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*Note to reader: This is the **abridged** version of the thesis. For the unabridged version, contact the author: JJLittle1917@gmail.com*

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Abstract

This DPhil thesis explores the origins and development of one of the most famous traditions within the Islamic Hadith corpus: the hadith of ‘Ā’iṣah bt. ‘abī Bakr’s marriage to the Prophet at a young age. To this end, I surveyed all of the modern literature pertaining to the great debate over whether—or to what extent—we can date hadiths and their content, culminating in a defence of a specific—rigorous and systematic—version of the *’isnād-cum-matn* analysis. Thereafter, I collated every available version of every hadith pertaining to this topic and subjected them all to an *’isnād-cum-matn* analysis, which allowed me to reconstruct the underlying urtexts or redactions of various earlier tradents (mostly operating from the mid-to-late 8th Century CE), known as “common links”. I then subjected these common-link redactions to various form-critical, geographical, and historical-critical analyses, which produced a striking conclusion: all versions of the marital-age hadith likely derive a single archetype or ur-hadith. This ur-hadith appears to have been created and disseminated by the Madinan tradent Hiṣām b. ‘Urwah b. al-Zubayr (d. 146-147/763-765) after he moved to Iraq towards the end of his life, probably as a reaction to local proto-Šī‘ī polemics against his great-aunt, ‘Ā’iṣah. Following on from this, I traced the spread and diversification of the hadith across the early Abbasid Caliphate, including the way in which some Hadith scholars reworked its content and/or replaced the original isnad with local and/or familial isnads, thereby naturalising it in their respective regions. Thereafter, I explored the reception of the hadith by the proto-Sunnī Hadith critics, who rejected or criticised some versions, but accepted others, seemingly without a thorough or systematic investigation of their provenance and transmission. Finally, I explored the broader implications of all of this, including the ways in which my findings variously confirm or disconfirm the conclusions and predictions of other scholars, concerning the authenticity of the marital-age hadith in particular and the historical development of Hadith in general. In short, this thesis tracks the provenance and development of a famous and widespread hadith, from its genesis in the sectarian milieu of mid-8th-Century Iraq, to its spread and diversification across the early Abbasid Caliphate, to its canonisation at the hands of the proto-Sunnī Hadith critics.

Introduction

The ‘hadith’ (*ḥadīth*) of the marital age of ‘Ā’ishah bt. ‘abī Bakr (d. 57-58/677-678), the young wife of the Islamic prophet Muḥammad b. ‘Abd Allāh (d. 11/632), is arguably the most well-known hadith beyond Muslim societies and communities. Many versions of this hadith exist throughout the Islamic Hadith corpus, such as the following version recorded in the *Ṣaḥīḥ* the famous hadith-collector Muḥammad b. ‘Ismā‘īl al-Bukārī:

Muḥammad b. Yūsuf related to us: “Sufyān related to us, from Hišām, from his father, from ‘Ā’ishah, that the Prophet married her when she was a girl of six years, and she was taken to him when she was a girl of nine, and she lived with him nine [years].”¹

The goal of this dissertation is to trace the origins and development of this hadith, with the ultimate goal of evaluating the authenticity of the historical memory contained therein. Such a project necessarily entails navigating the methodological debates within Hadith Studies and the field of Islamic origins more broadly—in particular, the great debate over whether—or to what extent—we can use *‘isnāds* to date hadiths. Consequently, I evaluate and attempt to synthesise Joseph Schacht *et al.*’s Revisionist model of Hadith development and his methods of dating Hadith with Harald Motzki *et al.*’s *‘isnād-cum-matn* analysis, in order to reconstruct the history of the hadith in question. On the basis of this reconstruction, I conclude herein that the hadith of ‘Ā’ishah’s marital age was first put into circulation by her great-nephew Hišām b. ‘Urwah b. al-Zubayr in Kufah between 754 and 765 CE—probably as a response to proto-Šī‘ī polemics and hostility directed towards ‘Ā’ishah.

Literature Review

Much has been written about this hadith, but very little of it is relevant to my specific research goals: my interest here is not the various Islamophobic polemics and Islamic

¹ Muḥammad b. ‘Ismā‘īl al-Bukārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, vol. 3 (Vaduz, Liechtenstein: Thesaurus Islamicus Foundation, 2000), p. 1076, # 5188.

apologetics that notably surround the hadith, nor the sociological reflections on these debates by Religious Studies academics.² Instead, what follows is a summary of some of the serious or notable assessments regarding the hadith's *authenticity*.³ This summary is by no means exhaustive, but any literature review of the authenticity-debates over this hadith will rapidly hit the point of diminishing returns, as most of the participants repeat the same claims over and over: the proponents of authenticity cite the numerous independent *'isnāds* supporting the hadith and the fact that they mostly derive from 'Ā'īshah herself, whilst the proponents of inauthenticity attack the reliability of the tradents in the *'isnāds* for the hadith (especially the common link Hišām) and cite implicit contradictions *vis-à-vis* the chronologies of other reports (entailing that 'Ā'īshah must have been older).

Muḥammad Nāṣir al-Dīn al-'Albānī (1985)

In his 1985 monograph *'Irwā' al-Ġalīl fī Taḥrīj 'Aḥādīṭ Manār al-Sabīl*, the prominent Salafite Hadith scholar Muḥammad Nāṣir al-Dīn al-'Albānī concluded that the hadith relating “that 'Ā'īshah was married when she was a girl of six” is “sound” (*ṣaḥīḥ*).⁴ No real argumentation is given therefor, however, beyond the citation of multiple lines of transmission from Hišām.

² That is not to say that such research is not worthwhile; but it is not the focus of the present work.

³ I thus disregard those authors who gloss over the question of authenticity. For example, Nabia Abbott, *Aishah, the Beloved of Mohammed* (Chicago, USA: Chicago University Press, 1942), 2 ff., merely regurgitated the narrative recorded in certain hadiths, including her engagement at age six (*ibid.*, 4) and her consummation of the marriage three years later; the extent of Abbott's analysis was a comment that 'Ā'īshah, “at the most, could not have been over ten years old” (*ibid.*, 7). Even Denise A. Spellberg, *Politics, gender, and the Islamic past: the legacy of 'Ā'isha bint Abi Bakr* (New York, USA: Columbia University Press, 1994), 39-40, 47, who notes the propaganda function of this hadith, does not really deal with the question of authenticity; instead, she seems to assume the essential historicity of the historical memory contained therein: “As a historical persona, 'A'isha had an edge over her co-wives manifest in her youth and virginity” (*ibid.*, 47). The closest we get is a brief and vague statement that the reports of 'Ā'īshah's marital age “suggest the variability of 'A'isha's age in the historical record” (*ibid.*, 40), although the relevant endnote (*ibid.* 204, n. 54) only seems to deal with her varying dates of birth and death.

⁴ Muḥammad Nāṣir al-Dīn al-'Albānī, *'Irwā' al-Ġalīl fī Taḥrīj 'Aḥādīṭ Manār al-Sabīl*, vol. 6, 2nd ed. (Beirut, Lebanon: al-Maktab al-'Islāmiyy, 1985), p. 230, # 1831.

T. O. Shanavas (2002)

In a 1999 article in *The Minaret* magazine, the Muslim author T. O. Shanavas argues that “the age of Ayesha has been erroneously reported in the hadith literature”,⁵ on the basis of a conflicting chronology inferable from certain other hadiths. In addition to these external considerations, Shanavas attacks the hadith on its own merits, in the following way: (1) the *’isnāds* of most versions of the hadith converge upon a single tradent named Hišām; (2) despite Hišām’s having lived in Madinah for most of his life, no other Madinans (including Mālik) transmitted this hadith; (3) according to Ya‘qūb b. Šaybah (as cited by Ibn Ḥajar), Hišām’s reporting became unreliable after he moved to Iraq; (4) Mālik (as cited by Ibn Ḥajar) refused to accept reports from Hišām after he moved to Iraq; and (5) according to al-Ḍahabī, Hišām’s memory declined in old age. From these points, Shanavas concludes that Hišām mistakenly invented this hadith in his old age after his transition from Madinah to Iraq, and hence, that “his narrative of Ayesha’s marriage and age are unreliable.”⁶

Shanavas’ appeals to conflicting chronologies are not very convincing. The chronology of Prophetical biography (*sīrah/maḡāzī*) is notoriously incoherent and artificial,⁷ and in general, this material is extremely dubious as a historical source for Muḥammad and his contemporaries: the sources in question are (1) non-contemporaneous and postdate the life and times of the Prophet by a century or more, (2) punctuated by magic and miracles, (3) underpinned by Judaeo-Christian themes and motifs and other such artificial literary structures, (4) incoherent in terms of content, (5) diffused with anachronistic doctrines and propaganda retrojected by later competing parties, (6) contradictory with earlier non-Muslim sources in several key respects, and (7) substantially inferred from the Quran (which is to say, exegetical speculation disguised as biography).⁸ Adducing a chronological contradiction from such a mess to cancel out the specific hadith of ‘Ā’iṣah’s marital age thus seems dubious, especially given the conflicting consummation-ages—twelve, thirteen, fourteen, fifteen, eighteen, nineteen, etc.—that could be inferred therefrom.

⁵ T. O. Shanavas, ‘The Myth of a Proverbial Wedding’, *The Minaret: The Islamic Magazine*, Volume 21, Number 3 (1999), 21, col. 2.

⁶ *Ibid.*, 22, col. 1.

⁷ E.g., Stephen J. Shoemaker, *The Death of a Prophet: The End of Muhammad’s Life and the Beginnings of Islam* (Philadelphia, USA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2012), 99-106.

⁸ See the references given in Ch. 1.

Moreover, Shanavas' claim that *no* Madinans narrated this hadith is also ostensibly wrong—in a few *ʿisnāds* we can find tradents such as Ibn Šihāb al-Zuhrī and Yaḥyá b. ʿAbd al-Raḥmān b. Ḥāṭib.⁹ Despite this overgeneralisation, Shanavas makes an excellent point regarding the striking paucity of Madinans in the transmission of this hadith, and his identification of Hišām—and specifically, Hišām in Iraq—as its originator is plausible. Shanavas' appeal to Hišām's senility as an explanation for the genesis of this hadith is not very convincing, however; such "conditional appraisals" within the biographical-dictionaries ('X was reliable until Y occurred') were often retrospective attempts to rationalise perceived disparities in the quality of a given tradent's transmissions, rather than accurate historical memories of senility, etc.¹⁰ Shanavas' reliance upon one such conditional appraisal ("when he was old, Hisham's memory suffered quite badly") to account for the hadith in question is thus dubious—especially given its salient propaganda value.¹¹

Gautier Juynboll (2007)

In his 2007 *Encyclopedia of Canonical Ḥadīth*, Gautier Juynboll claimed that the tradition of ʿĀ'ishah's marital age contained a kernel of historical truth, despite the additions by various later tradents:

ʿĀ'isha may also be assumed to have said (paraphrase):

- "The Prophet married me when I was six years old and he consummated the marriage when I was nine",

cf. Mz., XI, no. **15956**, XII, nos. 16809, 16871, 16881, 17066, 17106, 17249, 17751 (*kh*, 63/44, *m*, II, pp. 1038 f, *d*, *s*, *q*, Ṭay., no. 1454, IS VIII, pp. 40-3#, Ḥum., no. 231, IḤ., VI, pp. 118, 280). ʿĀ'isha's statement is transmitted in a great variety of different wordings for which the early *fuqahā'* and their respective PCLs may be held responsible. For a survey of these wordings, see IS and *m*. In the MC dealing with ʿĀ'isha's marriage to the Prophet there is one tradition in which the month in which the marriage was concluded is mentioned as Shawwāl, see Thawrī under no. 16355.¹²

⁹ These ascriptions are implausible (see chs. 2-3 of the present work), but Shanavas fails to demonstrate this.

¹⁰ Eerik Dickinson, *The Development of Early Sunnite Ḥadīth Criticism: The Taqdima of Ibn Abī Ḥātim al-Rāzī (240/854-327/938)* (Leiden, the Netherlands: Koninklijke Brill NV, 2001), 99.

¹¹ See Chapter 3 of the present work.

¹² Juynboll, *Encyclopedia*, 75.

Juynboll seems to have failed to consistently apply his own methodology here,¹³ for Hišām is the clear “common link” of this tradition—a parental “single strand” links him to ‘Ā’iṣah, whilst the independent transmissions via the likes of al-ʿAʿmaš and ‘Abū ‘Iṣḥāq are clearly “dives”. *Pace* Juynboll himself, a straightforward Juynbollian analysis should conclude that this tradition was put into circulation by Hišām.¹⁴

Muḥammad Ṣāliḥ al-Munajjid (2009)

In a 2009 *fatwā* on ‘certainty regarding the age of the Mother of the Believers, ‘Ā’iṣah’ (published on his IslamQA website), the Salafite scholar Muḥammad Ṣāliḥ al-Munajjid—or someone under his general supervision—argued that the hadith of ‘Ā’iṣah’s marital age is undeniably “sound” (*ṣaḥīḥ*).¹⁵ After quoting a question from a lay-believer concerning the age of ‘Ā’iṣah at the time of her marriage, al-Munajjid (or whoever) responded thus:

The determination of the age of ‘Ā’iṣah at the time of the engagement of the Prophet to her at “six years”, and at the time of the marital consummation with her at “nine years”, is not [open to] independent reasoning (*ijtihād*) for the scholars to judge its correctness from its incorrectness. On the contrary, it is a historical transmission solidly established by that which assures its soundness and [makes a] necessity of assenting to it.¹⁶

Two broad arguments are then outlined by al-Munajjid to substantiate this claim, the first comprising ten points and the second five points. The first is concerned with establishing the authenticity of the marital-age hadith, and largely consists of citations and descriptions of the different versions thereof:

¹³ See Chapter 1 of the present work.

¹⁴ Perhaps Juynboll was relying upon his unfalsifiable “sixth sense” in this instance: Gautier H. A. Juynboll, ‘On the Origins of Arabic Prose: Reflections on Authenticity’, in Gautier H. A. Juynboll (ed.), *Studies on the First Century of Islamic Society* (Carbondale & Edwardsville, USA: Southern Illinois University Press, 1982), 174-175.

¹⁵ Muḥammad Ṣāliḥ al-Munajjid *et al.*, Q&A # 124483 (*Taḥqīq fī ‘Umr ‘Umm al-Mu’minīn ‘Ā’iṣah ‘inda-mā tazawwaja-hā al-Nabiyy*), *IslamQA* (31st/January/2009): <https://islamqa.info/ar/124483>.

¹⁶ *Ibid.* (my translation). For an alternative English translation, see *id.*, Q&A # 124483 (‘Age of the Mother of the Believers ‘Ā’iṣah when the Prophet married her’), *IslamQA* (30th/December/2013): <https://islamqa.info/en/124483>.

1. This information derives from the explicit statement of no less than the subject of the issue herself (*qawl ṣāhibat al-ša'n nafsi-hā*), 'Ā'īṣah (rather than from the speech of someone about her or the description of some historian or traditionist), in an autobiographical hadith recorded by al-Buḵārī and Muslim.
2. This transmission (*riwāyah*) from 'Ā'īṣah was transmitted in the soundest of books after the Quran, namely, the collections of al-Buḵārī and Muslim.
3. This transmission (*riwāyah*) came from 'Ā'īṣah from a number of transmission-paths (*ṭuruq*), and *not* from a single transmission-path, contrary to that which is proclaimed by some of the ignorant—namely:
 - 3.1. The famous transmission-path (*al-ṭarīq al-mašhūrah*) is that from the transmission (*riwāyah*) of Hišām b. 'Urwah b. al-Zubayr, from his father 'Urwah, from 'Ā'īṣah; this is amongst the soundest of the transmissions (*min 'aṣaḥḥ al-riwāyāt*); 'Urwah b. al-Zubayr was the most knowledgeable of people concerning 'Ā'īṣah, because she was his maternal aunt.
 - 3.2. Another transmission-path (*ṭarīq*) from the transmission (*riwāyah*) of al-Zuhrī, from 'Urwah b. al-Zubayr, from 'Ā'īṣah, is recorded by Muslim.
 - 3.3. Another transmission-path (*ṭarīq*) from the transmission (*riwāyah*) of al-'A'maš, from 'Ibrāhīm, from al-'Aswad, from 'Ā'īṣah, is transmitted by Muslim.
 - 3.4. Another transmission-path (*ṭarīq*) from Muḥammad b. 'Amr, from Yaḥyá b. 'Abd al-Raḥmān b. Ḥātim, from 'Ā'īṣah, is transmitted by 'Abū Dāwūd.
 - 3.5. The contemporary Salafite scholar 'Abū 'Ishāq al-Ḥuwaynī has collected the names of those who corroborated (*al-mutābi'in*) 'Urwah b. al-Zubayr, and they were: al-'Aswad b. Yazīd, and al-Qāsim b. 'Abd al-Raḥmān, and al-Qāsim b. Muḥammad b. 'abī Bakr, and 'Amrah bt. 'Abd al-Raḥmān, and Yaḥyá b. 'Abd al-Raḥmān b. Ḥātim.
 - 3.6. Likewise, he collected the names of those who corroborate (*al-mutābi'in*) Hišām b. 'Urwah in the transmission (*riwāyah*) of this hadith, and they were: Ibn Šihāb al-Zuhrī and 'Abū Hamzah Maymūn, the *mawlá* of 'Urwah.
 - 3.7. Then he named the transmitters from Hišām b. 'Urwah amongst the people of Madinah (at which point, al-Munajjid emphasises to the reader that this hadith was amongst those transmitted by Hišām in Madinah as well), and

they were: 'Abū al-Zinād 'Abd Allāh b. Ḍakwān, and his son 'Abd al-Raḥmān b. 'abī al-Zinād, and 'Abd Allāh b. Muḥammad b. Yaḥyá b. 'Urwah.

3.8. And amongst the people of Makkah: Sufyān b. 'Uyaynah.

3.9. And Jarīr b. 'Abd al-Ḥamīd al-Ḍabbī: from amongst the people of Rayy.

3.10. And amongst the people of Basrah: Ḥammād b. Salamah, and Ḥammād b. Zayd, and Wuhayb b. Kālid, and others.

3.11. At this point, al-Munajjid directs the reader to two online video-lectures by al-Ḥuwaynī on this subject, before clarifying that all of this enumeration is necessary to repudiate the specious argumentation (*ṣubḥah*) of some of the ignorant, who argue that (1) Hišām b. 'Urwah was alone in his transmission and (2) that Hišām was senile in his old age. However, the truth is that this accusation (*tuhmah*) was articulated by no-one but 'Abū al-Ḥasan b. al-Qaṭṭān in his *Bayān al-Wahm wa-al-'Ihām*, in which he was mistaken.

3.12. al-Munajjid then quotes al-Ḍahabī from his *Mīzān* to the effect that, even though Hišām's memory diminished somewhat in his old age, he never become senile or confused (despite the report of Ibn al-Qaṭṭān to the contrary).

4. Likewise, the story of the marriage of the Prophet to 'Ā'īṣah when she was nine years old was transmitted by people other than 'Ā'īṣah, amongst those who were her contemporaries (*mimman 'adrakū-hā*) and were more knowledgeable than others regarding her:

4.1. Ibn Ḥanbal transmitted a hadith in his *Musnad*, from Muḥammad b. Bišr, from Muḥammad b. 'Amr, from 'Abū Salamah and Yaḥyá, who narrated about how Kāwlah bt. Ḥakīm advised the Prophet to marry 'Ā'īṣah—a hadith including the elements about 'Ā'īṣah's age.

5. This is what 'Ā'īṣah related about herself, and the transmitters related it from her; this was agreed upon by the historians who wrote biographies of 'Ā'īṣah, between which there is no disagreement concerning that. This matter was not the object of independent reasoning (*ijtihād*), for, after a person has spoken directly about themselves (as 'Ā'īṣah did), there is no room for anyone's independent reasoning (*ijtihād*).

Thereafter, al-Munajjid (or whoever) proceeds to cite indirect, chronological evidence to support this hadith (i.e., reports or statements about ‘Ā’iṣah birth-date, death-date, and age at death that are consistent with the hadith), thereby inverting the common strategy employed by Muslim skeptics of the same hadith.

Some of al-Munajjid (or whoever)’s argumentation is particularly weak—for example, he cherry-picks the quote from al-Ḍahabī in which he rationalises or excuses Hiṣām’s senility, downplaying numerous contrary reports recorded elsewhere by both al-Ḍahabī and Ibn Ḥajar. Additionally, in citing expedient reports and statements about ‘Ā’iṣah’s birth-date, death-date, and age at death in the (mostly late) “historical sources”, al-Munajjid (or whoever) is simply begging the question against skeptics: such reports and statements are consistent with having been generated or contaminated by precisely the marital-age hadith, and thus cannot simply be assumed to be independent corroboration therefor. Such a suspicion is supported by recent scholarship on the provenance of biographical data in *rijāl* works, which suggests that the birth-dates, death-dates, and ages of early figures were actually inferred from *’isnāds*, rather constituting some kind of independent set of information with which to evaluate *’isnāds*.¹⁷

In general, however, al-Munajjid makes a good point: contrary to the criticisms of some Muslim modernists and progressives (who wrongly assume that the *’isnāds* of this hadith all converge upon Hiṣām), the marital-age hadith is supported by more than four independent *’isnāds* and is thus at least *maṣhūr*, if not *mutawātir*. It is difficult to see how anyone taking a sanguine approach to Hadith and other early Islamic sources could resist such evidence—only a skeptic invoking some kind of Schachtian spread of *’isnāds* is in any position to reasonably differ with al-Munajjid on this matter and overcome his objections.

Hussein Abdul-Raof (2012)

In his 2012 monograph *Theological Approaches to Qur’anic Exegesis*, Hussein Abdul-Raof reiterated the common appeal to chronological discrepancies described above,

¹⁷ See the references given in the section on Brown’s criticism of Juynboll in ch. 1 of the present work.

arguing that ‘Ā’iṣah may have actually been engaged at age fourteen and married at age eighteen.¹⁸ Furthermore, Abdul-Raof is seemingly under the impression the hadith of ‘Ā’iṣah’s marital age was exclusively transmitted via Hiṣām, and adduced the aforementioned biographical reports alleging his unreliability after he moved from Madinah to Iraq. Abdul-Raof also notes the seeming absence of Madinan tradents in the hadith, and the telling absence of the hadith from the *Muwaṭṭa’* of Mālik.¹⁹ That said, Abdul-Raof ends by citing a counter-opinion affirming Hiṣām’s reliability, rendering his stance on the hadith’s authenticity somewhat ambiguous.²⁰

Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn al-’Idlibī (2013)

In 2013, the Sunnī theologian and traditionist Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn b. ’Aḥmad al-’Idlibī argued that the hadith-tradition of ‘Ā’iṣah’s marital age—exemplified in the versions recorded by al-Bukārī, Muslim, and Ibn Ḥanbal—does not contain a genuine historical memory, insofar as her age is concerned.²¹ His analysis was nuanced: al-’Idlibī acknowledged that the *’isnāds* underpinning these hadiths are *ṣaḥīḥ* (per traditional Islamic scholarship), and rejects the erroneous charge that Hiṣām alone transmitted (*tafarrada*) it.²² Instead, he argued that the hadith contradicts a chronology inferable from various other reports, which imply that ‘Ā’iṣah was married at age fourteen and cohabited at age eighteen. Consequently, al-’Idlibī concluded that the *matns* of the marital-age hadith contain an error (*wahm*), which he attributes to the potential forgetfulness (*nisyān*) of ‘Ā’iṣah herself, in her old age.²³ In short, the hadith is *ṣaḥīḥ* in

¹⁸ Hussein Abdul-Raof, *Theological Approaches to Qur’anic Exegesis: A Practical Comparative-Contrastive Analysis* (Abingdon, UK: Routledge, 2012), 215-217.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 217.

²⁰ *Ibid.*

²¹ Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn b. ’Aḥmad al-’Idlibī, *’Umr al-Sayyidah ‘Ā’iṣah Yawm al-’Aqd wa-Yawm al-Zawāj* (first published online in 2013, then updated in 2014, then again in 2015), available online: <http://shanfaraa.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/07/Hadith-on-age-of-Aisha.pdf>. For a summary of the history and context of this essay, and a translation as well, see Arnold Yasin Mol, ‘Aisha (ra): The Case for an Older Age in Sunni Hadith Scholarship’, *Yaqeen* (3rd/October/2018): <https://app.yaqeen.io/arnold-yasin-mol/aisha-ra-the-case-for-an-older-age-in-sunni-hadith-scholarship>.

²² ’Idlibī, *’Umr al-Sayyidah ‘Ā’iṣah*, p. 2.

²³ *Ibid.*, pp. 5-6.

terms of transmission but *ṣāḥih* in terms of content, because it conflicts with established historical evidence (*li-l-qarāʾin al-taʾrīkiyyah al-ṭābitah*).²⁴

As noted already, the chronology of the *sīrah* and related material is notoriously incoherent and spurious, and the criticisms above apply here also. As for his internal analysis of the hadith in question, al-ʿIdlibī was constrained by his trust in *ʾisnāds*: in the absence of the Schachtian notion of spreading *ʾisnāds*, he was forced to conclude that the hadith—with its multiple, seemingly-independent *ʾisnāds*—must derive from ʿĀʾishah herself and, hence, that the erroneous content therein must originate with her.

Asma Afsaruddin (2013)

In her 2013 article “Āʾisha bt. Abī Bakr” in the third edition of Brill’s *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, Asma Afsaruddin seems to imply that the dominant version of the marital-age hadith is erroneous, and that ʿĀʾishah was actually engaged at age nine and cohabited at age twelve:

ʿĀʾisha entered the prophet Muḥammad’s home as his wife about three years before the *hijra* (migration) to Medina, when she was around six or seven years of age, according to most sources. She had previously been promised in marriage to a young relative of hers named Jubayr b. Muṭʿim, whose family was still pagan. When the prophet Muḥammad, through the good offices of his aunt Khawla bt. Ḥakīm, expressed interest in ʿĀʾisha after the death of his wife Khadīja, in 619, Abū Bakr consulted with the boy’s family. By that time, Jubayr’s parents were against the idea of their son marrying into a Muslim family and the engagement fell through. ʿĀʾisha’s marriage to the Prophet was not consummated until approximately three years later, when she was either nine or ten years old, as the majority of sources report (Ibn Saʿd, 8:58–62; Ibn Ḥajar al-ʿAsqalānī, 8:139). However, according to the chronology of Ibn Khallikān (d. 681/1282) she would have been nine at her marriage and twelve at its consummation (*Wafayāt al-aʿyān*, 3:16), a chronology also supported by a report from Hishām b. ʿUrwa recorded by Ibn Saʿd (d. 230/845; *al-Ṭabaqāt*, 8:61).²⁵

²⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 6.

²⁵ Asma Afsaruddin, “Āʾisha bt. Abī Bakr”, in Kate Fleet, Gudrun Krämer, Denis Matringe, John Nawas, Everett Rowson, *et al.* (eds.), *Encyclopaedia of Islam, THREE* (Leiden, the Netherlands: Koninklijke Brill NV, 2007-present), online.

Afsaruddin offers two pieces of evidence for this possible revision, although neither are particularly convincing in and of themselves: an alternative chronology inferred from a late source (see above), and a single version that contradicts nearly all other versions of the hadith.

Jonathan Brown (2015)

In a 2015 interview with Ernie Rea on the BBC, Jonathan Brown predicted that a Motzkian *'isnād-cum-matn* analysis of the hadith of 'Ā'īshah's marital age would likely demonstrate the authenticity of the historical memory contained therein:

Brown: "I think it's an authentic report – in fact, I think the scholar whose work does represent the state of the field in Western scholarship on hadith—the German scholar Harald Motzki—if you were to take his methods of dating hadiths, I think you could date that report of Aisha back to actually about the time of Aisha."

Rea: "A contemporary report, you're saying?"

Brown: "Yeah, I think that's accurate. I think even from a non-Muslim perspective it's a good argument that that goes back to Aisha."²⁶

In a more recent (2018) online address, Brown asserts that this hadith is "incredibly widely transmitted," and also implies that no plausible "agenda" for fabricating such a hadith is discernible. Brown further asserts that even if Hišām (the common link) is discounted, a "sahih isnad" still remains (via al-Zuhrī instead). Finally, Brown claimed that "all" of the "variant matns" of this tradition "perfectly" line up with "specific isnads,"²⁷ and subsequently elaborated:

Given the massive evidence for a common link and the perfect distribution of matn variances along isnad variances, I think using Motzki's isnad-cum-matn analysis would conclude that, even for Western scholars using the historical critical method, this report could be dated back to the late 600's CE – to Aisha's own lifetime.²⁸

²⁶ Jonathan A. C. Brown, interview with Ernie Rea 'Hadith', *Beyond Belief*, on BBC Radio 4 (29th/June/2015): <http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b06084kv>.

²⁷ Jonathan A. C. Brown, published as a public comment on his Facebook webpage (9th/August/2018): <https://www.facebook.com/jonathanacbrown/posts/10156584464609850>.

²⁸ *Id.*, published as a public comment on his Facebook webpage (10th/August/2018): https://www.facebook.com/jonathanacbrown/posts/10156584464609850?comment_id=101565857

This is precisely the task undertaken in Chapter 2 of the present work, where Brown's prediction is put to the test. On the basis of the *'isnād-cum-matn* analysis undertaken therein, it looks as though Brown's prediction was wrong: the results indicate that the marital-age hadith cannot be reconstructed as far back as her primary student 'Urwah, nor his student al-Zuhrī. The reconstruction ostensibly terminates at Hišām, two generations after 'Ā'īshah.

Yasmin Amin (2016)

In a paper presented at the 2016 BRAIS Conference in London, Yasmin Amin argues—in a similar vein to Shanavas—that the hadith of 'Ā'īshah's marital age is dubious; on the basis of a conflicting chronology inferable from reports recorded in certain "Islamic history books, Sīra works, and biographical dictionaries", Amin concludes that 'Ā'īshah "was at least nineteen years old at the time of her marriage."²⁹ In addition to these external chronological considerations, Amin supersedes Shanavas in identifying Iraq as the place where Hišām created this hadith: beyond the reports concerning Hišām's unreliability and senility in Iraq, Amin also identified the Iraqi background of most of his tradents, the dubious reputations of some among them, and, perhaps most striking of all, the absence of this hadith in the earliest Madinan collections (such as the *Kitāb al-Mağāzī* of Ibn 'Ishāq, the *Muwaṭṭa'* of Mālik, and the *Kitāb al-Mağāzī* of al-Wāqidī).³⁰ In explaining the genesis of this hadith, Amin initially suggested a scribal error and a consequent scribal rationalisation, in conjunction with her other arguments about 'Ā'īshah's true marital age.³¹

90664850&reply_comment_id=10156585915604850&comment_tracking=%7B%22tn%22%3A%22R9%22%7D.

²⁹ Yasmin Amin, 'Age is just a number or is it? 'A'isha's age between Ḥadīth and History' – paper presented at the Third Annual Conference of the British Association for Islamic Studies, *Panel 3: Historical and Literary Approaches to Ḥadīth*, the British Association for Islamic Studies, London (11th/April/2016), 1.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, 2-3. In addition to her paper and presentation, Amin has elaborated her views to me via private correspondence (beginning in November of 2017).

³¹ *Ibid.*, 9.

In addition to this hypothesis, Amin has suggested a tentative alternative: given certain indications of nine as the ideal marital age within Zoroastrian culture,³² and given the ex-Sasanid character of Iraq and the Persian backgrounds of many of the Iraqi tradents of the hadith in question, it is possible that ‘Ā’iṣah’s marital age was revised to conform to a lingering Zoroastrian or Persian tradition. On this view, the fabricator of the hadith was either a paid-off Hišām or one of the Persian tradents.³³

A drawback of Amin’s initial research was her small sample size: her analysis of the *’isnāds* of the hadith of ‘Ā’iṣah’s marital age was limited to a handful of versions recorded by al-Bukārī, in which dives around Hišām—and their telling provisional provenance—cannot be detected. Amin’s appeals to the chronology of the *sīrah* and Hišām’s failing memory are also questionable (given the reservations outlined above), but her other points are extremely prescient: the near-total predomination of Iraqi tradents below Hišām is striking and, together with the silence of the earliest Madinan collections, certainly suggests an Iraqi provenance for the hadith. In this respect, Amin’s conclusions—and to some degree, those of Shanavas and Abdul-Raof—find dramatic confirmation in my own research. I differ principally in my explanation of the *motive* or *cause* behind Hišām’s creation, which I now see as sectarian (i.e., proto-Sunnī, anti-Šī‘ī propaganda) rather than cultural (i.e., some kind of Persian or Zoroastrian influence).³⁴

J. J. Little (2016 ff.)

For several years, I have been considering the possibility that the hadith of ‘Ā’iṣah’s marital age might be inauthentic. This hypothesis was explored more formally in my Masters dissertation at the University of Oxford (2016-2018), in which I initially

³² Touraj Daryaee, *Sasanian Persia: The Rise and Fall of an Empire* (London, UK: I. B. Tauris & Co. Ltd., 2009), 60; also see Carolyn G. Baugh, *Minor Marriage in Early Islamic Law* (Leiden, the Netherlands: Koninklijke Brill NV, 2017), 28-29.

³³ This hypothesis was conveyed to me via personal correspondence (in November of 2017).

³⁴ The main problem with this hypothesis is the fact that Hišām—the proposed originator of the hadith in question—was not a *mawla* with a Persian or Zoroastrian heritage, and although Amin suggests the possibility that he was commissioned to fabricate the hadith by some unknown agent intent on formally integrating their indigenous customs and ideals into Islam, I am not aware of any evidence that Hišām was buyable in this way. Still, there may be a version of this idea—as an influence on Hišām rather than a motive per se—that is salvageable; see Chapter 3 of the present work.

posited a Madinan and Zubayrid context for the hadith's creation, with Hišām, al-Zuhrī, and their master (and father, in the case of the former) 'Urwah. My reasoning ran as follows.

Early Muslim political claimants in the first and second *fitnahs* seem to have derived legitimacy from their female familial connections to Muḥammad—and 'Abd Allāh b. al-Zubayr, nephew of 'Ā'ishah and leader of the Zubayrid faction in the second *fitnah*, was no exception. Thus, it seems likely that the Zubayrids would have been under pressure, or were at least incentivised, to emphasise the importance of 'Ā'ishah to bolster the Zubayrid cause—and, given that they were wont to fabricate or interpolate reports in their favour, it is plausible that they did so in this regard also. This could explain the initial appearance of reports about the uniqueness of 'Ā'ishah and her status as the favourite wife of the Prophet. On this view, one of the ways that these propagandists emphasised the specialness of 'Ā'ishah was by trumpeting her distinctive status as Muḥammad's only virgin wife—an emphasis that would have been accentuated by the circulation of reports concerning her young marital age. It is thus unsurprising that the hadith in question is associated overwhelmingly with a locus of Zubayrid tradents—namely, Hišām and his father 'Urwah, the latter of whom was the brother of 'Abd Allāh and the nephew of 'Ā'ishah.³⁵

In November of 2017, however, I was swayed by Amin's argument for an Iraqi provenance, rather than a Madinan one, or in other words: the hadith was probably created by Hišām in early Abbasid Iraq, not 'Urwah in Zubayrid Madinah. This poses a problem of *relevancy* for my initial Zubayrid hypothesis. The need for a hadith like this would have been greatest *during* the Zubayrid rebellion, which ended when Hišām was still a child—it would make more sense coming from 'Urwah in Madinah under the Zubayrids, rather than Hišām in Iraq under the Abbasids. That said, there is a precedent for the fabrication of pro-Zubayrid hadiths by later sympathisers, i.e., “later attempts to redeem the memory of their lost cause as a just one.”³⁶ On the other hand, Hišām's hadith is somewhat indirect for such a cause—this does not preclude a pro-Zubayrid motive, but it does seem less plausible in the light of the hadith's more direct utility for legitimising 'Ā'ishah in her own right. In other words, the intended pro-

³⁵ For more on all of this see, see Chapter 3 of the present work.

³⁶ Mehdy Shaddel, “Abd Allāh ibn al-Zubayr and the Mahdī: Between propaganda and historical memory in the Second Civil War”, *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies*, Volume 80, Number 1 (2017), 1.

Zubayrid message or implications of this ‘Ā’iṣah-validating hadith would only be immediately obvious during the Zubayrid rebellion, i.e., a rebellion led by ‘Ā’iṣah’s family. By contrast, who by the Abbasid period would connect the dots between ‘Ā’iṣah being good with the Zubayrids being good by association? And if the connection would no longer be obvious, why then would someone fabricate this hadith for that purpose? If the marital-age hadith indeed originated with Hiṣām in Abbasid-era Iraq (as opposed to originating with ‘Urwah in Zubayrid-era Hijaz), then a retrospective Abbasid-era pro-Zubayrid political motive seems like a stretch.

Once again, there are many others who have commented upon this issue—but since they tend to repeat points already raised by those cited already, I have opted, for the sake of brevity, to omit them.

Outline of the Present Work

The present work explores the origins and development of the marital-age hadith through six chapters: **firstly**, a preliminary summary of the relevant methodological debates in Hadith Studies, culminating in a defence of at least a version of the *’isnād-cum-matn* analysis; **secondly**, a comprehensive *’isnād-cum-matn* analysis of the hadith, including a systematic reconstruction of its earlier redactions and an identification of those responsible therefor; **thirdly**, a combined form-critical, geographical, and historical-critical analysis of the origins of the hadith, identifying its probable provenance in the sectarian milieu of mid-8th-Century Iraq; **fourthly**, a summary of the hadith’s spread and diversification across the Abbasid Caliphate, accounting for the provenance of all of the extant versions thereof; **fifthly**, a summary of the hadith’s reception by Sunnī Hadith scholars, including both criticisms of some versions thereof and its overall achievement of canonical status; and **sixthly**, a summary of the broader implications of all of this research for both the modern methods and debates in Hadith Studies, on the one hand, and early Islamic history and the development of Hadith, on the other.

Chapter 1: Methods & Debates

That Hadith are unreliable—that any given *matn* cannot be taken at face value as an accurate datum from the 1st Islamic Century, and that any given *ʿisnād* cannot be taken at face value as an accurate record of a *matn*’s provenance—cannot be seriously contested, for multiple reasons. **Firstly**, there is an overwhelming prior probability based upon the ubiquity of fabrication and pseudepigraphy in Late Antique and Mediaeval religio-historical (pagan, Jewish, and Christian) ascriptions.³⁷ **Secondly**, there is the high frequency of contradictions within the Hadith corpus,³⁸ which necessitates the occurrence of a huge amount of fabrication, interpolation, and/or mutation and, therefore, skepticism towards any given hadith.³⁹ **Thirdly**, there is the ubiquity of fabrication and interpolation—both reported *and* demonstrable—in the Hadith corpus,⁴⁰ which again casts doubt upon the rest of the corpus.⁴¹ **Fourthly**, there is the rapid, extreme mutation and growth of reports that evidently took place over the course of a century or more of oral transmission,⁴² which means that any given *matn*—regardless of the *ʿisnād*—is likely at best heavily distorted and at worst obliterated beyond its original form.⁴³ **Fifthly**, there is the belated emergence of Hadith as a genre

³⁷ For this point (at least applied to early Islamic epistles), see Michael A. Cook, *Early Muslim Dogma: A Source-critical Study* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1981), 51. For the prior probability in question, see Richard C. Carrier, *On the Historicity of Jesus: Why We Might Have Reason to Doubt* (Sheffield, UK: Sheffield Phoenix Press, 2014), 214 ff.

³⁸ E.g., Ignáz Goldziher (ed. Samuel M. Stern and trans. Christa R. Barber & Samuel M. Stern), *Muslim Studies, Volume 2* (Albany, USA: State University Press of New York, 1971), *passim*.

³⁹ For this point, see Christopher Melchert, ‘The Life and Works of al-Nasāʿī’, *Journal of Semitic Studies*, Volume 59, Issue 2 (2014), 406, n. 130.

⁴⁰ For some examples, see: Goldziher (trans. Barber & Stern), *Muslim Studies*, II, *passim*; Schacht, *Origins*, *passim*; Gautier H. A. Juynboll, *Muslim tradition: Studies in chronology, provenance and authorship of early ḥadīth* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1983), *passim*. Also see the section on Motzki’s criticism of Cook, below.

⁴¹ For this point, see: Schacht, *Origins*, 149; Patricia Crone, *Roman, provincial and Islamic law: The origins of the Islamic patronate* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1987), 33; Shoemaker, *The Death of a Prophet*, 300, n. 56.

⁴² For the mutation in question, see especially: Patricia Crone, *Slaves on Horses: The Evolution of the Islamic Polity* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1980), ch. 1; *ead.*, *Roman, provincial and Islamic law*, 31-33; *ead.*, *Meccan Trade*, esp. ch. 9; *ead.*, ‘Muhammad and the origins of Islam. By F. E. Peters’, *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland*, Volume 5, Issue 2 (1995), 270-271; Hiroyuki Yanagihashi, *Studies in Legal Hadith* (Leiden, the Netherlands: Koninklijke Brill NV, 2019), *passim*. Also see Hawting, ‘Harald Motzki: Die Anfänge der islamischen Jurisprudenz’, 142, and Daniel Brown, *Rethinking Tradition in Modern Islamic Thought* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 87 ff.

⁴³ For this point, see Cook, *Muhammad*, 67, but much more forcefully argued in Crone, *Roman, provincial, and Islamic law*, 31-34, and *ead.*, *Medieval Islamic Political Thought* (Edinburgh, UK: Edinburgh University Press, 2004), 126, n. 3. For a similar point, see Robert G. Hoyland, ‘Writing the

and corpus, largely during the 8th and 9th Centuries CE, which straightforwardly precludes the authenticity of most ascriptions to the 7th Century CE.⁴⁴ This chronology is the core of what we can call the Revisionist model of Hadith development (along with the premise that Hadith underwent a process of progressive retrojection, from Followers, to Companions, to the Prophet), which is inferable from and corroborated by multiple, independent points of evidence, including: dissonant reports attesting to early, generic notions of *sunnah* (as opposed to a specifically Prophetic one), and early, vague notions of Prophetic *sunnah* (as opposed to one concretely embodied by Hadith); dissonant reports attesting to the origins of the *ʿisnād* during the second *fiṭnah*, and the spread and generalisation of the *ʿisnād* and Hadith during the middle of the 8th Century CE; the suspicious abundance of early long-lived tradents (which makes sense in light of the belated rise of *ʿisnāds*); the fact that most of the earliest “common links” operated during the 8th Century CE (which makes sense in light of the belated rise of *ʿisnāds*); the scarcity of Hadith in the earliest Islamic documents; the ascription-pattern of early Islamic epistles (which are almost all attributed to Followers, just as this model predicts); the reported and inferable massive growth of Hadith during the 8th and 9th Centuries CE; the inferable and observable belated use of Hadith, and especially Prophetic Hadith, in early Islamic jurisprudence; the relative paucity of Prophetic Hadith in the earliest Hadith collections, versus their numerousness in the later Hadith collections; and the existence of both non-Prophetic and Prophetic versions of the same hadiths.⁴⁵

These general conclusions are primarily the result of the work of Ignáz Goldziher, Joseph Schacht, Gautier Juynboll, Michael Cook, and Patricia Crone, although many others have contributed relevant evidence therefor. For all of these reasons (and indeed, for any one of them), skepticism obtains: any given *matn* was likely created

Biography of the Prophet Muhammad: Problems and Solutions’, *History Compass*, Volume 5, Number 2 (2007), 587.

⁴⁴ For this point, see Michael A. Cook, ‘Eschatology and the Dating of Traditions’, *Princeton Papers in Near Eastern Studies*, Volume 1 (1992), 24, and Andrew L. Rippin, ‘*Tafsīr Ibn ‘Abbās* and criteria for dating early *tafsīr* texts’, *Jerusalem Studies in Arabic and Islam*, Volume 18, Number 2 (1994), 61. Also see the section on ‘The relationship between CLs and their hadiths’, below.

⁴⁵ E.g., Schacht, *Origins*, *passim*; Cook, *Early Muslim Dogma*, *passim*; Juynboll, *Muslim tradition*, esp. ch. 1; Patricia Crone & Martin Hinds, *God’s Caliph: Religious authority in the first centuries of Islam* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1986), ch. 5; Gautier H. A. Juynboll, *Studies on the Origins and Uses of Islamic Ḥadīth* (Aldershot, UK: Variorum, 1996); Pavel Pavlovitch, ‘The Origin of the *Isnād* and al-Mukhtār b. Abī ‘Ubayd’s Revolt in Kūfa (66-7/685-7)’, *al-Qanṭara*, Volume 39, Number 1 (2018), 17-48.

long after the relevant events and/or distorted in the course of transmission, and any given *ʾisnād* was likely created long after anyone could remember the actual transmission-history of the *matn* in question.

There was quite a range of specific *mechanisms* or *processes* involved in the creation and alteration of Hadith, which are often attested even in traditional Islamic scholarship. The *matns* of hadiths were variously: crafted by oral storytellers and preachers—who valued education, edification, and entertainment above all else—from a common stock of material (and reformulated through successive retellings)⁴⁶; inferred into the mouths of early authorities by later jurists, theologians, and exegetes (and updated in the same way according to changing doctrines and understandings)⁴⁷; speculated into being, or created through honest guesswork⁴⁸; formulated by sectaries, regionalists, and others as symbolic or ideal expressions of correct doctrine (i.e., as a

⁴⁶ See Cook, *Muhammad*, 66-67; Juynboll, *Muslim tradition*, 11-14, 17, 23, 74; Crone, *Meccan Trade*, esp. ch. 9; Andrew L. Rippin, 'The Function of *Asbāb al-Nuzūl* in Qur'ānic Exegesis', *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies*, Volume 51, Issue 1 (1988), 19; Crone, 'Two legal problems', 13-20; Gregor Schoeler (ed. James E. Montgomery & trans. Uwe Vagelpohl), *The Biography of Muḥammad: Nature and Authenticity* (New York, USA: Routledge, 2011 [originally published in 1996]), 12 and ch. 2, esp. 74, 79; Harald Motzki, 'The Origins of Muslim Exegesis. A Debate', in Harald Motzki, *Analysing Muslim Traditions: Studies in Legal, Exegetical and Maghāzī Ḥadīth* (Leiden, the Netherlands: Koninklijke Brill NV, 2010), 265-266; Robert G. Hoyland, 'History, fiction and authorship in the first centuries of Islam', in Julia Bray (ed.), *Writing and Representation in Medieval Islam: Muslim horizons* (Abingdon, UK: Routledge, 2006), 31-32; Andreas Görke, Harald Motzki, & Gregor Schoeler, 'First Century Sources for the Life of Muḥammad? A Debate', *Der Islam*, Volume 89, Issue 1-2 (2012), 28-29; Andrew G. Bannister, *An Oral-Formulaic Study of the Qur'an* (Lanham, USA: Lexington Books, 2014), 45-46, 60 (n. 19); Andreas Görke, 'Authorship in the *Sīra* literature', in Lale Behzadi & Jaakko Hämeen-Anttila (eds.), *Concepts of Authorship in Pre-Modern Arabic Texts* (Bamberg, Germany: University of Bamberg Press, 2015), 84; *id.*, 'Between History and Exegesis: The Origins and Transformation of the Story of Muḥammad and Zaynab bt Ḡaḥṣ', *Arabica*, Volume 65, Issue 1-2 (2018), 36, 62; Harald Motzki, 'Historical-Critical Research of the *Sīra* of the Prophet Muhammad: What Do We Stand to Gain?', in Josephine van den Bent, Floris van den Eijnde, & Johan Weststeijn (ed.), *Late Antique Responses to the Arab Conquests* (Leiden, the Netherlands: Koninklijke Brill NV, 2022), 83. Likewise, Neal Robinson suggested (in his lecture 'Muhammad, "The Prophet like Moses", and the editing of the Qur'an', presented at the Oriental Institute, University of Oxford, on the 23rd of October, 2018) that the storytellers were responsible not just for most of the *sīrah*, but for much of the Sunnī Hadith canon (including the *Ṣaḥīḥayn*). There has been a tendency to equate these storytellers with the *quṣṣās* of later Islamic memory, but this is clearly a mistake, since the *quṣṣās* were not storytellers per se; cf. Lyall R. Armstrong, *The Quṣṣās of Early Islam* (Leiden, the Netherlands: Koninklijke Brill NV, 2017), *passim*.

⁴⁷ See Goldziher (trans. Barber & Stern), *Muslim Studies*, II, 56; James Robson, 'The *Isnād* in Muslim Tradition', in Harald Motzki (ed.), *Ḥadīth: Origins and Development* (Aldershot, UK: Ashgate Variorum, 2004), 166/18 (citing Caetani); *id.*, 'Ibn Ishāq's use of the *Isnād*', *Bulletin of the John Rylands Library*, Volume 38, Issue 2 (1956), 449; Harris Birkeland, *Old Muslim Opposition against Interpretation of the Koran* (Oslo, Norway: I Komrnisjon Hos Jacob Dybwad, 1955), 37; Crone, *Roman, provincial, and Islamic law*, 33; Herbert Berg, *The Development of Exegesis in Early Islam: The Authenticity of Muslim Literature from the Formative Period* (Richmond, UK: Curzon Press, 2000), 213; Wael B. Hallaq, *The Origins and Evolution of Islamic Law* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 78; A. Kevin Reinhart, 'Juynbolliana, Gradualism, the Big Bang, and *Ḥadīth* Study in the Twenty-First Century', *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, Volume 130, Number 3 (2010), 422; Yanagihashi, *Studies*, *passim*.

