

°UTHMĀN B. MUḤAMMAD FŪDĪ'S *SANAD* TO
AL-BUKHĀRĪ AS PRESENTED IN *TAZYĪN AL-*
WARAQĀT

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The *sanad* or chain of transmitting authorities for traditions is an important part of the credentials of Muslim scholars of *ḥadīth* (traditions). °Abd Allāh b. Muḥammad presents °Uthmān b. Muḥammad Fūdī's *sanad* for the collection of traditions by al-Bukhārī in his *Tazyīn al-waraqāt*. Mervyn Hiskett provides some identification for key personalities in this list through his footnotes to his translation of °Abd Allāh's work.¹ It might, however, be helpful to provide additional information and some corrections to his notes.

The names in the chain of authorities closest to Shaykh °Uthmān are of some significance. These provide a direct link between Shaykh °Uthmān and important revivalist scholarly traditions within the eighteenth-century Islamic world. In particular, the *sanad* to al-Bukhārī presented in *Tazyīn* is the same as would have been used by Muḥammad b. °Abd al-Wahhāb and Shāh Walī Allāh al-Dihlawī, the famous eighteenth-century revivalists in Arabia and South Asia.

The poetic rendition of the *sanad*² starts by saying that Shaykh °Uthmān had studied the traditions in the collection made by al-Bukhārī with his paternal uncle, Muḥammad b. Rāj. This uncle had been on pilgrimage and had studied

1 °Abd Allāh b. Muḥammad, *Tazyīn al-waraqāt*, trans. M. Hiskett, Ibadan: Ibadan University Press 1963. I wish to thank Nehemia Levtzion for drawing my attention to the reference to the *sanad* in this work.

2 *Ibid.*, 38-9 for the Arabic text, p. 95 for the translation and notes.

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traditions in the holy cities of Arabia, where he had studied al-Bukhārī with, and transmitted al-Bukhārī from, Abū 'l-Ḥasan al-Sindī. This scholar was unknown to Hiskett. There are two *ḥadīth* scholars by this name in the eighteenth century communities in Mecca and Medina. One is Abū 'l-Ḥasan Muḥammad b. °Abd al-Hādī al-Sindī (d. 1138/1725-6).³ In later sources he is sometimes referred to as Abū 'l-Ḥasan al-Kabīr or 'the Elder', to distinguish him from the later Abū 'l-Ḥasan al-Ṣaghīr or 'the Younger'. This latter is Abū 'l-Ḥasan Muḥammad b. Ṣādiq al-Sindī (1125-87/1712-73).⁴ Because Abū 'l-Ḥasan al-Kabīr is too old to be identified as the teacher of Muḥammad b. Rāj, Abū 'l-Ḥasan al-Ṣaghīr is most likely to be the person cited in the *sanad*.

The person from whom Abū 'l-Ḥasan al-Sindī is said to transmit al-Bukhārī is Muḥammad Ḥayāt al-Sindī, whose identity was also not known to Hiskett. He was a little-known though critical figure in eighteenth-century revivalism.⁵ Muḥammad Ḥayāt al-Sindī, who died in al-Madina in 1163/1750, was a teacher of Muḥammad b. °Abd al-Wahhāb and had close connections with the revivalist tradition of *ḥadīth* scholarship in the holy cities of the eighteenth century.

He had a number of *sanads* for transmission from al-Bukhārī, but the one cited in *Tazyīn* is through 'Ibn Sālīm'. Hiskett identifies this person as possibly being Muḥammad °Afif al-Din °Alī Ibn Sālīm (d. 1134/1721). This is probably not a correct identification. One of Muḥammad Ḥayāt al-Sindī's major teachers in tradition was a prominent *muḥaddith*, °Abd Allāh Ibn Sālīm al-Baṣrī (d. 1134/1722), who figures in the *sanads* of Shāh Walī Allāh of South Asia

3 See the biographical entry in Muḥammad Khalīl al-Murādī, *Silk al-durar fī °ayān al-qarn al-thānī °ashar*, Baghdad 1301/1883-4, IV, 66.

4 See the biographical entry in Kaḥḥāla, X, 76.

5 John Voll, 'Muḥammad Ḥayyāt al-Sindī and Muḥammad ibn °Abd al-Wahhāb: an Analysis of an Intellectual Group in Eighteenth Century Madina', *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies*, xxxviii, 1, 1975, 32-9.

and many other significant scholars of the day.⁶ In other words, this Ibn Sālīm is an important figure in the *sanads* of a variety of renewalist-minded scholars of the 18th century as well as being an authority on the tradition collection of al-Bukhārī.

With °Abd Allāh b. Sālīm al-Baṣrī the *sanad* reaches a point where it is connected to a well-known and highly respected chain of authorities. Al-Baṣrī transmits al-Bukhārī via a number of authorizations, but a major line of authority for him is through MuḤammad b. °Alā° al-Dīn al-Bābilī (d. 1077/1666).⁷ This is the link presented in Shaykh °Uthmān's *sanad*. Al-Bābilī was a prominent Egyptian scholar who appears to have taught a whole generation of scholars, both in Cairo and in the holy cities of Arabia. For this generation he appears to have been a standard authority and through him scholars from throughout the Islamic world were linked to the great Egyptian traditions of *ḥadīth* scholarship that go back through Zakariyyā al-Anṣārī and Ibn Ḥajar al-°Asqalānī.⁸

In *ḥadīth* scholarship the study of the accounts themselves was, at least in principle, the primary goal. However, an important part of the scholarly method of the discipline was related to the process of transmission. This process was studied in detail by scholars through the centuries to insure that the traditions were transmitted in as correct a form as possible. As a result, the chain of transmitters became significant as the key to the authenticity of the tradition being studied.

