān al-Harrānī (d. 213/828) narrated *ḥadīth* from Zuhayr b. Muʿāwiyah and ʿIsā b. Yūnus. Ḥusayn b. Mansūr, Ibrāhīm b. al-Haytham and others narrated from ʿAbdullāh b. Marwān. Ibn Ḥibbān said that he was a credible man (*thiqa*).²⁷

Dāraqutnī said that ʿAbdullāh b. Marwān, who was denigrated by Ibn Ḥibbān,²⁸ is not the same narrator who died in 213/828, because only Sulaymān b. ʿAbd al-Rahmān narrated from Abū Shaykh ʿAbdullah b. Marwān al-Khurāsānī and he never narrated from Ibn Abū Dhiʿb. According to Dāraqutnī, the ʿAbdullah b. Marwān who was denigrated by Ibn Ḥibbān is unidentified (*majhūl*).²⁹

2.b. A narrator steals a fabricated *ḥadīth* and narrates after combining it with a sound *isnād*

In this case, a narrator takes a *ḥadīth* from someone who is known as a fabricator of *ḥadīth* (*waḍḍāʿ*), then narrates it after combining it with a sound *isnād*. For example, the *ḥadīth* that lauds the lentil is narrated as follows:

The compiler: R₆ Ḥusayn b. Ishāq > R₅ ʿAmr b. Ḥusayn > R₄ Muḥammad b. ʿAbdullāh b. ʿUlātha > R₃ Thawr b. Yazīd > R₂ Makkhūl > R₁ Wasīla: The Prophet: “...

²⁵ al-Ṭahāwī, Abū Jaʿfar Aḥmad b. Muḥammad b. Salāma al-Azdī (d. 321/933), *Sharḥ mushkil al-āthār*, ed. Shuʿayb al-Arnaʿūt, Muʿassasat al-Risālah, Beirut 1994, vol. 10, p. 318.

²⁶ al-Qaysarānī, Abū al-Faḍl Muḥammad b. Ṭāhir Ibn (d. 507/1113), *Tadhkirat al-ḥuffāz*, ed. Ḥamdī b. ʿAbd al-Majīd b. ʿIsmaʿīl al-Salafī, Dār al-Sumayʿi, Riyadh 1994, p. 25.

²⁷ This information was collected from these sources: al-Bukhārī, Abū ʿAbdullah Muḥammad b. ʿIsmaʿīl (d. 256/870), *al-Tārīkh al-kabīr*, Dār al-Kutub al-ʿIlmiyyah, Beirut 1969, vol. 5, p. 207; al-Dhahabī, *Tārīkh*, vol. 15, p. 223.

²⁸ Ibn Ḥibbān, Abū Ḥatīm Muḥammad b. Ḥibbān b. Aḥmad al-Bustī (d. 354/965), *Kitāb al-majrūḥīn min al-muḥaddithīn*, ed. Ḥamdī b. ʿAbd al-Majīd b. ʿIsmaʿīl al-Salafī, Dār al-Sumayʿi, Riyadh 2000, vol. 1, p. 530.

²⁹ al-Dāraqutnī, Abū al-Ḥasan ʿAlī b. ʿUmar b. Aḥmad, (d. 385/995), *Taʿlīqāt al-Dāraqutnī ʿalā al-majrūḥīn li-Ibn Ḥibbān al-Bustī*, ed. Khalīl b. Muḥammad al-ʿArabī, Dār al-Kutub al-Islāmī, Cairo 1994, p. 153.

continue to eat the lentil, because it is blessed with the tongues of the seventy prophets.”³⁰

Ibn al-Jawzī mentioned it in a long *ḥadīth* with two *isnāds*, both different from that below.³¹ The *isnād* of Bayhaqī is as following:

The compiler: R₇ Abū ʿAbdullāh and Muḥammad b. Mūsā > R₆ Abū al-ʿAbbās al-ʿAṣam > R₅ al-ʿAbbās b. al-Walīd b. Mazyad > R₄ Mahlad b. Quraysh > R₃ ʿAbd al-Raḥmān b. Dalham > R₂ ʿAtāʾ > R₁ ∅³²: The Prophet: (...) ³³