⁴⁸ This was explicitly proposed by Robinson in his aforementioned 2018 presentation.

kind of convention)⁴⁹; and (mendaciously) fabricated and interpolated by propagandists and apologists for all manner of political, sectarian, regional, and other causes (whether for personal gain or the greater good).⁵⁰ Meanwhile, the *ʿisnāds* for these *matns* were variously: inferred into being (for example, on the basis of sectarian or regional scholarly lineages, or on the basis of family genealogies)⁵¹; produced through simple guesswork or speculation (i.e., based on what *might* or *could* have happened)⁵²; articulated as symbolic or ideal expressions of the communal or scholarly lineage for correct doctrines (especially along sectarian or regional lines)⁵³; and (mendaciously) fabricated for all manner of reasons—to defend a school, sect, or the like; to attack another school, sect, or the like; to provide the fabricator with a shorter *ʿisnād*; to bolster an existing *matn* or corroborate an existing *ʿisnād*; to justify a revised or corrected *matn*; to provide the fabricator with a novel *ʿisnād*; and so on.⁵⁴ Existing *ʿisnāds* were also altered or interpolated, whether through dishonesty, inference, or some other process: skipping contemporaneous sources in favour of directly citing the sources of these sources, or even older sources; omitting or dropping undesirable tradents, or replacing them with suitable alternatives; adding tradents in order to bridge gaps in transmission, or to supplant the initial source with an even earlier source; and so on.⁵⁵

The relative weight of these various processes or mechanisms is still up for debate, but the general falsity of Hadith entails that some combination thereof—or something like them—must have been at play in the formation of the extant corpus during the 8th and 9th Centuries CE. Regardless, skepticism obtains regarding Hadith: as it stands,

⁴⁹ See Goldziher (trans. Barber & Stern), *Muslim Studies*, II, 55-56; Schacht, 'Revaluation', 146; Birkeland, *Old Muslim Opposition*, 37; Berg, 'Ibn ʿAbbās in ʿAbbāsīd-Era *Tafsīr*', in Montgomery (ed.), *ʿAbbāsīd Studies*, 132 (citing Gilliot); Rippin, 'The Search for *Ṭuwā*', in Segovia & Lourié (eds.), *The Coming of the Comforter*, 410; Jonathan A. C. Brown, *Hadith: Muhammad's Legacy in the Medieval and Modern World*, 2nd ed. (Oxford, UK: Oneworld Academic, 2018), 76.

⁵⁰ See especially Goldziher (trans. Barber & Stern), *Muslim Studies*, II, *passim*, and Schacht, *Origins*, *passim*.

⁵¹ See Caetani, Robson, Birkeland, Berg, and Reinhart, cited above. Also see Schoeler (trans. Vagelpohl), *The Biography of Muḥammad*, 67, and Görke *et al.*, 'First Century Sources', 28.

⁵² This is already plausibly encompassed in Robinson's proposal, but for a more explicit statement to this effect, see Harald Motzki (trans. Frank Griffel & Paul Hardy), 'Whither *Ḥadīth* Studies?', in Harald Motzki, *Analysing Muslim Traditions: Studies in Legal, Exegetical and Maghāzī Ḥadīth* (Leiden, the Netherlands: Koninklijke Brill NV, 2010), 52.

⁵³ This seems like a corollary of what was mentioned or suggested above by Goldziher, Schacht, and Brown, and comes across strongly in Birkeland and Berg (in his summary of Gilliot).

⁵⁴ Schacht, *Origins*, *passim*; Cook, *Early Muslim Dogma*, ch. 11; Crone, *Roman, provincial, and Islamic law*, 23 ff.; Juynboll, *Encyclopedia*, intro.

⁵⁵ See Schacht, Cook, Crone, and Juynboll, cited above.

any given hadith (*ṣaḥīḥ* or otherwise) should be presumed to be inauthentic or unreliable, until the contrary can be demonstrated.

Can the contrary ever be demonstrated? Of course. The Criterion of Dissimilarity has always been used even by skeptics of Hadith to identify early or archaic material preserved in some *matns* (regardless of their *ʿisnāds*),⁵⁶ as have early, independent, corroborating non-Muslim sources.⁵⁷ But absent archaic-looking *matns* or independent corroboration (both of which are rare), is there any way to establish that a given hadith predates the time of the earliest extant collection in which it appears? In particular, can *ʿisnāds* be used, in any way, to date hadiths? Again, the answer is obviously yes: skeptics have long used *ʿisnāds* to date Hadith, in the following ways.

Dating by Ascription Type

It is not uncommon, when one encounters a doctrine expressed in a Prophetical hadith, to find the same doctrine expressed in a Companion hadith and/or a Follower hadith as well. In many instances, the *matn* (or a key wording therein) is the same, and sometimes, even the *ʿisnād* is the same—the only difference being the level at which the *ʿisnād* stops (i.e., with a Follower, or a Companion, or the Prophet). In other words, it is common to find the same doctrines, and even the same hadiths, with differing levels of ascription.⁵⁸

There are two ways to explain this phenomenon: either the hadiths are all genuine, with Followers expressing views and phrases inherited from the Companions, and Companions expressing views and phrases inherited from the Prophet, with instances

⁵⁶ For example, concerning the *Ṣaḥīfat Yaṭrib*, see: Patricia Crone & Michael A. Cook, *Hagarism: The making of the Islamic world* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1977), 7; Crone, *Slaves on Horses*, 7; *ead.*, *Roman, provincial and Islamic law*, 32. For another example, concerning archaic notions of *hijrah*, see *ead.*, “The First-Century Concept of *Hiġra*”, *Arabica*, Tome 41, Issue 3 (1994), 352-387. For a final example (employing the Criterion of Embarrassment in particular), concerning early failed prophecies, see Shoemaker, *The Death of a Prophet*, 172-176.

⁵⁷ Crone & Cook, *Hagarism*, ch. 1; Cook, *Muhammad*, 73-74; Crone, *Slaves on Horses*, ch. 1; etc.

⁵⁸ E.g., Goldziher (trans. Barber & Stern), *Muslim Studies*, II, 148-149 (incl. n. 3); Schacht, ‘Revaluation’, 147; *id.*, *Origins*, *passim*; Cook, *Early Muslim Dogma*, ch. 11; Juynboll, *Muslim tradition*, *passim*; Cook, ‘Magian Cheese’, *passim*; Crone, *Roman, provincial and Islamic law*, 29, 124 (nn. 67-68); Juynboll, ‘Islam’s first *fuqahā*’, *passim*; Melchert, ‘Basra and Kufa’, in Sadeghi *et al.* (eds.), *Islamic Cultures, Islamic Contexts*, 178; Görke, ‘Authorship in the *Sīra* literature’, in Behzadi & Hāmeen-Anttila (eds.), *Concepts of Authorship in Pre-Modern Arabic Texts*, 73. Also see the numerous examples exposed by the ICMA, cited below.

of each having been preserved; or else doctrines and even specific wordings have undergone multiple retrojections back to different levels of authority.

Various debates have arisen over this issue,⁵⁹ but these can be bypassed by simply reiterating the relevant established background knowledge on the evolution of Hadith types and then applying the Criterion of Dissimilarity. Firstly, our background knowledge: Hadith are absent from the earliest Islamic epistles and other plausible Umayyad-era ascriptions, where only Quranic citations and vague invocations of *sunnah* predominate; Follower Hadith overwhelmingly predominate in *fiqh* and collections from the middle of the 8th Century CE; Companion Hadith predominate in *fiqh* at the turn of the 9th Century CE; and Prophetical Hadith overwhelmingly predominate in *fiqh* and collections from the 9th Century CE onwards.⁶⁰ Moreover, the prioritisation of Prophetical Hadith over all other types of as a source of doctrine was formalised in the legal theory of al-Šāfi‘ī (d. 204/820), which became generalised rapidly over the course of the 9th Century CE.⁶¹ In other words, the citational patterns of Hadith in the 8th and 9th Centuries CE reveal a broad tendency in terms of preference, from Follower Hadith, to Companion Hadith, to Prophetical Hadith. Moreover, in conjunction with the initial absence of Hadith altogether, this is consistent with the successive emergence (i.e., creation) of Hadith types, or in other words, the progressive retrojection of Hadith—first to Followers, then to Companions, then to the Prophet, as a general tendency.⁶²

With all of that in mind, we can now turn to the Criterion of Dissimilarity, which is a staple of modern historical research. The principle is simple: a report that clashes with the orthodoxy or standards of the preservers or collectors of the report is unlikely to have been created by them—for, had they created it, they probably would have done

⁵⁹ E.g., Harald Motzki (trans. Marion H. Katz), *The Origins of Islamic Jurisprudence: Meccan Fiqh before the Classical Schools* (Leiden, the Netherlands: Koninklijke Brill NV, 2002), 18-22; Uri Rubin, *The Eye of the Beholder: The life of Muḥammad as viewed by the early Muslims: A Textual Analysis* (Princeton, USA: The Darwin Press, Inc., 1995), 235-237; Harald Motzki, 'The Prophet and the Cat: On Dating Mālik's *Muwaṭṭa'* and Legal Traditions', *Jerusalem Studies in Arabic and Islam*, Volume 22 (1998), 54; *id.* (trans. Sonja Adrianovska & Vivien Reid), 'The Prophet and the Debtors. A Ḥadīth Analysis under Scrutiny', in Harald Motzki, *Analysing Muslim Traditions: Studies in Legal, Exegetical and Maghāzī Ḥadīth* (Leiden, the Netherlands: Koninklijke Brill NV, 2010), 135.

⁶⁰ Schacht, 'Revaluation'; *id.*, *Origins, passim*; Cook, *Early Muslim Dogma, passim*; Juynboll, *Muslim tradition*, esp. ch. 1; Crone & Hinds, *God's Caliph*, esp. ch. 5; Juynboll, 'The development of *sunna*'; Christopher Melchert, 'Traditionist-Jurisprudents and the Framing of Islamic Law', *Islamic Law and Society*, Volume 8, Number 3 (2001), 383-406.

⁶¹ In addition to all of the above, see Ahmed El Shamsy, *The Canonization of Islamic Law: A Social and Intellectual History* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2013).

⁶² Again, see all of the above (other than El Shamsy, who rejects this explanation, as discussed below).

so in accordance with said orthodoxy or standards. Likewise, when two reports conflict, with one being consistent with the orthodoxy or standards of the preservers or collectors thereof, and the other conflicting therewith, the latter is more likely to be authentic: the latter is unlikely to have been created by the bearers of orthodoxy and standards and thus probably predates them, whereas the former is consistent with having been created in accordance with the emerging or established standard or orthodoxy. In other words, it is more likely that an adherent of an orthodoxy or standard would create the report in accordance therewith than that they would create a report conflicting therewith.⁶³

All of this has important implications for both the *relative* and *absolute* dating of Hadith, based on ascription types. To begin with, it generates a relative dating specifically for parallel versions of the same hadith (which is just to say, it allows us to adjudicate in certain specific cases between *variants* of the same text): when one version of a hadith is ascribed to a later authority, and another version is ascribed to an earlier authority, the former is more likely to represent the original version of the hadith—i.e., more likely to be earlier—than the latter. The reason is simple: the general tendency in early Islamic approaches to Hadith is to prefer earlier and earlier authorities, to the point that the proto-Sunnī Hadith partisans, traditionists, and Hadith critics (operating from around 800 CE onwards) who preserved most of the extant Hadith corpus explicitly prized Prophetical hadiths over Companion hadiths, and Companion hadiths over Follower hadiths. There was thus a long-term, systemic incentive to retroject hadiths back to earlier authorities (and conversely, a pressure against reattributing hadiths from earlier authorities to later authorities), such that the Follower version of a hadith is more likely to be earlier than the Companion or Prophetical version, and the Companion version is more likely to be earlier than the Prophetical version (all else being equal). Or, as Schacht famously put it: “in general we can say: the more perfect the *isnād*, the later the tradition.”⁶⁴

Exactly the same reasoning applies to hadiths with parallel *munqaṭiʿ/mursal* and *muttaṣil* versions, or in other words: the version of a given hadith with a broken or

⁶³ For example, see Christopher Melchert, *Ahmad ibn Hanbal* (Oxford, UK: Oneworld Publications, 2006), 28.

⁶⁴ Schacht, ‘Revaluation’, 147. Also see: *id.*, *Origins*, 156-157, 165; Cook, *Early Muslim Dogma*, 108; Crone, *Roman, provincial and Islamic law*, 29; Juynboll, ‘Some *isnād*-analytical methods’, 368-370; *id.*, ‘Some notes on Islam’s first *fuqahā*’, 300; Cook, ‘Eschatology’, 24; Melchert, ‘Basra and Kufa’, in Sadeghi *et al.* (eds.), *Islamic Cultures, Islamic Contexts*, 178.

discontinuous *ʾisnād* is more likely to reflect the original—i.e., to be earlier—than the version with an unbroken or continuous *ʾisnād*. Once again, there was a tendency—culminating in al-Šāfiʿī and the Hadith critics—to prefer *ittiṣāl*, making it much more likely that a *mursal* or *munqaṭiʿ* hadith was updated or interpolated into a *muttaṣil* hadith, rather than *vice versa*. As Schacht again famously put it, “*mursal* traditions are, generally speaking, older than traditions with full *isnāds*.”⁶⁵

The Criterion of Dissimilarity also provides a kind of absolute dating, based on when certain Hadith types were sought after, and when they lost force. Provisionally, we can date Follower hadiths recorded in later works back to the 8th Century CE at least (since we would not expect anyone to bother creating Follower hadiths any later), and we can date Companion hadiths recorded in later works back to the turn of the 9th Century CE at least (since we would not expect anyone to bother creating Companion hadiths any later), but we cannot—all else being equal—date Prophetical hadiths any earlier than the works in which they are cited (since the incentive or pressure to create Prophetical hadiths existed all the way up until the time of the works in question). In other words, as a rule of thumb,⁶⁶ Follower hadiths predate c. 800, Companion hadiths predate c. 820, and Prophetical hadiths could be as late as whatever work they appear in.⁶⁷

The same reasoning applies to *munqaṭiʿ* or *mursal* hadiths: they probably date to the turn of the 9th Century CE at the latest, since anyone creating a hadith any later than that would not be expected to create one with an *ʾisnād* that would be automatically rejected or disparaged. As Crone put it: “Similarly, a perfect *isnād* is likely to be later than an imperfect one. After all, the better a tradition conforms to the criteria evolved in the time of Shāfiʿī, the more likely it is to date from the time in which these criteria were evolved.”⁶⁸ As with parallel hadiths with different levels of ascription, so too with parallel hadiths with broken and unbroken *ʾisnāds*.

⁶⁵ Schacht, *Origins*, 39. Also see: Crone, *Roman, provincial and Islamic law*, 29; Juynboll, ‘Some notes on Islam’s first *fuqahā*’, 300; Cook, ‘Eschatology’, 24.

⁶⁶ Cf. Gerald R. Hawting, ‘The role of the Qurʾān and *ḥadīth* in the legal controversy about the rights of a divorced woman during her ‘waiting period’ (*ʿidda*)’, *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies*, Volume 52, Issue 3 (1989), 430-445, who argues that, in one particular early debate, a Prophetical hadith is inferably earlier than a conflicting (i.e., counter) Companion hadith.

⁶⁷ Cf. the summary in Juynboll, ‘Some *isnād*-analytical methods’, 369, which he describes as being “in order of absolute chronology”, even though he fails to add dates.

⁶⁸ Crone, *Roman, provincial and Islamic law*, 29.

Arguments from Silence

It is well-known that hadiths that appear in extant collections (say, in the 9th and 10th Centuries CE) frequently fail to be cited in earlier reported and extant doctrinal debates (say, in the 8th Century CE), even when said hadiths have some direct bearing on the debate in question. If the extant hadiths had existed all along (as purported by their *'isnāds*), then it is reasonable to expect that they would have been cited in the relevant debates. Thus, the non-citation of such hadiths is evidence for their initial non-existence, and for the creation thereof at some point between the initial debates and the extant collections. As Schacht put it: "The best way of proving that a tradition did not exist at a certain time is to show that it was not used as a legal argument in a discussion which would have made reference to it imperative, if it had existed."⁶⁹ This is Schacht's famous *argumentum e silentio*, which he used to pinpoint the growth of Hadith over the course of the 8th and 9th Centuries CE.

Perhaps the most systematic criticism of this method came from Harald Motzki, who enumerated several reasons for doubting the validity of conclusions derived thereby:

1. Not all the texts that Schacht compares are elements of a legal discussion which would necessarily demand the naming of all usable traditions.
2. A number of compilations are only textual selections.
3. The volume of the surviving sources is only a fraction of the originally existing stock.
4. Given the relatively prolonged regionally separated development of jurisprudence and Tradition, which—as Schacht himself assumes and this work will show—still prevailed in the first half of the second/eighth century, the lack of a text in a regional source says little as long as we have no contemporary sources from the other centers.⁷⁰

There are several problems here. Firstly, Motzki turns Schacht's appeals to probability into a rigid principle or deduction, requiring only the observation of the possibility to the contrary to refute: thus, Motzki speculates that traditionists or jurists may not have cited all of the Hadith that they knew, as if this constitutes a reason to reject Schacht's conclusion. This is at best uncharitable: Schacht's arguments from silence are

⁶⁹ Schacht, *Origins*, 140.

⁷⁰ Motzki (trans. Katz), *Origins*, 21-22. Also see Zafar Ishaq Ansari, 'The Authenticity of Traditions: A Critique of Joseph Schacht's Argument *E Silentio*', *Hamdard Islamicus*, Volume 7, Number 2 (1984), 51-61.

reasonably understood as *hypotheses* posited to explain the peculiarities of the evidence, not *deductions*. Consider the following example:

Tradition originating between "Ibrāhīm Nakha'ī" and Ḥammād
Āthār A.Y. 206: Abū Ḥanīfa—Ḥammād—Ibrāhīm—Ibn Mas'ūd did not follow a certain practice. *Āthār Shaib.* 37: Abū Ḥanīfa—Ḥammād—Ibrāhīm did not follow it; the same is related from Ibn Mas'ūd. But there is a tradition from the Prophet to the contrary. *Āthār A.Y.* 207: Abū Ḥanīfa—Ḥammād—'Abdalkarīm—with an *isnād* going back to the Prophet, that he did follow it. *Āthār Shaib.* 37: Shaibānī—'Umar b. Dharr Hamdānī—his father—Sa'īd b. Jubair—Ibn 'Abbās—Prophet: a tradition in favour of the practice, polemically directed against the other opinion. The same tradition with another Iraqi *isnād* occurs in *Tr. II*, 19 (t).⁷¹

Schacht can be reasonably understood here to be positing the growth of Hadith as the explanation for the peculiarity of Ḥammād transmitting "Not X" from 'Ibrāhīm (possibly a stand-in for "ancient Iraqi doctrine"), but also transmitting "X" from the Prophet: this can be explained by the creation of the latter as a counter to the former, i.e., subsequent to the former. This would explain why 'Ibrāhīm or the early authorities of Kufah were seemingly ignorant of—or seemingly defied—an explicit Prophetical hadith to the contrary that was circulating in Kufah (*viz.*, because the hadith did not yet exist), and would also conform with the general pattern of the evolution of ascription types (with Follower Hadith appearing earlier and Prophetical Hadith appearing later). In short, this is a matter of probability: Motzki merely observing that other explanations are *possible* does not suffice as a refutation thereof.

There is however an important caveat here, noted by Crone long before Motzki: it is not unreasonable to expect that early traditionists or jurists would have disregarded *inexpedient* hadiths:

Polemical authors do however often ignore evidence which they dislike, sometimes asserting that no traditions contrary to their own opinion exist at all – an assertion with much the same import as the 'no doubt' of modern scholars. The absence of a well known tradition accordingly carries little weight when the tradition goes against the author's views.⁷²

⁷¹ Schacht, *Origins*, 141.

⁷² Crone, *Roman, provincial, and Islamic law*, 30.

In other words, the non-citation of an inexpedient hadith is arguably not telling as to whether it existed at the time. This is an important restriction on such arguments from silence.

Another problem with Motzki's criticism of Schacht's arguments from silence is the implausibility of his counter-scenario: it is certainly *possible* that an early jurist or traditionist in a debate might *not* have cited a hadith that would have constituted stronger evidence for his position or won them the argument, even though they knew the hadith. It is possible—but is it *probable*? For example, if a Prophetic hadith (later cited by al-Šaybānī) was circulating amongst the authorities of Kufah before 'Abū Ḥanīfah, is it plausible that 'Abū Ḥanīfah would not have known about it? And if he had known about it, is it plausible that he would have passed over a Prophetic precedent for his position in favour of a mere Follower precedent (in this case, from al-Ša'bī)? It is certainly *possible*, but it does not seem *probable*, especially given the common invocation of *sunnat al-nabiyy* already at that time.⁷³ Schacht's explanation—that the hadith was created at some point between 'Abū Ḥanīfah and al-Šaybānī—thus seems reasonable.⁷⁴

Schacht's case for the early non-citation of expedient Hadith (contrasted with their later citation) as evidence for their growth is further strengthened in some cases by the fact that there are explicit *contemporaneous* declarations about the absence of any other hadiths on a given matter, and explicit *contemporaneous* observations that expedient hadiths would have been furnished had they existed:

The evidence collected in the present chapter has been chosen with particular regard to this last point, and in a number of cases one or the other of the opponents himself states that he has no evidence other than that quoted by him, which does not include the tradition in question. This kind of conclusion *e silentio* is furthermore made safe by *Tr. VIII*, 11, where Shaibānī says: '[This is so] unless the Medinese can produce a tradition in support of their doctrine, but they have none, or they would have produced it.'⁷⁵

⁷³ For the development of *sunnah*, see: Schacht, *Origins*, part I, ch. 7; Juynboll, *Muslim tradition*, ch. 1; Crone & Cook, *God's Caliph*, ch. 5; Juynboll, 'The development of *sunna*'.

⁷⁴ Schacht, *Origins*, e.g., 143.

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, 140.

In short, Schacht's explanation of such instances of silence are frequently reasonable, and cannot be overturned merely by speculating that some jurists and traditionists were keeping hidden aces up their sleeves.

A further issue with Motzki's criticism concerns his observation that the failure of an early writer (say, in Madinah) to cite an expedient hadith recorded in later sources but ascribed to a different region (say, Kufah) does not imply the non-existence of the hadith in question at the time of said writer. This criticism is completely reasonable, but also redundant, given that Crone already articulated it several years earlier:

The main shortcoming of this method, however, is that it cannot be properly used until it is too late. Given the voluminous nature of Shāfi'ī's works, the absence of a particular tradition may well be taken to show that it was still unknown in his time; but the development of Ḥadīth after Shāfi'ī is of limited importance for the evolution of substantive law, and before Shāfi'ī the literature is too scanty and above all too local in character for silences to count. The fact that Mālik fails to cite or argue against Iraqi traditions on a particular subject evidently does not mean that the Iraqi traditions did not yet exist. It is true that the lawyers of the old schools had begun to take note of each others' traditions a good deal before they were forced to adopt a common stock of Prophetic traditions and that polemics between them can occasionally be used to establish negative points; but in general other people's traditions still were not sufficiently compelling for this to be the case. Mālik's work can perhaps be used to show that certain Medinese traditions still did not exist in Medina. But before Mālik the argument from polemical silence can rarely be used at all.⁷⁶

In fact, *Schacht himself* had already acknowledged this limitation with his method at the outset, as in the following:

Tradition originating between Auzā'ī and Mālik

See above, p. 70. It is stated there that Abū Yūsuf does not yet know a tradition from the Prophet, although Mālik, his contemporary, does. Whereas this calls for caution in the use of the argument *e silentio*, it also shows that the tradition was not yet widely known in the time of Mālik.⁷⁷

By contrast, many of Schacht's examples of the growth of Hadith are of (for example) earlier Madinans failing to cite expedient hadiths known to later Madinans, when the

⁷⁶ Crone, *Roman, provincial, and Islamic law*, 30.

⁷⁷ Schacht, *Origins*, 142.

hadiths in question purport to derive via the peers of the earlier Madinans, or even from these earlier Madinans themselves.⁷⁸

Another criticism by Motzki is his appeal to lost sources,⁷⁹ which is understandable: if the silence being appealed to in a Schachtian argument is the non-citation of an expedient hadith by merely *one* debater or polemicist, it is easy to imagine various alternative explanations therefor. For example, the debater or polemicist could have failed to incorporate a useful hadith simply by accident,⁸⁰ or else omitted it due to space constraints, or because they rejected the hadith as unreliable,⁸¹ or because they hated the transmitter, etc. It is only when *numerous* sources all omit a hadith that we can reasonably preclude such idiosyncrasies *overall*, leaving the non-existence of the hadith as the probable explanation. In other words, it is only a *deafening* silence that counts.

Some of these confounding factors can be accounted for, or do not always apply. For example, if someone fails to cite an expedient hadith from someone else whom they reportedly hated, but they otherwise transmitted numerous hadiths from that person, then their hatred therefor cannot be invoked as an explanation for their non-citation of that particular hadith. Likewise, if someone fails to cite a *superior* hadith but still cites an *inferior* hadith for a doctrine or point, then space constraints or similar considerations cannot be invoked—we would still expect a polemicist or debater to cite the better hadith, if it was available to them at the time. Likewise, if early users of Hadith precisely accepted or rejected Hadith based upon their expediency (as was indeed the case in the early regional schools), then rejection of the authenticity of an expedient hadith—as an explanation for someone’s failure to cite it—does not seem very plausible.

However, there is always the chance of some kind of accident having occurred, such as someone simply forgetting to cite an expedient hadith. Therefore, it may be the case that a single non-citation of an expedient hadith is only *weak evidence* for the non-

⁷⁸ Also see Crone, *Roman, provincial, and Islamic law*, 30, 123 (n. 64).

⁷⁹ Likewise, Ansari, ‘Authenticity’, 58: “he might have known a tradition, but owing to the fact that not the entire quantity of traditions known to the jurists has come down-to us, especially of the jurists of the relatively early period of Islam, there is no mention of those traditions in the works presently available to us, even though those traditions might once have existed.”

⁸⁰ Likewise, *ibid.*: “the person concerned might have heard and then forgotten the tradition in question”.

⁸¹ Likewise, *ibid.*: “he might have heard that tradition, but might not have considered it authentic”.

existence of the hadith at that time, whereas multiple or numerous non-citations would be *strong evidence* therefor.

And yet, the silences themselves are numerous, even if each instance of a silence is often only a single source failing to cite an expedient hadith. In other words, we would have to posit that early jurists and others *repeatedly* forgot to cite expedient hadiths in their debates and polemics, which seems like a stretch.⁸² Schacht's explanation thus seems preferable (when the other confounding factors are accounted for), or as he put it: "the well-known incompleteness of our sources does not invalidate the **general conclusions**."⁸³

Even if we concede for the sake of argument that the probability of the mere non-citation of an expedient hadith versus its non-existence is intrinsically equal or undetermined, there are extrinsic factors favouring the latter over the former: the pattern identified by Schacht is *consistent* with the growth of Hadith over the course of the 8th and 9th Centuries CE, which is corroborated by reports about the massive growth of Hadith at that time,⁸⁴ the absence of Hadith in the earliest Islamic documents and plausible ascriptions,⁸⁵ etc. To put it another way, the Revisionist model entails that Hadith must have grown in large numbers during the 8th and 9th Centuries CE, and the silences or non-citations identified by Schacht are consistent with such a growth. Thus, Schacht's growth explanation in any given instance is corroborated in general by other evidence attesting to the massive growth of Hadith in the same time period, giving us a reason to prefer Schacht's explanation over the alternatives.

Moreover, occasional examples of traditionists and jurists failing to cite expedient and proximate Hadith that can be shown to have existed at that time on some other grounds (of which there are assuredly some) do not affect the general expectation, which is to say: we are still justified *in general* in our expectation that traditionists and jurists would have cited expedient hadiths circulating in their circles, given all of the considerations outlined above. Schacht himself made a similar point:

The evidence must, in the nature of things, be cumulative, and whilst care has been taken to verify the presence or absence of the traditions in

⁸² I owe thanks to Mahā Ḥ. for alerting me to this point.

⁸³ Schacht, *Origins*, 140. Emphasis mine.

⁸⁴ E.g., Juynboll, *Muslim tradition*, 29; Crone & Hinds, *God's Caliph*, 71; Hoyland, *In God's Path*, 137.

⁸⁵ E.g., Cook, *Early Muslim Dogma*, *passim*; Juynboll, *Muslim tradition*, 38-39; Crone & Hinds, *God's Caliph*, ch. 5.

question in or from the sources available, an occasional oversight or the well-known incompleteness of our sources does not invalidate the general conclusions.⁸⁶

In short, when a hadith that later claims to derive from the notables of a given region is not cited by an earlier jurist or polemicist in the same region, even though the hadith would have been expedient for them as a justification or defence of their doctrine, it is reasonable to infer, at least provisionally, that the hadith did not yet exist (at least as later claimed).

An addition to all of the above, a further criticism has been articulated by Ahmed El Shamsy,⁸⁷ directed against Schacht and others who “sought to explain the apparent fact that prior to this time [i.e., c. 800 CE], Muslim jurists disregarded Hadith that later on were widely accepted.”⁸⁸ According to El Shamsy, this explanation only works by assuming, in an anachronistic or even essentialist fashion, that early jurists were like later jurists:

And far from representing an exercise of “imaginative nerve,” as Crone called it, interpreting the initial marginality of Hadith in law as evidence of their nonexistence at that time displays a curious lack of imagination: it assumes that Hadith reports, if available, could be used only in the way that classical jurists used them, namely, as one of the primary canonical sources of the law. This approach thus reads an essentialized notion of Islamic law, developed on the basis of later literature, back into the early Islamic period and solves the resulting dissonance by postulating the wholesale invention of prophetic traditions.⁸⁹

Against such a view, El Shamsy proposes his own, more “convincing” explanation for “the “sudden” integration of Hadith into law from the second/eighth century onward”—namely, “their new significance and role – that is, their canonization.”⁹⁰ In other words, most of the extant Hadith corpus—or perhaps, at the very least, most of the extant Prophetical canon—existed all along, but it was only after the spread of al-Šāfi‘ī’s legal theory (in which the overriding authority of Prophetical Hadith was

⁸⁶ Schacht, *Origins*, 140.

⁸⁷ El Shamsy’s other criticisms against the Revisionist model more broadly, such as his appeal to parsimony and to Motzki’s scholarship, are automatically dealt with in the sections on Motzki and Brown, below.

⁸⁸ El Shamsy, *Canonization*, 7.

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, 8.

⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, 9.

‘canonised’) that a systematic effort was made to collect and cite Prophetic hadiths.⁹¹ Naturally, this would invalidate most Schachtian arguments from silence.

Pace El Shamsy, Schachtian arguments from silence—and the Revisionist model of Hadith development more broadly—do not require an anachronistic or essentialist view of early jurists in order to infer or posit the initial non-existence of Hadith (or certain types of Hadith). On the contrary, the expectation that, for example, expedient Prophetic hadiths should have been cited in 8th-Century works and compositions follows from our established background knowledge of their general veneration even at that time. We have ample evidence that *sunnah* was a concept that existed all along (probably even in pre-Islamic Arabia), *and* that the notion of *sunnat al-nabiyy* in particular became popular during the Umayyad period.⁹² Are we really to believe that early Muslims invested their great men (and the Prophet in particular) with *general authority* or *exemplary status* all along (or in the Umayyad period in particular), *and* that literally thousands upon thousands of opinions and precedents were recorded from the Prophet, then from the Companions as well, then from the Followers as well, and circulated amongst major figures in all the major centres, *but* that early caliphs, governors, judges, jurists, theologians, and rebels (unto the middle of the 8th Century CE) *disregarded most or even all of them* in their proclamations or work? This seems most unlikely.⁹³ Once again, the simple explanation in general, at least in the case of intra-regional failures to cite expedient hadiths, is that the hadiths in question did not yet exist.

Dating by the “Common Link”

It is well known that many hadiths have “common links” in their *’isnāds*, which is to say: when all of the *’isnāds* of all of the different versions of a given hadith are

⁹¹ *Ibid.*, e.g., 223.

⁹² For the development of *sunnah*, see: Schacht, *Origins*, part I, ch. 7; Juynboll, *Muslim tradition*, ch. 1; Crone & Cook, *God’s Caliph*, ch. 5; Juynboll, ‘The development of *sunna*’.

⁹³ Additionally, Pavlovitch comments (via personal correspondence): “If we take the *kalala* traditions as an example, it would be absurd to posit that hundreds of often contradictory traditions about the meaning and legal implications of this term had been in circulation in the first century for no imaginable purpose, only to be suddenly recovered by vying parties of second-century jurists, piecemeal in different times and different centers of learning throughout Iraq and the Hijaz.”

compared or overlaid against each other, it is often the case that most of the *ʿisnāds* converge on a common source—usually someone operating in the first two Islamic centuries. This phenomenon has given rise to perhaps the greatest methodological debate in the field of Hadith Studies over the last half-century: can a hadith be traced back to its common link, and thereby be dated to their lifetime?

I have opted to summarise most of the relevant dialectic chronologically, as follows: Schacht’s common link analysis; Cook’s criticism of Schacht; Juynboll’s refined common link analysis; Cook and Juynboll’s criticisms of each other; Motzki’s criticism of Juynboll; Motzki’s criticism of Cook; Powers’ criticism of Cook; Görke’s criticism of Cook; Brown’s criticism of Juynboll; Motzki *et al.*’s *ʿisnād-cum-matn* analysis; Melchert’s criticism of Motzki *et al.*; my own criticisms of Motzki *et al.*; and finally, my own refined *ʿisnād-cum-matn* analysis. Thereafter, I address the deeper—and equally-vexed—question of the exact relationship between a common link (henceforth, CL) and their hadith.

Note to reader: this chapter was originally much longer and more detailed, but due to the constraints of the word limit, it has been heavily abridged. In particular, the CL dialectic up until the ICMA have been removed. For an approximation of the material therein, see:

- Schacht, *The Origins of Muhammadan Jurisprudence* (1950), pp. 158-159, 166, 168-169, 171-172, 175-176.
- Azami, *Studies in Early Ḥadīth Literature* (1978), pp. 242-243, 247.
- Cook, *Early Muslim Dogma* (1981), ch. 11.
- Crone, *Roman, provincial and Islamic law* (1987), 30.
- Powers, ‘On Bequests in Early Islam’ (1989).
- Juynboll, ‘Some *isnād*-analytical methods’ (1989).
- Cook, ‘Eschatology and the Dating of Traditions’ (1992), 25-33, 39 (nn. 10-11), 46 (n. 74).
- Calder, *Studies in Early Muslim Jurisprudence* (1993), 236-237.
- Motzki (trans. Griffel & Hardy), ‘Whither *Ḥadīth* Studies?’, in Motzki, *Analysing Muslim Traditions* (2010).

- Görke, 'Eschatology, History, and the Common Link', in Berg (ed.), *Method and Theory in the Study of Islamic Origins* (2003).
- Motzki, 'Dating Muslim Traditions' (2005).
- Juynboll, *Encyclopedia of Canonical Ḥadīth* (2007), intro.
- Brown, *Hadith*, 2nd ed. (2018), ch. 9.
- Motzki, 'G.H.A. Juynboll. *Encyclopedia of canonical ḥadīth*' (2009).
- Brown, '*Encyclopedia of Canonical Ḥadīth*, by G. H. A. Juynboll' (2008).
- Reinhart, 'Juynbolliana, Gradualism, the Big Bang, and Ḥadīth Study in the Twenty-First Century' (2010).
- Pavlovitch, *The Formation of the Islamic Understanding of Kalāla* (2015), 22 ff.

The full, unabridged original (including sections on Schacht, Cook, and Juynboll, not to mention extensive supplemental evidence for the relevant debates) is available for the reviewers as an annex. It should be noted that the rest of the dissertation assumes the original chapter, not the abridgement.

Motzki *et al.*'s 'Isnād-Cum-Matn Analysis

Is there any reason, generally speaking, to accept PCLs and CLs as historical, rather than as products of spreading 'isnāds or successive dives? Proponents of the CL analysis have usually adopted two approaches in this regard: firstly, they attempt to minimise the threat of spreading and diving in 'isnāds by appealing to a lack of testimonial evidence therefor; and secondly, they appeal to some kind of additional evidence to corroborate the claims of 'isnāds concerning the PCL and CL provenance of given hadiths. The first appeal is hopeless in light of the vast testimonial evidence concerning the ubiquity of fabrication, interpolation, and other kinds of dishonesty or unreliability in Hadith in the 8th and 9th Centuries CE,⁹⁴ but the second has promise. In particular, proponents of the CL analysis have appealed to the patterns of *matns* to corroborate the common ascription of 'isnāds to PCLs and CLs, thereby combining a CL

⁹⁴ See above, in the section on Motzki's criticism of Cook.

analysis with a textual analysis—a synthesis known as the *’isnād-cum-matn* analysis (henceforth, ICMA).

One of the earliest forerunners to this approach was Jan Kramers in his 1953 article ‘Une tradition à tendance manichéenne’, who noted that the different versions or “redactions” of a certain hadith “can be separated into several groups in each of which the texts are specifically related. The *isnāds*, moreover, confirm that each of these groups possessed different lines of tradition.”⁹⁵ In other words, similar “redactions” seem to cluster around specific tradents, per their *’isnāds*.

Another forerunner to this approach was Josef van Ess in his 1975 *Zwischen Ḥadīṭ und Theologie*, but his method bore the brunt of Cook’s criticisms in *Early Muslim Dogma* and died prematurely.⁹⁶ In particular, Cook argued against the attribution of particular wordings to particular tradents, or our ability to reconstruct the wordings of particular tradents, given the omnipresent threat of contaminations and borrowings between tradents at any level.⁹⁷

And yet, some proponents of the ICMA—or forerunners thereof—persisted. Thus, Juynboll observed (in 1989) “the undeniable individuality of each bundle, with the cl’s particular wording,”⁹⁸ and further noted (in 1983): “Often we find in the fanning out of an *isnād* after a common link one or more partial common links, who are responsible for an *idrāj*, deletion, simplification or other alteration.”⁹⁹ In other words, Juynboll observed that PCLs are often ascribed distinctive sub-traditions (*vis-à-vis* each other), and that the broader traditions ascribed to CLs are likewise often distinctive (*vis-à-vis* those of other CLs with related traditions).¹⁰⁰ However, Juynboll never integrated this

⁹⁵ Jan H. Kramers (trans. Matthew Gordon), ‘A Tradition of Manichaeism (“The She-Eater of Grass”)’, in Harald Motzki (ed.), *Ḥadīṭ: Origins and Development* (Aldershot, UK: Ashgate Variorum, 2004), 245/1.

⁹⁶ Motzki, ‘Dating Muslim Traditions’, 250.

⁹⁷ Cook, *Early Muslim Dogma*, 112.

⁹⁸ Juynboll, ‘Some *isnād*-analytical methods’, 382.

⁹⁹ *Id.*, *Muslim tradition*, 216.

¹⁰⁰ Also see *id.*, ‘Nāfi’, 212, and ‘Early Islamic society’, 155-156. For similar observations, see Motzki (trans. Griffel & Hardy), ‘Whither Ḥadīṭ Studies?’, in Motzki, *Analysing Muslim Traditions*, 101 ff.; *id.*, ‘The Murder of Ibn Abī l-Ḥuqayq’, in Motzki (ed.), *The Biography of Muhammad*, 192-193; *id.*, ‘The Collection of the Qur’ān: A Reconsideration of Western Views in Light of Recent Methodological Developments’, *Der Islam*, Volume 78 (2001), 27-29; Gregor Schoeler, ‘Foundations for a New Biography of Muḥammad: The Production and Evaluation of the Corpus of Traditions according to ‘Urwah b. al-Zubayr’, in Herbert Berg (ed.), *Method and Theory in the Study of Islamic Origins* (Leiden, the Netherlands: Koninklijke Brill NV, 2003), 23; Görke, ‘Eschatology’, in Berg (ed.), *Method and Theory*, 188; Andreas Görke & Gregor Schoeler, ‘Reconstructing the Earliest *sīra* Texts: the *Hiġra* in the Corpus of ‘Urwah b. al-Zubayr’, *Der Islam*, Volume 82 (2005), 212; Mitter, ‘Origin and Development of the Islamic Patronate’, in Bernards & Nawas (eds.), *Patronate and Patronage*, 76-77; Anthony, ‘Crime and

insight into his method systematically, such that his CL analysis remained *ʿisnād*-focused and reliant on his authenticity criterion of dense transmission.¹⁰¹

The ICMA was finally formalised in the mid-to-late 1990s in a series of articles and books by Harald Motzki, Gregor Schoeler, and Andreas Görke,¹⁰² who sought thereby to verify the historicity of (at least parts of) some *ʿisnāds* and date (at least parts of) some *matns* back to early Muslim tradents. Motzki summarised this method as follows:

The aim of the *isnād-cum-matn* analysis is to trace the transmission history of a tradition by comparing their variants contained in the different compilations of traditions available. The method makes use of both the text (*matn*) and the chain of transmitters (*isnād*).¹⁰³

The argumentation behind this method is fairly straightforward: “a correlation between *isnād* variants and *matn* variants of a tradition” would be likely “if they were part of a real transmission process”, and conversely “unlikely to be the result of systematic forgery”.¹⁰⁴ In other words, “a correlation between the different branches and strands of the *isnād* bundle belonging to a tradition” and “the different variants of its *matn*”¹⁰⁵ is best explained by these hadiths reflecting accurate transmission, at least as far back as the correlation obtains.¹⁰⁶

Punishment in Early Medina’, in Motzki, *Analysing Muslim Traditions*, 417; Andreas Görke, ‘The relationship between *maghāzī* and *ḥadīth* in early Islamic scholarship’, *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies*, Volume 74, Issue 2 (2011), 179, 182-183; Ulrike Mitter, “‘The Majority of the dwellers of Hell-fire are women’: A short analysis of a much-discussed *ḥadīth*”, in Nicolet Boekhoff-van der Voort, Kees Versteegh, & Joas Wagemakers (eds.), *The Transmission and Dynamics of the Textual Sources of Islam: Essays in Honour of Harald Motzki* (Leiden, the Netherlands: Koninklijke Brill NV, 2011), 448; Görke *et al.*, ‘First Century Sources’, 40; Stijn Aerts, “‘Pray with Your Leader’: A Proto-Sunni Quietist Tradition”, *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, Volume 136, Issue 1 (2016), 38; Andreas Görke, ‘Criteria for dating early *Tafsīr* traditions: The exegetical traditions and variant readings of Abū Mijlāz Lāḥiq b. Humayd’, *Jerusalem Studies in Arabic and Islam*, Volume 49 (2021), 308. In my own private studies, I have found this pattern repeatedly, as I hope to demonstrate in future publications.

¹⁰¹ As evident in Juynboll, *Encyclopedia*, intro.

¹⁰² For the genealogy of the ICMA, see Schoeler (trans. Vagelpohl), *The Biography of Muḥammad*, 38, 80; Motzki, ‘The Collection of the Qur’ān’, 16; Motzki, ‘Dating Muslim Traditions’; Görke & Schoeler, ‘Reconstructing the Earliest *sīra* Texts’, 211-212; Mitter, ‘Origin and Development’, in Bernards & Nawas (eds.), *Patronage and Patronage*, 75-76; Reinhart, ‘Juynbolliana’; Shoemaker, ‘In Search of ‘Urwa’s *Sīra*’, 264, 266; Pavel Pavlovitch, ‘Dating’, in Daniel W. Brown (ed.), *The Wiley Blackwell Concise Companion to the Hadith* (Hoboken, USA: John Wiley & Sons Ltd., 2020), 117.

¹⁰³ Motzki, ‘The Murder of Ibn Abī l-Ḥuqayq’, in Motzki (ed.), *The Biography of Muḥammad*, 174.

¹⁰⁴ *Id.*, ‘Dating Muslim Traditions’, 250.

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, 250-251.

¹⁰⁶ For other appeals to correlation, see Schoeler (trans. Vagelpohl), *The Biography of Muḥammad*, 117-118; Motzki (trans. Griffel & Hardy), ‘Whither *Ḥadīth* Studies?’, in Motzki, *Analysing Muslim Traditions*, 117-118; *id.*, ‘The Collection of the Qur’ān’, 27-29; Gregor Schoeler, ‘Méthodes et Débats: Character and Authenticity of the Muslim Tradition on the Life of Muḥammad’, *Arabica*, Tome 48, Issue 3 (2002), 366; Görke, ‘Eschatology’, in Berg (ed.), *Method and Theory*, 188; Motzki, ‘The Origins of

Motzki *et al.*'s ICMA is thus a refined or more rigorous version of Juynboll's CL analysis,¹⁰⁷ incorporating *matns* to evaluate whether an ascription is genuine. In other words, where Juynboll usually only appealed to corroborating *'isnāds* to authenticate an ascription back to an earlier tradent, Motzki *et al.* also appealed to correlating patterns in *matns* as an independent means to corroborate the ascription. In doing so, Motzki *et al.* dispensed with Juynboll's inherent suspicion of SSs, since even a SS can be validated by being corroborated by other strands in transmitting a distinctive *matn* from a putative PCL or CL.¹⁰⁸ Motzki *et al.* also dispensed with Juynboll's criterion of three direct citations:

Unlike Juynboll's pure *isnād*-analysis, an *isnād-cum-matn* analysis – particularly when a tradition complex is as widely attested as the scandal story and when the relevant reports display as long and elaborate texts as in this case – can come up with safe assumptions about the existence of a genuine CL, even if only two transmission lines link the CL with two different transmitters of whom the texts show that their transmissions are independent of each other.¹⁰⁹

Instead of appealing to numbers, Motzki *et al.* appeal to corroborating patterns in the *matns*—in particular, when the *matns* form a series of clusters that match the PCLs and CLs depicted by the *'isnāds* of the relevant hadith. In this respect, the ICMA is reminiscent of textual criticism, as Schoeler notes:

For assessing the *isnāds*, suffice it to say here that their correctness—including the correctness of the common link that they display—is not just simply accepted, but rather tested in the investigation against the texts (*mutūn*). The analysis of the texts is done analogously to the investigation of manuscripts whose interdependence is to be ascertained: interdependencies are determined from the structure (abbreviations, additions, gaps) and wording of these texts. If the text analyses show that

Muslim Exegesis', in Motzki, *Analysing Muslim Traditions*, 290, 295; Mitter, 'Origin and Development', in Bernards & Nawas (eds.), *Patronate and Patronage*, 76-78; Aerts, "'Pray with Your Leader'", 35-36; Görke, 'Criteria for dating early *Tafsīr* traditions', 308.

¹⁰⁷ Schoeler (trans. Vagelpohl), *The Biography of Muḥammad*, 38, 80; Motzki, 'The Collection of the Qur'ān', 16; Reinhart, 'Juynbolliana', 426, 438-439; Shoemaker, 'In Search of 'Urwa's *Sīra*', 264, 266.

¹⁰⁸ Motzki (trans. Griffel & Hardy), 'Whither *Ḥadīth* Studies?', in Motzki, *Analysing Muslim Traditions*, 98, 101, 117-118; *id.*, 'The Prophet and the Cat', 55, 61, 66; *id.*, 'The Murder of Ibn Abī l-Ḥuqayq', in Motzki (ed.), *The Biography of Muḥammad*, 181; *id.*, (trans. Adrianovska & Reid), 'The Prophet and the Debtors', in Motzki, *Analysing Muslim Traditions*, 161-162; Görke *et al.*, 'First Century Sources', 36, 43-44, 51; Harald Motzki, *Reconstruction of a Source of Ibn Ishāq's Life of the Prophet and Early Qur'ān Exegesis: A Study of Early Ibn 'Abbās Traditions* (Piscataway, USA: Gorgias Press, 2017), 75.

¹⁰⁹ Görke *et al.*, 'First Century Sources', 36. Also see the other sources just cited.

the *isnāds* correctly indicate the interdependencies and that all of the present versions indeed lead back to a common archetype—the common link of the *isnāds*—then—and only then—can it be regarded as proved that the tradition was disseminated by the transmitter who turned out to be the common link.¹¹⁰

Of course, unlike textual criticism, the ICMA deals heavily with oral transmissions, and is accordingly better described as “tradition criticism”: most of the differences in *matns* are understood to be the product of paraphrase, mishearing, memory distortion, or elaboration, as opposed to scribal errors.¹¹¹ This brings up a crucial point: the ICMA requires the occurrence of mutagenic, paraphrastic, or error-ridden oral transmission in Hadith. Without *matn*-variations, correlations between *matn*-variations and *’isnāds* would not be possible; and without non-verbatim transmission, there would be no *matn*-variations. Proponents of the ICMA as a viable methodology for dating Hadith thus commit themselves—at minimum—to the view that *al-riwāyah bi-al-ma’ná* was the norm in early Hadith transmission. This is precisely why “a real transmission process” predicts “a correlation between *isnād* variants and *matn* variants of a tradition”, as Motzki put it: the ubiquity of non-verbatim oral transmission would mean that each student of a master would transmit his Hadith in their own (unique or idiosyncratic) wordings, and each of their students in turn would do the same, such that if later writers accurately recorded both the *matn* and *’isnād*, we would expect particular wordings to correlate with particular tradents.

Melchert’s Criticism of Motzki *et al.*

All of this yields an apparent paradox, as Christopher Melchert has observed: the ICMA supposes simultaneous precise *and* imprecise transmission.¹¹² It requires imprecision in the transmission of *matns*, such that variants can arise in the first place; but it also

¹¹⁰ Schoeler, ‘Méthodes et Débats’, 360-361.

¹¹¹ The difference is usually easy to spot. For example, when *jumaymah* occasionally becomes *ḥumaymah* in some variants, we have an obvious scribal error: *jīm* and *ḥā’* are much easier to confuse in writing than in hearing. Conversely, when *nakāḥa* becomes *tazawwaja*, it seems likely that this is the result of a paraphrase: these words look nothing alike in writing (making a scribal error unlikely), yet refer to the same concept (which is expected for a paraphrase).

¹¹² This problem has been expressed to me by Melchert several times in person, but seemingly not in print.

requires precision in the transmission of these variants (i.e., their accurate preservation henceforth), such that they can survive forthwith to give the extant appearance of their correlation with the tradents responsible therefor. If transmission was precise (such that variants could be preserved), then how could variants arise in the first place? And if transmission was imprecise (such that variants could arise), how could variants survive unscathed (without being replaced by new alterations that could obscure any appearance of correlation)?

Let us illustrate with a hypothetical example. Suppose that a CL passed on a hadith to three PCLs (PCL₁, PCL₂, and PCL₃), each of whom in turn passed it on to three further students. The CL's original *matn* comprised the element "A", but because of imprecise transmission, PCL₁ changed the *matn* to "AB". In turn, each student paraphrased this hadith in their own right, resulting variously in "AB1", "AB2", and "AB3". Meanwhile, PCL₂ changed the CL's original *matn* ("A") into "AC" (again thanks to imprecise transmission), and his three students in turn further changed this altered version into "AC4", "AC5", and "AC6", respectively. Finally, PCL₃ changed the CL's original *matn* ("A") into "AD", and his three students further changed this into "AD7", "AD8", and "AD9". All of this would yield a nice match between the *matns* and the *'isnāds*, with particular wordings correlating with particular tradents: the "B" element would correlate with PCL₁, the "C" element would correlate with the second PCL₂, and the "D" element would correlate with PCL₃, with the *matns* of the cluster of students around a given PCL being more similar to each other than to those in the other PCL clusters.