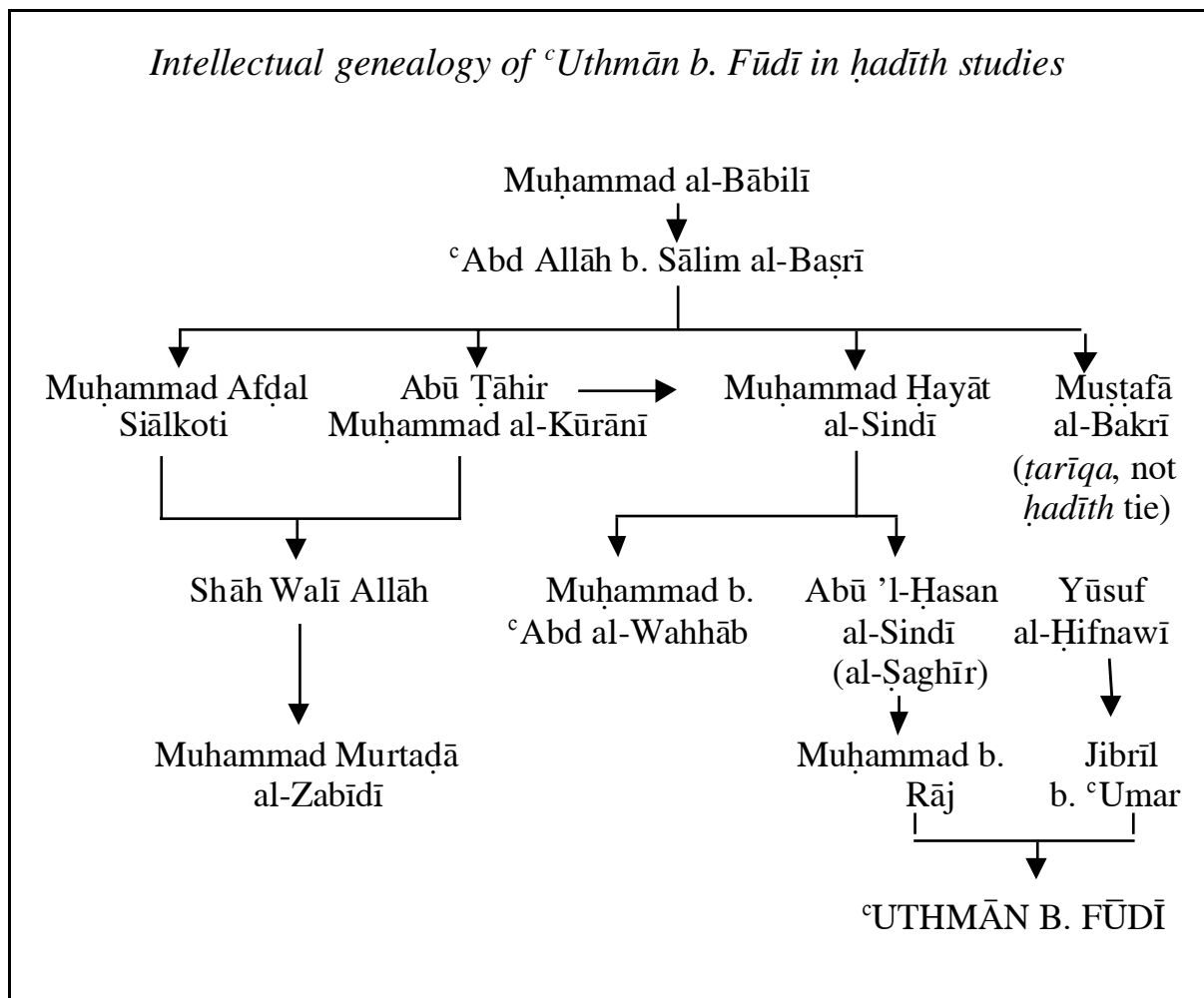
In the discipline of *ḥadīth* studies, there were two important methodological considerations with regard to these

6 See the biographical entry in °Abd al-Raḥmān al-Jabartī, *°Ajā°ib al-athār fī 'l-tarājim wa'l-akhbār*, Cairo 1957-68, I, 208-10. This Ibn Sālīm appears in Shāh Walī Allāh's *sanad* as presented in *Anfās al-°arīfīn*.

7 MuḤammad Amīn al-Muḥibbī, *Khulāṣat al-athar fī a°yān al-qarn al-hādī °ashar*, Cairo 1284/1867-8, IV, 39-42.

8 On this scholarly tradition, see F. Rosenthal, 'Ibn Ḥajar al-°Asqalānī', *EI* (2), III, 776-8.

chains of authorities (or *sanads*). One was the reliability of the people who were doing the transmitting, and the other was the length of the chains. By the 18th century, the scholarly battles over the first issue related largely to the early transmitters but later scholars of great reputations enhanced the prestige of a *sanad*. The second consideration—length of *sanad*—remained of great importance to *ḥadīth* scholars of the 18th century and students would travel great distances in order to be able to transmit on the authority of a *sanad* that was one or two persons shorter than the regular *sanads* for that generation.



As a result of considerations like these, the names in the *sanad* had importance for scholars like Shaykh °Uthmān. The

sanad would be a way of linking his name and reputation to a widely known tradition of *ḥadīth* scholarship. It is of interest that the *sanad* with which Shaykh °Uthmān is linked is one that he shares with other major revivalists of his day, ranging from Muḥammad b. °Abd al-Wahhāb in Arabia to Shāh Walī Allāh in India, and provides a way of locating him in intellectual terms in the cosmopolitan communities of scholars within the Islamic world in his era.