The *isnāds* mentioned below were criticized from various aspects and rejected because all of them are unreliable. We ignore these critiques and focus on the matter of stealing *ḥadīth*, which Ibn al-Qaysarānī mentioned as follows:

The first *isnād*: The compiler: R₆ ʿIsā b. Shuayb al-Basrī > R₅ Ḥajjāj b. Minhāl > R₄ Ḥumayd b. Abī Ḥumayd > R₃ ʿAbd al-Raḥmān b. Dalham > R₂ ∅ > R₁ ∅: The Prophet.³⁴

In this *isnād*, ʿIsā b. Shuayb was denigrated, as his *ḥadīth* is disregarded (*matrūk al-ḥadīth*).

The second *isnād*: The compiler: (...) > R₄ Yahyā b. al-Aʿlā al-Rāzī > R₃ Ṣafwān b. Sulaym > R₂ ʿAtāʾ b. Yasār > R₁ Ibn ʿAbbās: The Prophet: (...)

Yahyā, the fourth narrator, was accused of changing *isnāds* individually narrated from the credible narrators.

Ibn al-Qaysarānī said that Ghunaym b. Sālīm had had a book that was narrated with a fabricated *isnād*. Yahyā might have stolen this *ḥadīth* from that book and narrated it after changing its *isnād*.³⁵

³⁰ al-Ṭabarānī, Abū al-Qāsim Sulaymān b. Aḥmad b. Ayyūb al-Laḥmī (d. 360/971), *al-Muʿjam al-kabīr*, ed. Ḥamdī ʿAbd al-Majīd al-Salafī, Maktabat Ibn Taymiyyah, Cairo 1983, vol. 22, p. 63; *Musnad al-Shāmiyyīn*, ed. Ḥamdī ʿAbd al-Majīd al-Salafī, Muʾassasat al-risālah, Beirut 1989, vol. 1, p. 264; vol. 4, p. 311; Abū Nuʿaym Aḥmad b. ʿAbdullah b. Ishāq al-Isfahānī (d. 430/1038), *al-Tibb al-nabawī*, ed. Muṣṭafā H. Dūnmaz al-Turkī, Dār Ibn Ḥazm, Beirut 2006, vol. 2, p. 637.

³¹ Ibn al-Jawzī, Abū al-Faraj Jamāl al-Dīn ʿAbd al-Raḥman b. ʿAlī (d. 597/1201), *Kitāb al-mawḍūʿāt*, ed. Nuraddīn b. Shukrī Būyacīlar, Maktabat Adwāʾ al-Salaf, Riyadh 1997, vol. 3, p. 113.

³² This symbol shows an omitted narrator in the *isnād* or an omitted word in the text.

³³ al-Bayhaqī, Abū Bakr Aḥmad b. al-Ḥusayn b. ʿAlī (d. 458/1066), *al-Jāmiʿ li-shuʿab al-īmān*, ed. Mukhtār Aḥmad al-Nadwī, Maktabat al-Rushd, Riyadh 2003, vol. 8, p. 97.

³⁴ Ibn al-Qaysarānī, *Tadhkirat al-ḥuffāz*, p. 230.

³⁵ *Ibid.*

In preliminary research, we saw that the lentil *ḥadīth* did not become transformed into the *sarmal*.³⁶ It has only one or two forms. According to this research, it can be said that the earliest book containing this *ḥadīth* is Ṭabarānī's.

The second example of denigration is as follows: There is a *ḥadīth sarmal* which mentioned that the Prophet visited his mother's tomb with a group of his companions and prayed in tears for her forgiveness. In our preliminary research, we found many forms of this *ḥadīth* ascribed to the Prophet. Some of them are narrated by Abū Hurayra and others by Abū Burdah.³⁷ To understand how the *ḥadīth* was stolen, we will review the accounts mentioned in two *ḥadīth* books.