For this to work, however, each PCL has to be precise with his retaining of "A" from the CL (such that these hadiths can even be recognised as variants of the same tradition, sharing a common origin), yet simultaneously *imprecise* in his respective addition of "B", "C", or "D" (such that there can be particular wordings to correlate with the PCLs in the first place). Likewise, each student has to be precise in retaining both the original element from the CL and the addition of their PCL-source (such that the clusters of transmissions from each PCL are internally similar yet different from the other clusters), and so on, so forth (for however many generations this transmission occurs).

Why would we expect this happen? Why would the imprecise transmission allowing a PCL to change "A" into "AB" also not allow "A" to be completely replaced by "B", or "AB" to be replaced by "A1" (losing "B" along the way)? Moreover, if *matns* were being

transmitted imprecisely (such that variants could arise in the first place), why would we not expect the *ʿisnāds* to be altered concurrently? Is it plausible to imagine that transmitters devoted rigour to their memorisation of the *ʿisnād*, only to slack off into paraphrase, elaboration, or error when it came to the *matn*?

Even putting all of that aside, Melchert’s main criticism of the ICMA arises from the observation that it is possible that fabrication, interpolation, or accidental false ascription—i.e., spreading *ʿisnāds* or successive dives—could actually produce the kind of pattern sought by the ICMA.¹¹³ Melchert’s main objection is thus straightforward: the assumption of the ICMA that apparent *ʿisnād-matn* correlation is the product of genuine transmission is at best *ad hoc*,¹¹⁴ since the evidence is actually equivocal. Whether a seeming *ʿisnād-matn* correlation is the product of false ascription or genuine transmission is thus a matter of *probability* rather than *possibility*, since either mechanism could theoretically produce the same pattern of evidence.

For a hypothetical example, suppose that a tradent (T₁) created his own distinctive version of a *matn* and falsely ascribed it to an earlier figure (T₄); then another tradent (T₂) came along, obtained this distinctive *matn* from T₁, and suppressed T₁ from the *ʿisnād* by directly citing T₄ as his source instead; then along came yet another tradent (T₃), who received the *matn* from either T₁ or T₂ and likewise omitted his direct source in favour of citing T₄ as his source. The result would be three tradents (T₁, T₂, and T₃) who cite the same distinctive *matn* from the same source (T₄), such that a particular wording (the shared *matn*) would appear to correlate with a common source. Rather than being explained as a product of genuine transmission (i.e., T₁, T₂, and T₃ all accurately preserving both the distinctive *matn* and its origin with T₄), such a pattern would instead be the product of an initial false creation and successive borrowings and suppressions (i.e., between T₁, T₂, and T₃). Thus, even the ICMA seemingly cannot evade the threat of spreading *ʿisnāds* or successive dives, despite having been developed to overcome precisely this problem.

¹¹³ This problem—in addition to being expressed to me several times in person—is alluded to in Christopher Melchert, ‘Harald Motzki with Nicolet Boeckhoff-van der Voort and Sean Anthony, *Analysing Muslim Traditions: Studies in Legal, Exegetical and Maghāzī Ḥadīth*’, *Journal of Semitic Studies*, Volume 57, Issue 2 (2012), 438. Also see Shoemaker, *The Death of a Prophet*, 84-86, 300 (nn. 55-56).

¹¹⁴ By *ad hoc*, I simply mean a “just so” story, i.e., a hypothesis that merely explains the evidence that it was designed or adduced to explain, lacking independent corroboration, such that it remains unjustified *vis-à-vis* any number of alternative possible explanations for the same evidence. This is not to be confused with *ad hoc* auxiliary hypothesis, meaning, a secondary hypothesis that is adduced or devised to explain away evidence that would otherwise falsify an initial hypothesis.

Little's Criticism of Motzki *et al.*

To Melchert's criticisms of Motzki *et al.*'s ICMA, I add several of my own, most of which pertain to specific *versions* or *applications* of the ICMA, in contrast to the general problems outlined above.

To begin with, the early iterations of Motzki's ICMA had a different emphasis to that outlined above: rather than focusing on the recurring correlation of particular wordings with particular tradents, Motzki mostly argued on a case-by-case basis that particular *matns* must share a common ancestry rather than mutual dependence, and that their inferable common source was the CL explicitly depicted in their *'isnāds*. In particular, Motzki mostly appealed to a kind of textual-critical expectation of the retention of information in transmission: if X tradent borrowed from Y tradent, and Y's version has Z wording or detail, then X's consequent version ought to contain Z as well; therefore, if X's version lacks Z, it follows that X likely did not borrow from Y, and that the otherwise close similarities between X and Y must be explained by common descent. If, in such a situation, X and Y both cite a putative CL, it is taken to be likely that the common-ancestor version behind both X and Y's versions is the CL's version, such that the CL is genuine.¹¹⁵

Motzki's reasoning arguably makes sense from the turn of the 9th Century CE onward, when—as we will see—most transmitters sought to more or less retain the

¹¹⁵ E.g., Motzki (trans. Griffel & Hardy), 'Whither *Ḥadīth* Studies?', in Motzki, *Analysing Muslim Traditions*, 119; *id.*, 'The Prophet and the Cat', 33, 43-46; *id.*, 'The Murder of Ibn Abī l-Ḥuqayq', in Motzki (ed.), *The Biography of Muhammad*, 184, 186-188, 195, 204, 212, 221, 223; Andreas Görke, 'The Historical Tradition about al-Ḥudaybiya: A Study of 'Urwa b. al-Zubayr's Account', in Harald Motzki (ed.), *The Biography of Muhammad: The Issue of the Sources* (Leiden, the Netherlands: Koninklijke Brill NV, 2000), 247, 258-259; Motzki (trans. Adrianovska & Reid), 'The Prophet and the Debtors', in Motzki, *Analysing Muslim Traditions*, 149, 151-152, 154, 170; *id.* (trans. Sonja Adrianovska & Vivien Reid), 'Al-Radd 'Alā l-Radd: Concerning the Method of *Ḥadīth* Analysis', in Harald Motzki, *Analysing Muslim Traditions: Studies in Legal, Exegetical and Maghāzī Ḥadīth* (Leiden, the Netherlands: Koninklijke Brill NV, 2010), 221-222, 226; *id.*, 'The Origins of Muslim Exegesis', in Motzki, *Analysing Muslim Traditions*, 239, 256-257; Mitter, 'Origin and Development', in Bernards & Nawas (eds.), *Patronate and Patronage*, 87 (n. 70), 114, 126, 130-131; Nicolet Boekhoff-van der Voort, 'The Raid of the Hudhayl: Ibn Shihāb al-Zuhri's Version of the Event', in Harald Motzki, *Analysing Muslim Traditions: Studies in Legal, Exegetical and Maghāzī Ḥadīth* (Leiden, the Netherlands: Koninklijke Brill NV, 2010), 307, 362; Harald Motzki, 'Abraham, Hagar and Ishmael at Mecca: A Contribution to the Problem of Dating Muslim Traditions', in Andrew L. Rippin & Roberto Tottoli (eds.), *Books and Written Culture of the Islamic World: Studies Presented to Claude Gilliot on the Occasion of his 75th Birthday* (Leiden, the Netherlands: Koninklijke Brill NV, 2015), 370, 374-375.

information that they had received, and when the rising reliance on written notes was facilitating greater accuracy in Hadith transmission in general.¹¹⁶ In such a situation, absent an identifiable motive to alter or omit information, it does seem unexpected that a tradent borrowing from another would lose details contained in the latter's *matn*. However, the same cannot be said for earlier 'transmitters' of Hadith (in the first Islamic century and a half at least), who not only operated in an era of loose, paraphrastic oral transmission (which allowed for the transformation and loss of information), but evidently felt free to alter or even recreate reports.¹¹⁷ In such a situation, omissions and especially variations in content between two *matns* would by no means preclude mutual dependency, since paraphrasing, interpolation, or simple memory distortion or error could easily result therein, in an instance of borrowing. In general, it is certainly true—based on the findings of the last few centuries of textual criticism—that information or content is more likely to accrue than be lost, such that the more elaborate version of two competing texts is usually taken to be the later (i.e., embellished) form.¹¹⁸ However, that does not mean that a tradent will accurately retain all elements and details when they receive and transmit a hadith, especially in an oral context. In other words, standard textual-critical reasoning is not always applicable to oral transmission, especially when paraphrasing, memory distortion, and contamination are common. Thus, Motzki's appeal to the omission of wordings or details as a means to establish the independence of *matns* is unconvincing, at least regarding transmission before the turn of the 9th Century CE.

In short, Motzki had an unreasonably strict notion of what borrowing or mutual dependency would look like. For example, when evaluating the relationship between two PCLs—Zakariyyā' b. 'abī Zā'idah (d. 149/766-767) and Yūsuf b. 'Ishāq (d. 157/773-774)—within the broader tradition of the CL 'Abū 'Ishāq (d. 127-128/744-746), Motzki noted that the respective PCL redactions are substantially "similar in structure and choice of words", but that one of them "is shorter or uses other words" in "some places", which led him to conclude: "The differences between the two versions are such that any dependence on each other is not probable. What they have in common must therefore go back to a common source."¹¹⁹ Why? If the differences

¹¹⁶ See the section below, concerning Little's defence of the ICMA; and, also, the conclusion in ch. 2.

¹¹⁷ See the references given at the outset, esp. Crone and Yanagihashi.

¹¹⁸ E.g., Pavlovitch, *Formation*, 37-39.

¹¹⁹ Motzki, 'The Murder of Ibn Abī l-Ḥuqayq', in Motzki (ed.), *The Biography of Muhammad*, 186-187.

between Zakariyyā' and Yūsuf's redactions are so minor, surely a borrowing by one from the other, in the era of oral paraphrasing, could produce the same level of similarity and divergence? Why then does Motzki exclude such a scenario?

After enumerating such differences between all four of the PCLs within this tradition from 'Abū 'Ishāq, Motzki further concluded:

Our comparison of *matns*, ascribed to different transmitters who all relate on the authority of Abū Ishāq, has brought to light that all of them are independent from each other and must go back to a common source which, according to the *isnāds*, must be Abū Ishāq. Stated differently: The conclusion reached by the analysis of the *isnād* bundle that there is a common link is corroborated by the *matn* analysis; additionally, the *isnād* analysis shows that this common link is Abū Ishāq. The common link is not artificially created by the so-called "spread of *isnāds*".¹²⁰

Why? Motzki believed that the relevant level of difference between the PCLs must have arisen in the course of transmission *from* the CL *to* the PCLs, but why could the same level of difference not have arisen *between* the putative PCLs? Moreover, what if *several* (anonymous or suppressed) intermediary borrowings separated the borrowing from its original source—surely the two resulting versions (the borrowing and the original, both now claiming a common, earlier source) would notably diverge, despite being the product of mutual dependency rather than common descent? Furthermore, what if an outright storyteller—someone who habitually radically reworked reports—was involved somewhere along the way? Again, Motzki's appeal to differences between *matns* does not seem like a strong basis for establishing independence.

Motzki further stated, in regards to the tradition of 'Abū 'Ishāq:

A striking phenomenon is that, on the one hand, the versions of Isrā'īl and Sharīk resemble each other and, on the other hand, the same is true of the versions of Yūsuf b. Ishāq and Zakariyyā' b. Abī Zā'ida. If my conclusion is correct that the four versions must go back, independently from each other, to a common source, then the difference between the two types of stories (or the correspondence between two of each) must be explained by supposing that Abū Ishāq related the story in at least two different ways.¹²¹

¹²⁰ *Ibid.*, 187.

¹²¹ *Ibid.*, 188.

Why could we not instead infer (in the given case) that 'Isrā'īl and Šarīk borrowed from each other, on the one hand, and Yūsuf and Zakariyyā' borrowed from each other, on the other? How does Motzki preclude borrowing amongst the PCLs, in such a situation?

In short, Motzki seems only to have allowed for borrowing in the case of identical or near-identical *matns*, as he indicated in his evaluation of two seemingly-independent transmissions (Ibn Hišām—al-Bakkā'ī and al-'Uṭāridī—Ibn Bukayr) from a putative CL (Ibn 'Ishāq):

To arrive at more certainty as to whether we are concerned in this concrete case with such a deceptive manoeuvre, we need to examine the *texts* of the relevant transmissions. If a “spread of *isnāds*” were the case, then Ibn Hisham's and al-'Uṭāridī's versions of the narration must to a large extent be identical.¹²²

This only makes sense if borrowing and suppression—the spread of *isnāds* or diving—only occurred via precise or verbatim oral transmission, or else through the precise copying of written texts. However, if it also occurred between heavy-handed redactors, or via paraphrastic or sloppy oral transmission, or between storytellers, then there is no reason to expect that “the narration must to a large extent be identical” in such an instance. Again, Motzki's standard for establishing borrowing seems unreasonably high.¹²³

Worse still, Motzki's assertions of the independence of *matns* sometimes degenerate into little more than tautologies, as in the following instance: “The differences between the two versions are **so many** and sometimes **so substantial**, that it is not conceivable that al-Rūyānī's text is based on that of al-Bukhārī or vice versa.”¹²⁴

¹²² *Id.*, *Reconstruction*, 26. Also see *id.*, ‘The Murder of Ibn Abī l-Ḥuqayq’, in Motzki (ed.), *The Biography of Muhammad*, 204; *id.*, ‘The Origins of Muslim Exegesis’, in Motzki, *Analysing Muslim Traditions*, 252, 262; Görke, ‘Eschatology’, in Berg (ed.), *Method and Theory*, 189; Mitter, ‘Origin and Development’, in Bernards & Nawas (eds.), *Patronage and Patronage*, 76-77; Boekhoff-van der Voort, ‘The Raid of the Hudhayl’, in Motzki, *Analysing Muslim Traditions*, 307.

¹²³ This is at least a step up from Motzki's tendency elsewhere to interpret *all levels of variation* as consistent with genuine transmission, as noted in Melchert, ‘Motzki, Harald. *The Origins of Islamic Jurisprudence*’, 408: “Motzki continually talks about “demonstrating” that particular hadith reports are historically reliable, but one begins to wonder how many of his affirmations actually falsifiable. When two transmitters quote someone the way, it shows that they have a common source; if differently, that transmissions are satisfactorily independent.”

¹²⁴ Motzki, ‘The Murder of Ibn Abī l-Ḥuqayq’, in Motzki (ed.), *The Biography of Muhammad*, 187. Emphasis mine. For other examples, see *id.*, ‘The Prophet and the Cat’, 33, 48; *id.*, ‘The Murder of Ibn Abī l-Ḥuqayq’, in Motzki (ed.), *The Biography of Muhammad*, 186, 218-219; *id. et al.*, ‘First Century Sources’, 52; *id.* (trans. Adrianovska & Reid), ‘The Prophet and the Debtors’, 152, 162; *id.* (trans. Adrianovska & Reid), ‘Al-Radd ‘Alā l-Radd’, in Motzki, *Analysing Muslim Traditions*, 219; *id.*, ‘The Origins of Muslim

All that “so” means here is ‘at the right level’, which means that Motzki is merely stating: “it is not conceivable that al-Rūyānī’s text is based on that of al-Bukhārī or vice versa”, because the differences between the two versions are of the “it is not conceivable that al-Rūyānī’s text is based on that of al-Bukhārī or vice versa” *level of numerousness*, and of the “it is not conceivable that al-Rūyānī’s text is based on that of al-Bukhārī or vice versa” *level of substantialness*. In other words, the versions exhibit a ‘they must share common ancestry’ level of difference, so they must share common ancestry. In such instances of vacuity, we are left with no inkling as to the criterion for mutual dependency versus common ancestry, i.e., the criterion for what quantity or quality of variation would be sufficient therefor.

In short, Motzki seemed to think that there is some kind of clear or discernible level of variation between *matns* that precludes dependence and thus entails common ancestry, but failed to outline a sound criterion therefor: his assertions of the independence of *matns* were at best unjustified and at worst tautologies.

There are also problems with Motzki’s *application* of the ICMA, not just the *version* he was employing. For example, in his 1998 article ‘The Prophet and the Cat’, Motzki analysed a hadith about the ritual purity of cats and concluded that ‘Ishāq b. ‘Abd Allāh (d. 132-134/749-752),¹²⁵ ‘Ikrimah (d. 104-107/722-726),¹²⁶ and ‘Abd Allāh b. ‘abī Qatādah (d. 95/713-714)¹²⁷ were all genuine CLs who disseminated different versions of the hadith, before further concluding that their ultimate common source, the Companion ‘Abū Qatādah (d. 54/673-674), was also a genuine CL.¹²⁸ Of course, as has been noted already,¹²⁹ ‘Abū Qatādah is not a CL in the usual sense (i.e., a *common source* whose distinctive redaction was received by multiple relatives and students): he is a *common character* in reports ascribed to three of his relatives and one of his students. In other words, ‘Abū Qatādah *cannot* be a CL: only his relatives and students, each of whom allegedly transmitted their own recollection of an event (i.e., their own *report*), could logically be CLs (i.e., each for their own distinctive redaction). And yet, most of

Exegesis’, in Motzki, *Analysing Muslim Traditions*, 251; Boekhoff-van der Voort, ‘The Raid of the Hudhayl’, in Motzki, *Analysing Muslim Traditions*, 376; Motzki, *Reconstruction*, 110.

¹²⁵ Motzki, ‘The Prophet and the Cat’, 47 ff., 53.

¹²⁶ *Ibid.*, 58.

¹²⁷ *Ibid.*, 70.

¹²⁸ *Ibid.*, 64. Technically, this would make ‘Ishāq, ‘Ikrimah, and ‘Abd Allāh PCLs. Then again, if ‘Abū Qatādah is technically not a CL, such an emendation would be unnecessary.

¹²⁹ See the section on Brown’s criticism of Juynboll, above.

the relevant hadiths—’Ishāq’s redaction; the SSs of al-Bayhaqī, Ibn Ḥanbal, and al-Muḥalliṣ¹³⁰ unto ‘Abd Allāh; and al-Ṭaḥāwī’s SS to Ka’b—share the same elemental sequence:

1. ’Abū Qatādah
2. ablutions
3. a cat appears
4. the cat is allowed to drink from a water vessel
5. objection/amazement
6. ’Abū Qatādah cites the Prophet’s precedent

This is despite the fact that most of these hadiths are supposed to be the words and recollections of *multiple different people*: Kabšah, the wife of ‘Abd Allāh b. ’abī Qatādah (in ’Ishāq’s version); ‘Abd Allāh himself (in the SSs of al-Bayhaqī, Ibn Ḥanbal, and al-Muḥalliṣ); and Ka’b b. ‘Abd al-Raḥmān (in al-Ṭaḥāwī’s SS). Why would the independent recollections—the independent *reports*—of three different witnesses to a common event share the same form?

Motzki argues that all of these reports are witnesses to the same event—thus, the common form simply reflects a broadly-accurate memory of the same sequence of events, witnessed simultaneously by multiple people.¹³¹ This is certainly possible, but is it probable, let alone the most probable explanation for this kind of evidence? Anyone familiar with the work of Noth, Crone, and Roohi will immediately recognise an alternative explanation for such a pattern of evidence: stories and narrative material were constantly borrowed and remixed by early Muslim storytellers, such that the common elemental sequence featuring ’Abū Qatādah might simply reflect a reused schema or template, rather than independent recollections of the same event.¹³² Such a scenario is all the more plausible if the hadith indeed originated

¹³⁰ Muḥammad b. ‘Abd al-Raḥmān al-Muḥalliṣ (ed. Nabīl Sa’d al-Dīn Jarrār), *al-Muḥalliṣiyyāt wa-’Ajzā’ Uḵrā*, vol. 3 (Qatar: Wizārat al-’Awqāt wa-al-Ṣū’ūn al-’Islāmiyyah, 2008), p. 373. The reader should note that Motzki seems to have been unaware of this SS. However, for the sake of completeness (and to present the strongest possible case for Motzki), I have included this ‘corroborating evidence’ in my analysis. For the rest of the sources in question, see Motzki’s bibliography.

¹³¹ Motzki, ‘The Prophet and the Cat’, 63-64, 72.

¹³² Noth & Lawrence, *The Early Arabic Historical Tradition*, 2nd ed.; Crone, *Meccan Trade*, ch. 9; Ehsan Roohi, ‘Between History and Ancestral Lore: A Literary Approach to the *Sīra*’s Narratives of Political Assassinations’, *Der Islam*, Volume 98, Issue 2 (2021), 425-472; *id.*, ‘A Form-Critical Analysis of the al-

amongst the relatives and descendants 'Abū Qatādah, since informal borrowings and contaminations are completely expected in the context of family members learning family lore from each other.

Some kind of borrowing or common *narrative* origin (as opposed to an origin in a common *experience of an event*) becomes even more likely when it is noticed that nearly all of these hadiths describe how 'Abū Qatādah allowed the cat to drink in the same way: he “inclined” (*'aṣḡā*) the vessel containing the ablution water. What are the odds that independent recollections would happen to include the same non-essential detail regarding *how* the cat gained access to the water, and that they would moreover use *the same verb* in describing this? There are thus form-critical grounds for suspecting that the CL hadiths about 'Abū Qatādah are not independent of each other: rather than a match between a single, inferable ur-redaction (embodied in all the extant versions) and a CL ('Abū Qatādah), we instead have a mismatch between a single, inferable ur-redaction (embodied in all the extant versions) and two or three allegedly-independent recollections of a single event featuring a common figure ('Abū Qatādah).

However, this kind of deeper, form-critical evaluation is not even necessary in the first place, since the attribution of the aforementioned SSs to the putative CLs 'Abd Allāh and Ka'b are doubtful even on standard *'isnād-cum-matn* grounds: some of these SSs are more similar to certain transmissions from 'Ishāq than they are to each other, sharing particular elements and wordings. In this respect, Motzki already conceded that Ibn Ḥanbal's SS via Mu'ammār unto 'Abd Allāh is “a mixture of borrowings from several different traditions”,¹³³ and that al-Ṭaḥāwī's SS unto Ka'b is “modeled on” other ascriptions to Kabšah and 'Abd Allāh, given the presence of distinctive wordings in the suspect hadiths that are present in seemingly unrelated hadiths.¹³⁴ (On the same grounds, al-Muḥallī's SS back to 'Abd Allāh, which shares extensive wordings with 'Ishāq's recension, must be discarded as a borrowing.) However, according to Motzki, the remaining two ascriptions to 'Abd Allāh—namely, al-Bayhaqī's SS via al-Ḥajjāj and Qatādah, and his other SS via Hammām and Yaḥyá—have *matns* that are fundamentally similar: “In both texts, the behavior of Abū Qatāda is described in few

Rajī' and Bī'r Ma'ūna Stories: Tribal, Ideological, and Legal Incentives behind the Transmission of the Prophet's Biography', *al-'Uṣūr al-Wuṣṭā*, Volume 30 (2022), 267-338.

¹³³ Motzki, 'The Prophet and the Cat', 68-69.

¹³⁴ *Ibid.*, 70-71.

words. The content is, on the whole, the same.”¹³⁵ Moreover, given that these two ascriptions to ‘Abd Allāh differ notably in wording when they cite the Prophet, Motzki infers that they cannot be borrowed from each other, from which it follows that they must share a common source. Furthermore, since both hadiths do indeed cite a common source (‘Abd Allāh) in their *’isnāds*, this cited common source is likely the *actual* common source for the two hadiths:

The differences between both texts show that they are not dependent on each other. It is not very probable that the text of Qatāda had the *matn* of Yaḥyā as a model or the other way around. If so, how can the substantial similarities of both texts be explained? It seems most appropriate to think that they are derived from a common source and that the differences are due to the transmission process (i.e., oral, or based on written notes). Who could be that source? The most likely candidate is ‘Abd Allāh b. Abī Qatāda to whom, according to the *’isnāds*, both transmitters refer as their informant.

In this regard, Motzki has both exaggerated his findings and overlooked key evidence. To begin with, the similarity between al-Bayhaqī’s two ascriptions to ‘Abd Allāh is extremely superficial: whilst it is certainly interesting that both omit the *ṭawwāfīn* element present in ‘Ishāq’s redaction,¹³⁶ the version from al-Ḥajjāj—Qatādah contains noticeably more elements than the version from Hammām—Yaḥyā, and in general, the two *matns* share no distinctive wordings *vis-à-vis* the transmissions from ‘Ishāq. Moreover, the al-Ḥajjāj—Qatādah version has the sequence *kāna ’abū qatādah yuṣḡī al-’inā’ li-l-hirr fa-ṣaribat tumma yatawaḍḍa’u bi-hi*, which is extremely similar to ‘Abd al-Razzāq and al-Bayhaqī’s transmissions from ‘Ishāq: the former has *fa-’aṣḡā ’ilay-hā al-’inā’ allaḍī fī-hi wuḍū’u-hu fa-ṣaribat tumma tawaḍḍa’a bi-faḍli-hā*, and the latter has *fa-’aṣḡā ’ilay-hi al-’inā’ fa-ṣariba tumma tawaḍḍa’a bi-faḍli-hi*. In this respect, al-Bayhaqī’s SS to ‘Abd Allāh is much more similar to certain transmissions from ‘Ishāq than it is to al-Bayhaqī’s parallel SS unto ‘Abd Allāh, which lacks most of the relevant wordings. Conversely, the Hammām—Yaḥyā version has the sequence *wa-qāla ’inna rasūl allāh qāla laysat bi-najas*, which is extremely close to some versions of ‘Ishāq’s redaction (e.g., Mālik’s *qāla ’inna rasūl allāh qāla ’inna-hā laysat bi-najas*), but completely absent in al-Bayhaqī’s parallel SS. Once again, the ascriptions to ‘Abd Allāh

¹³⁵ *Ibid.*, 67.

¹³⁶ *Ibid.*, 68.

are much more similar to certain transmissions from 'Ishāq than they are to each other, which is consistent with the occurrence of borrowing: certainly, they cannot be said to derive in common from 'Abd Allāh, which means that 'Abd Allāh cannot be identified as a probable CL.

Curiously, Motzki at one point considered the possibility that al-Bayhaqī's SSs unto 'Abd Allāh via al-Ḥajjāj—Qatādah and Hammām—Yaḥyá were actually the product of borrowings from 'Ishāq or his students:

...the alleged transmitters of the two versions—Hammām and al-Ḥajjāj—could have created them after the model of the *ḥadīth* of Ishāq b. 'Abd Allāh b. Abī Ṭalḥa and changed the *isnād*. This objection does raise a question as well: if one assumes, for the sake of argument, that this really happened, how did they arrive at the same name for the informant? By chance? Or did they make this forgery together?¹³⁷

There are several obvious answers to this question. Firstly, there were various pressures for independent *'isnāds* during the 8th Century CE, so if some Iraqians at the time sought local, alternative paths of transmission back to 'Abū Qatādah, and some of their local predecessors were known to have transmitted from 'Abd Allāh b. 'abī Qatādah, he would have been an obvious choice for such retrojections. Secondly, 'Ishāq cited *the wife of 'Abd Allāh* as his source, so it is only natural that *'Abd Allāh himself* would jump out as an obvious alternative source. Thirdly, an initial dive to 'Abd Allāh could spawn parallel dives thereto, either deliberately (i.e., attempts to update or improve the initial dive) or accidentally (i.e., someone could simply mix up the initial dive to 'Abd Allāh with a version of 'Ishāq's *ḥadīth*). We can thus safely put aside any incredulity regarding the existence of multiple SSs unto 'Abd Allāh, as if this could only be explained by his having been an actual CL—on the contrary, the simultaneous or successive creation of parallel ascriptions to him is very easy to envisage, without invoking amazing coincidences or mendacious collaboration.¹³⁸

Of course, this still leaves the issue of the unique wording of the citation of the Prophet's precedent in al-Bayhaqī's transmission from al-Ḥajjāj—Qatādah, which differs not just from his parallel SS unto 'Abd Allāh, but also from 'Ishāq's redaction. According to Motzki, this unusual wording ("I am only doing what I saw the Messenger

¹³⁷ *Ibid.*, 67-68.

¹³⁸ For more on this, see Schacht, Cook, and Juynboll, cited variously above.

of God do”) cannot have been derived from the common wording shared by the Hammām—Yaḥyá version and ʾIshāq (“Verily the Messenger of God said: “Verily it is not impure”). Not a shred of argumentation is given in support of this contention, however: it is simply asserted. *Contra* Motzki, it is easy to envisage such a change occurring (especially during the 8th Century CE, when paraphrastic oral transmission still lingered), since it transforms ʾAbū Qatādah’s vague citation of something the Prophet said (i.e., without necessarily indicating that ʾAbū Qatādah himself heard it directly from the Prophet) into an act that ʾAbū Qatādah himself witnessed. A similar motive can explain why some versions of ʾIshāq’s redaction have ʾAbū Qatādah explicitly state, “Verily I heard the Messenger of God say...”: this can be understood as an alternative solution to the same ambiguity.

Finally, we have ʾIkrimah’s *mawqūf* hadith (in which no Prophetical precedent is cited), which certainly does not share the same elemental structure as the *marfūʿ* hadiths of the CL ʾIshāq and his borrowers—might we thus have two independent witnesses to a common event, as Motzki suggests?¹³⁹ Again, it is certainly possible—but there are reasons to be skeptical. Firstly, ʾIkrimah’s hadith can be read as vaguely reporting a continuous or general custom of ʾAbū Qatādah’s, rather than a specific event: “ʾAbū Qatādah used to (*kāna*) lower (*yudnī*) the vessel [containing water for ablutions] for a cat and it would lap (*yaliḡu*) therefrom, then he would perform ablutions (*tumma yatawaḍḍaʿu*) with the leftovers.” By contrast, ʾIshāq’s hadith reports a specific event, which means that ʾIshāq and ʾIkrimah do not attest to the same event per se. Moreover, even if they are supposed to refer to the same event, ʾIshāq’s hadith seems decidedly secondary, given that it is much more detailed and specific and adds a statement from the Prophet. It is thus at the very least highly plausible that ʾIshāq’s hadith represents an elaborated and improved version of ʾIkrimah’s hadith, calling into question Motzki’s conclusion that they represent independent recollections of a common event.

In short, the early version of the ICMA articulated by Motzki relied upon a certain kind of textual-critical reasoning—to establish the independence of texts—that often cannot be applied to the oral context of Hadith; Motzki’s arguments for the independence of texts often devolved into mere tautologies; and Motzki’s application

¹³⁹ Motzki, “The Prophet and the Cat”, 63-64.

of the ICMA was sometimes inconsistent and idiosyncratic, as when he disregarded clear textual relationships between hadiths. Even if the ICMA in general can be salvaged, many of Motzki's specific historical conclusions will have to be rejected.

Little's Defence of the 'Isnād-Cum-Matn Analysis

Despite all of this, an important consideration still remains in favour of the ICMA: **the *matns* attributed to particular PCLs and CLs are usually more similar to each other than to the *matns* attributed to other PCLs and CLs.**¹⁴⁰ Whilst it is *possible* that this kind of pattern could obtain via widespread and frequent borrowings, suppressions, and paraphrases (of the sort described above), Herbert Berg—following Motzki—argues that such an outcome *overall* seems quite unlikely: fabrications, interpolations, and paraphrases could go in any direction and produce all kinds of evidence, yet this particular pattern shows up again and again. By contrast, genuine transmission would consistently produce this kind of pattern, according to Berg:

Motzki's argument, however, is valid. If revisionists see no value whatsoever in the contents of the *isnāds*, then the observed correlations between the texts and those *isnāds* requires some alternative explanation. Organic growth and mass fabrication would likely favor randomness, not correlations.¹⁴¹

Be that as it may, there is an obvious solution to Melchert's first criticism (*viz.*, that the ICMA paradoxically requires simultaneous precise *and* imprecise transmission), in light of the usual chronology involved with putative CLs and PCLs. The transmission of Hadith was loose or sloppy during the mid-to-late 8th Century CE, when the CLs passed on their hadiths to their immediate PCLs; then transmission saw a marked increase in precision at the turn of the 9th Century CE, when these PCLs passed on their hadiths to their students (including junior PCLs); and henceforth, variations (at the hands of

¹⁴⁰ See Juynboll, Motzki, and Mitter, cited above, in the section on Motzki *et al.*'s ICMA.

¹⁴¹ Herbert Berg, 'The Needle in the Haystack: Islamic Origins and the Nature of the Early Sources', in Carlos A. Segovia & Basil Lourié (eds.), *The Coming of the Comforter: When, Where, and to Whom? Studies on the Rise of Islam and Various Other Topics in Memory of John Wansbrough* (Piscataway, USA: Gorgias Press, 2012), 281. Similarly, see Motzki, 'The Collection of the Qur'ān', 28; *id.*, 'The Question of the Authenticity of Muslim Traditions Reconsidered', in Berg (ed.), *Method and Theory*, 236-237; Mitter, 'Origin and Development', in Bernardts & Nawas (eds.), *Patronate and Patronage*, 77-78.

these students and later scribes) were extremely minor.¹⁴² In other words, initial imprecision (on the part of the CLs and their PCLs) allowed for variation to arise in the first place (reflecting the respective idiosyncrasies of each PCL), then subsequent increasing precision (on the part of the students of the PCLs, including junior PCLs) allowed for these variations to be preserved forthwith, etc.

In addition to explaining the common pattern of evidence found by numerous ICMAAs (minimal variation *within* PCL clusters, but substantial variation *between* PCL clusters), this inferable progression from imprecision to precision at the turn of the 9th Century CE (when the senior PCLs were transmitting to their students) coincides with both the generalised acceptance of the recording of Hadith in writing (or at least in personal notes)¹⁴³ and a transition in *ʿisnāds* from generic citations (*ʿan*) to verbatim quotations (*ḥaddaṭa-nā*, etc.).¹⁴⁴ As it happens, Motzki and others have already made this connection, at least in passing.¹⁴⁵

This general pattern also provides a tentative solution to Melchert's second criticism (*viz.*, the possibility that spreading *ʿisnāds* could produce apparent *ʿisnād-matn* correlation): the hypothesis of genuine and increasingly-reliable transmission makes better sense *in general* as an explanation for the evidence in question. In other words, as an *explanatory postulate*, the distinctive sub-traditions clustered around PCLs can be understood to reflect the respective redactions of said PCLs, and the underlying tradition shared by the PCLs can be understood to reflect the preceding redaction of the CL, against the backdrop of increasing precision in transmission due to the concomitant rise and generalisation of writing. Put differently, if the recurring

¹⁴² For some related evidence and similar observations, see Motzki, 'The Murder of Ibn Abī l-Ḥuqayq', in Motzki (ed.), *The Biography of Muhammad*, 187-188, 192; Mitter, 'Origin and Development of the Islamic Patronate', in Bernards & Nawas (eds.), *Patronate and Patronage*, 77, n. 32; Motzki, 'The Origins of Muslim Exegesis', in Motzki, *Analysing Muslim Traditions*, 252; Mitter, "'The Majority of the dwellers of Hell-fire are women'", in Boekhoff-van der Voort *et al.* (eds.), *The Transmission and Dynamics of the Textual Sources of Islam*, 450. The papyri studied in Abbott, *Studies*, II, are also consistent with this pattern.

¹⁴³ Michael A. Cook, 'The Opponents of the Writing of Tradition in early Islam', *Arabica*, Tome 44, Issue 4 (1997), 476; Gregor Schoeler (ed. James E. Montgomery and trans. Uwe Vagelpohl), *The Oral and the Written in Early Islam* (Abingdon, UK: Routledge, 2006), 116; Melchert, *Aḥmad*, 31-32.

¹⁴⁴ Christopher Melchert, 'The Destruction of Books by Traditionists', *al-Qanṭara*, Volume 35, Number 1 (2014), 218-219.

¹⁴⁵ Motzki (trans. Griffel & Hardy), 'Whither *Ḥadīth* Studies?', in Motzki, *Analysing Muslim Traditions*, 91; Schoeler (trans. Vagelpohl), *The Biography of Muḥammad*, 104, 115-116; Motzki, 'The Murder of Ibn Abī l-Ḥuqayq', in Motzki (ed.), *The Biography of Muhammad*, 187-188, 192; *id.* (trans. Adrianovska & Reid), 'The Prophet and the Debtors', in Motzki, *Analysing Muslim Traditions*, 143, 161; *id.*, *Reconstruction*, 110-111.

textual pattern of the PCLs and the CLs reflected genuine transmission, then it would have to be an increasingly precise form of transmission (in order to actually explain the pattern); and if indeed transmission was becoming more precise, it would have to be due to something like the rise and generalisation of writing; and as it happens, we have evidence for the spread and predomination of writing in exactly the right time period. Moreover, if transmission was becoming more precise, we would expect to see other signs thereof, i.e., signs of a general increase in precise quotation-practices, or tradents paying closer attention to memorising and transmitting the wordings of hadiths; and as it happens, the rise and spread of tradents reproducing the transmission-terminology of their teachers (for example, *ḥaddaṭa-nā*, as opposed to a vague *ʿan*) is consistent therewith, and occurred at around the same time as the generalisation—or general acceptance—of the writing of Hadith.¹⁴⁶

In short, the hypothesis of widespread genuine transmission in conjunction with increasing rigour or precision coincides with—i.e., is corroborated by—the rise of precise transmission-terminology in *ʿisnāds* and the rise and predomination of written transmission. Thus, the best *overall* explanation for the pattern in question (i.e., the recurring correlations between particular wordings and specific tradents) is widespread genuine—and increasingly accurate—transmission, at least from around the time of the CLs and PCLs onward. In other words, the best *overall* explanation for this pattern is that the idiosyncrasies or particularities of CLs and PCLs were accurately recorded by subsequent tradents, which means that their redactions can be reconstructed—at least whenever this correlation holds.

This also allows us to sidestep the problem I outlined with Motzki’s approach (i.e., the lack of a clear and sound criterion of establishing textual independence and common ancestry): the only criterion needed for a given set of *matns* to be explained as genuine transmissions from a PCL is that they are more similar to each other *vis-à-vis* those ascribed to others (i.e., that the PCL sub-tradition is *distinctive*), such that the *matns* in question can be explained as reflections of the redaction (i.e., the idiosyncrasies or particularities) of the PCL. By contrast, if the sub-traditions of PCLs

¹⁴⁶ Again, see Melchert, cited above. Of course, tradents sometimes failed in this respect (or lied), since we can infer in plenty of instances (by comparing variants) that a *ḥaddaṭa-nā* remembered by one tradent is remembered as an *ʿakbara-nā* by another. The important part is not that they remembered 100% accurately, however, but that they began to *attempt* to remember accurately. Or, to be more precise, the evidence is *consistent* with such an attempt, as a general tendency; cf. Melchert, *op cit.*, who sees this trend as a *reaction* against the rise the writing.

are not distinctive (i.e., the transmissions from them are not more similar to each other *vis-à-vis* those ascribed to others), then no appeal can be made to a general preservation of the particular wording of the PCLs.

Of course, my defence of the ICMA has severe consequences: if variation was generally insignificant from post-PCL students to subsequent students or later copyists, minor from the PCLs to their students, and major from the CLs to their PCLs, then it is reasonable to expect that such variation was greater still from the Followers to the CLs, and greater still yet from the Companions to the Followers, and so on,¹⁴⁷ as even Motzki admits.¹⁴⁸ This general progression from imprecision to precision is consistent with Crone's view on extreme and rapid mutation in the oral traditions of the 1st Islamic Century, undermining any expectation that the CL's redaction (in the event that this can even be reconstructed from the various paraphrases of their PCLs) accurately reflects a report or memory passed on from a predecessor.¹⁴⁹ Even the CL's cited *'isnād* seems questionable, since even *'isnāds* could in principle be subject to mutation.

In short, my solution to the problem of the seemingly-paradoxical simultaneous need for precise and imprecise transmission on the part of the ICMA—the tendency of Hadith transmission to increase in accuracy over time, as corroborated by other points of evidence—is a pyrrhic victory, in terms of the prospect of reconstructing any kind of pre-CL version of a hadith.

¹⁴⁷ For a similar point, see Cook, *Muhammad*, 66-67; Crone, *Meccan Trade*, 223-224.

¹⁴⁸ E.g., Motzki (trans. Griffel & Hardy), 'Whither *Ḥadīth* Studies?', in Motzki, *Analysing Muslim Traditions*, 91; *id.*, 'The Murder of Ibn Abī l-Ḥuqayq', in Motzki (ed.), *The Biography of Muhammad*, 187-188, 192; *id.* (trans. Adrianovska & Reid), 'The Prophet and the Debtors', in Motzki, *Analysing Muslim Traditions*, 143, 161. Also see *id.*, *Reconstruction*, 13, where Motzki noted some evidence for heavy legendary development during the 1st Islamic Century.

¹⁴⁹ Cf. Schoeler (trans. Vagelpohl), *Biography*, 16, 106, 113, 115; *id.*, 'Méthodes et Débats', 361-362; *id.*, 'Foundations', in Berg (ed.), *Method and Theory*, 24, 27-28; Görke & Schoeler, 'Reconstructing the Earliest *sīra* Texts', 220; Andreas Görke, 'Prospects and Limits in the Study of the Historical Muḥammad', in Nicolet Boekhoff-van der Voort, Kees Versteegh, & Joas Wagemakers (eds.), *The Transmission and Dynamics of the Textual Sources of Islam: Essays in Honour of Harald Motzki* (Leiden, the Netherlands: Koninklijke Brill NV, 2011), 148. Schoeler and Görke argue that, if we can reconstruct a gist back to 'Urwa, the gist of this gist (i.e., minus any miracles, propaganda, and anachronisms) can be trusted as an accurate historical memory tracing back to Companion eyewitnesses. Inasmuch as mutation and legendary development were at their most extreme during the 1st Islamic Century, this conclusion seems dubious: cf. in turn Chase F. Robinson, *Islamic Historiography* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 10; Shoemaker, 'In Search of 'Urwa's *Sīra*', 324-325; *id.*, 'Andreas Görke and Gregor Schoeler, *Die ältesten Berichte über das Leben Muhammads: Das Korpus 'Urwa ibn az-Zubair*', *Der Islam*, Volume 89, Issue 2 (2012), 209-210. Cf. also Sean W. Anthony, *Muhammad the Empires of Faith: The Making of the Prophet of Islam* (Oakland, USA: University of California Press, 2020), 7 (points 3-4).

Little's Refined *Isnād-Cum-Matn* Analysis

It should by now be clear that past executions of the ICMA contain imperfections that must be jettisoned: the reconstructed redaction of a CL cannot simply be treated as an accurate transmission from the preceding generation (in light of early rapid mutation); and mere differences between *matns* are insufficient to establish common ancestry, as opposed to direct or mutual borrowing. (Again, it is the general correlation of *particular* elements with *particular* tradents, rather than merely similarities or differences between *matns*, that is best explained as the result of genuine transmission from said tradents.) In other words, only a more skeptical or rigorous version of the ICMA seems sustainable, in light of the problems outlined above.

To begin with, PCLs and CLs are confirmed as genuine if they are associated with a distinctive tradition or sub-tradition within the relevant set of Hadith material, and whatever elements or wordings are shared in common within the tradition or sub-tradition can be reasonably identified as reflecting their underlying redaction.¹⁵⁰ SSs are arguably still suspect (especially lengthy ones and those that claim to derive via famous figures), but that suspicion can be set aside or mitigated if the SS is corroborated by other strands in transmitting a distinctive *matn* from a putative PCL or CL.¹⁵¹

This version of the ICMA is also clearly falsifiable: if a close correlation between *matns* and a common ascription to a key figure is indicative of genuine transmission, then a lack of correlation there-between is indicative of erroneous or false ascription. For example, if the *matns* attributed to a putative PCL are more similar to *matns* ascribed to other PCLs than to each other, this is consistent with the putative PCL in question being a spider (i.e., the target of multiple, independent false ascriptions),¹⁵² or with most of the transmissions from a PCL having been contaminated by various different sources.

¹⁵⁰ Motzki (trans. Adrianovska & Reid), 'The Prophet and the Debtors', in Motzki, *Analysing Muslim Traditions*, 146-147; *id.*, 'The Origins of Muslim Exegesis', in Motzki, *Analysing Muslim Traditions*, 243.

¹⁵¹ Pavlovitch, *Formation*, 31.

¹⁵² Similarly, Görke, 'Eschatology', in Berg (ed.), *Method and Theory*, 189-191. For an example, see Rudolph Peters, 'Murder at Khaybar: Some Thoughts on the Origins of the *Qasāma* Procedure in Islamic Law', *Islamic Law and Society*, Volume 9, Issue 2 (2002), 147.

Similarly, if a set of *matns* are extremely similar to each other (e.g., they comprise a distinctive PCL sub-tradition), but the *ʿisnād* attached to one of them claims therefor a completely different provenance (e.g., a SS independent from the relevant PCL), it is highly unlikely that identical or similar wordings and combinations of elements would obtain independently (especially given the early ubiquity of paraphrastic transmission). Therefore, the best explanation for such evidence is the occurrence of false ascription: the tradent has taken a distinctive *matn* and given it a new, independent *ʿisnād* (i.e., it is a dive), or else an old *matn* has been replaced by a new *matn* borrowed from somewhere else (i.e., total contamination), whilst its original *ʿisnād* has been retained.¹⁵³

Contaminations or minor borrowings are also detectable by the ICMA: if a specific wording or element associated with a particular PCL shows up randomly in a *matn* attributed to a different tradent, and none of the other transmissions from this tradent exhibit this wording or element, this is best explained by the PCL's version having contaminated or influenced the other.¹⁵⁴ Conversely, this analysis also exposes additions, omissions, and other such alterations: if only one PCL has a particular wording or element in their *matn*, for example, then this is best explained as an alteration on their part; if the particularity had originated with the CL, then it is reasonable to expect that at least some of the other PCLs would have transmitted the

¹⁵³ Similarly, Schoeler (trans. Vagelpohl), *The Biography of Muḥammad*, 104-105; Motzki (trans. Griffel & Hardy), 'Whither *Ḥadīth* Studies?', in Motzki, *Analysing Muslim Traditions*, 113-117; Mitter, 'Origin and Development of the Islamic Patronate', in Bernards & Nawas (eds.), *Patronate and Patronage*, 77, n. 32; Görke, 'Prospects and Limits', in Boekhoff-van der Voort *et al.* (eds.), *Transmission and Dynamics*, 143; Görke *et al.*, 'First Century Sources', 35-36. For examples, see Schoeler (trans. Vagelpohl), *The Biography of Muḥammad*, 18, 105-112; Motzki, 'The Prophet and the Cat', 58-61, 68-69, 70-71; Görke, 'The Historical Tradition about al-Ḥudaybiya', in Motzki (ed.), *The Biography of Muhammad*, 251, 258; Motzki (trans. Adrianovska & Reid), 'The Prophet and the Debtors', in Motzki, *Analysing Muslim Traditions*, 157-158; Schoeler, 'Méthodes et Débats', 365-366; Peters, 'Murder at Khaybar', 144-146; Görke, 'Eschatology', in Berg (ed.), *Method and Theory*, 189; Mitter, 'Origin and Development', in Bernards & Nawas (eds.), *Patronate and Patronage*, 130, incl. n. 235; Görke, 'The relationship between *maghāzī* and *ḥadīth*', 179-180; *id. et al.*, 'First Century Sources', 35-36; Stijn Aerts, 'The Prayers of Abū Muslim and al-Ma'mūn. An Exercise in Dating *Ḥadīth*', *Journal of Abbasid Studies*, Volume 1 (2014), 74; Pavlovitch, *Formation*, 112-113; Motzki, 'Abraham, Hagar and Ishmael at Mecca', in Rippin & Tottoli (eds.), *Books and Written Culture of the Islamic World*, 378; Aerts, "'Pray with Your Leader'", 37-38, 41-42.

¹⁵⁴ Similarly, Schoeler (trans. Vagelpohl), *The Biography of Muḥammad*, 104-105. For examples, see Motzki (trans. Griffel & Hardy), 'Whither *Ḥadīth* Studies?', in Motzki, *Analysing Muslim Traditions*, 113; *id.*, 'The Prophet and the Cat', 57-58; *id.*, 'The Murder of Ibn Abī l-Ḥuqayq', in Motzki (ed.), *The Biography of Muhammad*, 224; Görke, 'The Historical Tradition about al-Ḥudaybiya', in Motzki (ed.), *The Biography of Muhammad*, 258; Pavlovitch, *Formation*, 135, 143, 180, 226-227, 417-418; Aerts, "'Pray with Your Leader'", 37; Görke, 'Between History and Exegesis', 45.

wording or element as well.¹⁵⁵ This also applies to the raising of *ʿisnāds*,¹⁵⁶ and other kinds of *ʿisnād*-related improvements.¹⁵⁷

Of course, it is certainly possible that a feature confined to only one tradent still derives from their PCL or CL source, whose particular rendition of the hadith on one occasion just happened not to be preserved anywhere else.¹⁵⁸ However, this alternative explanation seems generally less preferable, for three reasons: (1) the odds of only one tradent preserving extra elements or details, at least when *several others* received the same report from the same source, must surely be low, and becomes lower still when the addition in question is absent from independent transmissions at *multiple registers* (i.e., absent not just from parallel transmissions from the source, but from parallel transmissions from the source's source); (2) it is simpler (i.e., more parsimonious) to posit a single interpolation, versus multiple omissions; and (3) as a general rule, the accrual of material in transmission is the norm, which again makes an interpolation scenario more likely than an omission scenario, all else being equal.¹⁵⁹

In short, the ICMA “allows [us] to determine when and with whom certain variants originated and branched off from the main transmission tree, whereas the common ancestry of the variants is fully accounted for.”¹⁶⁰ All of this also follows from the basic

¹⁵⁵ Similarly, Görke, ‘The relationship between *maghāzī* and *ḥadīth*’, 180; *id.*, ‘Prospects and Limits’, in Boekhoff-van der Voort *et al.* (eds.), *Transmission and Dynamics*, 142-143; *id.*, ‘Authorship in the *Sīra* literature’, in Behzadi & Hämeen-Anttila (eds.), *Concepts of Authorship in Pre-Modern Arabic Texts*, 72. For examples, see Motzki, ‘The Prophet and the Cat’, 42-43; *id.*, ‘The Murder of Ibn Abī l-Ḥuqayq’, in Motzki (ed.), *The Biography of Muhammad*, 202; Görke, ‘The Historical Tradition about al-Ḥudaybiya’, in Motzki (ed.), *The Biography of Muhammad*, 253, 267; Motzki (trans. Adrianovska & Reid), ‘The Prophet and the Debtors’, in Motzki, *Analysing Muslim Traditions*, 150-151; Görke, ‘The relationship between *maghāzī* and *ḥadīth*’, 180.

¹⁵⁶ Similarly, Schoeler, ‘Méthodes et Débats’, 362-363; Motzki, ‘The Origins of Muslim Exegesis’, in Motzki, *Analysing Muslim Traditions*, 243. For examples, see Schoeler (trans. Vagelpohl), *The Biography of Muḥammad*, 16, 59, 66-67; Görke, ‘The Historical Tradition about al-Ḥudaybiya’, in Motzki (ed.), *The Biography of Muhammad*, 267; Schoeler, ‘Méthodes et Débats’, 362-363; *id.*, ‘Foundations’, in Berg (ed.), *Method and Theory*, 25-26; Motzki, ‘The Origins of Muslim Exegesis’, in Motzki, *Analysing Muslim Traditions*, 243, 245-246, 271; Görke, Motzki, & Schoeler, ‘First Century Sources’, 27-28; Aerts, ‘The Prayers of Abū Muslim and al-Ma’mūn’, 77; Andreas Görke, ‘Remnants of an old *tafsīr* tradition? The exegetical accounts of ‘Urwa b. al-Zubayr’, in Majid Daneshgar & Walid A. Saleh (eds.), *Islamic Studies Today: Essays in Honor of Andrew Rippin* (Leiden, the Netherlands: Koninklijke Brill NV, 2017), 24, 37, 41.

¹⁵⁷ Similarly, Motzki (trans. Adrianovska & Reid), ‘The Prophet and the Debtors’, in Motzki, *Analysing Muslim Traditions*, 153. For examples, see Motzki, ‘The Prophet and the Cat’, 52-53; *id.*, ‘The Murder of Ibn Abī l-Ḥuqayq’, in Motzki (ed.), *The Biography of Muhammad*, 179; *id.* (trans. Adrianovska & Reid), ‘The Prophet and the Debtors’, in Motzki, *Analysing Muslim Traditions*, 153; *id.*, ‘The Origins of Muslim Exegesis’, in Motzki, *Analysing Muslim Traditions*, 257.

¹⁵⁸ E.g., Görke & Schoeler, ‘Reconstructing the earliest *sīra* texts’, 219.

¹⁵⁹ Pavlovitch, *Formation*, 37-39.

¹⁶⁰ Aerts, ‘The Prayers of Abū Muslim and al-Ma’mūn’, 72.

premises or postulates of my ICMA, in any case: the ICMA only works in the first place by explaining the correlation of particular *matns* with particular PCLs and CLs as being the result of the accurate recording of the provenance of alterations, with the rate of alterations decreasing over time in proportion to the rise of rigorous and especially written transmission. To even identify an ascription to a PCL or CL as genuine, therefore, we must posit their responsibility—whether by paraphrasing, sloppiness, error, or dishonesty—for a particular wording or element. In other words, we *must* identify unique wordings or elements associated with specific tradents as alterations, interpolations, and insertions on their part—this is the only way to beat Cook’s spread of *’isnāds*.¹⁶¹

Finally, it should be reiterated that none of this precludes the general unreliability of Hadith—on the contrary, “this method does not require general presumptions about authenticity”, as Motzki clarified.¹⁶²

The Relationship between CLs and Their Hadiths

Even if the ICMA—at least as a corroborated explanatory postulate—allows us to trace hadiths back to CLs, an important question remains: *what exactly is a CL?* Are they the creator, fabricator, formulator, redactor, collector, or first influential transmitter of the hadith, or some combination thereof? In other words, what is the specific relationship between a CL and their hadith, beyond the fact that they transmitted the hadith to some PCLs?

Most of the relevant scholars seem to agree that most CLs belong to the 8th Century CE.¹⁶³ Consequently, most of the relevant scholars agree that the CL is *at minimum* responsible for formulating the common or approximate *wording* or *gist* underlying all of the extant redactions of their given hadith. The reason therefor has been mentioned

¹⁶¹ We must thus dispense with certain hyper-sanguine attempts to attribute such variants all the way back to the Prophet or the Companions, of the sort mentioned in Christopher Melchert, ‘Muḥammad Nāṣir al-Dīn al-Albānī and Traditional Hadith Criticism’, in Elisabeth Kendall & Ahmad Khan (eds.), *Reclaiming Islamic Tradition: Modern Interpretations of the Classical Heritage* (Edinburgh, UK: Edinburgh University Press, 2016), 45-46. Such explanations are simply not corroborated by the chronology of writing and transmitter-terminology discussed above.

¹⁶² Motzki (trans. Adrianovska & Reid), ‘The Prophet and the Debtors’, in Motzki, *Analysing Muslim Traditions* 147.

¹⁶³ See above, in the section on Brown’s criticism of Juynboll.

already: mutagenic, sloppy, or paraphrastic oral transmission predominated at precisely the time when most of the CLs were operating. In other words, the transmission of religio-historical information was largely oral and paraphrastic until the end of the 8th Century CE (even after the rise of private notes), which means that even if some version of a hadith can be reconstructed back to a CL *and* be shown to derive from even earlier information, we should assume that this version represents *their formulation* (i.e., *their paraphrase*), rather than that of an earlier figure.

That this is so is actually a *postulate*, or a *corollary of a postulate*, in my refined ICMA (i.e., it needs to be supposed at the outset to make sense of the recurring patterns of the CLs and the PCLs, discussed above), but independently thereof, we still have the research of Crone *et al.* on early rapid mutation in the Islamic oral tradition,¹⁶⁴ along with various reports attesting to the belated rise and predomination of written transmission.¹⁶⁵ To this can be added our established background knowledge concerning oral traditions and historical memory in oral cultures (thanks to the past century of anthropological research), according to which, paraphrasing, remixing, and mutation are the norm.¹⁶⁶ Finally, consider the fact that, even on a Motzkian approach, we would often not be able to reconstruct the *wording* of the underlying redaction of a CL if we only had any one of the varying paraphrases or remixes thereof by their PCLs: it is only by comparing the different PCL redactions that the original core(s) from the CL can be ascertained—and even then, usually only approximately.¹⁶⁷ That being so, we should expect the CL's redaction to be no different—or *even worse*, given the tendency for transmission-methods to improve over time—in this regard: just as the PCLs altered the *matns* that they received from the CL, so too must the CLs have altered *their* received *matns* (if not to an even greater degree, being earlier), in the event that they even received their *matns* from earlier sources.

Thus, Juynboll described the CL as follows, in relation to their hadith: “In other words: *the saying which he claims was uttered by the prophet is in reality his own, or (if*

¹⁶⁴ See the references cited at the beginning of the present chapter.

¹⁶⁵ See Cook, Schoeler, and Melchert, cited above (in the section on Little's defence of the 'isnād-cum-matn analysis).

¹⁶⁶ For a summary of the relevant scholarship, see Bart D. Ehrman, *Jesus Before the Gospels: How the Earliest Christians Remembered, Changed, and Invented Their Stories of the Savior* (San Francisco, USA: HarperOne, 2016).

¹⁶⁷ Schoeler (trans. Vagelpohl), *The Biography of Muḥammad*, 114; *id.*, 'Méthodes et Débats', 361; Görke, 'Prospects and Limits', in Boekhoff-van der Voort *et al.* (eds.), *Transmission and Dynamics*, 143; Pavlovitch, *Formation*, 35-36; Anthony, *Muhammad*, 7.

somebody else's) he was the first to put it into so many words."¹⁶⁸ In subsequent descriptions, Juynboll inferred that the CL of a given hadith "may be held responsible for the *matn* (i.e. the text) of the tradition—at least of its **protoversion**",¹⁶⁹ or in other words, "for the proliferation of the text (*matn*) of the report or tradition, or in any case for the transmission of that *matn*'s **most ancient wording**",¹⁷⁰ or in other words, for "the authorship of **(the wording of)** that tradition".¹⁷¹ In this respect, Motzki *et al.* are in agreement with Juynboll, as Reinhart observes: "But, he says, and even Motzkians agree, **the wording** was probably constructed by the CL."¹⁷² Thus, in a response to Irene Schneider, Motzki stated:

When Schneider speaks of the possibility that the common link did not create the transmission out of the blue, but instead processed older material, it corresponds precisely with my own idea of a collector. **It goes without saying that the material was not handed down word-for-word in oral transmission, and that information could be combined, shortened, expanded and changed, as still happened later in the transmission process.**¹⁷³

Similarly, according to Görke:

The question whether a tradition was invented or merely transmitted by a common link is more difficult to answer. Historical probabilities might be adduced, but if we argued on that basis we would not need the common link at all. The question is whether the two concepts can be separated *only* by studying the variants themselves. We might escape this problem if we say that **the common link is the person who is responsible for the tradition in the form we have it. He may have used earlier materials, but he is the one who gave the tradition a certain form in which it was then transmitted.**¹⁷⁴

For example, when evaluating an apocalyptic hadith that is traceable back to the Basran CL Qatādah in terms of the *'isnāds*, but traceable back a generation earlier in

¹⁶⁸ Juynboll, 'Some *isnād*-analytical methods', 353. Emphasis mine.

¹⁶⁹ *Id.*, 'The Role of *Mu'ammārūn*', 155. Emphasis mine.

¹⁷⁰ *Id.*, 'Early Islamic society', 155. Emphasis mine.

¹⁷¹ *Id.*, '(Re)Appraisal of Some Technical Terms in *Ḥadīth* Science', *Islamic Law and Society*, Volume 8, Number 3 (2001), 306.

¹⁷² Reinhart, 'Juynbolliana', 421, n. 20. Emphasis mine.

¹⁷³ Motzki (trans. Adrianovska & Reid), 'The Prophet and the Debtors', in Motzki, *Analysing Muslim Traditions*, 134. Emphasis mine.

¹⁷⁴ Görke, 'Eschatology', in Berg (ed.), *Method and Theory*, 190. Emphasis mine.

terms of the historical content of the *matn*, Görke—here responding to Cook’s study of eschatological hadiths—postulates that Qatādah is the *formulator* of the extant hadith:

While Qatādah (60/680 to 117/735) lived a little too late to have invented this tradition, Mujāhid (21/642 to 100/718 or 104/722) could well have done so. But as only al-Ṭabarānī records the *isnād* going back to Mujāhid we might dismiss it as a later dive or a case of spreading. We would have to conclude that **Qatādah is responsible for the tradition in the form we have it.**¹⁷⁵

Likewise, Jens Scheiner describes the rôle of a CL—the Syrian traditionist Baqiyyah b. al-Walīd—in relation to a particular hadith as follows: “Baqiyya’s function as a common link makes him the first systematic collector of this tradition and **the one responsible for its wording.**”¹⁷⁶ Similarly, Stijn Aerts states:

In regard to the remaining possible interpretations, I tend toward a middle position (and herein I follow Schneider); viz., it may well be the case that the CL did not create the tradition from scratch but used existing narrative materials, **then shaped and transformed them in such a way that they met the needs of his time.** The CL, thus, is neither a faithful transmitter nor (necessarily) an outright forger.¹⁷⁷

For a final example, Motzki—in a scenario where he inferred that the CL (in this case, al-Zuhrī) had genuinely received his information from prior sources—cautioned the following:

This statement should not be understood to mean that I claim that al-Zuhrī’s accounts are literally taken over from his informants and that all the details of the two accounts necessarily derive from them; **this does not seem very probable in view of the mainly oral character of the transmission in al-Zuhrī’s time.**¹⁷⁸

Indeed, in light of this and in light of instances in which *multiple* distinctive redactions can be traced back to CLs, Motzki *et al.* argued that we cannot trace a single, fixed

¹⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, 199. Emphasis mine.

¹⁷⁶ Jens Scheiner, ‘Single *Isnāds* or *Riwāyas*? Quoted Books in Ibn ‘Asākir’s *Tarjama* of Tamīm al-Dārī’, Maurice A. Pomerantz & Aram A. Shahin (eds.), *The Heritage of Arabo-Islamic Learning: Studies Presented to Wadad Kadi* (Leiden, the Netherlands: Koninklijke Brill NV, 2016), 61. Emphasis mine.

¹⁷⁷ Aerts, “Pray with Your Leader”, 36. Emphasis mine.

¹⁷⁸ Motzki, ‘The Collection of the Qur’ān’, 31. Emphasis mine.

redaction back to the CL (or at least, the early ones): they probably altered their hadiths in successive retellings.¹⁷⁹

So far, so good—all of the relevant scholars seem to be in agreement. But a deeper question still remains: should we regard the CL as some kind of transmitter, or some kind of fabricator? There is actually quite a range of plausible scenarios—a whole spectrum of rôles for the CL, from “faithful transmitter” to “outright forger”—to consider:

- **Scenario 1:** The CL transmitted their own paraphrase or remix of a pre-existing (i.e., already-formalised) report, and accurately cited their immediate source(s) therefor.
- **Scenario 2:** The CL transmitted their own paraphrase or remix of a pre-existing (i.e., already-formalised) report, but lied, erred, or otherwise misled in their citation of their immediate source(s) therefor.
- **Scenario 3:** The CL took pre-existing, informal information (gossip, rumours, legends, stories, etc.), formulated it into a report with their own wording, and accurately cited their immediate source(s) therefor.
- **Scenario 4:** The CL took pre-existing, informal information (gossip, rumours, legends, stories, etc.), formulated it into a report with their own wording, but lied, erred, or otherwise misled in their citation of their immediate source(s) therefor.
- **Scenario 5:** The CL formulated their own conclusion, preference, or opinion into a report, and lied, erred, or otherwise misled in their citation of prior source(s) therefor.

According to Schacht, the hadith “was put into circulation” by its CL,¹⁸⁰ who was “the original promoter” thereof,¹⁸¹ such that the hadith “originated in the time of” the CL.¹⁸²

¹⁷⁹ E.g., Schoeler (trans. Vagelpohl), *The Biography of Muḥammad*, 44, 105, 110; Motzki (trans. Griffel & Hardy), ‘Whither *Hadīth* Studies?’, in Motzki, *Analysing Muslim Traditions*, 120; *id.*, ‘The Prophet and the Cat’, 52-53; *id.*, ‘The Murder of Ibn Abī l-Ḥuqayq’, in Motzki (ed.), *The Biography of Muḥammad*, 179, 188, 190, 198-199, 207; Görke, ‘The Historical Tradition about al-Ḥudaybiya’, in Motzki (ed.), *The Biography of Muḥammad*, 259-260; Motzki *et al.*, ‘First Century Sources’, 46-48.

¹⁸⁰ Schacht, *Origins*, 171.

¹⁸¹ *Ibid.*

¹⁸² *Ibid.*, 172.

More specifically, the CL “must be responsible for the creation of this tradition and the fictitious higher part of the *isnād*,”¹⁸³ or in other words, the CL “provided his tradition with an *isnād* reaching back to an authority such as a Companion or the Prophet”.¹⁸⁴ Schacht thus rejected scenarios 1 and 3, and in light of his view that the formal transmission of reports only arose around the same time as the CLs (i.e., around the middle of the 8th Century CE), he probably also rejected scenario 2. This leaves only scenarios 4 and 5: either the CL “created” their hadith—as a formal ascription back to an earlier source—*ex materia* (scenario 4), or they “created” it *ex nihilo* (scenario 5).¹⁸⁵ Schacht is usually thought of as suggesting the latter, and at times he did, as in his view that “the main body of decisions ascribed to” the Kufan Follower ‘Ibrāhīm al-Naḡā’ī “is to a great extent pure *ra’y*, often expressing systematic thought.”¹⁸⁶ (In other words, later Kufan jurists put their own *ra’y* into the mouth of an earlier authority, which seems like straightforward *ex-nihilo* creation.) Similarly, Schacht argued that the creation of Hadith by jurists and traditionists “partly also represented the means by which definite changes in the accepted doctrine of a school were proposed and supported.”¹⁸⁷ (In other words, when some jurists or traditionists disagreed with a prevailing view, they would express their disagreement in the form of a hadith, which again seems like *ex-nihilo* creation.) But Schacht often spoke of *ex-materia* creation as well, as in the following instance: “The *isnāds* of the Medinese version have a common link in the traditionist Ibn Abī Dhi’b. But this shows only the origin of the Medinese tradition and not of the legal maxim.”¹⁸⁸ More broadly, Schacht documented various examples of Iraqi *qiyās*,¹⁸⁹ Iraqi *istiḥsān*,¹⁹⁰ and Madinan *qiyās*¹⁹¹ reappearing as Hadith, and further stated in regards to Madinan appeals to *ra’y*: “This old *ra’y*, which was originally to a great extent anonymous, as the consensus of Medina of which it formed a part was anonymous, was frequently ascribed to individual ancient

¹⁸³ *Ibid.*, 158.

¹⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, 171.

¹⁸⁵ Either way, “created” and “creation” are Schacht’s preferred terms, as in *ibid.*, 155, 158-159, 163, 165-167, 171, 248, 253-254, 260. By contrast, he only mentions “fabrications” (*ibid.*, 163), “forgeries” (*ibid.*, 4), and “forged traditions” (*ibid.*, 250) once each.

¹⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, 105.

¹⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, 66.

¹⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, 181.

¹⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, 106 ff.

¹⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, 111 ff.

¹⁹¹ *Ibid.*, 117-118.

authorities.”¹⁹² In other words, the informally-transmitted opinions of past authorities, which undergirded the vague sense of local consensus in Madinah, were likewise transformed into formal reports (i.e., Hadith were created *ex materia*).

Juynboll took a similar view to Schacht, as we have already seen: the CL is the “originator” of their hadith (as a formal ascription back to an earlier source),¹⁹³ but may have drawn upon pre-existing material in the process. For example:

The single strand from the cl down to the prophet does not represent the transmission path taken by a prophetic saying, a path which has a claim to (a measure of) historicity, but is a path invented by the cl in order to lend a certain saying more prestige by means of the first and foremost authentication device of his days: the *isnād marfūʿ*.

In other words: *the saying which he claims was uttered by the prophet is in reality his own, or (if somebody else’s) he was the first to put it into so many words.*¹⁹⁴

All of this illustrates an important point: most of the major skeptics in Hadith Studies have agreed *all along* that at least some of the material comprising the extant Hadith corpus derives, in one form or another, from the 1st Islamic Century, and even from the Prophet himself.¹⁹⁵ In this respect, therefore, the CL debate is really over *formal and accurate transmission*, i.e., whether we can trust the SS preceding the CLs, such that they can be relied upon to backdate the content of the CL’s *matn* to a particular Follower, or a Companion, or even the Prophet. As we have already seen, Schacht and Juynboll answer this question in the negative: the SSs preceding the CLs were likely invented by them, so even if they did create their hadiths *ex materia*, we cannot know (all else being equal) how far back this material goes. Furthermore, absent some kind

¹⁹² *Ibid.*, 113.

¹⁹³ In *Muslim tradition*, in general, Juynboll favoured the terms “fabrication” and “forgery” (and their derivatives). In his treatment on “The common-link theory of J. Schacht” in particular, however, Juynboll described the CL as “the probable originator” of their hadith (*ibid.*, 207), or as being “responsible” therefor (*ibid.*, 217). Likewise, in *Encyclopedia* (e.g., ix, xvii, xx-xxi), Juynboll repeatedly used the term “originator” to describe the CL. By contrast, the terms “fabricator” and “forger” (and their derivatives) almost never appear in this work.

¹⁹⁴ *Id.*, ‘Some *isnād*-analytical methods’, 353.

¹⁹⁵ E.g., Ignáz Goldziher (trans. Andras Hamori & Ruth Hamori), *Introduction to Islamic Theology and Law* (Princeton, USA: Princeton University Press, 1981), 38-39; Berg, *Development*, 54, n. 33 (citing Lammens and Caetani); Schacht, ‘Revaluation’, pp. 153-154; Juynboll, *Muslim tradition*, 71; *id.*, ‘Nāfi’, 239; *id.*, ‘Early Islamic society’, 152, 181, 185; Rippin, ‘*Tafsīr Ibn ‘Abbās*’, 61; Reinhart, ‘Juynbolliana’, 422. Also see Crone, *Medieval Islamic Political Thought*, 126, n. 3.

of special evidence or consideration,¹⁹⁶ an *ex-materia* creation cannot be distinguished from an *ex-nihilo* creation, which means that, in practice, the content of a hadith cannot be dated any earlier than its CL (once again, all else being equal).¹⁹⁷

By contrast, Motzki *et al.* preferred to interpret CLs as broadly accurate transmitters of material from their informants amongst the senior (i.e., older) Followers and junior (i.e., younger or longer-surviving) Companions, even if they reworded this received material:

It is better to look upon the common links as the first great collectors and professional teachers of knowledge in general and of traditions about persons living in the first century of Islam in particular.

This makes it easier to understand the single strand below the common link as well. It is the *isnād* given by a first systematic collector.¹⁹⁸

In other words, according to Motzki, Schacht and Juynboll's explanation of the evidence is *ad hoc*, since a CL and their preceding SS can be explained differently, as a collector rather than a creator. Consequently, Motzki concluded: "There is no reason to reject *a priori* the claim of the common link that he received the tradition or the information on which it is based from the person he names."¹⁹⁹

In light of all that we have covered thus far, it may be obvious that this criticism does not stand up to scrutiny: Schacht and Juynboll's interpretation of the CL is not *ad hoc*,²⁰⁰ and we have good reason to suspect and reject the SSs that precede most CLs. As was noted at the outset, we have various points of evidence (reports of mass-fabrication, the absence of Hadith in the earliest documents and plausible ascriptions, etc.)

¹⁹⁶ For example, some kind of obvious archaism preserved in the *matn*, or the survival of an earlier, pre-hadith version of the *matn*, or something that would be subject to Criterion of Dissimilarity. Similarly, see Motzki (trans. Adrianovska & Reid), 'The Prophet and the Debtors', in Motzki, *Analysing Muslim Traditions*, 170. Conversely, an *ex-nihilo* creation could be inferred by taking into account the broader context of the CL, or from silence or the non-citation of the hadith in earlier sources, or from the suspicious convenience of a *matn* for a specific aim, etc. Similarly, see *id.*, 'The Collection of the Qur'ān', 30; Aerts, 'The Prayers of Abū Muslim and al-Ma'mūn'; *id.*, "'Pray with Your Leader'".

¹⁹⁷ For a similar point, again see Juynboll, *Muslim tradition*, 71.

¹⁹⁸ Motzki (trans. Griffel & Hardy), 'Whither *Ḥadīth* Studies?', in Motzki, *Analysing Muslim Traditions*, 51. Also see *id.* (trans. Katz), *Origins*, 25; *id.* (trans. Adrianovska & Reid), 'The Prophet and the Debtors', in Motzki, *Analysing Muslim Traditions*, 133 ff.; *id.*, 'The Collection of the Qur'ān', 29-30; *id.* (trans. Adrianovska & Reid), 'Al-Radd 'Alā l-Radd', in Motzki, *Analysing Muslim Traditions*, 210-214; Görke, 'Eschatology', in Berg (ed.), *Method and Theory*, 188 ff.; Motzki, 'The Origins of Muslim Exegesis', in Motzki, *Analysing Muslim Traditions*, 240; *id.*, *Reconstruction*, 73; etc.

¹⁹⁹ *Id.*, 'The Collection of the Qur'ān', 30.

²⁰⁰ Although Juynboll's interpretation of SSs *in general* does seem *ad hoc*, as noted already; see above, in the section on Motzki's criticism of Juynboll.

suggesting that most Hadith—or at least, the first big wave of Hadith—came into being during the 8th Century CE,²⁰¹ which is exactly when most of the CLs were operating: this already gives as a reason to think that the CLs were creators of Hadith.²⁰²

Moreover, the Revisionist chronology of the *ʿisnād* in particular generates a significant skeptical entailment, as was again noted at the outset: if Muslims (including senior Companions, junior Companions, and senior Followers) did not mention or record sources in the transmission of historical and religious information until 685 CE or later, and then only did so partially or sporadically until 718 CE or later (such that the transmission of such material unto the CLs was largely informal and undocumented), then most *ʿisnāds* purporting to extend all the way back into the 1st Islamic Century (via senior Followers, junior Companions, and senior Companions) must be inauthentic in that respect. In addition to having attained something approaching a consensus in modern Hadith Studies, this Revisionist chronology of the *ʿisnād* was also accepted by Motzki in particular.²⁰³ The skeptical entailment therefrom is thus binding upon most proponents of any form of CL analysis.

Nevertheless:

Motzki thinks it is possible that common links were able to at least partly remember the person from whom they heard something concerning a *tābiʿ*, *ṣaḥābī* or the Prophet, or that they wrote down the name(s) of their informant(s) together with the information received from them.²⁰⁴

²⁰¹ See the works of Schacht, Juynboll, Cook, Crone & Hinds, *et al.*, cited at the outset.

²⁰² This seems to have been Schacht's approach to the matter, as noted already in the section on him. Similarly, see Juynboll, *Muslim tradition*, 73.

²⁰³ For the genesis of the *ʿisnād* in the 680s and 690s CE, see: Josef Horowitz, 'The Antiquity and Origin of the *Isnād*', in Harald Motzki (ed.), *Ḥadīth: Origins and Development* (Aldershot, UK: Ashgate Variorum, 2004), 5/155; *id.* (ed. Lawrence I. Conrad), *The Earliest Biographies of the Prophet and their authors* (Princeton, USA: The Darwin Press, Inc., 2002), 26; Robson, 'The *Isnād* in Muslim Tradition', in Motzki (ed.), *Ḥadīth*, 21-22/169-170; Abbott, *Studies*, II, 75; Juynboll, 'The Date of the great *fitna*'; *id.*, *Muslim tradition*, 18-20; *id.*, 'Muslim's introduction to his *Ṣaḥīḥ*', 305-308; Motzki (trans. Griffel & Hardy), 'Whither *Ḥadīth* Studies?', in Motzki, *Analysing Muslim Traditions*, 50; Pavlovitch, 'Origin'; etc.

For the spread of the *ʿisnād* and the rise of its systematic use after 718 CE or around the middle of the 8th Century CE, see: Schacht, *Origins*, 37; Juynboll, *Muslim tradition*, 18-19; Motzki (trans. Katz), *Origins*, 241; Lucas, *Constructive Critics*, 347-348; Motzki, *Reconstruction*, 73; Pavlovitch, 'Origin', 43-44. Also see Motzki (trans. Adrianovska & Reid), 'The Prophet and the Debtors', in Motzki, *Analysing Muslim Traditions*, 137, and Stijn Aerts, 'Isnād', in Kate Fleet, Gudrun Krämer, Denis Matringe, John Nawas, & Everett Rowson (eds.), *Encyclopaedia of Islam, THREE* (Leiden, the Netherlands: Koninklijke Brill NV, 2018), online edition.

²⁰⁴ Görke *et al.*, 'First Century Sources', 45.

Furthermore, Motzki speculated that the CLs or “collectors”—as late Followers and Followers of the Followers, operating in the era when the demand for *ʾisnāds* was spreading—*could* have asked their sources (i.e., the senior Followers, or even some junior Companions) for *their* sources, such that some *ʾisnāds* could validly extend back into the 1st Islamic Century (i.e., back to some earlier Companions):

It is conceivable, in view of the chronology of the birth of the *isnād*, that the collector asked his informant for the source of his tradition and was told the name or, at least, some name.²⁰⁵

It is indeed reasonable to think that this happened in at least some cases, given that instances of *ʾisnād*-use, or some demands for sources, were occurring already in the 680s and 690s CE: the aforementioned skeptical entailment applies to **most** *ʾisnāds*, not all of them.

But even if we posit that the CLs (or “collectors”, as Motzki would have it) operating in the 8th Century CE were able to remember exactly from whom they had received a given datum, Motzki himself questions whether these sources in turn were able to remember their own sources, in an era when “bookkeeping was not yet done as regards from whom precisely which information about the Prophet was received.”²⁰⁶ Likewise (in a response to Schneider):

The possibility of going beyond the common link in a methodologically safe manner does not by any means necessarily indicate that the tradition is therefore authentic, i.e., that it goes back to the Prophet, as Schneider alleges I imply. One cannot even be certain that it really originates from the person whom the informant of the common link named as his source. In this case – as in the case of the common link – several possibilities have to be considered: Text or textual elements could indeed have been taken over from the person mentioned; they could have originated from other persons; they could have been created by the informant of the common link; or it could be a combination of the possibilities mentioned.²⁰⁷

Alternatively, the CL may not even have bothered to ask their informant in the first place, as Motzki again acknowledged: “But it is equally possible that the collector did

²⁰⁵ Motzki (trans. Griffel & Hardy), ‘Whither *Ḥadīth* Studies?’, in Motzki, *Analysing Muslim Traditions*, 52.

²⁰⁶ *Id.*, *Reconstruction*, 72.

²⁰⁷ *Id.* (trans. Adrianovska & Reid), ‘*Al-Radd ‘Alā l-Radd*’, in Motzki, *Analysing Muslim Traditions*, 212.

not make this enquiry of his informant. He simply inserted the name that to him seemed most likely.”²⁰⁸ Put simply, “the first three quarters of the first/seventh century” are “the phase of the anonymous and unknown living exegetical tradition”, as Motzki noted in a study of exegetical Hadith in particular.²⁰⁹

More importantly, Motzki himself already conceded that “the supplying of an *isnād*” only became *common* after the “beginning” of the 2nd Islamic Century (i.e., *after* 718-719 CE),²¹⁰ which is after the senior Followers and junior Companions (not to mention the senior Companions) were already dead.²¹¹ Thus, Motzki’s concession to the Revisionist chronology of the *’isnād*—a chronology for which there are multiple, independent points of evidence—still entails that most *’isnāds* purporting to extend back to the Companions must be false or at least unreliable in that respect. In other words, even if the CLs had wanted to ascertain exactly from whom their informants had received their material in turn, it was too late to ask: by the time that most of them began to systematically provide sources, or to respond to the spreading demand for sources, these informants were already dead.

Moreover, even the ascriptions of CLs back to their immediate sources (usually senior Followers) are in doubt. For example, the CL may simply have erred, or cited an *ideal* source rather than their *actual* source, or lied and cited a source—or a sequence of sources—that were expedient at a given time, as Görke has noted: “if the common link was the inventor of the *ḥadīth*, he might well change the *isnād* according to his audience’s expectations.”²¹² Likewise, Motzki acknowledged that “early collectors” (i.e., CLs) may have “mixed in traditions of their own with the genuine ones, adding fictitious *asānīd*”.²¹³ For example, in his reconstruction of a hadith back to the CL Sa’īd b. Jubayr, Motzki conceded that “it is also possible that Sa’īd himself composed the story on the basis of various pieces of information circulating after Ibn ‘Abbās’ death

²⁰⁸ *Id.* (trans. Griffel & Hardy), ‘Whither *Ḥadīth* Studies?’, in Motzki, *Analysing Muslim Traditions*, 52. Similarly, see *id.*, *Reconstruction*, 73.

²⁰⁹ *Id.*, ‘The Origins of Muslim Exegesis’, in Motzki, *Analysing Muslim Traditions*, 272.

²¹⁰ *Id.* (trans. Katz), *Origins*, 241. In summarising his own work, Motzki (*Reconstruction*, 73) later reiterated: “the custom of asking one’s teachers about their informants arose at the end of the 1st century H., and then slowly spread in the course of the 2nd century H. In Mekka, asking about an *isnād* didn’t begin until the start of the 2nd century, in Iraq even later.”

²¹¹ For a similar point, see Juynboll, *Muslim tradition*, 71-73; *id.*, ‘Nāfi’, 209-210, 222.

²¹² Görke, ‘Eschatology’, in Berg (ed.), *Method and Theory*, 190-191. For other examples, see *id.*, ‘The Prophet and the Cat’, 52-53, and *id.*, ‘The Murder of Ibn Abī l-Ḥuqayq’, in Motzki (ed.), *The Biography of Muhammad*, 179.

²¹³ Motzki (trans. Griffel & Hardy), ‘Whither *Ḥadīth* Studies?’, in Motzki, *Analysing Muslim Traditions*, 52-53.

and then attributed his narrative to his former teacher in order to give it more authority.”²¹⁴ Elsewhere, he further acknowledged:

Motzki does not rule out the possibility that a common link no longer knew whom he had received the tradition from and simply named a person who seemed to be the most probable source.²¹⁵

Ordinarily, there is no way to know whether the pre-CL SS is genuine: “Verification becomes impossible at this stage”²¹⁶ and “we cannot prove that the common link really received the tradition from the person he names as his informant”,²¹⁷ at least on the basis of *’isnāds*.²¹⁸ Therefore, at minimum, the ascription of the CL to their immediate source is suspect,²¹⁹ whilst any further authorities cited farther back in the *’isnād* should certainly be presumed to be the result of inference, guesswork, idealisation, error, lying, or some other form of false creation. Moreover, given the primarily oral and informal character of transmission up until the CLs of the 8th Century CE, it seems highly questionable that they could have remembered specific sources for specific data even if they had tried, or in other words: even their immediate cited sources should be doubted. Once again, the entire SS preceding the CL becomes dubious, or as Shoemaker put it: “An inherent skepticism pertains to the list of transmitters preceding the common link”.²²⁰

In short, it is generally agreed that the CL is the formulator of the extant underlying wording or gist of their hadith (i.e., that which can be discerned beneath the various PCL redactions), and that the CLs were amongst the first systematic disseminators of Hadith and citers of *’isnāds*. Given various considerations, however, the SSs that usually precede the CLs cannot be trusted: we have good reason to doubt their motivation or even their ability to accurately cite from whom they had received a given datum

²¹⁴ Motzki, ‘Abraham, Hagar and Ishmael at Mecca’, in Rippin & Tottoli (eds.), *Books and Written Culture*, 370-371.

²¹⁵ *Id. et al.*, ‘First Century Sources’, 45.

²¹⁶ Schoeler (trans. Vagelpohl), *The Biography of Muḥammad*, 16.

²¹⁷ Motzki, ‘The Origins of Muslim Exegesis’, in Motzki, *Analysing Muslim Traditions*, 240.

²¹⁸ Compare *id.* (trans. Griffel & Hardy), ‘Whither *Ḥadīth* Studies?’, in Motzki, *Analysing Muslim Traditions*, 53; *id.*, ‘The Origins of Muslim Exegesis’, in Motzki, *Analysing Muslim Traditions*, 240; *id.*, ‘Juynboll’, 541-542.

²¹⁹ Also see Görke, ‘Remnants of an old *tafsīr* tradition?’, in Daneshgar & Saleh (eds.), *Islamic Studies Today*, 41: “statements on ‘Urwa’s informants cannot generally be trusted.” Likewise, Aerts, ‘The Prayers of Abū Muslim and al-Ma’mūn’, 74: “The single strand from the Prophet to ‘Ubayd Allāh is difficult if not impossible to verify.”

²²⁰ Shoemaker, *The Death of a Prophet*, 83.

(assuming *ex-materia* creation in the first place), and even more reason to doubt that they knew, or were able to discover, from whom in turn their predecessors had received *their* data (again, assuming *ex-materia* creation). Moreover, an *ex-materia* creation by a CL cannot ordinarily be distinguished from an *ex-nihilo* creation, to begin with. Generally speaking, therefore, the ICMA cannot get us back beyond the CLs, which means in practice that we cannot usually reach back beyond 718 CE.²²¹ *Apropos* all of these considerations, Pavlovitch suggests that “the end of the first century is the earliest point in time at which we may posit the existence of primitive *isnād* transmission. For this reason, even if one were to undertake a meticulous *isnād-cum-matn* analysis of the traditions that in a way or another signal the onset of the *isnād*, one would hardly be able to cross below the threshold of *c.* 100/718.”²²²

Finally, it should be reiterated that even if we could know that a CL had created a hadith *ex-materia* or, better yet, had merely reworded or redacted a story or report received from an earlier authority, we would still not be able to trust that their redaction thereof accurately reflected the earlier material or report. The implications of Crone’s research seem inescapable: the 1st Islamic Century was a time of extreme, rapid mutation, distortion, and growth in historical memory and oral tradition, which calls into question the veracity of anything transmitted by the CLs (or at least, the earliest ones, operating in the early 8th Century CE). In other words, “even if they had a starting point in something the Prophet actually said or did,” Hadith have “undergone so many changes in the course of transmission that unless the contrary can be shown, they are best treated as evidence for the debates in which they were used rather than for the views of the figures to whom they were traced.”²²³ This would be the case *even if the isnād is genuine and even if all of the transmitters were honest*, as Hoyland points out:

That is the problem with *isnad* criticism. The same tradition may be transmitted with impeccable *isnads* and still drift wholly away from its original meaning. No one need have cheated; each authority may have transmitted the report faithfully, as they understood it. But by the time it is found in texts that are available to us, often two centuries or so after its

²²¹ Of course, our reaching back to ‘Urwah in some instances, as argued by Schoeler and Görke, is a notable exception. In such instances, we can at least reach back to the end of the 1st Islamic Century, or in other words, to around 700 CE.

²²² Pavlovitch, ‘Origin’, 40.

²²³ Crone, *Medieval Islamic Political Thought*, 126, n. 3.

genesis, it may have changed almost beyond recognition. This is the principal problem, transformation of a tradition's content in the course of transmission, and not systematic forgery.²²⁴

(Hoyland speaks of two centuries in this instance, but the worst of the damage was done in the first century of transmission, as Crone emphasised.²²⁵) Thus, even if the SS preceding the CL can be believed, the CL's *matn*—as an accurate rendition of what came therefrom—cannot be trusted. Once again, the buck stops with the CL.

Conclusion

Even if all Hadith are ultimately fabricated, interpolated, or otherwise ahistorical as formal ascriptions, they can still be subjected to various forms of dating. In particular, any given hadith can be dated by:

External Corroboration: if the content of a hadith is corroborated by an earlier source (usually, a Christian literary source, attesting to early Muslim beliefs and practices), then this content at least can be inferred to have been circulating amongst Muslims since the date of this earlier source.

Archaic Content: if the content of a hadith goes against the grain of the group that transmitted and preserved it, then—based on the Criterion of Dissimilarity—the hadith can be dated to before that group (or at least, to before that group received it).

Ascription Type: a version of a hadith ascribed to a later authority is likely earlier than a version ascribed to an earlier authority. Likewise, a *mursal* or *munqaṭiʿ* version of a hadith is likely earlier than a *muttaṣil* version. Additionally, a Companion hadith—based on the Criterion of Dissimilarity—probably dates back to the beginning of the 9th Century CE at the latest, whilst a Follower hadith probably dates back to the mid-to-late 8th Century CE at the latest.

²²⁴ Hoyland, 'Writing the Biography of the Prophet Muhammad', 587.

²²⁵ Crone, *Slaves on Horses*, 6.

Unexpected Silence: if it is reasonable to expect that someone would have cited a hadith (because it was extremely germane to their interests, or useful for them in a debate, and supposedly circulated amongst prominent people in their town, or even amongst their own teachers), but they failed to cite the hadith, then it is reasonable to infer, at least tentatively, that the hadith did not yet exist as such.

ICMA: if a hadith-tradition comprises a series of putative PCLs and a CL, and the *matns* ascribed to each PCL tend to be more similar to each other than they are to those of other PCLs, but all of them share an underlying, distinctive core, this can be reasonably explained by positing these key figures to be actual PCLs and CLs, whose distinctive redactions can be reconstructed.

Chapter 2: An *ʿIsnād-Cum-Matn* Analysis of the Hadith of ʿĀʾiṣḥāh’s Marital Age

Note to reader: this chapter was originally much longer and more detailed, but due to the constraints of the word limit, it has been heavily abridged. In particular, junior PCLs or sub-PCLs have been collapsed into the sections on senior PCLs or CLs. Moreover, highly detailed footnotes listing the similarities and differences between different reports have been removed. The full, unabridged original chapter (including sections on junior PCLs or sub-PCLs and more detailed footnotes) is available for the reviewers as an annex. It should be noted that the rest of the dissertation assumes the original chapter, not the abridgement.

In light of the preceding chapter, an *ʿisnād-cum-matn* analysis (ICMA) of the hadith of ʿĀʾiṣḥāh’s marital age—the reconstruction and dating of earlier versions of the hadith—becomes feasible. The tradition will be analysed one sub-tradition at a time, in order of the putative PCLs, CLs, and authorities with which each is associated: beginning with the latest and working backwards to the earliest, unto ʿĀʾiṣḥāh herself.

ʿAbd Allāh b. Muḥammad al-Baḡawī (d. 317/929-930)

I have collated two reports ascribed to the Baghdadian tradent ʿAbd Allāh b. Muḥammad al-Baḡawī (situated within the broader tradition of Hiṣām b. ʿUrwah), recorded by ʿAbū Nuʿaym²²⁶ and Ibn ʿAsākir.²²⁷ These two reports are more similar to each other than they are to every other version of the marital-age hadith, sharing as they do a highly distinctive elemental sequence and format: a discussion between al-Hayṭam b. ʿAdī and Hiṣām b. ʿUrwah about Ḳadījah, Sawdah, and ʿĀʾiṣḥāh. The second

²²⁶ ʿAbū Nuʿaym ʿAḥmad b. ʿAbd Allāh al-ʿIṣfahānī (ed. ʿĀdil b. Yūsuf al-ʿAzzāzī), *Maʿrifat al-Ṣaḥābah*, vol. 1 (Riyadh, KSA: Dār al-Waṭan, 1998), p. 3205, # 7368.

²²⁷ ʿAlī b. al-Ḥasan b. ʿAsākir (ed. ʿUmar b. Ġaramah al-ʿAmrawī), *Taʾrīḵ Madīnat Dimašq*, vol. 3 (Beirut, Lebanon: Dār al-Fikr, 1995), pp. 171-173.

half of both reports is admittedly extremely similar to a report recorded by Ibn Sa'd and ascribed to Muḥammad b. 'Amr,²²⁸ such that all three reports must clearly derive from a recent common ancestor *vis-à-vis* all the rest—but the two ascribed to al-Baḡawī are consistently more similar to each other than they are to the third, which is consistent with both of them descending from an even more recent common ancestor (*vis-à-vis* Ibn Sa'd's report). This matches their common ascription to al-Baḡawī, or in other words: al-Baḡawī is likely a genuine PCL, whose distinctive redaction is reflected in the first two reports.

'Abū Nu'aym and Ibn 'Asākir's reports are largely identical, with only a few variants (mostly minor additions or omissions) between them. This is consistent with the hadith's having been transmitted from al-Baḡawī to his students (and from them unto 'Abū Nu'aym and Ibn 'Asākir) in writing, which matches the predomination of written transmission in the relevant time period (i.e., the 10th-12th Centuries CE). Consequently, the relevant section of al-Baḡawī's urtext—the part pertaining to al-Hayṭam and Hišām's discussion—survives mostly intact:

ḥaddaṭa-nā al-'alā'ū bn^u mūsá [ḥaddaṭa/'anba'a]-nā al-hayṭam^u bn^u 'adiyyⁱⁿ al-ṭā'iyy^u: [...] fa-ḥaddaṭa-nī hišām^u bn^u 'urwat^a 'an 'abī-hi qāla fa-waladat la-hu 'abd^a al-'uzzá wa-'abd^a manāfⁱⁿ wa-al-qāsim^a qultu li-hišāmⁱⁿ fa-'ayna al-ṭayyib^u wa-al-ṭāhir^u [fa-]qāla ḥādā mā waḍa'tum 'antum yā 'ahl^a al-'irāqⁱ fa-'ammā 'ašyāku-nā fa-qālū 'abd^u al-'uzzá wa-'abd^u manāfⁱⁿ wa-al-qāsim^u wa-waladat la-hu min^a al-nisā'ⁱ ruqayyat^a [wa-zaynab^a] wa-'umm^a kultūmⁱⁿ wa-fāṭimat^a fa-halakāt kadījat^u qabl^a al-hijratⁱ bi-ṭalātⁱ sinīn^a fa-'atat kawlat^u bint^u ḥakīmⁱ bnⁱ al-'awqašⁱ al-sulamīyyat^u imra'at^u 'uṭmān^a bnⁱ maẓ'ūnⁱⁿ 'ilā al-nabiyyⁱ fa-qālat yā rasūl^a allāhⁱ 'innī 'arā-ka qad daḵalat-ka kallat^{un} li-faqdⁱ kadījat^a [fa-]qāla 'ajal 'umm^u al-'iyālⁱ wa-rabbat^u al-baytⁱ fa-qālat 'a-fa-lā 'aḵṭubu 'alay-ka qāla balá 'ammā '[i/a]nna-kunna [yā] ma'sar^a al-nisā'ⁱ 'arfaqu [bi-him] bi-dālika fa-ḵaṭabat 'alay-hi sawdat^a bint^a zam'at^a min banī 'āmīrⁱ bnⁱ lu'ayyⁱⁿ wa-ḵaṭabat 'alay-hi 'ā'īšat^a [bint/ibnat]^a 'abī bakrⁱⁿ fa-banā bi-sawdat^a wa-'ā'īšat^u yawma-'idⁱⁿ bint^u sittⁱ sinīn^a ḥattā banā bi-hā [haytu/ba'd^u lammā] qadima al-madīnat^a.

The deeper relationship between al-Baḡawī's redaction and the report recorded by Ibn Sa'd is addressed below.²²⁹

²²⁸ Muḥammad b. Sa'd al-Baṣrī (ed. Carl Brockelmann), *Biographien Muhammeds, seiner Gefährten und der späteren Träger des Islams bis zum Jahre 230 der Flucht, Band 8: Biographien der Frauen* (Leiden, the Netherlands: E. J. Brill, 1904), p. 39.

²²⁹ See the section on Muḥammad b. 'Amr, below.

ʿAḥmad b. ʿAbd al-Jabbār al-ʿUṭāridī (d. 272/886)

I have collated five reports ascribed to the Kufan tradent ʿAḥmad b. ʿAbd al-Jabbār al-ʿUṭāridī (situated within the broader tradition of Muḥammad b. ʿAmr), four of which appear to be abridgements: the version recorded by al-Ḥākim al-Naysābūrī²³⁰ only comprises the opening element thereof; one of the versions recorded by al-Bayhaqī lacks some medial elements and the final elements²³¹; another version recorded by al-Bayhaqī (in the same work, but in a different chapter) only comprises the final elements²³²; and yet another version recorded by al-Bayhaqī (in a different work) is actually the unabridged (or less-abridged) version of al-Ḥākim al-Naysābūrī’s version, missing only some final elements.²³³ Fortuitously, two full versions are recorded by Ibn al-Sammāk²³⁴ and Maymūn b. ʿIshāq,²³⁵ which are corroborated in each section by at least one of the abridged versions, such that every part of the hadith is attested at least thrice (save the very final element). When abridgements are accounted for, these texts are largely identical. There are numerous textual variations between them, but these tend to be very minor, and obviously the product of scribal errors: additional or missing conjunctions, particles, and prepositions, abbreviated or elaborated names, verbs given in different tense or person, outright misspellings, and a few added or omitted words here and there. There is also some confusion as to who is narrating some versions, although the narration is always coherent.

Despite all this, the majority of the corresponding texts are still identical, and textual variants are mostly isolated in one or another version, such that an urtext is easily discernible for the most part:

²³⁰ Muḥammad b. ʿAbd Allāh al-Ḥākim al-Naysābūrī, *al-Mustadrak ʿalā al-Ṣaḥīḥayn*, vol. 5 (Cairo, Egypt: Dār al-Taʾsīl, 2014), p. 243, # 4500.

²³¹ Bayhaqī (ed. Turkī), *al-Sunan al-Kubrā*, XIV, pp. 154-155, # 13863.

²³² *Ibid.*, XXI, p. 131, # 21026.

²³³ *Id.* (ed. Qalʿajī), *Dalāʾil*, II, pp. 411-412.

²³⁴ ʿUṭmān b. ʿAḥmad al-Daqqāq b. al-Sammāk, in Nabil Saʿd al-Dīn Jarrār (ed.), *Majmūʿ fī-hi ʿAṣrat ʿAjzāʾ Ḥadīṭiyyah*, part 5 (Beirut, Lebanon: Dār al-Baṣāʾir al-ʿIslāmiyyah, n. d.), pp. 265-267, # 449.