A *ḥadīth* account contained in al-Bazzār's book is as follows:

The compiler: R₆ Ḥumayd b. al-Rabī' > R₅ Yaḥyā b. Yamān > R₄ Sufyān > R₃ Alqama b. Marsad > R₂ Ibn Buraydah > R₁ Buraydah: an act of the Prophet: "The Prophet visited the grave of his mother with a thousand armed cavalry."³⁸

Another *ḥadīth* account contained in Ibn al-Qaysarānī's book is as follows:

The compiler: R₆ Muḥammad b. Yunus al-Kudaymī > R₅ Qabīṣa b. 'Uqba > R₄ Sufyān al-Thawrī > R₃ Alqama b. Marsad > R₂ Sulaymān b. Buraydah > R₁ Buraydah: An act of the Prophet: "The Prophet visited the grave of his mother with a thousand armed cavalry. He had never cried anywhere as he cried there."³⁹

According to Ibn al-Qaysarānī, Ibn al-Yamān⁴⁰ mistook this narration and al-Kudaymī stole it from him and narrated from Qabīṣa.

Abū al-'Abbās Muḥammad b. Yūnus al-Baṣrī al-Kudaymī (d. 286/899) is accused of fabricating and stealing *ḥadīth*. Relating to other denigrations, he was

³⁶ See for the term *sarmal*, Kuzudişli, Ali, *Rivayetlerde Sarmal Özellik*, Tıbyan Yay, Izmir 2012.

³⁷ Some of these narrations could be quoted from Ibn Hanbal, *al-Musnad*, vol. 37, p. 111.

³⁸ al-Bazzār, Abū Bakr Aḥmad b. 'Amr b. 'Abdulkhāliq al-Baṣrī (d. 292/905), *al-Musnad al-Baḥr al-zakḥkḥār*, ed. Maḥfūz al-Raḥmān Zaynallah, Mu'assasat 'Ulūm al-Qur'ān, Madina 1988, vol. 10, p. 272.

³⁹ Ibn al-Qaysarānī, *Tadhkirat al-ḥuffāz*, p. 91.

⁴⁰ According to this source, Ibn al-Yamān's name is Muḥammad but according to al-Bazzār, his name is Yaḥyā. I think the two are different men. Muḥammad b. al-Yamān al-Samarkandī (d. 268/882) is a Ḥanafī jurist. He has a book on *ḥadīth* called *al-I'tisām*. See Khayr al-Dīn Ziriklī (d. 1396/1976), *al-A'lām Qāmūs tarājīm li-ashhur al-rijāl wa'l-nisā'*, Dār al-'Ilm al-Malāyīn, Beirut 2006, vol. 7, p. 147; Ibn Qutlubūghā, Abū al-'Adl Zayn al-Dīn Qāsim, (d. 879/1474), *Tāj al-tarājīm*, ed. Muḥammad Khayr Ramaḍān Yūsuf, Dār al-Qalam, Damascus 1992, p. 282. The other name, Yaḥyā b. al-Yamān al-'Ijlī, Abū Zakariyyā (d. 189/805), is of a man who died in the period of Caliph Hārūn in Kūfa. It is said of him that he received a lot of narrations and made a lot of mistakes. His narration is disregarded when it contradicts well-known ones. See Ibn Ṣa'd, Abū 'Abdullāh Muḥammad b. Sa'd b. Manī' al-Zuhrī, (d. 230/845) *al-Ṭabaqāt al-kubrā*, ed. 'Alī Muḥammad 'Umar, Maktabat al-Khanjī, Cairo 2001, vol. 8, p. 513. In this case, al-Bazzār's account is more reliable. I could not obtain any information about the mistake of Ibn al-Yamān mentioned in the citation.

accused of narrating from those whom he had never met, saying that he had met them. It is said that he fabricated more than a thousand *ḥadīths*. Although some verified him, the majority of *ḥadīth* scholars did not respect his narrations.⁴¹

Abū ʿĀmir Qabīṣa b. ʿUkba al-Suwāʿī, of whom it is said that al-Kudaymī narrated *ḥadīth* from him, is accepted as a trusted narrator. He narrated many *ḥadīth* from al-Thawrī.⁴² According to Ibn al-Qaysarānī, al-Kudaymī took *ḥadīths* of Ibn al-Yamān in an invalid way and narrated them from Qabīṣa saying that he had heard them from him.