²³⁵ Maymūn b. ʿIshāq al-Ṣawwāf, *al-Juzʾ fī-hi min Ḥadīṭ ʿAbī ʿUmar al-ʿUṭāridīyy wa-Ġayri-hi*, Hadith # 42, available online at the Mawsūʿat al-Ḥadīṭ website: <https://hadith.maktaba.co.in/single-book/1304/%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%AC%D8%B2%D8%A1-%D9%81%D9%8A%D9%87-%D9%85%D9%86-%D8%AD%D8%AF%D9%8A%D8%AB-%D8%A3%D8%A8%D9%8A-%D8%B9%D9%85%D8%B1-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%B9%D8%B7%D8%A7%D8%B1%D8%AF%D9%8A-%D9%88%D8%BA%D9%8A%D8%B1%D9%87/878041/42>

ḥaddaṭa-nā ‘abdu allāhi bn^u ‘idrīs^a al-‘awdiyy^u ‘an muḥammadⁱ bnⁱ ‘amrⁱⁿw
‘an yaḥyá bnⁱ ‘abdi al-raḥmānⁱ bnⁱ ḥāṭibⁱⁿ qāla qālat ‘ā’iṣat^u lammā mātat
ḡadījat^u bint^u ḡulaylidⁱⁿ jā’at ḡawlat^u bint^u ḥakīmⁱⁿ ‘ilā rasūlⁱ allāhi fa-qālat
yā rasūl^a allāhi ‘a-lā tuzawwija qāla wa-man qālat ‘in šī’ta bikr^{an} wa-‘in šī’ta
ṭayyib^{an} qāla wa-manⁱ al-bikr^u wa-manⁱ al-ṭayyib^u qālat ‘ammā al-bikr^u fa-
ibnat^u ‘aḥabbⁱ ḡalqⁱ allāhi ‘ilay-ka ‘ā’iṣat^u bint^u ‘abī bakrⁱⁿ wa-‘ammā al-
ṭayyib^u fa-sawdat^u bint^u zam‘at^a qad ‘āmanat bi-ka wa-itta‘abat-ka qāla fa-
uḡkurī-himā ‘alayya qālat fa-‘ataytu ‘umma rūmān^a fa-qultu yā ‘umma^a
rūmān^a māḡḡā ‘adḡala allāh^u ‘alay-kum min^a al-ḡayrⁱ wa-al-barakatⁱ qālat
wa-ḡāka māḡḡā qālat rasūl^u allāhi yaḡkuru ‘ā’iṣat^a qālat intaḡirī fa-‘inna ‘abā
bakrⁱⁿ ‘ātⁱⁿ qālat fa-jā’a ‘abū bakrⁱⁿ fa-ḡakartu ḡālīka fa-qāla ‘a-wa-ṭaṣluḡu
la-hu wa-hiya ibnat^u ‘akī-hi fa-qāla rasūl^u allāhi ‘anā ‘aḡū-hu wa-huwa ‘akī
wa-ibnatu-hu ṭaṣluḡu lī qālat wa-qāma ‘abū bakrⁱⁿ fa-qālat lī ‘umm^u rūmān^a
‘inna al-muṭ‘im^a bn^a ‘adiyyⁱⁿ qad kāna ḡakara-hā ‘alā ibni-hi wa-allāhi mā
‘aḡlafa wa‘d^{an} ḡaṭṭu ta’nī ‘abā bakrⁱⁿ qālat fa-‘atā ‘abū bakrⁱⁿ al-muṭ‘im^a fa-
qāla mā taḡūlu fī ‘amrⁱ ḡāḡihi al-jāriyatⁱ qāla fa-‘aqbala ‘alā imra’ati-hi fa-
qāla la-hā mā taḡūlīna yā ḡāḡihi qāla fa-‘aqbalat ‘alā ‘abī bakrⁱⁿ fa-qālat
la‘alla-nā ‘in ‘ankaḡnā ḡāḡā al-fatā ‘ilay-ka ṭuṣību-hu wa-tuḡḡilu-hu fī dīni-
ka allaḡī ‘anta ‘alay-hi fa-‘aqbala ‘alay-hi ‘abū bakrⁱⁿ fa-qāla mā taḡūlu ‘anta
fa-qāla ‘inna-hā la-taḡūlu mā tasma‘u fa-qāma ‘abū bakrⁱⁿ wa-laysa fī nafsi-
hi min^a al-maw‘idⁱ šay^{un} fa-qāla la-hā ‘abū bakrⁱⁿ ḡūlī li-rasūlⁱ allāhi fa-l-ya’ti
qāla fa-jā’a rasūl^u allāhi fa-malaka-hā qālat ḡawlat^u ṭumma intaḡaḡtu ‘ilā
sawdat^a wa-‘abū-hā šayḡ^{un} kabīr^{un} qad jalasa ‘anⁱ al-mawāsīmⁱ fa-ḡayyaytu-
hu bi-taḡiyyatⁱ ‘ahli al-jāhiliyyatⁱ [f/w]a-qultu ‘an‘im ṣabāḡ^{an} [fa-]qāla man
‘anti qultu ḡawlat^u bint^u ḥakīmⁱⁿ qālat fa-raḡḡaba bī wa-qāla mā šā’a allāh^u
‘an yaḡūla qālat qultu muḥammad^u bn^u ‘abdi allāhi bnⁱ ‘abdi al-muṭṭalibⁱ
yaḡkuru sawdat^a bint^a zam‘at^a [fa-]qāla kuḡ^{un} karīm^{un} māḡḡā taḡūlu
ṣāḡibat^u-ka qultu tuḡibbu ḡāka qāla [fa-]ḡūlī la-hu fa-l-ya’ti qālat fa-jā’a
rasūl^u allāhi fa-malaka-hā qālat wa-qadima ‘abdu bn^u zam‘at^a fa-ja‘ala
yaḡṭ[ū/ī] ‘alā ra’si-hi al-turāb^a wa-qāla ba‘da ‘an ‘aslama la-‘amru-ka ‘innī
la-safīḡ^{un} yawma ‘aḡṭ[ī/ū] ‘alā ra’sī al-turāb^a ‘an tazawwaja rasūl^u allāhi
sawdat^a qālat ‘ā’iṣat^u tazawwaja-nī li-sittⁱ sinīn^a [fa-lammā qadimnā al-
madīnat^a nazalnā al-sunḡ^a fī banī al-ḡarīṭⁱ bnⁱ al-ḡazrajⁱ qālat fa-‘innī la-
‘urajjaḡu bayna ‘adḡaynⁱ wa-‘anā ibnat^u tisⁱⁿ ‘id jā’at ‘ummī fa-‘anzalat-nī
ṭumma maṣat bī ḡattā intaḡat bī ‘ilā al-bābⁱ wa-‘anā ‘anhaju fa-masaḡat
wajḡī bi-šayⁱⁿ min māⁱⁿ wa-faraḡat jumaymat^{an} kānat lī ṭumma ḡaḡalat bī
‘alā rasūlⁱ allāhi wa-fī al-baytⁱ rijāl^{un} wa-nisā^{un} fa-qālat ḡā’ulā’i ‘ahlu-ki fa-
bāraka allāh^u la-ki fī-him wa-bāraka la-hum fī-ki qālat fa-qāma al-rijāl^u wa-
al-nisā^u fa-ḡarajū wa-banā bī rasūl^u allāhi wa-lā wa-allāhi mā nuḡirat
‘alayya [min] jazūr^[in/un] wa-lā ḡubiḡat [‘alayya] min šātⁱⁿ wa-lākin jafnat^{un}
kāna[t] yab‘aṭu bi-hā sa‘d^u bn^u ‘ubādat^a ‘ilā rasūlⁱ allāhi ‘idā [ḡukira/dāra]
bayna nisā’i-hi fa-qad ‘alimtu ‘anna-hu ba‘aṭa bi-hā.

Al-‘Uṭāridī is likely responsible for the wording of this urtext: the reports ascribed via him—the reports from which this urtext was reconstructed—are all more similar to each other than the reports ascribed to other figures within the broader tradition of

Muḥammad b. ‘Amr (see below). This is strengthened by the fact that two of the sources—Ibn al-Sammāk and Maymūn b. ‘Ishāq, who also happen to provide unabridged versions of the report—corroborate each other in transmitting directly from al-‘Uṭāridī, or in other words: al-‘Uṭāridī is converged upon directly by two extant collectors, rather than just the SSs of much later collectors. In light of all of this, al-‘Uṭāridī is likely to be a genuine PCL.

The transmission from al-‘Uṭāridī to his students and unto the extant collections was clearly written rather than oral, given that the extant versions are largely identical (which belies oral paraphrasing), and given also the *scribal* character of most of the variations that arose in the course of this transmission from al-‘Uṭāridī.

Sa‘īd b. Yaḥyá al-‘Umawī (d. 249/863)

I have collated six reports ascribed to the Baghdadian tradent Sa‘īd b. Yaḥyá al-‘Umawī (situated within the broader tradition of Muḥammad b. ‘Amr), five of which appear to be abridgements: the version recorded by al-Ḥākim al-Naysābūrī focuses on ‘Ā’iṣah and only comprises the opening element, a fragment of the second element, part of the third element, and two small medial elements²³⁶; the first version recorded by al-Ṭabarānī also focuses on ‘Ā’iṣah and comprises the first three elements and two medial elements²³⁷; the second version recorded by al-Ṭabarānī focuses on Sawdah and only comprises part of the first element and the medial elements related to Sawdah²³⁸; the version recorded by Ibn ‘abī ‘Āṣim focuses on Sawdah in exactly the same way²³⁹; and the version recorded by Hišām b. ‘Ammār only comprises the final elements, focusing on ‘Ā’iṣah.²⁴⁰ Fortuitously, a full version of the hadith is recorded by al-Ṭabarī,²⁴¹ which is corroborated in each section by at least one of the abridged versions, such that every part of the hadith is attested at least thrice (save one medial element).

²³⁶ Ḥākim, *Mustadrak*, III, pp. 442-443, # 2742.

²³⁷ Ṭabarānī (ed. Salafī), *al-Mu‘jam al-Kabīr*, XXIII, pp. 23-24, # 57.

²³⁸ *Ibid.*, XXIV, pp. 30-31, # 80.

²³⁹ Ibn ‘abī ‘Āṣim (ed. Jawābirah), *‘Āḥād*, V, pp. 413-414, # 3061.

²⁴⁰ Hišām b. ‘Ammār al-Dimašqī (ed. ‘Abd Allāh b. Wakīl), *Ḥadīth Hišām bn ‘Ammār* (Riyadh, KSA: Dār ‘Iṣbiyyā, 1999), p. 242, # 123.

²⁴¹ Muḥammad b. Jarīr al-Ṭabarī (ed. Michael J. de Goeje and reviewed by Pieter de Jong), *Annales quos scripsit Abu Djafar Mohammed ibn Djarir at-Tabari, Volume 4* (Leiden, the Netherlands: E. J. Brill, 1890), pp. 1767-1770.

When abridgements are accounted for, these texts are largely identical. Still, there are numerous textual variations between them, such as the usual additional, missing, or variant conjunctions, prepositions, pronouns, and so on, and also a few additional or omitted words of substance. There are also quite a few instances of paraphrasing, and quite a few outright mistakes and misspellings as well. All of the extant versions are plagued by confused narrator perspectives, which is likely due to the length of the report: at some point in their memorisation, writing, or copying of this lengthy hadith, a transmitter forgot what was happening or who was speaking in the story—usually towards the middle or the end. This usually occurs when either *Ḳawlah* or *‘Ā’iṣah* suddenly begins narrating the story, although the point at which this occurs—the point at which confusion arose and errors obtained—varies from one version to the next.

And yet, despite all of this, the different versions of this hadith are largely identical (when abridgements are accounted for), yielding the following urtext:

ḥaddaṭa-n[ā/i] ‘abī [[‘an muḥammadī bnⁱ]/[ḥaddaṭa-nā muḥammad^u bn^u]] ‘amrⁱw bnⁱ ‘alqamata ‘an yaḥyá bnⁱ ‘abdi al-raḥmānⁱ bnⁱ ḥaṭībⁱⁿ ‘an ‘ā’iṣat^a qālat lammā tuwuffiyat ḡadījat^u qālat ḡawlat^u bint^u ḥakīmⁱ bnⁱ ‘umayyat^a bnⁱ al-‘awqasⁱ imra’at^u ‘uṭmān^a bnⁱ maḡ‘ūnⁱⁿ wa-ḡālika bi-makkat^a ‘ay rasūl^a allāhⁱ ‘a-lā tuzawwija qāla wa-man qālat ‘in šī’ta bikraⁿ wa-‘in šī’ta ṭayyib^{an} qāla fa-manⁱ al-bikr^u qālat ibnat^u ‘aḡabbⁱ ḡalqⁱ allāhⁱ ‘ilay-ka ‘ā’iṣat^u bint^u ‘abī bakrⁱⁿ qāla wa-manⁱ al-ṭayyib^u qālat sawdat^u bint^u zam‘ata^a bnⁱ qaysⁱⁿ qad ‘āmanat bi-ka wa-ittaba‘at-ka ‘alā mā ‘anta ‘alay-hi qāla fa-iḡhabī fa-uḡkurī-himā ‘alayyaⁱ fa-jā‘at fa-daḡalat bayt^a ‘abī bakrⁱⁿ fa-wajadat ‘umma^a rūmān^a ‘umma^a ‘ā’iṣat^a fa-qālat [‘ay/yā] ‘umma^a rūmān^a māḡā ‘adḡala allāh^u ‘alay-kum min^a al-ḡayrⁱ wa-al-barakatⁱ [qālat wa-mā ḡāka qālat] ‘arsala-nī rasūl^u allāhⁱ ‘aḡṭubu [‘alay-hi] ‘ā’iṣat^a qālat wadidtu intaḡirī ‘abā bakrⁱⁿ fa-‘inna-hu ‘ātⁱⁿ fa-jā‘a ‘abū bakrⁱⁿ fa-qālat yā ‘abā bakrⁱⁿ māḡā ‘adḡala allāh^u ‘alay-[ka/kum] min^a al-ḡayrⁱ wa-al-barakatⁱ ‘arsala-nī rasūl^u allāhⁱ ‘aḡṭubu ‘alay-hi ‘ā’iṣat^a qāla [wa-]ḡal taṣluḡu la-hu [wa-]inna-mā hiya [bint^u/ibnat^u] ‘aḡi-hi fa-raja‘a[t/-nī] ilā rasūlⁱ allāhⁱ fa-[[ḡakarāt ḡālika la-hu]/[qālat la-hu ḡālika]] fa-qāla irja‘ī ilay-hi fa-qūlī la-hu ‘anta ‘aḡi fī al-‘islāmⁱ wa-‘anā ‘aḡū-ka wa-ibnat^u-ka taṣluḡu li fa-‘atat ‘abā bakrⁱⁿ [fa-ḡakarāt ḡālika la-hu fa-qāla intaḡirī-nī ḡattā ‘arjī‘a fa-qālat ‘umma^a rūmān^a ‘inna al-muṭ‘im^a bn^a ‘adiyyⁱⁿ kāna ḡakara-hā ‘alā ibni-hi wa-lā wa-allāhⁱ mā wa‘ada ṣay^{an} qaṭṭu fa-‘aḡlafa fa-daḡala ‘abū bakrⁱⁿ ‘alā muṭ‘imⁱⁿ wa-‘inda-hu imra’atu-hu ‘umma^a ibni-hi allaḡī kāna ḡakara-hā ‘alay-hi fa-qālat al-‘ajūz^u yā ibn^a ‘abī quḡāfat^a la‘alla-nā ‘in zawwajnā ibna-nā ibnata-ka ‘an tuṣbī‘a-hu wa-tudḡila-hu fī ḡīni-ka allaḡī ‘anta ‘alay-hi fa-‘aqbala ‘alā zawji-hā al-muṭ‘imⁱ fa-qāla mā taqūlu ḡāḡiḡi fa-qāla fa-‘inna-hā taqūlu ḡāka qāla fa-ḡaraja ‘abū bakrⁱⁿ wa-qad ‘aḡhaba allāh^u al-‘idat^a allatī kānat fī nafsi-hi min ‘idati-hi allatī wa‘ada-hā ‘iyyā-hu] [f/w]a-qāla li-ḡawlat^a idī lī rasūl^a allāhⁱ fa-da‘at-hu fa-jā‘a fa-

'ankaḥa-hu wa-hiya yawma-'idⁱⁿ ibnat^u sittⁱ sinīn^a fa-ḥarajtu fa-daḥaltu 'alā
 sawdat^a fa-qultu yā sawdat^u māḍā 'adkala allāh^u 'alay-ki min^a al-ḥayrⁱ wa-
 al-barakatⁱ qālat wa-mā ḍāka qālat 'arsala-nī rasūl^u allāhⁱ 'aḥṭubu-ki 'alay-hi
 fa-qālat wadidtu udḥulī 'alā 'abī fa-udḥurī ḍāka la-hu qālat wa-huwa šayḥ^{un}
 kabīr^{un} qad taḥallafa 'anī al-ḥajjⁱ fa-daḥaltu 'alay-hi fa-ḥayyaytu-hu bi-
 taḥiyyatⁱ 'ahlī al-jāhiliyyatⁱ tumma qultu 'inna muḥammad^a bn^a 'abdi allāhⁱ
 bnⁱ 'abdi al-muṭṭalibⁱ 'arsala-nī 'aḥṭubu 'alay-hi sawdat^a qāla kuḥ^{un} karīm^{un}
 fa-māḍā taqūlu šāhibatu-ki qālat tuḥibbu ḍālika qāla fa-id'ī-hā 'ilayya fa-
 [da'at-hā/da'awtu-hā/du'iyat la-hu] fa-qāla 'ay sawdat^u za'amat ḥādihi
 'anna muḥammad^a bn^a 'abdi allāhⁱ bnⁱ 'abdi al-muṭṭalibⁱ 'arsala yaḥṭubu-ki
 wa-huwa kuḥ^{un} karīm^{un} 'a-fa-tuḥibbīna 'an 'uzawwija-ki-hu qālat na'am
 qāla id'ī-hi lī fa-[da'at/da'awtu]-hu fa-jā'a fa-zawwaja-hu fa-jā'a 'aḥū-hā
 min^a al-ḥajjⁱ 'abdu bn^u zam'at^a fa-ja'ala yaḥṭū fī ra'si-hi al-turāb^a fa-qāla ba'da
 'an 'aslama 'innī la-safīh^{un} yawma' aḥṭū fī ra'sī al-turāb^a 'an tazawwaja rasūl^u
 allāhⁱ sawdat^a bint^a zam'at^a [qāla qālat 'ā'īsat^u] fa-qadīmna al-madīnat^a fa-
 nazala[nā] [abū bakrⁱⁿ] [[al-sunḥ^a fī banī al-hāritⁱ bnⁱ al-kazrajⁱ]/[fī
 banī al-hāritⁱ bnⁱ al-kazrajⁱ fī al-sunḥⁱ]] qāla[t] fa-jā'a rasūl^u allāhⁱ fa-
 daḥala bayta-nā fa-ijtama'a 'ilay-hi rijāl^{un} [[min^a al-'anṣārⁱ wa-
 nisā'^{un}]/[wa-nisā'^{un} min^a al-'anṣārⁱ]] fa-jā'at-nī 'ummī wa-'anā [fī/'alā]
 'urjūhatⁱⁿ bayn^a ['irqaynⁱ/'adqaynⁱ] [yurjaḥu bī] fa-'anzalat-nī tumma
 [[waffat jumaymat^{an} kānat lī]/[faraqat jummat^{an} 'alayya]] wa-masahat
 wajhī bi-šay'ⁱⁿ min mā'ⁱⁿ tumma 'aqbalat taqūdu-nī ḥattā [idā] kuntu 'inda
 al-bābⁱ waqafat [bī] ḥattā ḍahaba ba'd^u nafasī tumma [[udḥiltu wa-rasūl^u
 allāhⁱ]/[daḥalat bī 'alā rasūl^u allāhⁱ wa-huwa]] jālis^{un} 'alā sarīr[[i-hi]/[in
 fī bayti-nā qālat]] fa-'ajlasa[t]-nī fī ḥijri-hi fa-qālat ḥā'ulā'i 'ahlu-ki fa-
 bāraka allāh^u la-ki fī-hinna wa-bāraka la-hunna fī-ka wa-waṭaba al-qawm^u
 wa-al-nisā'^u [fa-ḥarajū] fa-banā bī rasūl^u allāhⁱ fī bayt[i/i-nā ḍālika] mā
 nuḥirat ['alayya] jazūr^{un} wa-lā ḍubiḥa[t] 'alayya šāt^{un} wa-'anā yawma-'idⁱⁿ
 [bint^u/ibnat^u] tis' sinīn^a ḥattā 'arsala 'ilay-nā sa'd^u bn^u 'ubādat^a bi-jafnatⁱⁿ
 kāna yursilu bi-hā 'ilā rasūlⁱ allāhⁱ.

Can this urtext (with the caveat that the middle section is poorly attested) be attributed to Sa'īd b. Yaḥyā al-'Umawī, the putative PCL therefor according to all of the relevant *'isnāds*? It seems likely: on the whole, all of the versions of this hadith (whence the urtext was derived) are more similar to each other than they are to the other versions of the broader tradition of Muḥammad b. 'Amr. In other words, they constitute a distinctive sub-tradition, which is consistent with Sa'īd's redaction's having been preserved, broadly speaking.

Abridgements aside, this hadith as a whole was transmitted fairly accurately from Sa'īd: most of the wording of most of elements are identical, as was noted already. This is indicative of mostly written transmission, as are the various mistakes and misspellings scattered throughout—these are consistent with being scribal errors.

That said, there are still many instances of paraphrasing between the extant versions, which suggests a lingering oral component in the transmission.

'Ishāq b. Rāhwayh (d. 238/853)

I have collated two reports ascribed to the Mervian tradent 'Ishāq b. 'Ibrāhīm al-Ḥanẓalī (better known as Ibn Rāhwayh), recorded by Ibn Qutaybah²⁴² and al-Dīnawarī.²⁴³ There are several differences between these two reports, but most are minor additions, omissions, and substitutions and do not affect the meaning. The only potentially significant variant is the following: Ibn Qutaybah names the source and narrator of the hadith as al-Ḥasan, where al-Dīnawarī specifies him to be al-Ḥasan b. Ḥayy. The ambiguous citation in the former could lead one to mistakenly believe that the source and narrator of the hadith is the prominent Basran Qadarī Follower al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī (d. 110/728), rather than the prominent Kufan Zaydī theologian and traditionist al-Ḥasan b. Ṣāliḥ b. Ḥayy (d. 169/785-786).²⁴⁴

Differences aside, these two reports are largely identical, and are moreover much more similar to each other than they are to any other version of the marital-age hadith. As such, they clearly embody a distinctive tradition, which is consistent with their reflecting in common the underlying redaction of their cited source, Ibn Rāhwayh. Consequently, Ibn Rāhwayh is likely a genuine PCL, to whom the following urtext can be attributed:

[**'aḳbara**]-nā yaḥyá bn^u 'ādam^a 'anⁱ al-ḥasanⁱ [**bnⁱ ḥayyⁱⁿ**] qāla ra'aytu jaddat^{an} [**ibnat/bint**]^a 'iḥdā wa-ʿiṣrīn^a sanat^{an} qāla wa-ʿaḳall^u ʿawqātⁱ [**al-**]ḥamlⁱ [**al-marʿatⁱ**] tis^{ʿu} sinīn^a wa-huwa ʿawwal^u [**waqt/ʿawqāt**]ⁱ al-waṭʿⁱ wa-daḳala rasūl^u allāhⁱ bi-ʿāʾiṣat^a wa-hiya bint^u tis^{ʿi[n]} sinīn^a.

²⁴² 'Abd Allāh b. Muslim b. Qutaybah al-Dīnawarī, *Kitāb 'Uyūn al-'Aḳbār*, part 4 (Beirut, Lebanon: Dār al-Kitāb al-'Arabiyy, n. d.), p. 66.

²⁴³ 'Aḥmad b. Marwān al-Dīnawarī (ed. Maṣḥūr b. Ḥasan 'Āl Salmān), *al-Mujālasah wa-Jawāhir al-'Ilm*, vol. 3 (Beirut, Lebanon: Dār Ibn Ḥazm, 1998), p. 518, # 1133.

²⁴⁴ Suleiman Ali Mourad, *Early Islam Between Myth and History: Al-Ḥasan Al-Baṣrī (d. 110H/728CE) and the Formation of His Legacy in Classical Islamic Scholarship* (Leiden, the Netherlands: Koninklijke Brill NV, 2006), 76.

The uniformity of the two extant derivations from Ibn Rāhwayh's redaction is consistent with its having been transmitted in writing, or at least with the aid of written notes (allowing a minor element of paraphrasing), from Ibn Rāhwayh to his students. This is consistent with the predomination of written transmission in the relevant time-period (i.e., the early-to-mid 9th Century CE).

al-Ḥajjāj b. 'abī Manī' (d. post-216/831)

I have collated four reports ascribed to the Levantine tradent al-Ḥajjāj b. 'abī Manī' al-Ruṣāfi (ostensibly situated within the broader tradition of al-Zuhrī), recorded by al-Bayhaqī²⁴⁵ and Ibn al-Ṭabarī.²⁴⁶ These four reports reduce to two PCL sub-traditions, which in turn embody a common distinctive tradition *vis-à-vis* all other versions of the marital-age hadith. This is consistent with their common ascription to al-Ḥajjāj, meaning that al-Ḥajjāj is probably a genuine PCL. In fact, these two reports are mostly identical, aside from a few additions, omissions, and substitutions, such that al-Ḥajjāj's urtext is easy to discern:

tumma tazawwaja rasūlu allāhi 'ā'iṣat^u [ba'da kadījat^a] wa-kāna qad [ra'ā/
uriya] fī al-nawmⁱ marrataynⁱ yuqālu [la-hu] hiya imra'atu-ka wa-'ā'iṣat^u
yawma-'idⁱⁿ [ibnat/bint]^u sittⁱ sinīn^a fa-nakaḥa-hā rasūlu allāhi bi-makkat^a
wa-hiya [bint/ibnat]^u sittⁱ sinīn^a tumma 'inna rasūla allāhi baná bi-'ā'iṣat^a
ba'da-mā qadima al-madīnatⁱ wa-'ā'iṣat^u yawma baná bi-hā [rasūlu allāhi]
bint^u tis'ī sinīn^a wa-[hiya] 'ā'iṣat^u bint^u 'abī bakrⁱ bnⁱ 'abī quḥāfat^a bnⁱ 'āmirⁱ
[bnⁱ 'amrⁱw] bnⁱ ka'bⁱ bnⁱ sa'dⁱ bnⁱ taymⁱ bnⁱ murrat^a [bnⁱ ka'bⁱ] bnⁱ lu'ayyⁱ
bnⁱ gālibⁱ bnⁱ fihriⁿ fa-tazawwaja-hā rasūlu allāhi bīkr^{an} wa-ism^u 'abī bakrⁱⁿ
'atīq^{un} wa-ism^u 'abī quḥāfat^a 'uṭmān^u.

The precise preservation of this hadith is consistent with its having been transmitted from al-Ḥajjāj to his students, and from them unto the extant collections, in writing, which fits well enough with the relevant time periods: al-Ḥajjāj operated unto the middle of the 9th Century CE, when written transmission predominated.

²⁴⁵ Bayhaqī (ed. Qal'ajī), *Dalā'il al-Nubuwwah*, VII, p. 284; *id.* (ed. Turkī), *al-Sunan al-Kubrā*, XIII, p. 564, # 13553.

²⁴⁶ Fasawī (ed. 'Umarī), *al-Ma'rifah wa-al-Ta'rīk*, III, pp. 321, 326.

‘Abd al-Razzāq b. Hammām (d. 211/827)

I have collated six reports ascribed to the Yemenite tradent ‘Abd al-Razzāq b. Hammām, recorded by Muslim,²⁴⁷ Ibn ‘abī al-Dunyā,²⁴⁸ al-Dabarī,²⁴⁹ Ibn ‘abī ‘Āṣim,²⁵⁰ al-Nasā’ī,²⁵¹ ‘Abū ‘Awānah,²⁵² al-Ṭabarānī,²⁵³ Ibn Mandah,²⁵⁴ ‘Abū Nu‘aym,²⁵⁵ and al-Bayhaqī.²⁵⁶ Most of these reports agree upon the same gist and even much of the same wording, and all of them are more similar to each other than to all the other versions of the marital-age hadith, such that they constitute a distinctive sub-tradition. This is consistent with all of these reports preserving an underlying recension from their stated common source, ‘Abd al-Razzāq. It is thus likely that ‘Abd al-Razzāq is a genuine PCL, and that this sub-tradition derives from him.

When it comes to reconstructing the *specific* wording of ‘Abd al-Razzāq’s redaction, however, there are some serious problems. There are of course numerous variants in the six reports, including rearranged, added, omitted, and substituted words, all of which are consistent with paraphrastic transmission. More troubling is the *pattern* of variants: most of them are doubly attested (i.e., present in two reports), but seemingly at random. In other words, most of the variants are not confined to only one version, which seems unlikely if the variants in question were the product of the respective tradents thereof: it is not very likely that two tradents would make exactly the same change to their versions independently, and even less likely that this would occur over and over.

²⁴⁷ Muslim (ed. Fāryābī), *Ṣaḥīḥ*, I, p. 642, # 71/1422.

²⁴⁸ ‘Abd Allāh b. ‘abī al-Dunyā Muḥammad b. ‘Ubayd (ed. Najm ‘Abd al-Raḥmān Ḳalaf), *Kitāb al-‘Iyāl* (Dammam, KSA: Dār Ibn al-Qayyim, 1990), p. 755, # 558.

²⁴⁹ ‘Abd al-Razzāq b. Hammām al-Ṣan‘ānī (ed. Ḥabīb al-Raḥmān al-‘A‘ẓamī), *al-Muṣannaḡ*, vol. 6 (Beirut, Lebanon: al-Majlis al-‘Ilmiyy, 1970), p. 162, ## 10349-10350.

²⁵⁰ ‘Aḥmad b. ‘abī ‘Āṣim b. ‘Amr (ed. Bāsil Fayṣal ‘Aḥmad al-Jawābirah), *al-‘Āḥād wa-al-Maṭānī*, vol. 5 (Riyad, KSA: Dār al-Rāyah, 1991), p. 399, # 3028.

²⁵¹ Nasā’ī (ed. Ṣalabī), *al-Sunan al-Kubrā*, V, pp. 242-243, # 5544.

²⁵² ‘Abū ‘Awānah (ed. ‘Aṭā’ Allāh), *al-Musnad al-Ṣaḥīḥ*, XI, p. 385, # 4709.

²⁵³ Sulaymān b. ‘Aḥmad al-Ṭabarānī (ed. Ḥamdī ‘Abd al-Majīd al-Salafī), *al-Mu‘jam al-Kabīr*, vol. 23 (Cairo, Egypt: Maktabat Ibn Taymiyyah, n. d.), pp. 20-21, # 44.

²⁵⁴ Muḥammad b. ‘Ishāq b. Mandah (ed. ‘Āmir Ḥasan Ṣabrī), *Ma‘rifat al-Ṣaḥābah* (UAE: Jāmi‘at al-‘Imārāt al-‘Arabiyyah al-Muttaḥidah, 2005), pp. 940-941.

²⁵⁵ ‘Abū Nu‘aym ‘Aḥmad b. ‘Abd Allāh al-‘Iṣfahānī (ed. Muḥammad Ḥasan ‘Ismā‘īl al-Ṣāfi‘ī), *al-Musnad al-Mustaḡraj ‘alā Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, vol. 4 (Beirut, Lebanon: Dār al-Kutub al-‘Ilmiyyah, n. d.), p. 87, # 3312.

²⁵⁶ Bayhaqī (ed. Turkī), *al-Sunan al-Kubrā*, XXI, p. 129, # 21024.

There are two solutions to this puzzle: either there was frequent contamination between the different transmissions from ‘Abd al-Razzāq,²⁵⁷ rendering the precise reconstruction of his urtext largely impossible (since corroborating wordings might actually be borrowed from each other); or alternatively, ‘Abd al-Razzāq reworded his version through successive retellings, such that there is no coherent or fixed urtext to reconstruct in the first place. The gist of the ‘original’ redaction remains the same regardless, but (in the first scenario) some key details are thrown into question: did ‘Abd al-Razzāq cite Hišām as one of his sources, or did he not? Did he relate that ‘Ā’iṣah was engaged to marry the Prophet when she was six, or six or seven, or seven? Even more troubling (in the second scenario) is the prospect that ‘Abd al-Razzāq changed a key detail in his hadith over time. The addition or omission of Hišām could be explained away as mere abridgement, but the alternating ages cannot: was ‘Ā’iṣah six, or six or seven, or seven?²⁵⁸

In the first scenario, there is still some prospect of reconstructing a speculative urtext, based on the Criterion of Dissimilarity: unusual and undesirable textual variants are more likely to belong to the original and less likely to be the product of contamination, since it is more likely that an obscure or undesirable version was updated in accordance with a common, popular, or ideal version, rather than vice versa.²⁵⁹ On this basis, the following approximation obtains:

...ma‘mar^{un} ‘anⁱ al-zuhriyyⁱ ‘an ‘urwat^a [wa-hiṣāmⁱ bnⁱ ‘urwat^a ‘an ‘abī-hi] qāla **nakaḥa** al-nabiyy^u ‘ā’iṣat^a wa-hiya bint^u sittⁱ sanawātⁱⁿ ‘aw sab^{‘in} **wa-zuffat** ‘ilay-hi wa-hiya bint^u tis^{‘i[n]} [sinīn^a] **wa-lu‘abu-hā ma‘a-hā** **wa-māta** ‘an-hā wa-hiya bint^u ṭamānⁱ ‘aṣrat^a.

Alternatively, in the second scenario, we can discern several distinct drafts of ‘Abd al-Razzāq’s hadith. In the earliest version (partially and variously recorded by al-Dabarī,

²⁵⁷ The geography of the tradents is consistent with this: all of those who transmitted from ‘Abd al-Razzāq (bar al-Dabarī) operated primarily in Iraq and the East, such that they could easily have met and influenced each other’s versions.

²⁵⁸ It might be claimed that “six” and “seven” were each just abbreviations of “six or seven”, but if so, this still seems extremely sloppy or dishonest on ‘Abd al-Razzāq’s part—in either instance, he would be giving the impression of precision or certainty on a historical datum that he knew to be uncertain.

²⁵⁹ Thus: the vague ‘an is likely the original, rather than the specific ‘aḵbara-nā; the ascription to ‘Urwah is likely the original, rather than the ascription via ‘Urwah to ‘Ā’iṣah; the rare *nakaḥa* and *sanawāt* are likely the original, rather than the common *tazawwaja* and *sinīn*; the uncertain *sitt* ‘aw *sab*‘ is likely the original, rather than the certain *sitt* or *sab*‘, respectively; and finally, *zuffat* is rare in the broader tradition as a whole, so it is plausibly the original (rather than the isolated variants ‘uhdiyyat and *dufi‘tu*) here.

al-Nasā'ī, and 'Abū 'Awānah),²⁶⁰ Hišām was probably included in the 'isnād, 'Ā'īshah was probably absent from the 'isnād (making it *munqaṭī'*), the first verb was probably the rare *nakaḥa*, and 'Ā'īshah's marital age was probably uncertain (*sitt sanawāt 'aw sab*'), as in the following:

...ma'mar^{un} 'anī al-zuhriyyi 'an 'urwat^a wa-hišāmī bni 'urwat^a 'an 'abī-hi qāla
nakaḥa al-nabiyy^u 'ā'īṣat^a wa-hiya bint^u sittⁱ sanawātⁱⁿ 'aw sabⁱⁿ wa-zuffat
'ilay-hi wa-hiya bint^u tisⁱⁿ wa-lu'abu-hā ma'a-hā wa-māta 'an-hā wa-hiya
bint^u tamānī 'ašrat^a.

In a subsequent iteration (recorded by 'Abū 'Awānah),²⁶¹ 'Abd al-Razzāq omitted Hišām from the 'isnād and further raised it from 'Urwah to 'Ā'īshah, whilst also substituting the uncommon *nakaḥa* for the common *tazawwaja*, as in the following:

...ma'marⁱⁿ 'anī al-zuhriyyi 'an 'urwat^a 'an 'ā'īṣat^a 'anna al-nabiyy^a
tazawwaja-hā wa-hiya bint^u sittⁱ sanawātⁱⁿ 'aw hiya bint^u sabⁱⁿ wa-zuffat
'ilay-hi wa-hiya bint^u tisⁱⁿ wa-lu'abu-hā ma'a-hā wa-māta 'an-hā wa-hiya
bint^u tamānī 'ašrat^a.

In a final iteration (recorded by Muslim, and in Ibn 'abī al-Dunyā's version from the PCL Ibn 'Askar),²⁶² 'Abd al-Razzāq further refined the hadith by removing the ambiguity surrounding 'Ā'īshah's marital age and specifying seven in particular, as in the following:

...ma'mar^{un} 'anī al-zuhriyyi 'an 'urwat^a 'an 'ā'īṣat^a 'anna al-nabiyy^a
tazawwaja-hā wa-hiya bint^u sabⁱ sinīn^a wa-zuffat 'ilay-hi wa-hiya bint^u tisⁱⁿ
wa-lu'abu-hā ma'a-hā wa-māta 'an-hā wa-hiya bint^u tamānī 'ašrat^a.

Finally, 'Abd al-Razzāq's student al-Dabarī alternatively specified the first element as *sitt*, and Ibn Mandah or one of his intermediaries back to 'Abd al-Razzāq ('Aḥmad b. Muḥammad b. Ziyād or 'Aḥmad b. Manṣūr) took this and further rephrased the entire

²⁶⁰ The raising in 'Abū 'Awānah and the 'anna al-nabiyy tazawwaja-hā are both secondary, and the *tuwuffiya* is a unique variant in his transmission, so all must be disregarded for this redaction; the *sinīn* and *sanah* in al-Nasā'ī are absent in the other two, and should be disregarded accordingly; the *uḥdiyat* in al-Dabarī is unique to him; and finally, the specific *sitt* in al-Dabarī seems secondary, *vis-à-vis* the vague *sitt sanawāt 'aw sab*.

²⁶¹ However, *tuwuffiya* is unique to 'Abū 'Awānah, and has been emended to *māta* accordingly.

²⁶² Ibn 'abī al-Dunyā—Ibn 'Askar omits *'ilay-hi*, present in all other versions of this hadith. The two other versions of Ibn 'Askar omit *'anna* and reorganise the first element: Ibn 'abī 'Āṣim has *tazawwaja-hā al-nabiyy*, and al-Ṭabarānī has *tazawwaja-nī rasūl allāh*.

hadith into an autobiographical quotation from ‘Ā’iṣah (substituting *al-nabiyy* for *rasūl allāh* and the *z-f-f* root with the *d-f-‘* root, and omitting the ‘dolls’ element in the process).

On either scenario, the following wording probably derives from ‘Abd al-Razzāq, as his original formulation (before it was altered and contaminated by successive tradents) or earliest discernible formulation (before he himself altered in successive retellings):

...ma‘mar^{un} ‘anⁱ al-zuhriyyⁱ ‘an ‘urwat^a [wa-hiṣāmⁱ bni ‘urwat^a ‘an ‘abī-hi] qāla nakaha al-nabiyy^u ‘ā’iṣat^a wa-hiya bint^u sittⁱ sanawātⁱⁿ ‘aw sab^{‘in} wa-zuffat ‘ilay-hi wa-hiya bint^u tis^{‘in} [sinīn^a] wa-lu‘abu-hā ma‘a-hā wa-māta ‘an-hā wa-hiya bint^u tamānⁱ ‘aṣrat^a

In the first scenario, where the tradents from ‘Abd al-Razzāq are responsible for the major variants within this sub-tradition, most of the variants in the first element (substituted words, rearranged sentences, changed details) are consistent with oral paraphrasing, even as the overall uniformity of the other three elements is consistent with written transmission; this might point to parallel or partial oral *and* written transmission at this time, from ‘Abd al-Razzāq to his students, and between these students. In the second scenario, where ‘Abd al-Razzāq himself is responsible for the major variants within this sub-tradition, most of these variants are consistent with oral paraphrasing on the part of ‘Abd al-Razzāq, combined with fairly precise written transmission on the part of his tradents, or in other words: ‘Abd al-Razzāq transmitted his hadith orally (and paraphrased it in successive retellings), whereas most of his students preserved it in writing. Even then, there may have been a few instances of paraphrasing on the part of these students: al-Dabarī seems to have paraphrased *zuffat* as *‘uhdiyat*, and possibly also reduced *sitt sanawāt ‘aw sab* to *sitt*; ‘Abū ‘Awānah or his source al-Ṣaḡānī seems to have paraphrased *māta* as *tuwuffiya*; and Ibn Mandah or one of his sources rephrased the entire hadith (see above). By contrast, the occasional additions or omissions in the different transmissions can be explained by occasional scribal errors, either by the aforementioned tradents or later copyists of the relevant collections.²⁶³

²⁶³ Specifically: the added *sinīn* in both Muslim and al-Nasā’ī; the missing *‘an-hā* in Ibn ‘Askar; and the added *sanah* in al-Nasā’ī.

Muḥammad b. ‘Umar al-Wāqidī (d. 207/823)

I have collated two reports ascribed to the Madinan tradent Muḥammad b. ‘Umar al-Wāqidī (from ‘Abd al-Wāḥid b. Maymūn, from Ḥabīb al-’A‘war), recorded by Ibn Sa‘d²⁶⁴ and al-Ḥākim al-Naysābūrī.²⁶⁵ These two reports are more similar to each other than they are to all the rest, and are in fact largely identical, aside from a few additions, omissions, and other minor differences. As such, these two reports constitute a distinctive sub-tradition, which is consistent with their reflecting the particular redaction of their common source, al-Wāqidī. Consequently, al-Wāqidī is probably a genuine CL, to whom the following urtext can be attributed:

ḥaddaṭa-n[ī/ā] ‘abd^u al-wāḥidⁱ bn^u maymūnⁱⁿ mawlā ‘urwat^a ‘an ḥabībⁱⁿ
mawlā ‘urwat^a qāla lammā mātat kadījat^u ḥazina ‘alay-hā al-nabiyy^u
[ḥuzn^{an} šadīd^{an}] [[fa-’atā-hu jibrīl^a]/[fa-ba’atā allāh^u jibrīl^a fa-’atā-hu]]
bi-‘ā’iṣat^a fī mahdⁱⁿ fa-qāla yā rasūl^a allāhⁱ ḥādīhi tuḏhibu [bi-]ba’^di ḥuzni-
ka wa-’inna fī ḥādīhi [la-]kalaf^{an} min kadījat^a tumma radda-hā fa-kāna
rasūl^u allāhⁱ yakṭalifu ‘ilā bayti ‘abī bakrⁱⁿ wa-yaqūlu yā ‘umma rūmān^a
istawṣī bi-‘ā’iṣat^a kayr^{an} wa-iḥfazī-nī fī-hā fa-kāna li-‘ā’iṣat^a bi-
[dālīka/dāka] manzilat^{un} ‘inda ‘ahli-hā wa-lā yaš‘urūna bi-’amri allāhⁱ fī-hā
fa-’atā-hum rasūl^u allāhⁱ [yawm^{an}] fī ba’^di mā kāna ya’tī-him wa-kāna lā
yuḳṭi’u-hu yawm^[u/a]n wāḥid^[u/a]n [’illā] ‘an ya’tiya ‘ilā bayti ‘abī bakrⁱⁿ
munḍu ‘aslama ‘ilā ‘an ḥājara fa-yajidu ‘ā’iṣat^a mutasattirat^{an} bi-bābi [dārⁱ]
‘abī bakrⁱⁿ tabkī bukā’^{an} ḥazīn^{an} fa-sa’ala-hā fa-šakat ‘umma-hā fa-ḍakarāt
‘anna-hā tūla’u [bi-hā] fa-dama’at ‘aynā rasūlⁱ allāhⁱ [f/w]a-daḳala ‘alā
‘ummi rūmān^a fa-qāla yā ‘umma rūmān^a ‘a-lam ‘ūṣi-ki bi-‘ā’iṣat^a ‘an taḥfazī-
nī fī-[h/m]ā fa-qālat yā rasūl^a allāhⁱ ‘inna-hā ballaḡati al-ṣiddīq^a ‘ann[ā/ī]
wa-’aḡḍabat-hu ‘alay-nā fa-qāla al-nabiyy^u wa-’in fa’alat qālat ‘ummu
rūmān^a lā jaram^a lā su’tu-hā ‘abad^{an} wa-kānat ‘ā’iṣat^u wulīdat [fī] al-
sanat^[i/a] al-rābi’at^[i/a] min^a al-nubuwwatⁱ [fī ‘awwali-hā] wa-tazawwaja-hā
rasūl^u allāhⁱ fī al-sanatⁱ al-‘āširatⁱ fī šawwālⁱⁿ wa-hiya yawma-’idⁱⁿ
[bint/ibnat]^u sittⁱ sinīn^a wa-tazawwaja-hā ba’^da sawdat^a bi-šahrⁱⁿ.

The extremely high rate of similarity between the two extant derivations of this hadith is consistent with its having been transmitted in writing from al-Wāqidī to his students, which fits not just the general time period involved (i.e., the early 9th Century CE

²⁶⁴ Ibn Sa‘d (ed. Brockelmann), *Biographien*, VIII, p. 54.

²⁶⁵ Ḥākim, *Mustadrak*, VII, p. 21, # 6883. For the rest of the ‘isnād, see *ibid.*, p. 20, # 6881.

onward, when written transmission predominated), but with the fact that al-Wāqidī was an early composer of texts (*ṣāḥib al-taṣānīf wa-al-maḡāzī*),²⁶⁶ Ibn Sa‘d was his personal scribe (*kātib*),²⁶⁷ and al-Ḥusayn b. al-Faraj transmitted from him a recension of his *al-Mubtada’ wa-al-Maḡāzī*.²⁶⁸

Muḥammad b. Biṣr (d. 203/818-819)

I have collated two reports ascribed to the Kufan tradent Muḥammad b. Biṣr (situated within the broader tradition of Muḥammad b. ‘Amr): one recorded in the *Musnad* of Ibn Rāhwayh,²⁶⁹ and the other in the *Musnad* of Ibn Ḥanbal (as composed or transmitted by his son ‘Abd Allāh).²⁷⁰ There are numerous differences between these two versions: additional or missing conjunctions, particles, and prepositions, transpositions, outright misspellings, the addition or omission of words and sentences, and most of all, paraphrases (including both substitution with synonyms and elaborations). Both versions are also characterised by confusion in the narrator’s point of view (whether due to interpolation or editorial correction, or paraphrastic or scribal error), but in different places.

Despite all of this, these two reports are more similar to each other than to any others within the broader tradition of Muḥammad b. ‘Amr (see below), sharing the same elements in the same order, and many novel wordings as well, such that they constitute a distinctive sub-tradition. The absence of more versions of this sub-tradition makes it harder to adjudicate between the textual variants preserved in the two that we do have, but most of the underlying redaction can still be discerned:

ḥaddaṭa-nā muḥammad^u bn^u ‘amrⁱⁿw ḥaddaṭa-nā ‘abū salamat^a wa-yaḥyá
[bn^u ‘abdⁱ al-raḥmānⁱ bnⁱ ḥāṭibⁱⁿ] qālā lammā halakat kadījat^u jā‘at kawlat^u
bint^u ḥakīmⁱⁿ imra‘at^u ‘uṭmān^a bnⁱ maḥ‘ūnⁱⁿ [[‘ilā rasūlⁱ allāhⁱ qālat]/[qālat
yā rasūl^a allāhⁱ]] ‘a-lā tuzawwija [fa-]qāla man qālat ‘in šī‘ta bikr^{an} wa-‘in

²⁶⁶ Dahabī (ed. ‘Arna‘ūṭ *et al.*), *Siyar*, IX, p. 454.

²⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, X, p. 664.

²⁶⁸ ‘Abū al-Šayḫ ‘Abd Allāh b. Muḥammad (ed. ‘Abd al-Ġafūr b. ‘Abd al-Ḥaqq al-Balūšī), *Ṭabaqāt al-Muḥaddiṭīn bi-‘Aṣḥān wa-al-Wāridīn ‘alay-hā*, vol. 2 (Beirut, Lebanon: Mu‘assasat al-Risālah, n. d.), p. 200, # 100.

²⁶⁹ Ibn Rāhwayh (ed. Balūšī), *Musnad*, II, pp. 587-590, # 1164/621.

²⁷⁰ ‘Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal (ed. Muḥammad al-Zahrī al-Ġamrāwī), *al-Musnad*, vol. 6 (Cairo, Egypt: al-Maṭba‘ah al-Maymaniyyah, 1895), pp. 210-211.

ši'ta tayyib^{an} [fa-]qāla manⁱ al-bikr^u [fa-]qālat ibnat^u 'aḥabbⁱ qalqⁱ allāhⁱ 'ilay-
 ka 'ā'īsat^u bint^u 'abī bakrⁱⁿ qāla [f/w]a-manⁱ al-tayyib^u qālat sawdat^u
 [bint^u/ibnat^u] zam^{at}a [wa-]qad 'āmanat [bi-ka] wa-ittaba^{at} [[-ka 'alá mā
 taqūlu]/[alladī 'anta 'alay-hi] qāla fa-idḥabī fa-udkurī-himā 'alayya fa-
 daḳalat bayt^a 'abī bakrⁱⁿ fa-qālat yā 'umm^a rūmān^a māḍā 'adḳala allāh^u 'alay-
 k[i/um] min^a al-ḳayrⁱ wa-al-barakatⁱ [fa-]qālat wa-mā ḍāka [fa-]qālat
 'arsala-nī rasūl^u allāhⁱ 'aḳṭubu 'alay-hi 'ā'īsat^a qālat intazirī [[**'abā bakrⁱⁿ**
ḥattá ya'tiya]/[**ḥattá ya'tiya 'abū bakrⁱⁿ**]] fa-[jā'a/daḳala] 'abū bakrⁱⁿ fa-
 qālat [yā **'abā bakrⁱⁿ**] māḍā 'adḳala allāh^u 'alay-kum min^a al-ḳayrⁱ wa-al-
 barakatⁱ qāla wa-mā ḍāka qālat 'arsala-nī rasūl^u allāhⁱ 'aḳṭubu 'alay-hi
 'ā'īsat^a qāla wa-hal taṣluḥu la-hu 'inna-mā hiya ibnat^u 'aḳī-hi fa-raja^{at} 'ilá
 rasūlⁱ allāhⁱ fa-ḍakarat ḍālika la-hu qāla irjaⁱ 'ilay-hi fa-qūlⁱ la-hu 'anā 'aḳū-
 ka wa-'anta 'aḳī fī al-'islāmⁱ wa-ibnatu-ka taṣluḥu li fa-raja^{at} ['ilay-hi] fa-
 ḍakarat ḍālika la-hu [[**fa-ḳaraja wa-qāla intazirī**]/[**qāla intazirī wa-**
ḳaraja]] [fa-]qālat 'umm^u rūmān^a [**'anna/'inna**] muṭ'im^a bn^a 'adiyyⁱⁿ [qad]
 kāna ḍakara-hā 'alá ibni-hi [fa-]wa-[allāhⁱ] mā wa'ada wa'd^{an} qaṭṭu [**'abū**
bakrⁱⁿ fa-'aḳlafa-hu]/[**fa-'aḳlafa-hu li-'abī bakrⁱⁿ**] fa-daḳala 'abū bakrⁱⁿ
 'alá muṭ'im^a bn^a 'adiyyⁱⁿ wa-'inda-hu imra'atu-hu 'umm^u al-fatá fa-qālat yā
 ibn^a 'abī quḥāfat^a la'alla-ka [[**muṣbⁱⁿ ṣāḥiba-nā**]/[**muṣbⁱ hādā al-fatá**
wa-]] mudḳilu-hu fī dīni-ka alladī 'anta 'alay-hi 'in [**'anta zawwajta-hu fa-**
'aqbala 'abū bakrⁱⁿ 'alá al-]/[**tazawwaja 'ilay-ka qāla 'abū bakrⁱⁿ li-l-**]]
 muṭ'imⁱ bnⁱ 'adiyyⁱⁿ [fa-qāla] 'a-[[**taqūlu mā taqūlu hādihī**]/[**qawl^u hādihī**
taqūlu]] [fa-]qāla 'inna-hā [la-]taqūlu ḍālika fa-ḳaraja [**'abū bakrⁱⁿ**]/[**min**
'indi-hi] [wa-]qad [**'adḥaba/'aḳraja**] allāh^u mā kāna fī nafsⁱ-hi min^a
 ['idati-hi/al-'idatⁱ] allatī wa'ada-hu fa-raja^a fa-qāla [yā/li-] ḳawlat^u idⁱ [lī]
 rasūl^a allāhⁱ fa-da'at-hu fa-zawwaja-hā [[**min rasūlⁱ allāhⁱ**]/[**'iyyā-hu**]] **wa-**
[hiya/'ā'īsat^u] yawma-'idⁱⁿ [bint^u/ibnat^u] sittⁱ sinīn^a tumma ḳarajat fa-
 daḳalat 'alá sawdat^a [ibnatⁱ/bintⁱ] zam^{at}a fa-qālat [la-hā] māḍā 'adḳala
 allāh^u 'alay-ki min^a al-ḳayrⁱ wa-al-barakatⁱ [fa-]qālat wa-mā ḍāka [fa-]qālat
 'arsala-nī rasūl^u allāhⁱ 'aḳṭubu-ki 'alay-hi [fa-]qālat wadidtu udḳulī
 ['alá/'ilá] 'abī fa-udkurī ḍālika la-hu wa-kāna ṣayḳ^{an} kabīr^{an} qad 'adraka[t]-
 hu al-sinn^u [wa-]qad [[**fāta-hu**]/[**taḳallafa 'anⁱ**]] al-ḥajj^u/i fa-daḳalat
 'alay-hi fa-ḥayyat-hu bi-taḥiyyatⁱ al-jāhiliyyatⁱ fa-qāla man [**'anti/hādihī**]
 fa-qālat ḳawlat^u bint^u ḥakīmⁱⁿ qāla [w/f]a-mā ṣa'nu-ki [fa-]qālat 'arsala-nī
 muḥammad^u bn^u 'abdⁱ allāhⁱ [**'ilay-ka**] 'aḳṭubu 'alay-ka sawdat^a [fa-]qāla
 kuḥ^{un} karīm^{un} mā[**ḍā**] taqūlu ṣāḥibatu-ki fa-qālat tuḥibbu ḍālika fa-qāla idⁱ-
 hā [lī] fa-da'at-hā fa-jā'at [fa-]qāla 'ay bunayyat^u 'inna hādihī taz'umu 'anna
 muḥammad^a bn^a 'abdⁱ allāhⁱ bnⁱ 'abdⁱ al-muṭṭalibⁱ [qad] 'arsala yaḳṭubu-ki
 ['alay-hi] wa-huwa kuḥ^{un} karīm^{un} 'a-tuḥibbīna 'an 'uzawwija-ki [-hi/bi-hi]
 [fa-]qālat na'am qāla[t] idⁱ-hi li [fa-da'at-hu] fa-jā'a [rasūl^u allāhⁱ 'ilay-hi]
 fa-zawwaja-hā [**'iyyā/min**]-hu fa-[[**jā'a-hā 'aḳū-hā**]/[**lammā qadima**]]
 'abdu bn^u zam^{at}a min^a al-ḥajjⁱ [[**fa-ja'ala yaḥṭī fī ra'si-hi al-turāb^a fa-**
qāla]/[**qāla māḍā ṣana'a ḥubb^u zawjⁱ sawdat^a min-hu fa-kāna**]] ba'd^a
 [**'an/mā**] 'aslama [yaqūlu] la-'amr[i/u-ka] 'innī la-safih^{un} yawma [[**'aḥṭī fī**
ra'sī al-turāb^a 'an tazawwaja rasūl^u allāhⁱ sawdat^a bint^a
zam^{at}a]/[**'ankartu tazwija rasūlⁱ allāhⁱ sawdat^a wa-kāna ḥaṭ^{an} 'alá**
ra'si-hi al-turāb^a]] qālat 'ā'īsat^u fa-[lammā] qadimnā al-madīnat^a [fa-
l nazalnā fī banī al-hāritⁱ bnⁱ al-ḳazrajⁱ fī al-sunh [qālat] [[**fa-jā'a rasūl^u**
allāhⁱ fa-daḳala]/[**fa-daḳala rasūl^u allāhⁱ**] bayta-nā fa-ijtama'a 'ilay-hi

rijāl^{un} min^a al-ʿanṣārī wa-nisāʿ^{un} [qāla] fa-jāʿa [t-nī] ʿummī wa-ʿinnī/ʿanā
[la-]fi ʿurjūḥatⁱⁿ [fi/bayn^a] ʿaḍqaynī tarjaḥu bī [[fa-ʿanzalat-nī min^a al-
ʿurjūḥatⁱ]/[fa-ʿaḳaḍat taqūdi-nī min^a al-ʿurjūḥatⁱ fa-ʿanzalat-nī]] wa-lī
jumaymat^{un} fa-[faraqtu/faraqat]-hā [w/f]a-masaḥat wajhī bi-ṣayⁱⁿ min
māⁱⁿ tumma [ʿaḳbalat/jaʿalat] taqūdu-nī ḥattā [waqafat/jāʿa] bī ʿinda [[al-
bābⁱ]/[bābⁱ al-baytⁱ] wa-ʿinnī la-ʿanhaju [ḥattā/fa-lammā] sakana
[[bī]/[min nafasī tumma]] daḳalat bī [[ʿalay-hi]/[fa-ʿidā rasūl^u allāhⁱ
jālis^{un} ʿalā sarīrⁱⁿ fi bayti-nā]] wa-ʿinda-hu rijāl^{un} [[wa-nisāʿ^{un} min^a al-
ʿanṣārī]/[min^a al-ʿanṣārī wa-nisāʿ^{un}]] fa-ʿajlasat-nī [fi ḥijri-hi]
[tumma/fa-] qālat hāʿulāʿi ʿahlu-ki fa-bāraka allāh^u la-ki fī-[hā/him] wa-
bāraka la-hum fī-ki fa-waṭaba al-rijāl^u wa-al-nisāʿ^u fa-ḳarajū fa-banā bī
rasūl^u allāhⁱ fi bayti-nā mā [[naḥara lī]/[nuḥirat ʿalayya]] jazūr^{un} wa-lā
[[dabaḥa lī]/[ḍubihat ʿalayya]] šāt^{an} ḥattā ʿarsala ʿilay-nā saʿd^u bn^u
ʿubādat^a bi-jafnatⁱⁿ kāna yursilu bi-hā ʿilā rasūlⁱ allāhⁱ ʿidā dāra fī nisāʿi-hi
wa-ʿanā yawma-ʿidⁱⁿ [bint^u/ibnat^u] tis^{ʿi} sinīn^a.

The attribution of this (approximate) redaction to Muḥammad b. Bišr is reasonable: the two reports under consideration evidently share a close recent textual ancestor to the exclusion of all others within the broader tradition of Muḥammad b. ʿAmr, which matches the attribution in the *ʿisnāds* of both to the PCL Muḥammad b. Bišr. This attribution is strengthened by the fact that at least one of the extant sources preserving this hadith—Ibn Rāhwayh—transmits directly from Muḥammad b. Bišr, rather than via some SS from a distant remove.

The transmission of this hadith from Muḥammad b. Bišr to his students Ibn Rāhwayh and Ibn Ḥanbal (and possibly from Ibn Ḥanbal to his son ʿAbd Allāh) was sloppy, and probably substantially oral: most of numerous variants that arose between the extant versions seem like paraphrases and elaborations (rather than scribal errors), which is characteristic of oral transmission. That said, the general outline and much of the wording of the original elements was accurately preserved, which precludes free oral remixing and may indicate the parallel use of written notes to aid memorisation (e.g., recording rough outlines or summaries).

ʿAbū ʿUsāmah Ḥammād (d. 201/817)

There are two distinct sets of hadiths ascribed to the Kufan tradent ʿAbū ʿUsāmah Ḥammād b. ʿUsāmah (both situated within the broader tradition of Hišām b. ʿUrwah),

the first of which comprises two reports, recorded by Ibn 'abī Šaybah²⁷¹ and al-Buḵārī.²⁷² Both of these reports comprise the same unique sequence of elements (not to mention a rare verb) *vis-à-vis* all other iterations of the marital-age hadith,²⁷³ which means that they constitute a distinctive sub-tradition. This matches their common ascription to 'Abū 'Usāmah, which means that he is likely a genuine PCL whose distinctive redaction is reflected thereby. The rate of variation between these two reports is substantial relative to their shortness, but in absolute terms, consists only of a few additions, omissions, and substitutions. Consequently, the underlying redaction of 'Abū 'Usāmah is substantially reconstructable, as follows:

...hišāmⁱⁿ 'an 'abī-hi qāla tuwuffiyat ḵadījat^u qabl^a [ʾan yaḵruja/maḵrajⁱ] al-nabiyyi 'ilā al-madīnatⁱ bi-[talātⁱ sinīn^a fa-labiṭa] sanataynⁱ 'aw qarīb^{an} min dālika [tūmma/wa-] nakaḥa 'ā'iṣat^a wa-hiya bint^u sittⁱ sinīn^a [tūmma/wa-] banā bi-hā wa-hiya bint^u tisⁱ⁽ⁿ⁾ [sinīn^a].

In light of the extremely short distance between 'Abū 'Usāmah and the extant sources (Ibn 'abī Šaybah having transmitted from him directly, and al-Buḵārī being separated from him by a single intermediary), and in light also of the relevant time period (the early 9th Century CE, when the written transmission of Hadith was just attaining hegemony), the variants are probably the product of oral paraphrasing (rather than scribal error), but of a fairly constrained kind (perhaps based on some written notes).

The second hadith associated with 'Abū 'Usāmah was recorded by Muslim,²⁷⁴ 'Abū Dāwūd,²⁷⁵ 'Abū Ya'lá,²⁷⁶ Ibn Ḥibbān,²⁷⁷ 'Abū Nu'aym,²⁷⁸ al-Bayhaqī,²⁷⁹ and Ibn al-Muhtadī bi-Allāh.²⁸⁰ Some of these reports are evidently abridgements, but where corresponding wordings are available, they all closely match each other, bar the first version cited by 'Abū Dāwūd (which seems to be partially his own summary and partially a mixture of transmissions from different sources). The *set* of elements

²⁷¹ Ibn 'abī Šaybah (ed. 'Usāmah), *Muṣannaf*, XI, p. 341, # 34894.

²⁷² Buḵārī, *Šaḥīḥ*, I, p. 767, # 3944.

²⁷³ I.e., the sequence outlined above, and the verb *nakaḥa*.

²⁷⁴ Muslim (ed. Fāryābī), *Šaḥīḥ*, I, p. 642, # 69/1422.

²⁷⁵ 'Abū Dāwūd (ed. 'Abd al-Ḥamīd), *Sunan*, IV, p. 284, ## 4933-4934, 4936.

²⁷⁶ 'Abū Ya'lá (ed. 'Asad), *Musnad*, VIII, p. 301, # 4897/541.

²⁷⁷ Ibn Ḥibbān (ed. 'Arna'ūt), *Šaḥīḥ*, XVI, p. 9, # 7097.

²⁷⁸ 'Abū Nu'aym (ed. Šāfi'ī), *al-Musnad al-Mustaḵraj*, IV, pp. 86-87, # 3310.

²⁷⁹ Bayhaqī (ed. Turkī), *al-Sunan al-Kubrā*, XIV, p. 109, # 13774; *ibid.*, p. 544, # 14583; *ibid.*, XXI, pp. 130-131, # 21025.

²⁸⁰ 'Abd Allāh b. Ziyād al-Naysābūrī (ed. Kālid b. Hāyif b. 'Urayj al-Muṭayrī), *al-Ziyādāt 'alā Kitāb al-Muzaniyy* (Kuwait: Dār al-Kawṭar, n. d.), p. 478, # 445.

comprising these reports are not unique (having substantial overlap with those comprising the sub-tradition of Ḥammād b. Salamah, and being the same as those comprising the sub-tradition of ‘Alī b. Mushir), but the *sequence* thereof is,²⁸¹ not to mention in combination with some rare wordings.²⁸² Consequently, it is clear that these reports reflect a distinctive sub-tradition, which matches their common ascription to ‘Abū ‘Usāmah. He is thus likely a genuine PCL, whose distinctive redaction is reflected thereby, despite the presence of a few variants (mostly substitutions and omissions) scattered throughout each of the relevant reports.

And yet, there is a difficulty in pinpointing the original wording of ‘Abū ‘Usāmah’s redaction: several of these reports are equipped with dual *‘isnāds*, resulting in a chaotic jumble of converging strands and potential PCLs. As such, it is difficult to pinpoint which strands are meant to indicate the actual transmission-paths of the content of a given report, and which are being mentioned simply to indicate the paths of similar (but unquoted) content. There are also no consistent sub-redactions within this set of reports (of the kind that allowed us to previously distinguish the redactions of ‘Abū al-Ḥusayn al-Qaṭṭān and al-Ḥākim al-Naysābūrī),²⁸³ with recurring variants seemingly distributed at random (which could point to ubiquitous contamination between the relevant tradents). As such, wordings introduced by PCLs and tradents *after* ‘Abū ‘Usāmah cannot be easily pinpointed and weeded out of the available set, resulting in more uncertainty in ‘Abū ‘Usāmah’s hypothetical redaction.

Still, these reports are largely identical, which means that most of ‘Abū ‘Usāmah’s underlying redaction can be readily discerned (even if many specific wordings remain uncertain), as follows:

...hišāmⁱ bnⁱ ‘urwat^a ‘an ‘abī-hi ‘an ‘ā’išat^a qālat tazawwaja-nī rasūl^u allāhⁱ li-sittⁱ sinīn^a wa-banā bī wa-‘anā [bint/ibnat]^u tisⁱ sinīn^a [qālat] fa-[qadimnā/qadimtu] al-madīnat^a fa-wu‘iktu šahr^{an} fa-wafā ša‘rī jumaymat^{an} fa-‘atat-nī ‘umm^u rūmān^a wa-‘anā ‘alā ‘urjūḥatⁱⁿ wa-mā‘ī sawāhibī fa-šarakat bī fa-‘ataytu-hā wa-mā ‘adrī mā[ḍā] yurādu bī fa-‘aḳaḳat bi-yadī fa-‘awqafat-nī ‘alā al-bābⁱ fa-qultu hah hah ḥattā dahaba nafasī fa-‘adḳalat-nī bayt^{an} fa-‘idā niswat^{un} min^a al-‘anšārⁱ fa-qulna ‘alā al-kayrⁱ wa-al-barakatⁱ wa-‘alā kayrⁱ ṭā’irⁱⁿ fa-‘aslamat-nī ‘ilay-hinna fa-ḡasalna

²⁸¹ Most notably, the ‘Alī b. Mushir sub-tradition has the ‘consummation’ element at the end.

²⁸² E.g., most of the reports ascribed to ‘Abū ‘Usāmah have the unusual wording *li-sittⁱ sinīn^a*, where those ascribed to ‘Alī b. Mushir have the usual *wa-‘anā ibnah/bint sitt sinīn^a*.

²⁸³ See the relevant sections, above.

ra'sī wa-'aṣḥabna-nī fa-lam yaru'-'nī 'illā rasūlu allāhi [ḍuḥ^{an}] fa-'aṣḥabna-nī 'ilay-hi.

Again, the generally precise preservation of this hadith (with very few instances of paraphrasing) is consistent with its having been transmitted in writing from 'Abū 'Usāmah to his students in the early 9th Century CE.

Sufyān b. 'Uyaynah (d. 198/814)

I have collated five reports ascribed to the Kufo-Meccan tradent Sufyān b. 'Uyaynah (situated within the broader tradition of Hišām b. 'Urwah), recorded by al-Rabī' b. Sulaymān (in his recension of al-Šāfi'i),²⁸⁴ Bišr b. Mūsā (in his recension of al-Ḥumaydī),²⁸⁵ and al-'Ājurri.²⁸⁶ Most of these ascriptions to Sufyān do appear to belong to the same vague sub-tradition *vis-à-vis* most other transmissions from Hišām b. 'Urwah, but they are not unique: the same basic elemental sequence, including the detail of 'Ā'īshah being married at “seven” or “six or seven”, can be found in ascriptions to other putative PCLs, such as Ḥammād b. Zayd, Jarīr b. 'Abd al-Ḥamīd, and Wakī' b. al-Jarrāḥ. For example, Bišr's transmission from Sufyān²⁸⁷ and one of al-Rabī's transmissions from Sufyān²⁸⁸ share an uncertainty over “six or seven”, but in this respect, they are more similar to Ibn 'Abd al-Barr's transmission from Jarīr²⁸⁹ than they are to the other transmissions from Sufyān. Meanwhile, another of al-Rabī's transmissions from Sufyān, which includes a lengthy final element about dolls and shy friends,²⁹⁰ is in that respect more similar to Ibn Wahb's transmission from Ibn 'abī al-Zinād and Sa'īd b. 'Abd al-Raḥmān.²⁹¹

²⁸⁴ Šāfi'i (ed. 'Abd al-Muṭṭalib), 'Umm, VI, pp. 45-46, # 2210; *ibid.*, p. 429, # 2462; *ibid.*, X, p. 141, # 147.

²⁸⁵ 'Abd Allāh b. al-Zubayr al-Ḥumaydī (ed. Ḥusayn Salīm 'Asad al-Dārānī), *Musnad*, vol. 1 (Damascus, Syria: Dār al-Saqā, 1996), p. 273, # 233.

²⁸⁶ 'Ājurri (ed. Sayf al-Nāṣir), *Šarī'ah*, III, p. 472, # 1241/1938.

²⁸⁷ Ḥumaydī (ed. Dārānī), *Musnad*, I, p. 273, # 233: *wa-'anā bint sitt sinīn 'aw sab' sinīn.*

²⁸⁸ Šāfi'i (ed. 'Abd al-Muṭṭalib), 'Umm, VI, pp. 45-46, # 2210: *wa-'anā ibnat sitt 'aw sab'.*

²⁸⁹ Ibn 'Abd al-Barr (ed. 'A'rāb), *Tamhīd*, XIX, p. 108: *wa-'anā ibnat sitt 'aw sab' sinīn.*

²⁹⁰ Šāfi'i (ed. 'Abd al-Muṭṭalib), 'Umm, X, p. 141, # 147.

²⁹¹ 'Abd Allāh b. Wahb b. Muslim (ed. Rif'at Fawzī 'Abd al-Muṭṭalib & 'Alī 'Abd al-Bāsiṭ Mazyad), *al-Jāmi'* (Mansurah, Egypt: Dār al-Wafā', 2005), pp. 154-155, # 260.

This problem is only compounded when it is realised that three of the above-cited transmissions from Sufyān actually derive from the same duo, al-Rabīʿ and al-Šāfiʿī, yet differ from each other more than they differ from the rest: one has the unusual wording of *nakaḥa* (where all the rest have *tazawwaja*) and *sitt ʿaw sabʿ* (where most of the others just have *sabʿ*), whilst another has the lengthy addendum about dolls and shy friends (absent in the rest). Either al-Rabīʿ and al-Šāfiʿī were sloppy or forgetful (such that they accidentally distorted or contaminated the hadith in different citations thereof), or else they (deliberately) interpolated it at different times in different ways. Indeed, in the case of the ‘dolls’ element, al-Šāfiʿī or al-Rabīʿ has combined two originally-separate hadiths from Sufyān, from Hišām, which remain discrete in the transmissions of Sufyān’s other students.²⁹²

Al-Rabīʿ and al-Šāfiʿī’s idiosyncratic citations aside, it is still at least plausible that Sufyān transmitted a version of this hadith, and that this version is partially preserved across the extant ascriptions to him, but this cannot be demonstrated as with other PCLs: there is no distinctive wording that correlates with his name, which raises the spectre of contamination or spreading *ʿisnāds*. Thus, the following approximation can be synthesised from these ascriptions,²⁹³ but cannot be attributed to Sufyān with confidence:

...hišāmī bnī ʿurwat^a ʿan ʿabī-hi ʿan ʿāʾiṣat^a qālat **tazawwaja-nī rasūl^u allāhⁱ**
wa-ʿanā [bint/ibnat]^u sitt^{i[n]} ʿaw sab^{ʿi[n]} [sinīn^a] wa-banā bī wa-ʿanā
[bint/ibnat]^u tis^{ʿi[n]} [sinīn^a].

Even this might need to be revised, given that al-ʿĀjurri’s version (transmitted via Ibn ʿabī ʿUmar) depicts ʿĀʾiṣah being described in the third person (*hiya*, etc.), in contrast to the first-person perspective recorded by al-Rabīʿ—al-Šāfiʿī and Bišr—al-Ḥumaydī (*ʿanā*, etc.). Since the former seems more archaic than the latter, we might regard the third-person perspective as the original, although this would entail that al-Šāfiʿī and al-Ḥumaydī reworded their respective versions into autobiographical narrations from ʿĀʾiṣah (or else that Sufyān himself did so in successive retellings of his hadith).

²⁹² E.g., Ḥumaydī (ed. Dārānī), *Musnad*, I, p. 289, # 262.

²⁹³ By discarding the isolated *ʿanna* and *daḳalat ʿalay-hi* in ʿĀjurri, the isolated *nakaḥa-nī al-nabiyy* in Šāfiʿī # 2210, and the isolated ‘dolls’ element in Šāfiʿī # 147. Additionally, the vague *sitt ʿaw sabʿ* in both Šāfiʿī # 2210 and Bišr—Ḥumaydī has been preferred over the specific *sabʿ* in the rest.

In short, the ascriptions to Sufyān b. ‘Uyaynah do not constitute a distinctive sub-tradition *vis-à-vis* ascriptions to all other PCLs, and are even quite divergent from each other in some respects, such that a redaction clearly deriving from Sufyān cannot be ascertained. He may be responsible for some of the wordings preserved across these ascriptions, but this is by no means certain.

Wakī‘ b. al-Jarrāḥ (d. 196-197/812)

I have collated four reports ascribed to the Kufan tradent Wakī‘ b. al-Jarrāḥ, recorded by Ibn Sa‘d (twice),²⁹⁴ Ibn Rāhwayh,²⁹⁵ and Hannād.²⁹⁶ It should be immediately clear that there is no distinctive sub-tradition clustered around Wakī‘ specifically: even the two broadly-similar ascriptions (recorded by Ibn Sa‘d and Ibn Rāhwayh) are just as similar as ascriptions to some other PCLs, such as Ḥammād b. Zayd, Jarīr b. ‘Abd al-Ḥamīd, and Sufyān b. ‘Uyaynah. Thus, even if Wakī‘ actually transmitted some or all of these reports from his alleged sources, it cannot be demonstrated with the present evidence: there is no particular redaction or wording that can be attributed to him.

Of the three ascriptions to him that purport to derive from Hišām, Ibn Sa‘d’s version is the most likely to be genuine: in addition to being vaguely corroborated in its elemental outline by numerous other transmissions from Hišām (unlike Hannād’s version), it also contains uncertainty in the core wording (*sitt sinīn ‘aw sab*) and a *munqaṭi‘* ascription (to ‘Urwah, rather than ‘Ā’iṣah), which makes it seem more archaic than Ibn Rāhwayh’s (unambiguous and *muttaṣil*) version. In other words, the following has the strongest claim to derive from Wakī‘:

...hišāmī bnī ‘urwat^a ‘an ‘abī-hi ‘anna al-nabiyy^a tazawwaja ‘ā’iṣat^a wa-hiya
ibnat^u sittⁱ sinīn^a ‘aw sab^{‘in} wa-banā bi-hā wa-hiya ibnat^u tis^{‘in}.²⁹⁷

Again, however, the ascription of this hadith to Wakī‘ cannot be confirmed, absent corroborating transmissions all embodying a distinctive sub-tradition. In other words,

²⁹⁴ Ibn Sa‘d (ed. Brockelmann), *Biographien*, VIII, p. 41.

²⁹⁵ Ibn Rāhwayh (ed. Balūṣī), *Musnad*, II, p. 213, # 721/178.

²⁹⁶ Hannād b. al-Sarī b. Muṣ‘ab (ed. ‘Abd al-Raḥmān b. ‘Abd al-Jabbār al-Farīwā’ī), *Kitāb al-Zuhd* (Kuwait: Dār al-Ḳulafā’ li-l-Kitāb al-‘Islāmiyy, 1985), p. 379, # 738.

²⁹⁷ Based on Ibn Sa‘d (ed. Brockelmann), *Biographien*, VIII, p. 41.

absent the inferable presence of an underlying redaction that can be attributed to Wakīʿ, there is always the threat that an ascription is the product of contamination and/or spreading *ʿisnāds*.

That said, it should be acknowledged that the line *ʿanna al-nabiyy tazawwaja ʿāʾiṣah wa-hiya ibnah*, present in both of Ibn Saʿd's ascriptions to Wakīʿ (unto both Hišām b. ʿUrwah and Sufyān al-Ṭawrī), is unique in the marital-age tradition more broadly. This could be explained as reflecting Wakīʿ's particular wording, but could equally be the result of Ibn Saʿd's own particular wording, especially considering that he lists the two hadiths one after the other: he may simply have worded both in the same way because he wrote them down at the same time. This is complicated by the fact that the nearest similar wording in the relevant corpus is found in an alternative transmission from Sufyān recorded by al-Ṭabarānī: *ʿanna al-nabiyy tazawwaja ʿāʾiṣah wa-hiya bint*.²⁹⁸ This could be a sign that Wakīʿ accurately preserved a wording from Sufyān (in common with what al-Ṭabarānī preserved), which was then recorded by Ibn Saʿd—although this would imply that the same wording was then inserted, by Ibn Saʿd or Wakīʿ himself, into Wakīʿ's transmission from Hišām. Alternatively, al-Ṭabarānī's version is contaminated or borrowed from Ibn Saʿd or Wakīʿ's versions (just as it was clearly contaminated by the ʿAbū Muʿāwiyah sub-tradition in terms of its elemental outline), which again leaves us without a definite answer.

ʿAbū Muʿāwiyah al-Ḍarīr (d. 194-195/809-811)

I have collated fourteen relevant transmissions from the Kufan tradent and putative PCL ʿAbū Muʿāwiyah, but not all of them reflect the same sub-tradition of the marital-age hadith: one transmission recorded by Ibn Rāhwayh has ʿAbū Muʿāwiyah citing Hišām as his source,²⁹⁹ where all the rest have him citing al-ʿAʿmaš; and even amongst the latter, there appear to be two distinctive sub-traditions. The first of these (henceforth, sub-tradition #1) is unique, being much more similar to each other than to any other versions of the marital-age hadith: ʿĀʾiṣah was married at nine, and the

²⁹⁸ Ṭabarānī (ed. Salāfi), *al-Muʿjam al-Kabīr*. XXIII, p. 23, # 56.

²⁹⁹ Ibn Rāhwayh (ed. Balūši), *Musnad*, II, p. 214, # 722/178.

Prophet died when she was eighteen.³⁰⁰ The second (henceforth, sub-tradition #2) ostensibly resembles the sub-traditions of Wuhayb, Sufyān al-Ṭawrī, and especially 'Isrā'īl: 'Ā'īṣah was married at six/seven, the marriage was consummated when she was nine, and the Prophet died when she was eighteen.³⁰¹

Sub-tradition #2 is deeply problematic, for several reasons. Firstly, it is more similar (in terms of elemental sequence) to the sub-tradition of 'Isrā'īl (see below) than to all the rest within the broader marital-age tradition, which implies that both share a recent common ancestor *vis-à-vis* the rest—yet the *'isnāds* contradict this.³⁰² Secondly, sub-tradition #2 claims descent via exactly the same *'isnād* as sub-tradition #1 ('Abū Mu'āwiyah—al-'A'maš—Ibrāhīm—al-'Aswad—'Ā'īṣah), which seems rather odd: is it realistic to envisage two *contradictory* versions of the same hadith being transmitted from *exactly the same sequence of tradents*? Since the *'isnāds* are identical, how did the contradiction arise in the first place? The obvious resolution (if we stay within the constraints of the *'isnāds*) would be that 'Abū Mu'āwiyah himself changed the hadith in successive retellings, transmitting one version to one set of students and another to another.

That said, the attribution of sub-tradition #2 to 'Abū Mu'āwiyah is by no means assured, since it only has three dubious attestations, two of which converge on the PCL Yaḥyá b. Yaḥyá, and the other of which is recorded by al-Ṭabarānī. Although both reports share the same elemental sequence, the first line of al-Ṭabarānī's version has a different syntax than Yaḥyá's,³⁰³ and (more importantly) differs in the first element on a key detail: 'Ā'īṣah is married at seven, rather than six.³⁰⁴ Moreover, none of the four sources cited by al-Ṭabarānī as transmitting sub-tradition #2 from 'Abū Mu'āwiyah—namely, Ibn Numayr, Yaḥyá al-Ḥimmānī, Hannād, and 'Ibrāhīm—are cited anywhere else in the entire Hadith corpus—in any parallel or corroborating transmissions—as

³⁰⁰ Ibn Sa'd (ed. Brockelmann), *Biographien*, VIII, p. 41; Ibn 'abī Šaybah (ed. 'Usāmah), *Muṣannaf*, VI, p. 245, # 17615; also see *ibid.*, XI, p. 306, # 34452; *ibid.*, p. 870, # 1537/995; Ibn 'abī 'Āšim (ed. Jawābirah), *Āḥād*, V, p. 396, # 3020; Ibn Ḥanbal (ed. Ġamrāwī), *Musnad*, VI, p. 42; Nasā'ī (ed. Ṭayyār *et al.*), *Sunan*, pp. 772-773, # 3258; *id.* (ed. Šalabī), *al-Sunan al-Kubrā*, V, p. 170, # 5348; 'Abū 'Awānah (ed. 'Aṭā' Allāh), *al-Musnad al-Šaḥīḥ*, XI, p. 384, # 4707; 'Abū Zur'ah (ed. Qawjānī), *Ta'rīk*, part 7, p. 494, # 1288; 'Ājurri (ed. Sayf al-Nāṣir), *Šarī'ah*, III, p. 472, # 1242/1939.

³⁰¹ Muslim (ed. Fāryābī), *Šaḥīḥ*, I, p. 642, # 72/1422; Ṭabarānī (ed. Salafī), *al-Mu'jam al-Kabīr*, XXIII, p. 22, # 51; Bayhaqī (ed. Turkī), *al-Sunan al-Kubrā*, XIV, p. 111, # 13776.

³⁰² Whereas one ostensibly derives via 'Abū Mu'āwiyah—al-'A'maš—Ibrāhīm—al-'Aswad—'Ā'īṣah, the other ostensibly derives via 'Isrā'īl—'Abū 'Ishāq—misc. (sometimes ending in 'Ā'īṣah).

³⁰³ Where Y. has *tazawwaja-hā rasūl allāh*, Ṭ. has *'anna rasūl allāh tazawwaja-hā*.

³⁰⁴ Where Y. has *sitt*, Ṭ. has *sab'*.

having done so. In fact, Ibn Numayr is elsewhere cited as a transmitter of sub-tradition #1 from 'Abū Mu'āwiyah,³⁰⁵ not sub-tradition #2; and Hannād is elsewhere cited as having transmitted from 'Abū Mu'āwiyah—Hišām—'Urwah—'Ā'īshah,³⁰⁶ rather than 'Abū Mu'āwiyah—al-'A'maš—'Ibrāhīm—al-'Aswad—'Ā'īshah. It cannot be discounted that we are dealing with some kind of dive.

In short, both of the attestations of sub-tradition #2 are highly suspect, which is to say: not only can it not be positively traced back to 'Abū Mu'āwiyah, we have reason to positively doubt that any iteration thereof is authentic. Ibn Rāhwayh's ascription (that 'Ā'īshah was married at six and consummated in marriage at nine) via 'Abū Mu'āwiyah—Hišām—'Urwah—'Ā'īshah is also completely uncorroborated, and thus also cannot be traced back to 'Abū Mu'āwiyah. This leaves us with the following, i.e., sub-tradition #1, which is multiply attested from 'Abū Mu'āwiyah. That this sub-tradition truly derives from 'Abū Mu'āwiyah seems very likely: these versions are generally much more similar to each other than to any others within the broader marital-age tradition (bar a single stray ascription),³⁰⁷ which matches their common ascription to 'Abū Mu'āwiyah. Moreover, three of the extant collections transmit from 'Abū Mu'āwiyah directly. There is thus little doubt that 'Abū Mu'āwiyah is a genuine PCL.

There are some issues in reconstructing 'Abū Mu'āwiyah's redaction, however: the transmissions from him display numerous variants, including omitted, added, and substituted words. Such variation is of course common, but the *frequency* thereof in such short texts is striking: some are clearly attributable to scribal error, but others seem indicative of mild oral paraphrasing. Even more striking is the instance of extreme paraphrasing or interpolation by Ibn 'abī 'Āṣim or his source Ibn Numayr, who omitted the first element of the hadith and reworded the second into an autobiographical quotation from 'Ā'īshah. Meanwhile, al-'Ājurri, or someone in his *'isnād* unto 'Abū Mu'āwiyah (namely, 'Abd Allāh b. Muḥammad or Muḥammad b. al-Muṭannā), or possibly even a later scribe, was obviously bothered or confused by 'Abū Mu'āwiyah's text (which has 'Ā'īshah being engaged for marriage at age nine, rather than

³⁰⁵ By 'Abū al-Maymūn, cited above; and in a strange form, by Ibn 'abī 'Āṣim, also cited above.

³⁰⁶ 'Abū Nu'aym (ed. Šāfi'), *al-Musnad al-Mustakraj*, IV, p. 87, # 3311.

³⁰⁷ Cf. 'Uqaylī (ed. Sarsāwī), *Ḍu'afā'*, V, p. 473, # 1/5735. By contrast, Tabarānī (ed. Salafī), *al-Mu'jam al-Kabīr*, XXIII, p. 23, # 56 and the ascriptions to 'Abṭar (see below) are less similar: both have the same distinctive elemental sequence, but the former has *wa-makaṭat 'inda-hu tis^{an}* and the latter have *wa-ṣahibtu-hu tis^{an}*, contrast to the usual *wa-māta 'an-hā wa-hiya bint tamān[iy] 'ašrah* in this sub-tradition.

the usual six or seven). Accordingly, they added a clarificatory comment into the middle of the hadith:

The Messenger of God married her when she was a girl of nine—**meaning, the time of his consummation of marriage with her [occurred] when she was a girl of nine** (*ya'nī waqt dukūli-hi bi-hā wa-hiya bint tis'*)—and he died when she was a girl of eighteen years.³⁰⁸

This is not necessarily an interpolation *per se*, since the *ya'nī* can be understood to openly signify the editorialising of a tradent or scribe; the only problem is that the tradent or scribe in question is not indicated, which could give the false impression that 'Abū Mu'āwiyah himself made this comment.

Finally, there is a significant mistake or interpolation in Ibn Rāhwayh's version, which has *sitt* instead of the usual *tis'*. This may be the product of sloppy transmission by Ibn Rāhwayh: he may have read or heard *tazawwaja* and expected a *sitt* to follow (per the common version of the marital-age tradition more broadly), and wrote *sitt* accordingly. Alternatively, this may be an emendation by Ibn Rāhwayh, who thought he was correcting an error by 'Abū Mu'āwiyah. Either way, Ibn Rāhwayh himself (rather than some later scribe) was probably responsible for the change, since a subsequent collection ascribes this exact variant to him.³⁰⁹

It thus seems as though the transmission of this text from 'Abū Mu'āwiyah to his students involved some sloppy paraphrasing, even if the gist and much of the same wording was still preserved. On that note, a common underlying text is still clearly discernible:

[ḥaddaṭa-nā] al-'a'maš^u 'an 'ibrāhīma 'anⁱ al-'aswadi 'an 'ā'īṣat^a [qālat] tazawwaja-hā rasūl^u allāhⁱ wa-hiya bint^u tis'ⁱⁿ wa-māta 'an-hā wa-hiya bint^u tamān[i/a/iy^a] 'ašrat^a.

This may not be *the* urtext of the hadith (since some of the aforementioned oral variation may hark back to 'Abū Mu'āwiyah himself, such that there is no urtext *per se*),

³⁰⁸ 'Ājurri (ed. Sayf al-Nāṣir), *Šarī'ah*, III, p. 472, # 1242/1939. Emphasis mine.

³⁰⁹ 'Abū Nu'aym (ed. Šāfi'), *al-Musnad al-Mustakraj*, IV, p. 87, # 3313: "And Ibn Rāhwayh said: "...when she was a girl of six...." Oddly, 'Abū Nu'aym also attributes *sab'* to 'Aḥmad (b. Ḥanbal), despite my 1895 edition of his *Musnad* clearly stating *tis'*.

but it does at least represent *a* wording from 'Abū Mu'āwiyah, or in other words, his redaction.

'Alī b. Mushir (d. 189/804-805)

I have collated six reports ascribed to the Kufan tradent 'Alī b. Mushir (situated within the broader tradition of Hišām b. 'Urwah), recorded by al-Dārimī,³¹⁰ al-Buḵārī,³¹¹ Ibn Mājah,³¹² 'Abū 'Awānah,³¹³ al-Bayhaqī,³¹⁴ and Ibn al-Ṭabarī.³¹⁵ All of these reports are more similar to each other than to all the rest, which is consistent with their embodying a common tradition from their cited source. 'Alī is thus likely a genuine PCL, to whom the following urtext can be attributed:

[*tnā*] hišām^u bn^u 'urwat^a 'an 'abī-hi 'an 'ā'īṣat^a qālat tazawwaja-nī rasūl^u allāhⁱ wa-'anā bint^u sittⁱ sinīn^a fa-qadimnā al-madīnat^a fa-nazalnā fī banī al-ḥārītⁱ bnī al-kazrajⁱ fa-wu'iktu fa-tamazzaqa ša'arī fa-'awfā jumaymat^{an} fa-'atat-nī 'ummī 'umm^u rūmān^a wa-'innī la-fī 'urjūḥatⁱⁿ wa-ma'ī ṣawāḥibāt^{un} lī fa-ṣarakat bī fa-'ataytu-hā wa-mā 'adrī mā turīdu bī fa-'aḳaḳat bi-yadī ḥattā 'awqafat-nī 'alā bābⁱ al-dārⁱ wa-'innī la-'anhaju ḥattā sakana ba'd^u nafasī tumma 'aḳaḳat šay'^{an} min mā'ⁱⁿ fa-masaḥat bi-hi wajhī wa-ra'sī tumma 'adḳalat-nī al-dār^a fa-'idā niswat^{un} min^a al-'anṣārⁱ fī baytⁱⁿ fa-qulna 'alā al-ḳayrⁱ wa-al-barakatⁱ wa-'alā ḳayrⁱ ṭā'irⁱⁿ fa-'aslamat-nī 'ilay-hinna fa-'aslaḥna min ša'nī fa-lam yaru'-nī illā rasūl^u allāhⁱ ḍuḥ^{an} fa-'aslamna-nī 'ilay-hi wa-'anā yawma-'idⁱⁿ bint^u tis'ⁱ sinīn^a.

The handful of minor variations between the extant transmissions of this hadith are mostly consistent with being mere scribal errors. This, in combination with the otherwise extremely precise preservation of the texts, suggests that the transmission of this hadith from 'Alī to his students occurred in writing.

³¹⁰ 'Abd Allāh b. 'Abd al-Raḥmān al-Dārimī (ed. Ḥusayn Salīm 'Asad al-Dārānī), *Musnad*, vol. 3 (Riyadh, KSA: Dār al-Muḡnī, 2000), pp. 1451-1452, # 2307.

³¹¹ Buḵārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, I, p. 767. The same hadith appears in two other places in abbreviated form, with relevant parts excerpted according to *bāb*: *ibid.*, III, pp. 1080-1081. Since the 'isnād and the available wording of these two are identical to the first, they clearly are just abbreviations or excerpts, which is why I have not included them as different versions or variants in the proceeding analysis.

³¹² Ibn Mājah (ed. 'Abd al-Bāqī), *Sunan*, I, pp. 603-604, # 1876.

³¹³ 'Abū 'Awānah (ed. 'Atā' Allāh), *al-Musnad al-Ṣaḥīḥ*, XI, pp. 379-380, # 4698.

³¹⁴ Aḥmad b. al-Ḥusayn al-Bayhaqī (ed. 'Abd Allāh b. 'Abd al-Muḥsin al-Turkī), *al-Sunan al-Kubrā*, vol. 14 (Cairo, Egypt: Dār al-Hajar, 2011), pp. 214-215, # 13957.

³¹⁵ Fasawī (ed. 'Umarī), *al-Ma'rifah wa-al-Ta'rīḳ*, III, pp. 326-327.

Jarīr b. ‘Abd al-Ḥamīd (d. 188/804)

I have collated two reports ascribed to the Kufan tradent Jarīr b. ‘Abd al-Ḥamīd (situated within the broader tradition of Hišām b. ‘Urwah), recorded by Ibn ‘abī al-Dunyā,³¹⁶ Ibn ‘abī Dāwūd,³¹⁷ and Ibn ‘Abd al-Barr.³¹⁸ These three ascriptions (two of which converge on the PCL ‘Abū Ḳayṭamah) are not strikingly more similar to each other than to those found in other transmissions, but they are still extremely similar: both have ‘Ā’iṣah speaking in the first person; both have *tazawwaja-nī rasūl allāh*; both have *sab‘ sinīn* (although one version is uncertain and adds *sitt* as well); both have *baná bī*; and both have *tis‘ sinīn*. Other than the uncertainty over *sitt ‘aw sab‘ sinīn*, the only difference between these two reports is that ‘Abū Ḳayṭamah’s version may have had *ibnah* in two places, where Ibn ‘abī Dāwūd has *bint*.³¹⁹ It is thus still *plausible* that these two hadiths reflect Jarīr’s redaction, even if such an attribution is not certain (as it would be if they shared a distinctive or unique wording *vis-à-vis* all other versions of the marital-age hadith). That being so, the following redaction obtains:

[‘aḵbara-nā] hišām^u bn^u ‘urwat^a ‘an ‘abī-hi ‘an ‘ā’iṣat^a qālat *tazawwaja-nī rasūl^u allāhⁱ wa-‘anā bint^u [sittⁱ ‘aw] sab^{‘i} sinīn^a wa-baná bī wa-‘anā bint^u tis^{‘i} sinīn^a.*

The general uniformity of the preservation of this hadith (aside from the difference over *sitt ‘aw sab‘ sinīn*) is consistent with its having been transmitted in writing from Jarīr to his students.

³¹⁶ Ibn ‘abī al-Dunyā (ed. Ḳalaf), *‘Iyāl*, p. 756, # 559. Cf. ‘Abū ‘Awānah Ya‘qūb b. ‘Iṣḥāq al-‘Isfarāyīnī (ed. Muḥammad Makkī ‘Aṭā’ Allāh), *al-Musnad al-Ṣaḥīḥ al-Muḳarrarj ‘alā Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, vol. 11 (Madinah, KSA: al-Jāmi‘ah al-‘Islāmiyyah, 2014), pp. 384-385, # 4708, in which Ibn ‘abī al-Dunyā’s original ascription (to Hišām) has been replaced by another (to al-‘A‘maš), whether due to error or mendacity on the part of ‘Abū ‘Awānah.

³¹⁷ Ibn ‘abī Dāwūd (ed. Ḥusayn), *Musnad ‘Ā’iṣah*, p. 64, # 34.

³¹⁸ Yūsuf b. ‘Abd Allāh b. ‘Abd al-Barr (ed. Sa‘īd ‘Aḥmad ‘A‘rāb), *al-Tamhīd li-mā fī al-Muwaṭṭa’ min al-Ma‘ānī wa-al-‘Asānīd*, vol. 19 (Rabat, Morocco: Wizārat ‘Umūm al-‘Awqāf wa-al-Ṣū‘ūn al-‘Islāmiyyah, 1988), p. 108.

³¹⁹ Since Ibn ‘abī Dāwūd’s version has a kind of collective *‘isnād*, there is no specific *‘isnād* for this particular hadith that can be compared to the wording in ‘Abū Ḳayṭamah’s version. Thus, if there were some differences between the *‘isnāds* of these two versions, we can no longer detect them.

‘Abdah b. Sulaymān (d. 187-188/803-804)

I have collated eight reports ascribed to the Kufan tradent ‘Abdah b. Sulaymān (situated within the broader tradition of Hišām b. ‘Urwah), variously recorded by Ibn ‘abī Šaybah,³²⁰ Muslim,³²¹ al-Balāḍurī,³²² al-Nasā’ī (in two versions)³²³, Ibn al-Jārūd,³²⁴ Ibn ‘abī Dāwūd,³²⁵ al-Ṭabarānī,³²⁶ and ‘Abū Nu‘aym.³²⁷ At first glance, most of these transmissions from ‘Abdah do not seem to be more similar to each other than other hadiths within the broader Hišām tradition: there are several other PCL sub-traditions (Ja‘far b. Sulaymān, Ḥammād b. Zayd, Jarīr b. ‘Abd al-Ḥamīd, Wakīf b. al-Jarrāh, and Sufyān b. ‘Uyaynah)³²⁸ and a few SS transmissions³²⁹ that also comprise the same two elements in the same order (marriage, consummation). On closer inspection, however, most of these other transmissions have ‘Ā’iṣah being married at seven or six or seven,³³⁰ whereas all of those from ‘Abdah have her being married at six. On this key detail, then, the transmissions from ‘Abdah are more similar to each other than to the rest, which is consistent with his redaction’s having been broadly preserved in the relevant transmissions.

There are some difficulties in the reconstruction of ‘Abdah’s redaction, however, given the variation that exists between the extant transmissions from him: in addition

³²⁰ Ibn ‘abī Šaybah (ed. ‘Usāmah), *Muṣannaḥ*, XI, p. 316, # 34516.

³²¹ Muslim (ed. Fāryābī), *Ṣaḥīḥ*, I, p. 642, # 70/1422. Muslim gives another *’isnād* for this hadith (Yaḥyá b. Yaḥyá—‘Abū Mu‘āwiyah—Hišām—‘Urwah—‘Ā’iṣah:), but as he says, the wording of the hadith (*al-lafẓ*) is Ibn Numayr’s.

³²² Balāḍurī (ed. Zakkār & Ziriklī), *Jumal min ‘Ansāb al-‘Ašraf*, II, p. 38.

³²³ Nasā’ī (ed. Ṭayyār *et al.*), *Sunan*, p. 794, # 3378; for a slightly different wording, see *id.* (ed. Šalabī), *al-Sunan al-Kubrā*, V, p. 794, # 3378.

³²⁴ ‘Abd Allāh b. ‘Alī b. al-Jārūd al-Naysābūrī (ed. ‘Abū ‘Ishāq al-Ḥawaynī al-‘Aṭarī), *Kitāb Ġawṭ al-Makdūd bi-Taḥrīj Muntaqā Ibn al-Jārūd*, vol. 3 (Beirut, Lebanon: Dār al-Kitāb al-‘Arabiyy, 1988), p. 44, # 711.

³²⁵ ‘Abd Allāh b. ‘abī Dāwūd Sulaymān al-Sijistānī (ed. ‘Abd al-Ġafūr ‘Abd al-Ḥaqq Ḥusayn), *Musnad ‘Ā’iṣah* (Kuwait: Maktabat Dār al-‘Aqṣá, 1985), p. 74, # 56.

³²⁶ Ṭabarānī (ed. Salafī), *al-Mu‘jam al-Kabīr*, XXIII, p. 21, # 48.

³²⁷ ‘Abū Nu‘aym (ed. Šāfi‘ī), *al-Musnad al-Mustakraj*, IV, p. 87, # 3311.

³²⁸ See elsewhere, in the present chapter.

³²⁹ Sa‘īd b. Manšūr al-Ḳurāsānī (ed. Ḥabīb al-Raḥmān al-‘A‘zamī), *Kitāb al-Sunan*, vol. 1 (Bombay, India: al-Dār al-Salafiyyah, 1982), p. 170, # 515; Ṭabarānī (ed. Salafī), *al-Mu‘jam al-Kabīr*, XXIII, p. 22, # 50; ‘Abū Nu‘aym (ed. ‘Azzāzī), *Ma‘rifat al-Ṣaḥābah*, I, p. 3208, # 7375; Ibn al-Muhtadī bi-Allāh (ed. Muṭayrī), *Ziyādāt*, p. 478, # 445.

³³⁰ Moreover, the few that do have ‘Ā’iṣah marrying at six (as in ‘Abdah’s version) have other notable divergences: Ibn al-Muhtadī bi-Allāh and ‘Abū Nu‘aym’s versions both have *li-sitt*, rather than the usual *ḥāl* clause; and al-Ṭabarānī’s version has an embellishment about the chronology. Only Sa‘īd b. Manšūr’s version remains extremely similar to ‘Abdah’s.

to a relatively high rate of added, omitted, and substituted words, one version (al-Nasā'ī) adds a short element about dolls, and others (converging on the PCL Hārūn b. 'Ishāq) add a long element about dolls. Thus, even though all of the transmissions from 'Abdah retained the core gist that 'Ā'iṣah was married at six and consummated in marriage at nine, there was considerable instability when it came to the exact wording thereof. This is consistent with paraphrasing, which makes it probable that the transmission of this hadith from 'Abdah to his students occurred orally.

Most of the long 'dolls' element in the version of the PCL Hārūn is uncorroborated by all the other transmissions from 'Abdah, such that Hārūn himself is probably responsible for adding the element into his version. The first part of Hārūn's 'dolls' element (*wa-kuntu 'al'abu bi-al-banāt*) is corroborated by both of al-Nasā'ī's versions, however, which means that we have two transmissions from 'Abdah that incorporate the short 'dolls' element (Hārūn and al-Nasā'ī), and three that lack it (Ibn 'abī Ṣaybah, Muslim, and al-Balāḍurī). It could be the case that 'Abdah's original hadith incorporated the short 'dolls' element, although this raises the question of why three of those who transmitted from him omitted it.

There are two plausible explanations for all of this, and two corresponding ways in which the original redaction(s) could be reconstructed. Firstly, 'Abdah never transmitted the 'dolls' element, which means that it obtained in Hārūn and al-Nasā'ī's versions via some combination of *tadlīs* on the part of both Hārūn and al-Nasā'ī or his source Muḥammad b. 'Ādam. Such a supposition would yield the following redaction from 'Abdah:

...hiṣām^{un} 'an 'abī-hi 'an 'ā'iṣat^a qālat tazawwaja-nī rasūl^u allāhⁱ wa-'anā
[bint/ibnat]^u sittⁱ sinīn^a wa-[banā/dakala] bī wa-'anā [bint/ibnat]^u tis^ī
sinīn^a

The other option is that 'Abdah transmitted two different versions of his own hadith: one containing the 'dolls' element (to Hārūn and Muḥammad), and one without it (Ibn 'abī Ṣaybah, Ibn Numayr, and 'Amr b. Muḥammad). Such a supposition yields the following redactions from 'Abdah:

...hiṣām^{un} 'an 'abī-hi 'an 'ā'iṣat^a qālat tazawwaja-nī rasūl^u allāhⁱ wa-'anā
bint^u sittⁱ sinīn^a wa-banā bī wa-'anā bint^u tis^ī sinīn^a

...hišām^{un} ‘an ‘abī-hi ‘an ‘ā’iṣat^a qālat tazawwaja-nī rasūl^u allāhⁱ wa-‘anā
 [bint/ibnat]^u sittⁱ sinīn^a wa-daḡala [bī/‘alayya] wa-‘anā ibnat^u tis^{‘i} sinīn^a
 wa-kuntu ‘al‘abu bī-al-banātⁱ.