The Judgment of the *Ḥadīth* Thieves

As explained above, those who took *ḥadīth* from someone in an invalid way and narrated it without any change was judged to be a thief generally. He is separated from those who lie about the Prophet,⁴³ because his lie is concerning the way of taking *ḥadīth*, not concerning the fabrication of *isnād* or text. In other words, he does not fabricate a new *ḥadīth* but narrates that which he has no right to narrate. Because of this, he was considered a liar, in general, not a *waddāʿ* or *kadhhdhāb*.

If a narrator narrates something that he had stolen after making some change, he is denigrated as a *waddāʿ*.⁴⁴ His status is judged to be as follows, from the lightest to heaviest cases:

- a) A narrator steals a narration which has a sound *isnād* and narrates it, fabricating a weak *isnād*.
- b) He steals a narration that has a weak *isnād* and narrates it, fabricating a sound *isnād*.
- c) He steals a fabricated narration and narrates it, fabricating a sound *isnād*.⁴⁵

The severity of changing the text of a *ḥadīth* would be comparable to the changing of the *isnād* of a *ḥadīth*. The severity of emendations causing change in the Sharīa is the greatest.

Conclusion

⁴¹ Ibn Hibbān, *Kitab al-majrūhīn*, vol. 2, p. 312; Ibn ʿAdī, *al-Kāmil*, vol. 7, p. 553; al-Dhahabī, *Tārīkh*, vol. 21, p. 302.

⁴² Ibn Saʿd, *Ṭabaqāt*, vol. 8, p. 527; Bukhārī, *Tārīkh*, vol. 7, p. 177; al-Khatīb al-Baghdādī, *Tārīkh*, vol. 14, p. 493; al-Dhahabī, *Tārīkh*, vol. 15, p. 352.

⁴³ al-Dhahabī, *Mūqīza*, p. 60.

⁴⁴ *Ibid*.

⁴⁵ *Ibid* (by improving).

The terms used for critiques of narrators are important for giving information about the reliability of a narrator as well as for giving some hints about the history of *ḥadīth*. In this article I tried to explain one such term, stealing *ḥadīth*, in Arabic *sariqat al-ḥadīth* or *al-ḥadīth al-masrūq*.

Stealing *ḥadīth* may be briefly defined as “a narrator takes a *ḥadīth* in an invalid way and narrates it to others, commonly after making some changes to it.” Because thieves of *ḥadīth* generally change *ḥadīth*, stealing *ḥadīth* is considered a violation of rights and a malicious act which threatens to disrupt narrations more than a mistake of procedure.

The evaluation of stealing *ḥadīth* as a violation of rights led to some questions like these: What is the right of narration, and how and why does a narrator achieve it? These questions may be answered briefly as follows:

The rules of *ḥadīth* narration began to be more stringent from the second/eighth century. In this period, *ḥadīth* underwent some developments as the scholars began to collect them in books. This made receiving *ḥadīth* from credible narrators very important. It was necessary for a narrator who lived in this period to explain the source of his narration.

When a narrator has a *ḥadīth* that he received from a reliable narrator in a valid way, other narrators come to him for hearing it directly. This situation increased his popularity with the public. A narrator could not reach this situation easily. He had to travel long distances for collecting to *ḥadīths*. The valid way of collecting *ḥadīths* was too difficult. Those who did not want to take this long way would gather *ḥadīth* in invalid ways and narrate them as if he had heard from the owner of the *ḥadīth* narration. This was seen as a violation of rights and caused accusations of stealing *ḥadīth*.

There are many ways of stealing *ḥadīth* but they can be divided into two groups. The first kind is when a narrator receives a *ḥadīth* in an invalid way and narrates it without any changes. The second kind is when a narrator receives a *ḥadīth*, be it sound or unsound, in an invalid way and narrates it after making some changes.

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