Even if he did, however, it seems probable that the version without the ‘dolls’ element represents his original formulation or transmission, given that the general tendency in the transmission of traditions is the accrual rather than loss of content. In other words, it is at least plausible that ‘Abdah’s inclusion of the ‘dolls’ element reflects a secondary addition to his hadith, borrowed from or contaminated by another famous hadith from Hišām.

Ḥammād b. Zayd (d. 179/795)

I have collated four reports ascribed to the Basran tradent Ḥammād b. Zayd (situated within the broader tradition of Hišām b. ‘Urwah), recorded by Ibn Sa‘d,³³¹ ‘Abū Dāwūd,³³² ‘Abū ‘Awānah,³³³ and al-Ṭabarānī.³³⁴ These reports do appear to belong to the same sub-tradition *vis-à-vis* most other transmissions from Hišām b. ‘Urwah, but they are not unique: one of al-Rabī‘ al-Murādī’s transmissions from Sufyān b. ‘Uyaynah has an extremely similar wording,³³⁵ as does Ibn ‘abī Dāwūd’s transmission from Jarīr b. ‘Abd al-Ḥamīd.³³⁶ Still, most versions of this sub-tradition explicitly depict Ḥammād b. Zayd as their source, which matches the fact that the *matns* therein inferably share a recent common ancestor *vis-à-vis* all other versions of the broader Hišām tradition. The underlying urtext thus probably derives from Ḥammād, or in other words: Ḥammād is probably a genuine PCL, whose wording has been preserved in this sub-tradition.

Still, there are some notable variations between the extant versions, mainly comprising some substituted, added, and omitted words. There is also a major difference in ‘Abū ‘Awānah’s version: following the usual two elements associated with

³³¹ Ibn Sa‘d (ed. Brockelmann), *Biographien*, VIII, p. 42.

³³² ‘Abū Dāwūd (ed. ‘Abd al-Ḥamīd), *Sunan*, II, p. 239, # 2121

³³³ ‘Abū ‘Awānah (ed. ‘Aṭā’ Allāh), *al-Musnad al-Ṣaḥīḥ*, IX, p. 382, # 4703.

³³⁴ Ṭabarānī (ed. Salafī), *al-Mu‘jam al-Kabīr*, XXIII, p. 21, # 45.

³³⁵ Ṣāfi‘ī (ed. ‘Abd al-Muṭṭalib), *‘Umm*, VI, p. 429, # 2462.

³³⁶ Ibn ‘abī Dāwūd (ed. Ḥusayn), *Musnad ‘Ā’iṣah*, p. 64, # 34.

Ḥammād, there is an elaborate account by ‘Ā’iṣah about her experiences on the day of her marital consummation (featuring women from the ‘Anṣār, a swing, a fever and hair loss, and a marital preparation), followed by a description of how she continued to play with dolls with her shy friends. This particular combination of elements is actually unique: most of them can be found in the sub-traditions of ‘Alī b. Mushir, Ḥammād b. Salamah, ‘Abū ‘Usāmah, and Muḥammad b. ‘Amr, but not the ‘dolls’ element; and whilst numerous transmissions and sub-traditions emanating from Hišām b. ‘Urwah contain the ‘dolls’ element, none of them also contain all the other aforementioned elements. Since none of the other transmissions from Ḥammād b. Zayd contain these elements, and since these elements are akin to those found in other sub-traditions, it seems clear that ‘Abū ‘Awānah (or Ibn ‘abī al-Ḥunayn, or Šihāb b. ‘Abbād, or a now-suppressed tradent) has contaminated his transmission from Ḥammād b. Zayd—combining and paraphrasing a distinctive set of elements from one or two other hadiths about ‘Ā’iṣah’s marriage and adding them into Ḥammād’s version.

When all of these variants are accounted for, the following urtext from Ḥammād b. Zayd obtains:

...hišāmⁱ bnⁱ ‘urwat^a ‘an ‘abī-hi ‘an ‘ā’iṣat^a qālat tazawwaja-nī rasūl^u allāhⁱ
wa-‘anā [bint/ibnat]^u sab^{‘i} sinīn^a wa-banā bī wa-‘anā bint^u tis^{‘in}.

Most of the variants within this sub-tradition are very minor, which is consistent with occasional scribal errors or mild paraphrasing. Most of the text was preserved quite precisely, which is consistent with the hadith’s having been transmitted partially or fully in writing, from Ḥammād to his students.

Ja‘far b. Sulaymān (d. 178/794-795)

I have collated several reports ascribed to the Basran tradent Ja‘far b. Sulaymān that bear consideration (in regards to the broader marital-age tradition of Hišām b.

‘Urwah), variously recorded by Ibn Sa’d,³³⁷ al-Nasā’ī,³³⁸ ‘Abū ‘Awānah,³³⁹ and Ibn ‘Adī.³⁴⁰ Some of these hadiths contain the ‘dolls’ element, and some even lack the ‘marital-age’ elements altogether. If Ja‘far did indeed transmit a hadith from Hišām comprising the ‘dolls’ element, he seems to have done so independently of his putative transmission of the marital-age elements therefrom: only Ibn Sa’d depicts the two as having been transmitted together, and even then, the marital-age elements in his version do not match the other ascriptions thereof to Ja‘far. If the reports that are exclusively about the dolls are thus put aside, along with Ibn Sa’d’s contaminated or borrowed version, we are actually left with a distinctive sub-tradition: the *matns* ascribed to Ja‘far by both al-Nasā’ī and ‘Abū ‘Awānah are more similar to each other than to all other versions of the marital-age tradition more broadly, which is consistent with both ascriptions reflecting Ja‘far’s particular redaction.

There are some differences between these two ascriptions, in the form of a few added/omitted and substituted words, and they also differ slightly in the *’isnād* (i.e., in how they quote Ja‘far). However, these are all minor, and could be the result of either scribal errors or extremely mild paraphrasing. As such, Ja‘far’s redaction is discernible, despite some uncertainty in the exact wording:

...hišāmⁱ bnⁱ ‘urwat^a ‘an ‘abī-hi ‘an ‘ā’iṣat^a qālat tazawwaja-nī [[**rasūl^u**
allāhⁱ]/[al-nabiyy^u]] li-sab^{‘i}[n] [sinīn^a**] wa-dakala [**‘alayya/bī**] li-tis[‘]
sinīn^a.**

‘Abṭar b. al-Qāsim (d. 178/794-795)

I have collated three reports ascribed to the Kufan tradent ‘Abū Zubayd ‘Abṭar b. al-Qāsim (situated within the broader tradition associated with ‘Abū ‘Ishāq), recorded by al-Nasā’ī,³⁴¹ al-Ṭabarānī,³⁴² and al-Bayhaqī.³⁴³ These three reports clearly constitute a

³³⁷ Ibn Sa’d (ed. Brockelmann), *Biographien*, VIII, p. 41.

³³⁸ Nasā’ī (ed. Ṭayyār *et al.*), *Sunan*, p. 772, # 3256; *id.* (ed. Šalabī), *al-Sunan al-Kubrā*, VIII, p. 179, # 8898.

³³⁹ ‘Abū ‘Awānah (ed. ‘Atā’ Allāh), *al-Musnad al-Šaḥīḥ*, XI, p. 383, # 4705.

³⁴⁰ Ibn ‘Adī (ed. Sarsāwī), *Kāmil*, V, pp. 620-621, # 8406.

³⁴¹ Nasā’ī (ed. Ṭayyār *et al.*), *Sunan*, p. 772, # 3257.

³⁴² Ṭabarānī (ed. Salafī), *al-Mu‘jam al-Kabīr*, XXIII, pp. 22-23, # 53.

³⁴³ ‘Aḥmad b. al-Ḥusayn al-Bayhaqī (ed. ‘Āmir ‘Aḥmad Ḥaydar), *al-Ba‘ṭ wa-al-Nuṣūr* (Beirut, Lebanon: Markaz al-Ḳadamāt wa-al-‘Abḥāt al-Ṭaqāfiyyah, 1986), p. 115, # 125.

distinctive sub-tradition: they are all more similar to other—at least in terms of their core elements—than all other versions of the marital-age hadith more broadly,³⁴⁴ which is consistent with all three deriving from and reflecting ‘Abṭar’s particular redaction. There are three relatively minor differences between these versions: the first is an error in a name³⁴⁵; the second could be the product of paraphrase, interpolation, or scribal error³⁴⁶; and the third seems like a paraphrase.³⁴⁷ Al-Bayhaqī’s version exhibits two of these three variants, and further includes a lengthy final element about the meaning of the words *kawṭar* and *buṭnān*. Given the absence of this element in the other two, it is likely an interpolation, which implies dishonesty or extreme sloppiness on the part of someone in al-Bayhaqī’s *’isnād*.

The general uniformity of this hadith’s preservation (aside from the paraphrase and interpolation in al-Bayhaqī’s version) is consistent with its having been transmitted in writing from ‘Abṭar to his students (or at least, to Qutaybah and Sa‘īd b. ‘Amr). Consequently, ‘Abṭar’s urtext is readily discernible across the three extant ascriptions:

...muṭarrifⁿ ‘an ‘abī ‘ishāq^a ‘an ‘abī ‘ubaydat^a qāla qālat ‘ā’iṣat^u tazawwaja-
nī rasūl^u allāhⁱ li-tis^{’i} sinīn^a wa-ṣaḥibtu-hu tis^{’an}.

Šarīk b. ‘Abd Allāh (d. 177-178/793-795)

I have collated two reports ascribed to the Kufan tradent Šarīk b. ‘Abd Allāh (situated within the broader tradition associated with ‘Abū ‘Ishāq), both of which are recorded by al-Ṭabarānī.³⁴⁸ There are marked differences between these two versions, in terms of their ascription (‘Abd Allāh b. Mas‘ūd vs. ‘Ā’iṣah), the core detail of the first element (*sitt* vs. *sab*), the verb in the second element (*daḳala* vs. *baná*), and even—in the case of the first hadith—a whole extra element (*wa-qubiḍa wa-hiya bint ṭamān ‘ašrah*). In fact, the first version is more similar to certain specific transmissions from ‘Isrā’īl than

³⁴⁴ In addition to comprising the rare combination of ‘married at nine’ and ‘the Prophet’s death’ (in terms of elements), all three exhibit the unique phrase *wa-ṣaḥibtu-hu tis^{’an}*.

³⁴⁵ B. has ‘abī ‘ubayd, where the other two have ‘abī ‘ubaydah.

³⁴⁶ Ṭ. has ‘an ‘ā’iṣah qālat, where the other two have qāla qālat ‘ā’iṣah.

³⁴⁷ B. has *wa-‘anā bint tis[’]*, where the other two have *li-tis[’]*.

³⁴⁸ Ṭabarānī (ed. Salafī), *al-Mu‘jam al-Kabīr*, X, p. 184, # 10279 [this edition should be emended (to include the missing line *wa-qubiḍa wa-hiya bint*) in light of the 1984 Wizārat al-‘Awqāf wa-al-Shu‘ūn al-Dīniyyah, al-Jumhūriyyah al-‘Irāqiyyah edition (also at # 10279)]; *ibid.*, XXIII, p. 23, # 54.

it is to the second version,³⁴⁹ whilst the second version is in turn more similar to any other version of the marital-age hadith that comprises only the ‘marriage’ and ‘consummation’ elements, especially those with the keywords *sabʿ* and *baná*—in particular, the redactions of Jarīr and Ḥammād b. Zayd, both from Hišām.³⁵⁰ In other words, the two ascriptions to Šarīk are not more similar to each other than they are to other versions of the marital-age hadith more broadly. Indeed, one of the transmitters of the first ascription to Šarīk, Yaḥyá b. ʿĀdam, elsewhere transmitted an extremely similar hadith from ʿIsrāʾīl (recorded by al-Tirmidī),³⁵¹ which is consistent with someone (including Yaḥyá himself) having taken what Yaḥyá transmitted from ʿIsrāʾīl and retributed it to Šarīk, in order to corroborate ʿIsrāʾīl’s transmission from ʿAbū ʿIshāq. Whatever the motive and whoever the culprits, Šarīk looks like a spider, i.e., the convergence of successive dives with disparate *matns*: the ascriptions from him do not reflect any discernible redaction that can be traced back to him.

ʿAbū ʿAwānah al-Waḍḍāḥ (d. 176/792)

I have collated two *faḍāʾil* reports with marital-age elements ascribed to the Iraqi tradent ʿAbū ʿAwānah al-Waḍḍāḥ (who spent time in Wasit but ended up in Basrah), recorded by Ibn Saʿd³⁵² and al-Ṭabarānī.³⁵³ These two reports are more similar to each other than they are to all others (including related *faḍāʾil* reports) and therefore constitute a distinctive sub-tradition, which is consistent with both reflecting ʿAbū ʿAwānah’s particular redaction of the relevant pool of *faḍāʾil* material. That said, there are still numerous differences between the two, in the form of added, omitted, and substituted words. Some of these are probably due to scribal errors (such as *yašhad* versus *tašhad*, which share the same consonantal *rasm*), but others (such as *li-tisʿ sinīn* versus *wa-ʿanā bint tisʿ sinīn*, or *marīḍa rasūl allāh marḍata-hu* versus *marīḍa rasūl*

³⁴⁹ E.g., Ibn Saʿd (ed. Brockelmann), *Biographien*, VIII, p. 41; ʿUqaylī (ed. Sarsāwī), *Ḍuʿafāʾ*, V, pp. 473-474, # 2/5736.

³⁵⁰ See the relevant sections (above and below), and esp. Ibn Saʿd (ed. Brockelmann), *Biographien*, VIII, p. 42; Ibn ʿabī Dāwūd (ed. Ḥusayn), *Musnad ʿĀʾiṣṣah*, p. 64, # 34; Ṭabarānī (ed. Salāfi), *al-Muʿjam al-Kabīr*, XXIII, p. 21, # 45.

³⁵¹ Tirmidī (ed. Sāmarrāʾī et al.), *ʿIlal*, p. 169, # 296, which shares *ʿan ʿabd allāh, sitt sinīn, daḡala, tisʿ sinīn*, and *qubiḡa*.

³⁵² Ibn Saʿd (ed. Brockelmann), *Biographien*, VIII, p. 44.

³⁵³ Ṭabarānī (ed. Salāfi), *al-Muʿjam al-Kabīr*, XXIII, pp. 29-30, # 74.

allāh fi baytī fa-marraḍtu-hu fa-qubīḍa) are consistent with paraphrasing, which would suggest some orality in the transmission of this hadith. Despite this, the gist of the hadith seems well preserved, retaining the same elements in the same order. This would suggest that the oral transmission of this hadith was sloppy but not wild or free, and may be indicative of the parallel use of written notes (i.e., used as a reminder of the basic outline of the hadith). Either way, the two reports agree in the majority of their wording, such that most of 'Abū 'Awānah's particular redaction is readily discernible:

...ʿabdi al-malikⁱ bni ʿumayrⁱⁿ ʿan ʿāʾiṣat^a [ʿanna-hā] qālat ʿuʿtītu [kilāl/kiṣāl]^{an} mā ʿuʿtiyat-hā imraʿat^{un} malaka-nī [rasūl^u allāhⁱ] wa-ʿanā bint^u [sitt/sab^ʿ] sinīn^a wa-ʿatā-hu al-malak^u bi-ṣūratī fi kaffi-hi fa-nazara ʿilay-hā wa-banā bī [[wa-ʿanā bint^u]/[li-]]tisⁱ sinīn^a wa-raʾaytu jibrīl^a wa-lam tara-hu imraʿat^{un} ḡayrī wa-kuntu ʾaḥabb^a nisāʾi-hi ʿilay-hi wa-kāna ʾabī ʾaḥabb^a ʾaṣḥābi-hi ʿilay-hi wa-mariḍa rasūl^u allāhi [[marḍata-hu]/[fi baytī fa-marraḍtu-hu fa-qubīḍa]] wa-lam [y/t]aṣḥad-hu ḡayrī wa-al-malāʾikat^u.

Interestingly, the *ʾisnād* of this hadith is *munqaṭiʿ*, since ʿAbd al-Malik b. ʿUmayr (who operated during the middle of the 8th Century CE and died in 136/754) was not remembered as having transmitted directly from ʿĀʾiṣah.³⁵⁴ This is consistent with the hadith's having been formulated in the 8th Century CE (for example, by ʿAbū ʿAwānah), when *munqaṭiʿ* hadiths were still acceptable.

Ḥammād b. Salamah (d. 167/784)

I have collated sixteen reports ascribed to the Basran tradent Ḥammād b. Salamah (situated within the broader tradition of Hiṣām b. ʿUrwah), recorded by Ibn Saʿd,³⁵⁵ Yūnus b. Ḥabīb,³⁵⁶ ʾAbū Dāwūd,³⁵⁷ Ibn ʾabī Kayṭamah,³⁵⁸ Ibn ʾabī ʿĀṣim,³⁵⁹ ʿAbd Allāh b.

³⁵⁴ See Ḍahabī (ed. ʾArnaʾūṭ *et al.*), *Siyar*, V, pp. 438-441.

³⁵⁵ Ibn Saʿd (ed. Brockelmann), *Biographien*, VIII, pp. 40-41.

³⁵⁶ Ṭayālīsī, *Musnad*, p. 205, # 1454.

³⁵⁷ ʾAbū Dāwūd Sulaymān b. al-ʾAṣʿaṭ al-Sijistānī (ed. Muḥammad Muḥyī al-Dīn ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd), *Sunan*, vol. 4 (Beirut, Lebanon: al-Maktabah al-ʿAṣriyyah, n. d.), p. 284, # 4933; *ibid.*, # 4935.

³⁵⁸ ʾAḥmad b. ʾabī Kayṭamah Zuhayr b. Ḥarb (ed. Ṣalāḥ b. Fathī Halal), *al-Taʾrīk al-Kabīr al-Maʾrūf bi-Taʾrīk Ibn ʾabī Kayṭamah*, vol. 1 (Cairo, Egypt: al-Fārūq al-Ḥadīṭiyyah, 2004), p. 170, # 400; *ibid.*, p. 387 # 1445.

³⁵⁹ Ibn ʾabī ʿĀṣim (ed. Jawābirah), *ʾĀḥād*, V, p. 391, # 3009.

ʿAḥmad,³⁶⁰ ʿAbū Yaʿlā,³⁶¹ ʿAbū ʿAwānah,³⁶² al-ʿĀjurī,³⁶³ al-Ṭabarānī,³⁶⁴ al-Bayhaqī,³⁶⁵ and Ibn al-Ṭabarī.³⁶⁶ The amount of variation between these transmissions from Ḥammād b. Salamah is staggering: some of them have different elemental sequences; some of them add or omit elements present in the others; some of them rearrange the order of words within shared elements; some of them differ slightly in their *ʿisnāds*; and finally, all of them add, omit, and substitute words and even whole lines within shared elements.

Despite all of this, it seems likely that Ḥammād was a genuine PCL who transmitted some combination of these elements to some of his students—but what exactly did he transmit? The problem here is not that a distinctive sequence or wording cannot be attributed to him, but rather, the opposite: *multiple, different* sequences and particular wordings are attested for him. To make matters worse, these distinctive elements and wordings are not coterminous, which is to say: one version may share a distinctive wording with another, which in turn shares a distinctive sequence of elements with another, which in turn shares a distinctive wording with yet another, and so on. This means either that there was a storm of alteration and contamination occurring between Ḥammād’s students, and/or that Ḥammād changed the hadith in the course of successive retellings. In light of the oral mode of transmission that still predominated in the generation of Ḥammād, the latter scenario at least seems highly plausible. That being so, the reconstruction of a single redaction from him is out of the question. Instead, only discrete units of Ḥammād’s hadith (i.e., elements, or sets of elements), transmitted at different times in different combinations, can be identified. Some of these may be the product of later alteration and contamination between

³⁶⁰ There are actually two versions of this hadith in two of the works of Ibn Ḥanbal (both actually composed by his son ʿAbd Allāh), with slight differences: *Musnad*, VI, p. 280, and (ed. ʿAbbās), *ʿIlal*, III, p. 243, # 5073. In addition to slight differences in the wording of the *ʿisnād*, the version in the latter has *muḥajammah* and *sabʿ sinīn ʿaw sitt sinīn*, where the former has *mujammamah* and *sabʿ sinīn*; *muḥajammah* is gibberish born from a scribal or typographical error, but *sabʿ sinīn ʿaw sitt sinīn* has a better claim to reflecting the original than *sabʿ sinīn*, based on the Criterion of Dissimilarity. Finally, second version has *jāʿat-nā*, where the first has the usual *jāʿat-nī*.

³⁶¹ ʿAbū Yaʿlā (ed. ʿAsad), *Musnad*, VIII, p. 74, # 4600/244.

³⁶² ʿAbū ʿAwānah (ed. ʿAṭāʾ Allāh), *al-Musnad al-Ṣaḥīḥ*, XVIII, p. 589, # 10747.

³⁶³ Muḥammad b. al-Ḥusayn al-ʿĀjurī (ed. al-Walīd b. Muḥammad Nabīh Sayf al-Nāṣir), *al-Ṣarīʿah*, vol. 3 (Cairo, Egypt: Muʾassasat Qurtubah, 1996), p. 470, # 1238/1935; *ibid.*, p. 473, # 1243/1940.

³⁶⁴ Ṭabarānī (ed. Salāfi), *al-Muʿjam al-Kabīr*, XXIII, pp. 19-20, # 41; *ibid.*, p. 23, # 55.

³⁶⁵ ʿAḥmad b. al-Ḥusayn al-Bayhaqī (ed. ʿAbd al-Muʿṭī Qalʿajī), *Dalāʾil al-Nubuwwah wa-Maʿrifat ʿAḥwāl Ṣāḥib al-Ṣarīʿah*, vol. 2 (Beirut, Lebanon: Dār al-Kutub al-ʿIlmiyyah, 1988), p. 409.

³⁶⁶ Fasawī (ed. ʿUmarī), *al-Maʿrifah wa-al-Taʾrīk*, III, p. 327. Note that the full *ʿisnād*, via ʿAbd Allāh b. Jaʿfar and ʿAbū al-Ḥusayn unto Ibn al-Ṭabarī, is cited earlier in the text (*ibid.*, p. 326).

Ḥammād's students, but much of it likely goes back to him—after all, they often comprise distinctive wordings and sequences, which is consistent with their common ascriptions to Ḥammād reflecting his various particular wordings and formulations.

To begin with, Ḥammād sometimes prefaced his hadith with a narrative about 'Ā'īshah being shown to the Prophet in silk in a dream, which began as follows:

...hišāmⁱ bnⁱ 'urwat^a 'an 'abī-hi 'an 'ā'īšat^a 'anna rasūl^a allāhⁱ qāla 'utītu bi-jāriyatⁱⁿ fī saraqatⁱⁿ min ḥarīrⁱⁿ...

Thereafter, he sometimes added the following element:

...ba'd^a wafātⁱ kadījat^a...

Thereafter, he would continue:

...fa-kašaftu-hā fa-'idā hiya 'anti fa-qultu 'in yakun hādā min 'indⁱ allāhⁱ yumḍi-hi...

Thereafter, he would sometimes conclude this narrative with the following line:

...marrataynⁱ 'aw talāt^{an}.

Other times, rather than just stipulating that the scenario occurred twice or thrice, he would actually narrate the second occurrence, as follows:

...tumma 'utītu bi-jāriyatⁱⁿ fī [[saraqatⁱⁿ min]/[sufatⁱ]] ḥarīrⁱⁿ fa-kašaftu-hā fa-'idā hiya 'anti fa-qultu 'in yaku[n] hādā min [qibalⁱ/‘indⁱ] allāhⁱ yumḍi-hi.

On some occasions, he may even have repeated this element a third time (although this is only attested in one report, such that the wording is uncorroborated), as follows:

[...tumma 'utītu bi-jāriyatⁱⁿ fī saraqatⁱⁿ min ḥarīrⁱⁿ fa-kašaftu-hā fa-'idā hiya 'anti fa-qultu 'in yakun hādā min 'indⁱ allāhⁱ yumḍi-hi.]

Thereafter, Ḥammād would switch the narratorial point of view from the Prophet to 'Ā'īshah (with a *fa-qālat* 'ā'īshah), or alternatively—in those instances where he omitted

the preliminary narrative about dreams and silk altogether—he would begin the hadith with the following *ʿisnād*:

...hišāmⁱ bnⁱ ʿurwat^a ʿan ʾabī-hi ʿan ʿāʾiṣat^a qālat...

Thereafter (regardless of whether he had prefaced the hadith with the narrative about dreams and silk), he would usually begin the main (marital-age) hadith as follows:

...tazawwaja-nī rasūl^u allāhⁱ...

Thereafter, Ḥammād would often mention Ḳadijah’s death, usually in the following way:

...mutawaffā ḳadījat^a...

At other times (according to two attestations), he would instead mention it in the following way:

...baʿda wafātⁱ ḳadījat^a...

At other times (according to two attestations), he would proceed without mentioning it at all. Either way, he would usually (but not always, per three attestations) continue:

...qabla makraji-hi ʾilā al-madīnatⁱ bi-sanataynⁱ [ʾaw talātⁱⁿ]...

Thereafter, he would continue

...wa-ʾanā [bint/ibnat]^u sittⁱ sinīn^a ʾaw sab^{ʿi} sinīn^a...

Or, alternatively:

...wa-ʾanā [bint/ibnat]^u sab^{ʿi} sinīn^a ʾaw sittⁱ sinīn^a...

Thereafter, he would usually mention the Hijrah, as follows:

...fa-lammā qadimnā al-madīnat^a...

Alternatively, he would make no mention of the Hijrah and instead move straight to ‘Ā’iṣah’s marital consummation, probably as follows:

...wa-banā bī wa-’anā [bint/ibnat]^u tis^{‘i} sinīn^a...

Thereafter (regardless of whether he mentioned the Hijrah or ‘Ā’iṣah’s marital consummation), he would continue with a mention of ‘Ā’iṣah’s playing on a swing as a girl with shoulder-length hair, probably as follows:

...ā’a-nī niswat^{un} wa-’anā ’al’abu ’alā ’urjūḥatⁱⁿ wa-’anā mujammamat^{un}...

Alternatively, he may have reordered the wording, although this is poorly attested (i.e., by only two reports, with markedly different wordings). Either way, he would then continue with mention of ‘Ā’iṣah’s marital preparation, often beginning with the following:

...fa-dahabna bī...

Thereafter, he would continue (or alternatively, begin the element) with the following:

...fa-hayya’na-nī wa-ṣan[n]a’na-nī...

Thereafter, he would usually conclude the hadith with the following:

...tumma ’atayna bī rasūl^a allāhⁱ [fa-banā bī] wa-’anā [bint/ibnat]^u tis^{‘i} sinīn^a.

(Sometimes, he may have omitted *fa-banā bī*, as attested in two instances.) But sometimes (when he had already mentioned ‘Ā’iṣah’s marital consummation near the beginning of the hadith), he would instead conclude with the following shorter ending (attested twice):

...wa-’ahdayna-nī ’ilā rasūlⁱ allāhⁱ.

The ordering these elements was not random: the narrative from the Prophet about ‘Ā’iṣah being presented to him in a dream in silk (when present) always came at the beginning of the hadith; the ‘Ḳadījah’s death’ element (when present) was always made near the beginning of the aforementioned narrative (after the first instance of *ḥarīr*), and/or near the beginning of ‘Ā’iṣah’s autobiographical narrative (after *tazawwaja-nī rasūl allāh*); the ‘Hijrah’ element (when present) always came immediately after the ‘married at six/seven’ element; the ‘swing’ element, the ‘hair’ element, and the ‘marital preparation’ element were always present, and always in that order (although the first two were sometimes a bit intermingled); and the ‘consummated in marriage at nine’ element always came either directly after the ‘married at six/seven’ element (in lieu of the ‘Hijrah’ element), or (when the ‘Hijrah’ element was included) at the very end of the hadith.

The ordering principle behind this pattern is easy to discern: the elements comprising (the various redactions of) Ḥammād’s hadith—whenever they happened to be present—were ordered chronologically. The exception thereto is the ‘consummated in marriage at nine’ element, which was sometimes paired directly with the ‘married at six/seven’ element (and always at the expense of the ‘Hijrah’ element, for some reason), presumably because they were related thematically.

There is less order (which is to say, no real order) when it came to the inclusion or omission of *sub-elements*, i.e., the inclusion or omission of specific wordings *within* some of the elements of the hadith. This was the case principally with the ‘marital preparation’ element: sometimes *ḡahabna bī* was included, and sometimes not; sometimes *hayya’na-nī* was included, and sometimes not; and sometimes *ṣan[n]a’na-nī* was included, and sometimes not. Additionally, the word *sinīn* was sometimes included and sometimes excluded, in both the ‘married at six/seven’ element and the ‘consummated in marriage at nine’ element, and *fa-banā bī* was sometimes omitted from the latter as well.

Less common (or at least, less detectable, absent more corroborating transmissions) are paraphrastic substitutions, of which the main examples are *mutawaffā ḡadījah* versus *ba’da wafāt ḡadījah*, *ibnah* versus *bint* (along with the addition or omission of *sinīn*), and *ṭumma ’atayna bī rasūl allāh* versus *wa-’ahdayna-nī ’ilā rasūl allāh*. For the most part, wordings were variously added or subtracted, but not *substituted*.

In short, the inclusion of many elements was random, and the inclusion therein of specific sub-elements or particular wordings was random; but the *ordering thereof* was not random, and the specific wordings *themselves* were not random. The latter point is of particular interest: for example, the marital-age element may have comprised *ḍahabna bī + hayya'na-nī + ṣan[n]a'na-nī*, or *ḍahabna bī + ṣan[n]a'na-nī + hayya'na-nī*, or just *hayya'na-nī + ṣan[n]a'na-nī*, but seemingly not *paraphrases* or *substitutions* thereof.

All of this is consistent with Ḥammād's having memorised a set of wordings tied to particular concepts or episodes, which he variously included or excluded—usually in chronological order—in successive retellings. Ḥammād's version of the marital-age hadith was thus a kind of fluid construct, in which a range of (mostly fixed) wordings functioned as optional or interchangeable building blocks. In this respect, Ḥammād comes across as somewhat of a storyteller, rather than a simple tradent.

Wuhayb b. Kālid (d. 165/781-782)

I have collated three reports ascribed to the Basran tradent Wuhayb b. Kālid (situated within the broader tradition of Hišām b. 'Urwah), recorded by Ibn Sa'd,³⁶⁷ al-Buḳārī,³⁶⁸ and al-Ṭabarānī.³⁶⁹ These three texts (two of which converge upon the PCL 'Affān) are more similar to each other than either is to any other version of the marital-age tradition (with the same set of elements in the same order, with the same distinctive wording), such that they constitute a distinctive sub-tradition and must share a recent common ancestor *vis-à-vis* all the rest. This matches the *'isnāds*, which depict Wuhayb as the PCL for this sub-tradition. The attribution of the urtext of this hadith to Wuhayb thus seems probable.

There is a wrinkle here, however: al-Ṭabarānī's transmission from Wuhayb via 'Affān is actually identical to al-Buḳārī's transmission from Wuhayb via Mu'allā, when it comes to the wording of the constitutive elements of the hadith. In other words, when it comes to the *wording* of the elements, al-Ṭabarānī's version is more similar to al-

³⁶⁷ Ibn Sa'd (ed. Brockelmann), *Biographien*, VIII, p. 42.

³⁶⁸ Buḳārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ* III, pp. 1076-1077.

³⁶⁹ Ṭabarānī (ed. Salafī), *al-Mu'jam al-Kabīr*, XXIII, p. 21, # 47.

Buḵārī's version than Ibn Sa'd's, despite Ibn Sa'd likewise transmitting from 'Affān. This is consistent with Ibn Sa'd's being uniquely sloppy within this sub-tradition, but it is also consistent with al-Ṭabarānī's version's having been contaminated by al-Buḵārī's, or even having been borrowed therefrom and given a false, alternative *'isnād* (via 'Affān rather than Mu'allā).

Of course, there is still a major difference between al-Buḵārī's version, on the one hand, and Ibn Sa'd and al-Ṭabarānī's, on the other: the former adds an important statement from Wuhayb that is absent in the other two, clarifying that the third element is an editorial comment or addendum. To illustrate this difference, consider the following translation of Ibn Sa'd's version:

'Affān b. Muslim reported to us: "Wuhayb reported to us: "Hišām b. 'Urwah reported to us, from his father, from 'Ā'iṣah, that the Messenger of God married her when she was a girl of six years and consummated the marriage with her when she was a girl of nine years, and she was with him nine years.'"

Likewise, consider the following translation of al-Ṭabarānī's version:

Muḥammad b. al-'Abbās al-Mu'addib related to us: "'Affān b. Muslim al-Ṣaffār related to us—he said: "Wuhayb b. Kālid related to me, from Hišām b. 'Urwah, from his father, from 'Ā'iṣah, that the Prophet married her when she was a girl of six years and consummated the marriage with her when she was a girl of nine years, and she was with him nine years.'"

In both of these versions, the final element is presented as if it is part of the same package of information as the rest, deriving together from the same set of sources back to 'Ā'iṣah. By contrast, consider al-Buḵārī's version (emphasis mine):

Mu'allā b. 'Asad related to us: "Wuhayb related to us, from Hišām b. 'Urwah, from his father, from 'Ā'iṣah, that the Prophet married her when she was a girl of six years and consummated the marriage with her when she was a girl of nine years.

Then Hišām said: "And I was informed that (*fa-qāla hišām wa-'unbi'tu 'anna-hā*) she was with him nine years.'"

The difference is striking: in al-Buḵārī's version, it is recorded that the third element was an unsourced addendum by Hišām. Even if the third element also derived from

‘Urwah, the fact that Hišām presents it as an addendum (rather than simply narrating it along with the rest) suggests that this element was not originally transmitted in the same package of information as the other two, or in other words: at minimum, Hišām is combining information from different reports from his father. That said, there is reason to suspect that Hišām is actually not being depicted as saying that he received the third element from ‘Urwah. For the first two elements, Hišām is explicitly depicted as having claimed to receive them from his father, from ‘Ā’iṣah; but for the final element, he vaguely states that “I was informed”, in the passive. This would be odd if the informant in question was simply ‘Urwah, who was explicitly cited as the source for the preceding two elements: why not simply say, “my father said” (*qāla ‘abī*), or “he said” (*qāla*), or similar?³⁷⁰ This suggests that Hišām obtained this element from someone other than his father, i.e., an anonymous source.

There is thus a major difference between Ibn Sa’d and al-Ṭabarānī’s versions, on the one hand, and al-Buḫārī’s, on the other: the first two make it seem as though the third element in this hadith (*kānat ‘inda-hu tis‘ sinīn*) was part of the same report—from the same line of transmission—as the third element, whereas the latter makes it clear that the third element is an addendum or comment from some other source. Al-Buḫārī’s version is clearly the archaic one, in light of the Criterion of Dissimilarity: it is much more likely that an addendum from a *majhūl* was smoothed over and incorporated into the rest of the hadith, rather than vice versa. This is similar to the well-known phenomenon of the “incorporation of marginalia” in the copying of manuscripts,³⁷¹ which is to say: this sort of thing happened all the time in the transmission of texts.

Since both of the versions that lack Hišām’s clarification claim to derive from ‘Affān, he is the obvious culprit behind the suppression thereof: where Mu‘allā accurately transmitted Wuhayb’s recounting of Hišām’s addendum to al-Buḫārī, ‘Affān made it seem as though the addendum was simply part of the same narration as the rest of the hadith, which he then transmitted to both Ibn Sa’d and Muḥammad b. al-‘Abbās (which the latter in turn passed on to al-Ṭabarānī).

³⁷⁰ For comparison, see the redactions of Ḥammād b. Salamah, ‘Abū ‘Usāmah, Muḥammad b. Bišr, Sa‘īd b. Yaḥyá, and ‘Aḥmad b. ‘Abd al-Jabbār (in the relevant sections, above), where the previously-cited source is reintroduced or cited again with a simple *qālat* or *qālat fulān*.

³⁷¹ E.g., John P. Postgate, ‘Textual Criticism’, in *The Encyclopædia Britannica: A Dictionary of Arts, Sciences, Literature and General Information: Eleventh Edition*, vol. XXVI (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1911), 712, col. 2.

However, the fact that al-Ṭabarānī's version is otherwise identical to al-Buḵārī's in wording is still highly suspect, for it looks as though the former (or his source, Muḥammad) may have borrowed the latter's *matn* and supplied it with an alternative line of transmission: via 'Affān (who may have been known as a transmitter of this hadith, thanks to Ibn Sa'd), rather than Mu'allā. Alternatively, al-Ṭabarānī or Muḥammad may really have received a version of this hadith from 'Affān, but updated the wording according to that in the version of the great al-Buḵārī.

If either of those scenarios is correct, then why did al-Ṭabarānī or Muḥammad not also borrow Hišām's statement? The answer is simple: doing so would have created a weaker or less desirable hadith, i.e., one with an element from a *majhūl*. Thus, even if al-Ṭabarānī or Muḥammad borrowed from al-Buḵārī's version, or updated the wording of a genuine transmission from 'Affān to accord to the exact wording of al-Buḵārī's version, we would still have a reason to expect that they would omit Hišām's statement.

Since this scenario is at least plausible, we cannot treat al-Ṭabarānī's version as a corroboration for Ibn Sa'd's transmission from 'Affān: al-Ṭabarānī's version is suspect, and must be removed from the equation accordingly. This leaves us with only two transmissions from Wuhayb: Ibn Sa'd, via 'Affān; and al-Buḵārī, via Mu'allā. Can we still reconstruct Wuhayb's urtext therefrom, or could some kind of borrowing underly the remaining two versions as well? Since al-Buḵārī retains Hišām's statement, he cannot have borrowed his version from Ibn Sa'd, who lacks it—otherwise, we would have to posit that al-Buḵārī inserted Hišām's statement into the hadith, which seems unlikely. (Likewise, if al-Buḵārī indeed received his version from Mu'allā, it does not seem likely that Mu'allā borrowed it from Ibn Sa'd, for the same reasons.) Again, al-Buḵārī's version likely represents the original outline (though not necessarily the exact wording) of this sub-tradition, per the Criterion of Dissimilarity. In light of that fact, and in light of the fact that an interpolated version of the sub-tradition is recorded by Ibn Sa'd (d. 230/845), the original must be earlier still.

The attribution of this sub-tradition back to Wuhayb is thus at least plausible, even if the match between the *'isnāds* and the *matns* is not as precise as it first appeared.³⁷² The texts are still consistent with descending from a recent common ancestor (who

³⁷² I.e., when it appeared that the *'isnāds* accurately tracked the sub-tradition of 'Affān within the broader sub-tradition of Wuhayb; see the section on 'Affān, above.

must have been operating prior to Ibn Sa'd), which matches the depiction of Wuhayb as the PCL thereof in the *'isnāds*.

There is of course variation between Ibn Sa'd and al-Bukārī's ascriptions to Wuhayb, but these are mostly few and minor (i.e., four instances of substituted words), with the exception of the omission of Hišām's statement in Ibn Sa'd's version. The minor variants could be chalked up to occasional mild paraphrasing or simple scribal errors, but the major variant is consistent with interpolation on the part of either Ibn Sa'd or his source 'Affān.

Accordingly (and by taking the Criterion of Dissimilarity into account), the following redaction can be plausibly reconstructed back to Wuhayb:

...hišāmī bni 'urwat^a 'an 'abī-hi 'an 'ā'išat^a 'anna [[**rasūl^a allāhⁱ]/[al-nabiyy^a]] tazawwaja-hā wa-hiya **[ibnat/bint]^u** sittⁱ sinīn^a **wa-banā bi-hā wa-hiya [ibnat/bint]^u** tisⁱ sinīn^a fa-qāla hišām^{un} wa-'unbi'tu 'anna-hā **kānat 'inda-hu tis^a sinīn^a.****

The sequence of elements and most of the wordings therein have been accurately preserved, which is consistent with the hadith's having been transmitted (at least in part) in writing, from Wuhayb to his students. Al-Bukārī, Mu'allā, and Wuhayb come across as particularly reliable, given their accurate preservation of Hišām's clarificatory statement concerning the third element (*vis-à-vis* Ibn Sa'd and al-Ṭabarānī's versions).

al-Ḥasan b. Ḥayy (d. 169/785-786)

I was only able to find one transmission of the tradition of the Kufan Zaydī theologian and traditionist al-Ḥasan b. Ṣāliḥ b. Ḥayy within the extant Hadith corpus: the report recorded by Ibn Rāhwayh (reconstructed).³⁷³ Given that the attribution of this hadith to al-Ḥasan relies upon a SS, said attribution cannot be confirmed, which is to say: the evidence does not allow us to affirm that al-Ḥasan was a genuine CL. Moreover, even if it were the case that this hadith ultimately originates as the saying of al-Ḥasan (which

³⁷³ See the section on 'Ishāq b. Rāhwayh, above.

is certainly plausible),³⁷⁴ we would have no way of knowing exactly which extant wordings belong to the original, and which are the product of later error, contamination, or interpolation.

‘Abd al-Raḥmān b. ‘abī al-Zinād (d. 164/780-781 or 174/790-791)

I have collated five reports ascribed to the Madino-Baghdadian tradent ‘Abd al-Raḥmān b. ‘abī al-Zinād (mostly situated within the broader tradition of Hišām b. ‘Urwah), recorded by Ibn Sa‘d,³⁷⁵ ‘Abd Allāh b. ‘Aḥmad (in his recension of the *Musnad* of Ibn Ḥanbal),³⁷⁶ al-‘Aṣamm (in his recension of the *Jāmi‘* of Ibn Wahb),³⁷⁷ and al-Ṭabarānī.³⁷⁸ Al-Ṭabarānī’s first version (recorded in his *al-Mu‘jam al-‘Awsaṭ*) should be discarded immediately, on several grounds: firstly, it comprises a combination of elements (in particular, about the Prophet’s death) that is uncorroborated by any other transmission from Ibn ‘abī al-Zinād; secondly, the *‘isnād* has Ibn ‘abī al-Zinād transmitting from his father, where all the rest have him transmitting from Hišām; and thirdly, the combination of elements therein is more similar to the sub-tradition of Sufyān al-Ṭawrī (i.e., a different PCL) than to the other transmissions from Ibn ‘abī al-Zinād, and the key wordings therein (*‘udkiltu ‘alay-hi* and *wa-makaṭṭu ‘inda-hu tis^{an}*) are identical to those in the redaction by Sufyān’s PCL-student al-‘Aḥwaṣ b. Jawwāb in particular, a version of which was recorded by none other than al-Ṭabarānī himself.³⁷⁹ For all of these reasons, al-Ṭabarānī’s first version is likely the product of contamination and/or interpolation.

Al-Ṭabarānī’s second version (recorded in his *al-Mu‘jam al-Kabīr*) suffers from a similar problem, but on a much smaller scale: the ascription to Hišām and the

³⁷⁴ After all, why would Ibn Rāḥwayh or Yaḥyá, both of whom were traditionists operating in the era when Companion or Prophetical hadiths were prized above all else, have bothered to invent the saying of an 8th-Century traditionist?

³⁷⁵ Ibn Sa‘d (ed. Brockelmann), *Biographien*, VIII, p. 40.

³⁷⁶ Ibn Ḥanbal (ed. Ḡamrāwī), *Musnad*, VI, p. 118.

³⁷⁷ Ibn Wahb (ed. ‘Abd al-Muṭṭalib & Mazyad), *Jāmi‘*, pp. 154-155, # 260.

³⁷⁸ Ṭabarānī (ed. Ṭāriq & Ḥusaynī), *al-Mu‘jam al-‘Awsaṭ*, VII, p. 94, # 6957; *id.* (ed. Salafī), *al-Mu‘jam al-Kabīr*, XXIII, p. 21, # 46.

³⁷⁹ *Id.* (ed. Ṭāriq & Ḥusaynī), *al-Mu‘jam al-‘Awsaṭ*, II, p. 301, # 2042.

combination of elements therein are corroborated by other transmissions from Ibn 'abī al-Zinād, but the wording of the second element (*wa-'udkiltu 'alay-hi wa-'anā bint tis' sinīn*) happens to be identical with al-Ṭabarānī's first version (in *al-Mu'jam al-'Awsaṭ*) and, by extension, the redaction of al-'Aḥwaṣ. This is consistent with minor contamination, wherein the wording of one particular element has been replaced by the analogous wording from a different transmission. Since this happened twice in the works of the very same collector (and the *'isnāds* claim independent paths, via different regions, back to Ibn 'abī al-Zinād), the collector himself is likely responsible for the contamination: whether through error, mendacity, or some other motive, al-Ṭabarānī altered the wording in at least one of his transmissions from Ibn 'abī al-Zinād. Perhaps he did so under the influence of the first contaminated or interpolated version (in *al-Mu'jam al-'Awsaṭ*), for which he was not himself responsible—or perhaps he was responsible for contamination or interpolation of both versions (in *al-Mu'jam al-'Awsaṭ* and *al-Mu'jam al-Kabīr* alike).

There is also a problem in al-'Aṣamm's version, *viz.*, the dual ascription: his transmission claims to derive via both Sa'īd b. 'Abd al-Raḥmān *and* 'Abd al-Raḥmān b. 'abī al-Zinād, with both receiving the hadith in turn from Hišām. In addition to the ascription to Sa'īd being completely uncorroborated (both in the other ascriptions to Ibn 'abī al-Zinād, and in other transmissions from Hišām more broadly), Sa'īd was reportedly born in 157/773-774 (as recorded in the *'Aḡbār al-Quḍāh* of Wakī'),³⁸⁰ a decade after the death of Hišām. If so, he cannot have transmitted this hadith directly from Hišām, which means that the *'isnād* in question is *munqaṭī'* in that respect.

Despite all of that (and with al-Ṭabarānī's first version removed from the equation), these reports are more similar to each other than to other versions of the marital-age in certain key ways: two of them share the unusual element *mutawaffā kadījah*, and three of them share the element about 'Ā'īṣah's dolls and her shy friends. More importantly, all three of these 'dolls' elements begin with the *d-k-l* root, then 'Ā'īṣah's saying that she would *'al'abu*, then a statement about her friends, which is unique out of all versions of the marital-age hadith that incorporate the 'dolls' element.³⁸¹

³⁸⁰ Wakī' Muḥammad b. Ḳalaf b. Ḥayyān, *'Aḡbār al-Quḍāh*, vol. 3 (Beirut, Lebanon: 'Ālam al-Kutub, n. d.), p. 264.

³⁸¹ Cf. Ibn Sa'd (ed. Brockelmann), *Biographien*, VIII, p. 41; Šāfi'ī (ed. 'Abd al-Muṭṭalib), *'Umm*, X, p. 141, # 147; Ibn 'abī al-Dunyā (ed. Ḳalaf), *'Iyāl*, p. 756, # 559; 'Abū 'Awānah (ed. 'Aṭā' Allāh), *al-Musnad al-Šaḥīḥ*, XI, p. 382, # 4703; *ibid.*, pp. 384-385, # 4708; Ibn 'abī Dāwūd (ed. Ḥusayn), *Musnad 'Ā'īṣah*, p. 74, # 56; 'Abū Nu'aym (ed. Šāfi'ī), *al-Musnad al-Mustaḡraj*, IV, p. 87, # 3311.

That said, al-ʿAṣamm’s version of the ‘dolls’ element is in another respect more similar to the ‘dolls’ element that appears in one of versions of the marital-age hadith recorded in al-Rabīʿ al-Murādī’s recension of al-Šāfiʿī’s works: both have the line *fa-ʿidā raʿayna rasūl allāh*, to the exclusion of all other related versions of the marital-age hadith.³⁸² Since al-ʿAṣamm received his version from Egyptians, and since al-Šāfiʿī and al-Rabīʿ both operated in Egypt, this cannot be a coincidence: some kind of contamination evidently took place between Egyptian tradents of different versions of the marital-age hadith around the turn of the 9th Century CE. Still, in most other respects, al-ʿAṣamm’s version is more similar to other transmissions from Ibn ʿabī al-Zinād: in addition to the aforementioned, his version also shares both *istahyayna* and *rubba-mā* with al-Ṭabarānī’s second version, to the exclusion of all other relevant versions.

Thus, it is still plausible that the relevant reports preserve a distinctive redaction from Ibn ʿabī al-Zinād, even if the preservation in question was highly imperfect: the variation between these reports is substantial, including the addition or omission of whole elements. Even where the same elements are retained, there are numerous variants, including additions, omissions, and, above all, substitutions and paraphrases. All of this suggests that Ibn ʿabī al-Zinād’s redaction was transmitted to his students not just orally, but rather freely or sloppily. Despite this, the outline and at least some of the wording of Ibn ʿabī al-Zinād’s redaction can be recovered from the available transmissions, although much of it is poorly attested (by only two of the four reports), and some parts are largely reconstructable altogether:

...hišāmī bni ʿurwat^a ʿan ʿabī-hi ʿan ʿāʾišat^a qālat **tazawwaja-nī rasūl^u allāhⁱ**
wa-ʿanā bint^u sittⁱ sinīn^a **[mutawaffā kadījat^a]** **wa-daḡala bī wa-ʿanā**
[bint/ibnat^u] **tisⁱ sinīn^a** **fa-daḡaltu [[ʿalā rasūlⁱ allāhⁱ]/[ʿalay-hi]]** **wa-ʿanā**
ʿalʿabu bi-al-banātⁱ wa-kāna lī ṣawāhibu yalʿabna maʿī **[[fa-yadḡulu fa-**
yanqamīʿna min-hu ṣawāhibī fa-yadḡruju fa-yadḡruju rasūl^u allāhⁱ]/[fa-
ʿidā raʿaynā rasūl^a allāhⁱ istahyayna wa-taqammaʿna fa-rubba-mā
karaja rasūl^u allāhⁱ]/[fa-rubba-mā istahyayna min rasūlⁱ allāhⁱ]] **fa-**
yusarribu-hunna ʿilayya.

The muddled penultimate section of the ‘dolls’ element probably contained the verb *istahyayna*, the *q-m-ʿ* root, the preposition *min*, the wording *fa-rubba-mā*, and the *k-r-j*

³⁸² Compare Šāfiʿī (ed. ʿAbd al-Muṭṭalib), *ʿUmm*, X, p. 141, with all of the other references above.

root, since each is attested twice. The ordering and specifics differ in each version, however, rendering the original impossible to reconstruct.

Sufyān al-Ṭawrī (d. 161/777-778)

The reports ascribed to Sufyān al-Ṭawrī are somewhat messy, so some disentanglement is in order. Firstly, there are seven that reside within the broader tradition of Hišām b. ‘Urwah, recorded by al-Buḵārī,³⁸³ ‘Abū ‘Awānah,³⁸⁴ Ibn Ḥibbān,³⁸⁵ al-Ṭabarānī,³⁸⁶ and ‘Abū Nu‘aym.³⁸⁷ All of these reports (most of which converge on the PCLs Qabīṣah, al-‘Aḥwaṣ, and al-Firyābī) are more similar to each other than they are to all other versions of the marital-age hadith, such that they definitely constitute a distinctive sub-tradition: this is consistent with their reflecting Sufyān al-Ṭawrī’s particular redaction of the marital-age hadith. There is still considerable variation between these ascriptions, however, including a difference in their *’isnāds*, a difference in narrative perspective, and several substituted words. Based on the Criterion of Dissimilarity, al-Buḵārī’s *munqaṭi‘* version of the hadith from Qabīṣah is more likely to represent Sufyān’s original than the *muttaṣil* ascriptions of the other two PCLs, which would imply that both al-‘Aḥwaṣ and al-Firyābī raised their respective versions. Given that their *muttaṣil* ascriptions are worded differently,³⁸⁸ they may have done so independently, in response to the common pressure against broken or imperfect *’isnāds*.³⁸⁹ Additionally, the first-person point-of-view in al-‘Aḥwaṣ’s version is definitely secondary, compared to the third-person narrations about ‘Ā’iṣah in the versions of al-Firyābī and al-Buḵārī—Qabīṣah: this is again consistent with interpolation, although it could be the product of very liberal paraphrasing. The remaining variants are also consistent with paraphrasing, which in turn suggests that

³⁸³ Buḵārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, III, pp. 1076, 1081.

³⁸⁴ ‘Abū ‘Awānah (ed. ‘Atā’ Allāh), *al-Musnad al-Ṣaḥīḥ*, XI, p. 383, # 4704.

³⁸⁵ Muḥammad b. Ḥibbān al-Bustī (ed. Šu‘ayb al-‘Arna‘ūt), *al-Iḥsān fī Tartīb Ṣaḥīḥ Ibn Ḥibbān*, vol. 16 (Beirut, Lebanon: Mu‘assasat al-Risālah, 1991), p. 56, # 7118.

³⁸⁶ Sulaymān b. ‘Aḥmad al-Ṭabarānī (ed. Ṭāriq b. ‘Iwaḍ Allāh b. Muḥammad & ‘Abd al-Muḥsin b. ‘Ibrāhīm al-Ḥusaynī), *al-Mu‘jam al-‘Awsaṭ*, vol. 2 (Cairo, Egypt: Dār al-Ḥaramayn, 1995), p. 301, # 2042; *id.* (ed. Salafī), *al-Mu‘jam al-Kabīr*, XXIII, pp. 21-22, # 49.

³⁸⁷ ‘Abū Nu‘aym ‘Aḥmad b. ‘Abd Allāh al-‘Aṣbahānī (ed. Sayyid Kasrawī Ḥasan), *Ta’rīk ‘Aṣbahān / ‘Aḵbār ‘Aṣbahān*, vol. 2 (Beirut, Lebanon: Dār al-‘Ilmiyyah, 1990), p. 63.

³⁸⁸ F. has *‘an ‘abī-hi ‘an ‘ā’iṣah ‘anna*, whereas A. has *‘an ‘abī-hi ‘an ‘ā’iṣah qālat*.

³⁸⁹ Similarly, Schoeler (trans. Vagelpohl), *The Biography of Muḥammad*, 58.

the hadith was transmitted orally from Sufyān to his students: the gist was retained fairly accurately, even if some of the wordings (along with the ascriptions in two cases, and the narrator's perspective in one case) changed along the way. Some of the wording is thus tentative, but the following redaction can be attributed to the PCL Sufyān al-Ṭawrī:

...hišāmⁱ bnⁱ 'urwat^a 'an 'urwat^a tazawwaja al-nabiyy^u 'ā'iṣat^a wa-hiya
 [ibnat/bint]^u sittⁱⁿ wa-'udkilat 'alay-hi wa-hiya [ibnat/bint]^u tisⁱⁿ wa-
 makātāt 'inda-hu tis^{an}.

In addition to all of the above, I was also able to find three reports ascribed to Sufyān al-Ṭawrī that ostensibly reside within the broader tradition of 'Abū 'Ishāq, recorded by Ibn Sa'd³⁹⁰ and al-Ṭabarānī.³⁹¹ These three ascriptions do not constitute a distinctive sub-tradition *vis-à-vis* other versions of the marital-age hadith: Ibn Sa'd's version is more similar to 'Isrā'īl's redaction (in terms of elemental outline)³⁹² and a certain transmission from 'Abū Mu'āwiyah (in terms of specific wording)³⁹³; al-Ṭabarānī's first version comprises a combination of elements that jars with all other transmissions from Sufyān, but which also closely matches the distinctive wording of the second half of al-'Aḥwaṣ's redaction (from Sufyān, from Hišām) in particular³⁹⁴; and al-Ṭabarānī's second version likewise comprises a combination of elements that jars with all other transmissions from Sufyān and Qabīṣah alike, but which likewise closely matches some of the distinctive wording of both Qabīṣah and al-Firyābī (from Sufyān, from Hišām).³⁹⁵ In other words, there is no distinctive redaction from Sufyān *from 'Abū 'Ishāq* discernible here: in addition to being extremely disparate *vis-à-vis* each other (in terms of elements), each of these three ascriptions is more similar to other transmissions, including other transmissions from Sufyān *from Hišām b. 'Urwah*. This is consistent with all three of these ascriptions being the product of some kind of borrowing or contamination, through error (e.g., accidentally mixing Sufyān's ascription to Hišām with 'Isrā'īl's ascription to 'Abū 'Ishāq) and/or some kind of deliberate reattribution and

³⁹⁰ Ibn Sa'd (ed. Brockelmann), *Biographien*, VIII, p. 41.

³⁹¹ Ṭabarānī (ed. Salafi), *al-Mu'jam al-Kabīr*, XXIII, p. 23, # 55; *ibid.*, # 56.

³⁹² See the section on 'Isrā'īl, below.

³⁹³ Ṭabarānī (ed. Salafi), *al-Mu'jam al-Kabīr*, XXIII, p. 22, # 51, sharing *sab'*, *baná*, and *wa-māta 'an-hā*.

³⁹⁴ In particular, *'udkiltu* and *makātū*.

³⁹⁵ In particular, *wa-makātāt 'inda-hu tis^{an}*.

diving (e.g., to provide 'Isrā'il's ascription to 'Abū 'Ishāq with some kind corroboration). Either way, it does not seem like Sufyān transmitted a version of the marital-age hadith from 'Abū 'Ishāq.

Finally, there are four additional reports ascribed to Sufyān al-Ṭawrī that appear to be versions of the marital-age hadith, recorded by al-'Ijlī,³⁹⁶ Ibn 'abī 'Āṣim,³⁹⁷ and al-Ṭabarānī.³⁹⁸ All of these hadiths (three of which derive from the PCL Muḥammad b. al-Ḥasan) are the product of substantial contamination or interpolation, and cannot be attributed to Sufyān. The version from Muḥammad b. al-Ḥasan has an *'isnād* (Sa'd b. 'Ibrāhīm—al-Qāsim b. Muḥammad) that is completely uncorroborated by any other ascription of the marital-age hadith to Sufyān, and a set of elements that is only corroborated by a version (al-'Ijlī's) that has a different *'isnād* ('Ismā'il b. 'Umayyah—'Abd Allāh b. 'Urwah). In turn, the version of al-'Ijlī (from 'Abū Dāwūd al-Ḥafarī) is an obvious corruption of an extremely widely transmitted hadith from Sufyān about Ṣawwāl that otherwise—in every other version, of which there are dozens and dozens—lacks the marital-age elements.³⁹⁹ In other words, al-'Ijlī's version is a pre-existing and well-known hadith from Sufyān that has been contaminated (at the hands of al-'Ijlī himself or, more likely, his immediate source, 'Abū Dāwūd) by the marital-age hadith,⁴⁰⁰ whilst Muḥammad b. al-Ḥasan's version is a similar contamination (or borrowing) compounded by a *further* error or interpolation in the *'isnād*, whereby the original ascription (via 'Ismā'il—'Abd Allāh) has been replaced by a false ascription (via Sa'd—al-Qāsim). To top this all off, the *'isnād* in al-'Ijlī's version is *munqaṭi'*, since it is missing 'Urwah between 'Abd Allāh and 'Ā'ishah—but this is plausibly the product of scribal error, whereby a scribe skipped *'an 'urwah* by mistaking it for the preceding *bn 'urwah* (similar to *homeoteleuton*).

In short, Sufyān al-Ṭawrī was a genuine PCL who transmitted his own distinctive redaction of the marital-age hadith, on the authority of Hišām b. 'Urwah, to at least three students: Qabīṣah, al-Firyābī, and al-'Aḥwaṣ. Thereafter, in two instances, Sufyān's hadith was contaminated or interpolated and reattributed from Hišām to 'Abū 'Ishāq, whilst in a third instance, Sufyān's name was recruited into an existing

³⁹⁶ 'Aḥmad b. 'Abd Allāh al-'Ijlī (ed. 'Abd al-Mu'ṭī Qal'ajī), *Ta'rīk al-Ṭiqāt* (Beirut, Lebanon: Dār al-Bāz, 1984), p. 521, # 2103.

³⁹⁷ Ibn 'abī 'Āṣim (ed. Jawābirah), *'Āḥād*, V, p. 390, # 3007.

³⁹⁸ Ṭabarānī (ed. Salāfi), *al-Mu'jam al-Kabīr*, XXIII, p. 22, # 52; *ibid.*, p. 28, # 69.

³⁹⁹ Juynboll, *Encyclopedia*, 642, col. 2.

⁴⁰⁰ Specifically, the sub-tradition of 'Abdah, which shares extremely similar wordings therewith.

ascription to 'Abū 'Ishāq. Finally, in two instances, a completely different hadith about Šawwāl—transmitted by Sufyān to numerous students, on the authority of 'Ismā'īl b. 'Umayyah—was contaminated or interpolated in two instances with elements from the marital-age hadith, one of which was also reattributed from 'Ismā'īl to Sa'd b. 'Ibrāhīm.

'Isrā'īl b. Yūnus (d. 160-162/776-779)

I have collated eight reports ascribed to the Kufan tradent 'Isrā'īl b. Yūnus (situated within the broader tradition associated with 'Abū 'Ishāq), recorded by Ibn Sa'd,⁴⁰¹ Ibn Mājah,⁴⁰² al-Tirmidī,⁴⁰³ al-Balāḍurī,⁴⁰⁴ al-Nasā'ī,⁴⁰⁵ al-'Uqaylī,⁴⁰⁶ and al-Ḳaṭīb al-Baḡdādī.⁴⁰⁷ Several of these ascriptions converge three PCLs: including al-Faḍl b. Dukayn, 'Abū 'Aḥmad al-Zubayrī, and Yaḥyá b. 'Ādam.

Most of these reports are more similar to each other than all other versions of the marital-age hadith (bar one or two related SSs), such that they constitute a distinctive sub-tradition: this is consistent with said reports reflecting an underlying redaction from 'Isrā'īl, and with 'Isrā'īl being a genuine PCL. A notable exception is the first report recorded by al-'Uqaylī, the *matn* of which contradicts every other ascription to 'Isrā'īl and looks like it instead belongs to the distinctive sub-tradition of the PCL 'Abū Mu'āwiyah.⁴⁰⁸

Another highly problematic report amongst the ascriptions to 'Isrā'īl is Ibn Sa'd's transmission from al-Wāqidī: the *matn* clearly belongs to the same sub-tradition as the rest, but the *isnād* contradicts them all by depicting 'Isrā'īl's immediate source as al-'A'maš, rather than 'Abū 'Ishāq. To compound matters, this version has 'Ā'īshah narrating in the first person, rather than being described in the third person (as in every other transmission from 'Isrā'īl). This is clearly a grave error or falsification on the part of Ibn Sa'd, al-Wāqidī, or some now-suppressed tradent.

⁴⁰¹ Ibn Sa'd (ed. Brockelmann), *Biographien*, VIII, pp. 41-42.

⁴⁰² Ibn Mājah (ed. 'Abd al-Bāqī), *Sunan*, I, p. 604, # 1877.

⁴⁰³ Tirmidī (ed. Sāmarrā'ī *et al.*), *Ilal*, p. 169, # 296.

⁴⁰⁴ 'Aḥmad b. Yaḥyá al-Balāḍurī (ed. Suhayl Zakkār & Riyāḍ Ziriklī), *Kitāb Jumal min 'Ansāb al-'Ašraf*, vol. 2 (Beirut, Lebanon: Dār al-Fikr, 1997), pp. 40-41.

⁴⁰⁵ Nasā'ī (ed. Šalabī), *al-Sunan al-Kubrā*, V, p. 171, # 5350.

⁴⁰⁶ 'Uqaylī (ed. Sarsāwī), *Ḍu'afā'*, V, pp. 473-474, # 1-2/5735-5736.

⁴⁰⁷ Ḳaṭīb (ed. Ma'rūf), *Ta'rīk Madīnat al-Salām*, XIII, pp. 148-149.

⁴⁰⁸ See the section on 'Abū Mu'āwiyah, above.

Putting aside al-‘Uqaylī’s contaminated or borrowed transmission from Mālik b. Sulaymān, and the false *’isnād* and altered point of view in Ibn Sa’d’s transmission from al-Wāqidī, there are still numerous variants across the ‘Isrā’īl sub-tradition, including added, omitted, and especially substituted words, and even differences in the earliest segment of the *’isnād*. Most of this variation is consistent with frequent paraphrasing (giving rise to *baná* and *daḳala*, for example, and *māta*, *tuwuffiya*, and *qubiḍa*), which in turn suggests that the transmission of this hadith from ‘Isrā’īl to his students was primarily oral. The gist of ‘Isrā’īl’s redaction was still accurately preserved (save in one instance),⁴⁰⁹ but the exact wording thereof is extremely difficult to pinpoint, along with the original *’isnād*. The versions preserved by al-Tirmidī, Ibn Mājah, and al-Ḳaṭīb al-Baḡdādī (the latter two both on the authority of ‘Abū ‘Aḥmad) all have ‘Isrā’īl transmitting from ‘Abū ‘Ishāq—‘Abū ‘Ubaydah—Ibn Mas‘ūd, whereas the redaction of al-Faḍl and one of the versions recorded by al-‘Uqaylī (# 5736) only have ‘Abū ‘Ishāq—‘Abū ‘Ubaydah, and yet another version recorded by Ibn Sa’d has ‘Abū ‘Ishāq—Muṣ‘ab b. Sa’d. Based on the Criterion of Dissimilarity, an original ascription to ‘Abū ‘Ishāq—‘Abū ‘Ubaydah was probably raised or interpolated into ‘Abū ‘Ishāq—‘Abū ‘Ubaydah—Ibn Mas‘ūd, arising in two or three transmissions either synchronously (as an obvious move in response to the rising demand for *muttaṣil* hadiths, since Ibn Mas‘ūd was the famous father of ‘Abū ‘Ubaydah⁴¹⁰) or through contamination (as some tradents borrowed the superior ascription from others).

This leaves ‘Abū ‘Ishāq—Muṣ‘ab b. Sa’d, which at first glance seems dubious: it is only attested in one source (Ibn Sa’d), which would suggest that the ascription was the product an error or interpolation after ‘Isrā’īl (for which Ibn Sa’d or his immediate source, ‘Abd al-Wahhāb b. ‘Aṭā’, must be responsible). On the other hand, Muṣ‘ab was valued as a source by Kufans in particular (since his father was the founder of Kufah), which makes it more likely that ‘Isrā’īl (a Kufan) would have created an ascription to him (to provide the hadith with a further Kufan pedigree), rather than Ibn Sa’d or ‘Abd al-Wahhāb (both of whom were Basro-Baghdadians).

That aside, an approximate wording of ‘Isrā’īl’s redaction can still be discerned across the surviving sub-tradition, as follows:

⁴⁰⁹ Namely, where Ibn Mājah has *sab*’, for which he himself, or his immediate source ‘Aḥmad b. Sinān, is probably responsible.

⁴¹⁰ Similarly, Schoeler (trans. Vagelpohl), *The Biography of Muḥammad*, 58.

...ʿabī ʾiṣḥāq^a ʿan ʿabī ʿubaydat^a qāla tazawwaja [[rasūl^u allāhⁱ]/[al-nabiyy^u]] ʿāʾiṣat^a wa-hiya [bint/ibnat]^u sittⁱ sinīn^a wa-[daḡala/banā] bi-hā wa-hiya [bint/ibnat]^u tisⁱ sinīn^a wa-[[qubiḡa al-nabiyy^u]/[tuwuffiya [ʿan-hā/rasūl^u allāhⁱ]]] wa-hiya [bint/ibnat]^u tamānī ʿaṣrat^a [sanat^{an}].

Again, the gist has been preserved, but the exact wording has not. This is consistent with ʾIsrāʾīl's having reworded the hadith in successive retellings (such that there is no single, underlying redaction per se), and/or his students' having paraphrased from him. Either way, the *maʿnā* can be reconstructed, but not the *lafẓ*.

Maʿmar b. Rāšid (d. 152-154/769-771)

I have collated two reports ascribed to the Basro-Yemenite tradent Maʿmar b. Rāšid (ostensibly situated within the broader traditions of both Hišām and al-Zuhrī), recorded by ʿAbd al-Razzāq (reconstructed)⁴¹¹ and Ibn Saʿd.⁴¹² These two reports are complicated. On the one hand, they exhibit some striking similarities: both of them cite both Hišām and al-Zuhrī; they share the wording *nakaḡa al-nabiyy ʿāʾiṣah wa-hiya*, including the rare verb *nakaḡa*; and they share the wording *sanawāt ʿaw sabʿ*, including the rare word *sanawāt*. As such, there must be some kind of common ancestry or mutual dependency here, which is to say: both of these reports, at least in these respects, clearly constitute a distinctive sub-tradition, which matches their common ascription to Maʿmar, and is thus consistent with both reflecting his particular redaction.

On the other hand, there are huge discrepancies between these two reports: ʿAbd al-Razzāq's version is ascribed via Hišām and al-Zuhrī to ʿUrwah, where Ibn Saʿd's is ascribed only to Hišām and al-Zuhrī; ʿAbd al-Razzāq's version has ʿĀʾiṣah's marriage occurring at six or seven, where Ibn Saʿd's version has it at nine or seven; and ʿAbd al-Razzāq's version has three whole elements that are absent from Ibn Saʿd's. More importantly, the presence of these additional elements in ʿAbd al-Razzāq's ascription to Maʿmar makes it more similar in that respect to various other transmissions from

⁴¹¹ See the section on ʿAbd al-Razzāq, above.

⁴¹² Ibn Saʿd (ed. Brockelmann), *Biographien*, VIII, p. 42.

Hišām, than to Ibn Sa‘d’s parallel transmission from Ma‘mar. Conversely, the inclusion of “nine” in the ‘marriage’ element in Ibn Sa‘d’s version makes it more similar in that respect to the various transmissions from al-‘A‘maš, than to ‘Abd al-Razzāq’s version. At minimum, therefore, these ascriptions to Ma‘mar appear to be heavily interpolated or contaminated.

Thus, if we accept that these two reports in some way reflect Ma‘mar’s distinctive redaction (given the unique or rare elements they have in common), only a fragment of ‘Abd al-Razzāq’s version, in conjunction with Ibn Sa‘d’s (and in light of the Criterion of Dissimilarity⁴¹³), can be attributed to Ma‘mar, as follows:

...al-zuhriyyi wa-hišāmī bnī ‘urwatā qālā nakaḥa al-nabiyyū ‘ā’iṣatā wa-hiya [bint/ibnat]^u [tis‘/sitt]ⁱ sanawātⁱⁿ ‘aw sab‘ⁱⁿ....

Based on the textual-critical principle of *lectio difficilior potior*, the highly unusual *tis‘* is more likely to be the original wording than the conventional *sitt*.

Needless to say, if this hadith indeed derives from Ma‘mar (which is certainly plausible), it was transmitted from him to students in an incredibly sloppy fashion (which would be consistent with paraphrastic oral transmission), if not involving outright interpolation. In particular, ‘Abd al-Razzāq’s version ended up comprising a sequence of elements (marriage, consummation, dolls, death) that is completely uncorroborated by any other version of the marital-age hadith, but which individually appear in various transmissions from Hišām, al-‘A‘maš, and ‘Abū ‘Iṣḥāq.⁴¹⁴ This is consistent with ‘Abd al-Razzāq’s having combined a short statement inherited from Ma‘mar with elements taken from other, miscellaneous transmissions from Hišām.⁴¹⁵

⁴¹³ I.e., applied to the discrepant *‘isnāds*.

⁴¹⁴ The ‘death’ element appears in Ibn Bukayr’s transmission from Hišām, ‘Abū Mu‘āwiyah’s transmission from al-‘A‘maš, and ‘Isrā’īl’s transmission from ‘Abū ‘Iṣḥāq; and the ‘dolls’ element appears in numerous transmissions from Hišām.

⁴¹⁵ E.g., from Hišām’s hadith about ‘Ā’iṣah’s playing with dolls. Indeed, ‘Abd al-Razzāq elsewhere transmitted a version thereof from Ma‘mar: ‘Abd al-Razzāq (ed. ‘A‘zamī), *Muṣannaḥ*, X, pp. 465-466, # 19722; Ibn Rāḥwayh (ed. Balūšī), *Musnad*, II, p. 276, # 242/785; Ibn Ḥanbal (ed. ‘Arna’ūt *et al.*), *Musnad*, XLII, p. 204, # 25334; ‘Aṣamm (ed. Jarrār), *Majmū‘*, p. 339, # 633; al-Ḥusayn b. Mas‘ūd al-Baḡawī (ed. Šu‘ayb al-‘Arna’ūt), *Šarḥ al-Sunnah*, vol. 9 (Beirut, Lebanon: al-Maktab al-‘Islāmiyy, 1983), p. 165, # 2336.

Sulaymān b. Mihrān al-ʿAʿmaš (d. 147-148/764-766)

I have collated five relevant reports ascribed to the Kufan tradent and putative CL Sulaymān b. Mihrān al-ʿAʿmaš, variously recorded by ʿAbū Muʿāwiyah (reconstructed),⁴¹⁶ Ibn Saʿd,⁴¹⁷ Ibn Qutaybah,⁴¹⁸ and ʿAbū ʿAwānah (twice).⁴¹⁹ The version recorded by Ibn Saʿd and the second version recorded by ʿAbū ʿAwānah can both be dismissed at the outset: both are false ascriptions, as has been shown already.⁴²⁰ This leaves us with only three ascriptions: the reconstructed version of ʿAbū Muʿāwiyah, the version recorded by Ibn Qutaybah, and the first version recorded by ʿAbū ʿAwānah. As it happens, all three are more similar to each other than to most other versions of the marital-age tradition, sharing the distinctive elemental sequence of (1) ʿĀʾiṣah being married (i.e., engaged for marriage) at nine and (2) a mention (directly or indirectly) of the Prophet’s death. They are not the only versions within the broader marital-age tradition that share this distinctive sequence, however. There are three other versions with different ascriptions that exhibit similar elements: one recorded by al-Ṭabarānī (with an *ʾisnād* that ends with Sufyān—ʿAbū ʾIṣḥāq—ʿAbū ʿUbaydah),⁴²¹ one recorded by al-ʿUqaylī (with an *ʾisnād* that ends with ʾIsrāʾīl—ʿAbū ʾIṣḥāq—ʿAbū ʿUbaydah—Ibn Masʿūd),⁴²² and one that can be reconstructed back to ʿAbṭar (with the *ʾisnād* Muṭarrif—ʿAbū ʾIṣḥāq—ʿAbū ʿUbaydah—ʿĀʾiṣah).⁴²³ In other words, the distinctive textual sub-tradition in question does not neatly line up with a common ascription.

The first two reports (from al-ʿUqaylī and al-Ṭabarānī) are both false ascriptions (as has again been shown already), and can be dismissed accordingly: al-ʿUqaylī’s version contradicts every other ascription to ʾIsrāʾīl, and the *matn* looks like it was borrowed directly from ʿAbū Muʿāwiyah’s version; meanwhile, al-Ṭabarānī’s version contradicts every other ascription to Sufyān al-Ṭawrī, but matches some of the particular wordings

⁴¹⁶ See the section on ʿAbū Muʿāwiyah, above.

⁴¹⁷ Ibn Saʿd (ed. Brockelmann), *Biographien*, VIII, p. 42.

⁴¹⁸ ʿAbd Allāh b. Muslim b. Qutaybah al-Dīnawarī (ed. Tarwat ʿUkkāšah), *al-Maʿārif* (Cairo, Egypt: Dār al-Maʿāraf, n. d.), p. 134.

⁴¹⁹ ʿAbū ʿAwānah (ed. ʿAṭāʾ Allāh), *al-Musnad al-Ṣaḥīḥ*, XI, pp. 383-385, # 4706, 4708.

⁴²⁰ See the sections on Jarīr and ʾIsrāʾīl, above.

⁴²¹ Ṭabarānī (ed. Salāfi), *al-Muʿjam al-Kabīr*, XXIII, p. 23, # 56.

⁴²² ʿUqaylī (ed. Sarsāwī), *Ḍuʿafāʾ*, V, p. 473, # 1/5735.

⁴²³ See the section on ʿAbṭar, above.

therein (*vis-à-vis* all other versions of the marital-age tradition more broadly), such that it looks like a corruption thereof.⁴²⁴

This leaves only ‘Abṭar’s redaction as a point of comparison with the three remaining ascriptions to al-ʿAʿmaš (ʿAbū Muʿāwiyah, Ibn Qutaybah, and ʿAbū ʿAwānah), and here a curious pattern arises: the versions of Ibn Qutaybah and ʿAbū ʿAwānah are much more similar to each other than to all the rest, but are also more similar—at least in terms of the *matn*—to ‘Abṭar’s version than to ʿAbū Muʿāwiyah’s. In the first case, the versions recorded by Ibn Qutaybah and ʿAbū ʿAwānah both quote ʿĀʾiṣah in the first person, share a similar wording in the first element (despite a corruption in one and an editorial comment inserted into the other),⁴²⁵ and share exactly the same wording in the second element.⁴²⁶ In the second case, the versions of Ibn Qutaybah, ʿAbū ʿAwānah, and ‘Abṭar all quote ʿĀʾiṣah in the first person and share a similarly-worded final element, in contrast to the corresponding element in ʿAbū Muʿāwiyah’s version.⁴²⁷ Clearly, the versions of Ibn Qutaybah, ʿAbū ʿAwānah, and ‘Abṭar are more closely related to each other than they are to ʿAbū Muʿāwiyah’s version, which means that there is a problem in their ascriptions: where ‘Abṭar cited the *ʾisnād* Muṭarrif—ʿAbū ʾIṣḥāq—ʿAbū ʾUbaydah—ʿĀʾiṣah, all the rest cite the *ʾisnād* al-ʿAʿmaš—ʾIbrāhīm—al-ʾAswad—ʿĀʾiṣah. In other words, ‘Abṭar’s *matn* entails a close relationship with the versions of Ibn Qutaybah and ʿAbū ʿAwānah *vis-à-vis* ʿAbū Muʿāwiyah’s, but his *ʾisnād* depicts a much more distant relationship *vis-à-vis* all three. Clearly, ‘Abṭar received his *matn* from an ultimate source in common with Ibn Qutaybah or ʿAbū ʿAwānah and then replaced the original *ʾisnād* (al-ʿAʿmaš—ʾIbrāhīm—al-ʾAswad—ʿĀʾiṣah) with the *ʾisnād* associated with the hadith of his senior Kufan contemporary ʾIsrāʾīl,⁴²⁸ whilst incorporating his own Kufan master Muṭarrif therein (Muṭarrif—ʿAbū ʾIṣḥāq—ʿAbū ʾUbaydah—ʿĀʾiṣah). This explains why ‘Abṭar’s *matn* is extremely close to the versions of Ibn Qutaybah and ʿAbū ʿAwānah, whilst at the same time, his *ʾisnād* is the same as that cited by ʾIsrāʾīl in his version.

⁴²⁴ See the sections on Sufyān al-Ṭawrī, above, and ʿAbū ʾIṣḥāq al-Sabīʿī, below.

⁴²⁵ Both of them have *tazawwaja-nī rasūl allāh wa-ʿanā bint*, but the *tisʿ* in Ibn Qutaybah has been corrupted into a *sabʿ* in ʿAbū ʿAwānah, and the former also adds a *sinīn* that is absent in the latter. Finally, a tradent or scribe (obviously bothered or confused by the unusual *tisʿ*) has inserted *turidu daḡala bī* into Ibn Qutaybah’s version.

⁴²⁶ Both of them have *wa-kuntu ʿinda-hu tisʿan*.

⁴²⁷ Ibn Qutaybah and ʿAbū ʿAwānah both have *wa-kuntu ʿinda-hu tisʿan*, and ‘Abṭar has *wa-ṣaḥibtu-hu tisʿan*, where ʿAbū Muʿāwiyah has *wa-māta ʿan-hā wa-hiya bint ṭamān[iy] ʿašrah*.

⁴²⁸ See the section on ʾIsrāʾīl, above.

With all of that out of the way, we can now focus on the remaining ascriptions to al-ʿAʿmaš, recorded by ʿAbū Muʿāwiyah, Ibn Qutaybah, and ʿAbū ʿAwānah. All three—when scribal errors and editorial comments are accounted for—clearly embody a common, distinctive tradition, which matches their common ascription to al-ʿAʿmaš. However, a problem remains: the versions of Ibn Qutaybah and ʿAbū ʿAwānah are much more similar to each other than they are to ʿAbū Muʿāwiyah’s version, as has been noted already. How is this to be explained? It might be posited that ʿAbū ʿAwānah and Ibn Qutaybah’s versions are so similar because both have (broadly) accurately preserved the words of al-ʿAʿmaš, where ʿAbū Muʿāwiyah has strayed therefrom. However, this explanation is contradicted by the fact that the wording in ʿAbū Muʿāwiyah’s version (in which ʿĀʾiṣah is referred to in the third person) seems more archaic—and thus more likely to reflect the original—than the versions of ʿAbū ʿAwānah and Ibn Qutaybah (in which ʿĀʾiṣah speaks in the first person).

Alternatively, it might be posited that al-ʿAʿmaš narrated his hadith in two different ways: once with ʿĀʾiṣah as the object of the narration (recorded by ʿAbū Muʿāwiyah), and once with ʿĀʾiṣah herself as the narrator (recorded by both Ibn Qutaybah and ʿAbū ʿAwānah). This is certainly plausible: Hišām did the same thing with his hadith, as will be seen below.⁴²⁹

Alternatively, this could be explained by positing that the versions of Ibn Qutaybah and ʿAbū ʿAwānah share a more recent common ancestry or dependency *vis-à-vis* ʿAbū Muʿāwiyah’s version, despite the fact that all three claim independent lines of transmission back to a common source (i.e., al-ʿAʿmaš). This would mean that someone in the *ʾisnād* of either Ibn Qutaybah or ʿAbū ʿAwānah’s version borrowed from someone in the other *ʾisnād* and then suppressed this dependence. Even if this scenario is preferred, however, we would still be left with two distinct ascriptions to al-ʿAʿmaš: the version of ʿAbū Muʿāwiyah, and whichever of the other two is the original therebetween. As always, there is the possibility that even the original in question was a *diver*—for example, one designed to update ʿAbū Muʿāwiyah’s version. Indeed, the fact that both Ibn Qutaybah and ʿAbū ʿAwānah’s versions are supported by lengthy SSs back to al-ʿAʿmaš is suspect: given the immense stature of al-ʿAʿmaš (a *madār* of Kufah, no less), it is odd that only a single PCL of his survived, and that the other transmission(s)

⁴²⁹ See the section on Hišām b. ʿUrwah, below.

from him occurred in isolation for several generations. Despite this, it remains at least *plausible* that al-ʿAʿmaš was a genuine CL, whose distinctive redaction of the marital-age hadith is reflected in the tradition embodied by the redactions of ʿAbū Muʿāwiyah and at least one other.

Even if the tradition embodied in the reports of ʿAbū Muʿāwiyah, Ibn Qutaybah, and ʿAbū ʿAwānah derives from the distinctive redaction of al-ʿAʿmaš, the wording thereof—in light of the meagre and somewhat questionable evidence available—remains highly uncertain:

...ʿibrāhīm^a ʿanⁱ al-ʿaswadⁱ ʿan ʿāʾiṣat^a qālat tazawwaja-[hā/nī] rasūl^u allāhⁱ
wa-[hiya/ʿanā] bint^u tis^{ʿi[n]} [sinīn^a] wa-[[kuntu ʿinda-hu tis^{ʿan}]/[māta
ʿan-hā wa-hiya bint ṭamān[iy] ʿašrah]].

Needless to say, if al-ʿAʿmaš was a genuine CL, then his hadith appears to have been transmitted via oral paraphrase, with notable changes in wording (e.g., from “he died when she was eighteen years old” to “I was with him for nine years”) and a major change in narratorial point of view.

Hišām b. ʿUrwah (d. 146-147/763-765)

I have collated twenty-three reports ascribed to the Madinan tradent and putative CL Hišām b. ʿUrwah b. al-Zubayr, recorded by Maʿmar b. Rāšid (reconstructed),⁴³⁰ Sufyān al-Ṭawrī (reconstructed),⁴³¹ ʿAbd al-Raḥmān b. ʿabī al-Zinād (reconstructed),⁴³² Wuhayb b. Kālid (reconstructed),⁴³³ Ḥammād b. Salamah (reconstructed),⁴³⁴ Jaʿfar b. Sulaymān (reconstructed),⁴³⁵ Ḥammād b. Zayd (reconstructed),⁴³⁶ ʿAbdah b. Sulaymān (reconstructed),⁴³⁷ Jarīr b. ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd (reconstructed),⁴³⁸ ʿAlī b. Mushir

⁴³⁰ See the section on Maʿmar, above.

⁴³¹ See the section on Sufyān al-Ṭawrī, above.

⁴³² See the section on b. ʿabī al-Zinād, above.

⁴³³ See the section on Wuhayb, above.

⁴³⁴ See the section on Ḥammād b. Salamah, above.

⁴³⁵ See the section on Jaʿfar b. Sulaymān, above.

⁴³⁶ See the section on Ḥammād b. Zayd, above.

⁴³⁷ See the section on ʿAbdah, above.

⁴³⁸ See the section on Jarīr, above.

(reconstructed),⁴³⁹ Sufyān b. ‘Uyaynah (reconstructed),⁴⁴⁰ ‘Abū ‘Usāmah Ḥammād (reconstructed),⁴⁴¹ Ibn Sa‘d,⁴⁴² Ibn Rāhwayh,⁴⁴³ ‘Aḥmad al-‘Uṭaridī (in his recension of Ibn Bukayr’s *Siyar*),⁴⁴⁴ Muḥammad b. ‘Alī al-Ṣā’ig (in his recension of Sa‘īd b. Manṣūr’s *Sunan*),⁴⁴⁵ al-Ṭabarī,⁴⁴⁶ ‘Abū ‘Awānah,⁴⁴⁷ al-Baḡawī (reconstructed),⁴⁴⁸ al-Ṭabarānī,⁴⁴⁹ al-Ḥākim al-Naysābūrī,⁴⁵⁰ and ‘Abū Nu‘aym.⁴⁵¹

Before proceeding, some caveats are in order. Firstly, the redaction of the PCL Ḥammād b. Salamah is highly tentative, given the great variation in his transmissions to his students. In other words, it is questionable whether he ever transmitted the hadith in the exact form given here—although he likely did transmit each of the constituent parts thereof, at different times and in various combinations. Secondly, the reports underpinning my reconstruction of the redaction of the PCL Jarīr b. ‘Abd al-Ḥamīd do not constitute a *distinctive* sub-tradition, which weakens said reconstruction. Thirdly, the reports underpinning my reconstruction of the redaction of the PCL Sufyān b. ‘Uyaynah are in some respect more similar to other reports than to each other, which undermines the identification of Sufyān as a PCL in the first place and renders my reconstruction of his redaction speculative at best. Fourthly, Ibn Sa‘d’s ascription to Wakī‘ is just one out of four disparate ascriptions thereto, although it still has the best claim thereof to being genuine. Fifthly, Ibn Rāhwayh’s ascription to ‘Abū Mu‘āwiyah (to Hiṣām) is uncorroborated, and indeed, does not match the numerous other ascriptions thereto (to al-‘A‘maš). Sixthly, it should be acknowledged that there is mention (by Ibn Wahb) of a parallel transmission from Hiṣām by Sa‘īd b. ‘Abd al-Raḥmān, alongside that of ‘Abd al-Raḥmān b. ‘abī al-Zinād; however, as has been noted already, this is (1) uncorroborated by any other transmissions from Ibn ‘abī al-Zinād, (2) uncorroborated by any other transmissions full stop, and (3) contradicts the report

⁴³⁹ See the section on ‘Alī b. Mushir, above.

⁴⁴⁰ See the section on Sufyān b. ‘Uyaynah, above.

⁴⁴¹ See the section on ‘Abū ‘Usāmah, above.

⁴⁴² Ibn Sa‘d (ed. Brockelmann), *Biographien*, VIII, p. 41.

⁴⁴³ Ibn Rāhwayh (ed. Balūṣī), *Musnad*, II, p. 214, # 722/178.

⁴⁴⁴ Yūnus b. Bukayr b. Wāṣil (ed. Suhayl Zakkār), *Kitāb al-Siyar wa-al-Maḡāzī* (Damascus, Syria: Dār al-Fikr, 1978), p. 255.

⁴⁴⁵ Sa‘īd b. Manṣūr (ed. ‘A‘zamī), *Sunan*, I, p. 170, # 515.

⁴⁴⁶ Ṭabarī (ed. de Goeje), *Annales*, IV, p. 1770.

⁴⁴⁷ ‘Abū ‘Awānah (ed. ‘Aṭā’ Allāh), *al-Musnad al-Ṣaḥīḥ*, XI, pp. 381-382, # 4702.

⁴⁴⁸ See the section on al-Baḡawī, above.

⁴⁴⁹ Ṭabarānī (ed. Salafī), *al-Mu‘jam al-Kabīr*, XXIII, p. 22, # 50.

⁴⁵⁰ Ḥākim, *Mustadrak*, VII, p. 19, # 6880.

⁴⁵¹ ‘Abū Nu‘aym (ed. ‘Azzāzī), *Ma‘rifat al-Ṣaḥābah*, I, p. 3208, # 7375.

that Sa‘īd was born after Hišām died. Seventhly (and finally), ‘Abū ‘Awānah’s ascription (via an Eastern SS) back to Yaḥyá b. Zakariyyā’ is (1) completely uncorroborated and (2) lacks a *matn*, rendering it completely unusable in this analysis.

Even a cursory examination of this collection of reports and PCL redactions immediately reveals striking disunity there-between: the variation at the elemental level is often extreme, with some reports or redactions sharing little in common. Moreover, there is noticeable instability even in the wording of the common element of ‘Ā’iṣah’s marital engagement (i.e., her *nikāḥ/tazawwuj*): Hišām is variously said to have reported that ‘Ā’iṣah was married at age ‘six’, ‘six or seven’, ‘seven’, or ‘seven or nine’. Who is responsible for this textual chaos: Hišām, his students, or later tradents?

The answer seems to be: all of the above. In the first case, most of these reports constitute several distinct sub-traditions, i.e., clusters of corroborating ascriptions to Hišām that share a similar set of elements. This is consistent with Hišām himself having told and retold the hadith in different ways at different times, with each distinctive iteration’s having been preserved by a different set of students.

In the second case, several of Hišām’s direct students were alone in their transmission of a particular element or addition: Ma‘mar alone transmitted the uncertain ‘nine or seven’ version of the ‘marriage’ element, and plausibly omitted (or even conflated therewith) a discrete ‘consummation’ element; ‘Abū ‘Usāmah alone added an elaborate element about Ẓadījah’s death (which appears in various forms in other hadiths from Hišām⁴⁵²) to the common, simple version of Hišām’s marital-age hadith; Ibn ‘abī al-Zinād alone interspersed the ‘marriage’ and ‘consummation’ elements with an element about Ẓadījah’s death, and further added a lengthy ‘dolls’ element at the end (evidently taken from another well-known hadith of Hišām’s); Ḥammād b. Salamah alone added an elaborate narrative about a dream-vision about ‘Ā’iṣah (which appears elsewhere in various forms as a separate hadith from Hišām⁴⁵³), and frequently rearranged other elements and alternated their wordings; and finally, ‘Alī b. Mushir alone transmitted various details in the ‘Hijrah’ and ‘marital preparation’ elements. All of this is consistent with contamination, elaboration, interpolation,

⁴⁵² Juynboll, *Encyclopedia*, 193, col. 2; also see ‘Abd al-Razzāq (ed. ‘A‘zamī), *Muṣannaf*, VII, p. 492, # 14003.

⁴⁵³ Juynboll, *Encyclopedia*, 195, col. 1; e.g., Ibn Sa‘d (ed. Brockelmann), *Biographien*, VIII, p. 44, 46; ‘Abū ‘Awānah (ed. ‘Atā’ Allāh), *al-Musnad al-Ṣaḥīḥ*, XVIII, pp. 587-589, # 10742-17246; Bayhaqī (ed. Qal‘ajī), *Dalā’il*, II, pp. 410-411. Cf. ‘Ājurri (ed. Sayf al-Nāṣir), *Ṣarī‘ah*, III, pp. 470-471, # 1936/1239, and ‘Abū Ya‘lā (ed. ‘Asad), *Musnad*, VIII, pp. 243-244, # 4822/466.

and/or major errors or sloppiness on the part of these students of Hišām, resulting in elemental divergences in their respective redactions. Moreover, even where elements are shared, many students of Hišām transmit particular wordings or formulations thereof,⁴⁵⁴ which is consistent with their having paraphrased what they received from Hišām. In light of all this, it is hard to take seriously Muslim b. al-Ḥajjāj's assertion that the students of Hišām were "precise memorisers of his Hadith" (*al-ḥuffāz al-mutqinīn li-ḥadīṭi-hi*), who transmitted his Hadith "with agreement amongst them regarding most of it" (*ʿalā al-ittifāq min-hum fī ʾaḳṭari-hi*).⁴⁵⁵ On the contrary, many of his students—most of whom were later regarded as *ṭiqāt*—appear to have distorted their respective transmissions.

In the third case, in reports that only reach back to Hišām via SSs, there are notable instances of isolated elements and aberrations: al-Baḡawī's SS alone transmitted a certain elaborate combination of elements (including material on Ḳadījah, Ḳawlah, and Sawdah); al-Ṭabarī's SS alone transmitted Hišām's letter from ʿUrwah with a preface about Ḳadījah's death; al-Ḥākim al-Naysābūrī's SS alone transmitted Hišām's letter from ʿUrwah with an addendum about ʿĀʾiṣah's death; and al-Ṭabarānī's SS alone transmitted certain chronological elaborations in both the 'marriage' and 'consummation' elements. These variants could be the fault of the direct students of Hišām cited in the relevant SSs, or could instead be the fault of later tradents.

In light of all of the above, which wordings, elements, or gists can be traced back to Hišām himself? The best way to proceed in analysing all of this material is to deal with each of the distinctive sub-traditions associated with Hišām individually and successively, from the simplest to the more complex.

Version 1: marriage, consummation.

The reports of Jaʿfar b. Sulaymān, Ḥammād b. Zayd, ʿAbdah b. Sulaymān, Jarīr b. ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd, Sufyān b. ʿUyaynah, Ibn Saʿd, Ibn Rāhwayh, Muḥammad b. ʿAlī al-Ṣāʾig, and ʿAbū Nuʿaym comprise an elemental sequence that is almost always associated with Hišām, such that they constitute a distinctive sub-tradition with a common source. The

⁴⁵⁴ See below.

⁴⁵⁵ Muslim (ed. Fāryābī), *Ṣaḥīḥ*, I, pp. 3-4. For an alternative translation, see Juynboll, 'Muslim's introduction', 269-270.

reports of ‘Abd al-Raḥmān b. ‘abī al-Zinād and ‘Abū ‘Usāmah can also be included in this set, since they are most likely variations thereof.⁴⁵⁶ Even aside from the elemental additions in Ibn ‘abī al-Zinād and ‘Abū ‘Usāmah’s redactions, there are numerous differences in wording between all of these reports, most of which are minor additions, omissions, and substitutions, but some of which affect the ascription (i.e., *munqaṭi‘* vs. *muttaṣil*),⁴⁵⁷ the narrative point of view (i.e., biography vs. autobiography),⁴⁵⁸ and even the basic meaning thereof (i.e., ‘six’ vs. ‘six or seven’ vs. ‘seven’).⁴⁵⁹ As such, a single urtext cannot be reconstructed, and probably never existed: as noted already, Hišām seems to have modified his hadith (including Version 1) in successive retellings. Still, the multiple attestation of particular wordings allows us to reconstruct *sub-versions* of Version 1, which is to say, at least some of Hišām’s formulations thereof.

To begin with, this hadith likely began as *munqaṭi‘* (as attested by ‘Abū ‘Usāmah and Ibn Sa‘d—Wakī‘, and in conjunction with the Criterion of Dissimilarity), meaning that it probably originated as a story *about* ‘Ā’iṣah rather than *from* ‘Ā’iṣah. However, since none of the Version 1 reports record Hišām’s direct wording in the ‘*isnād*’ (i.e., none of them quote him as saying, “my father said”, or similar), the exact form of this original ascription remains speculative (e.g., *qāla ‘abī*): we can infer *that* he narrated the hadith as a saying of his father’s, but not *how* he narrated it as such.

Thereafter, Hišām himself seems to have raised the hadith explicitly back to ‘Ā’iṣah,⁴⁶⁰ and further rephrased the *matn* into her direct, autobiographical speech: this is by far the most common form of Version 1. Although some iterations of this raised version are doubtless the product of interpolations by Hišām’s students

⁴⁵⁶ The reason for this is simple: of all the sub-traditions from Hišām under consideration, it would have been easiest for Version 1 to be transformed into both ‘Abū ‘Usāmah and Ibn ‘abī al-Zinād’s redactions, through the addition of one (in the case of ‘Abū ‘Usāmah) or two (Ibn ‘abī al-Zinād) elements. By contrast, the transformation of Versions 2, 3, or 3 into either would have required not just the *addition* of elements, but the *omission* of elements.

⁴⁵⁷ Ibn Sa‘d—Wakī‘ and ‘Abū ‘Usāmah both have Hišām—‘Urwah, where all the rest have Hišām—‘Urwah—‘Ā’iṣah.

⁴⁵⁸ ‘Abū ‘Usāmah, Ibn Sa‘d—Wakī‘, and Ibn Rāhwayh—‘Abū Mu‘āwiyah all have ‘Ā’iṣah being described in the third person (i.e., *-hā/‘ā’iṣah* and *hiya*), where all the rest have her narrating the hadith herself, in the first person (i.e., *-nī* and *anā*).

⁴⁵⁹ Ibn ‘abī al-Zinād, ‘Abdah, ‘Abū ‘Usāmah, Ibn Rāhwayh—‘Abū Mu‘āwiyah, Muḥammad al-Šā’ig—‘Ismā‘īl, and ‘Abū Nu‘aym—Yaḥyā all have *sitt*; Jarīr, Sufyān b. ‘Uyaynah, and Ibn Sa‘d—Wakī‘ all have both *sitt* and *sab‘*; and Ja‘far and Ḥammād b. Zayd both have *sab‘*.

⁴⁶⁰ In contrast to the usual pattern found in Schoeler (trans. Vagelpohl), *The Biography of Muḥammad*, 16, 59, 66-67; *id.*, ‘Méthodes et Débats’, 362-363; *id.*, ‘Foundations’, in Berg (ed.), *Method and Theory*, 25-26; Görke, Motzki, & Schoeler, ‘First Century Sources’, 27-28; Görke, ‘Remnants of an old *tafsīr* tradition?’, in Daneshgar & Saleh (eds.), *Islamic Studies Today*, 24, 37, 41.

(contaminated by the raised versions of others, or simply as the obvious means of lending more legitimacy to the report, in response to the general, increasing demand for *muttaṣil* ascriptions), it is simpler to suppose that most of these are accounted for by Hišām himself having transmitted it as such. As above, the relevant reports do not record Hišām’s direct wording in the *’isnād*, again leaving us to speculate on the exact form (e.g., *’aḵbara-nī ’abī ’an ’ā’iṣah qālat*).

Things are generally clearer in regards to the *matn*: in the first element of Version 1, Hišām almost always used the verb *tazawwaja* and the noun *rasūl allāh*; this was almost always followed by a *ḥāl* clause specifying ‘Ā’iṣah’s age, in which Hišām alternated between *ibnah* and *bint*, and between *sitt*, *sitt ’aw sab*, and *sab*; and Hišām almost always concluded this clause (and thereby the first element) with *sinīn*.

The second element of Version 1 is even more straightforward: Hišām almost always introduced it with a *wa-*, followed by the verb *baná*, followed by a *bi-* with an attached pronoun; this was almost always followed by a *ḥāl* clause specifying ‘Ā’iṣah’s age, in which Hišām alternated between *ibnah* and *bint*, always included *tis*, and alternated in adding or omitting *sinīn* at the end.

Thus, whilst a single urtext cannot be reconstructed, several of Hišām’s redactions—several distinct formulations of Version 1—can still be identified, the most archaic of which probably looked something like the following:

[qāla ’abī]⁴⁶¹ tazawwaja rasūl^u allāhⁱ ‘ā’iṣat^a wa-hiya [bint/ibnat]^u sittⁱ sinīn^a ’aw sab^{’in} wa-baná bi-hā wa-hiya [bint/ibnat]^u tis^{’i[n]} [sinīn^a].

Given that Version 2 evolved out of Version 1 (see below), and given that Version 2 combined a *munqaṭi’* ascription with a ‘marriage’ element containing only *sitt*, there must once have also been a version of Version 1 that combined a *munqaṭi’* ascription with a ‘marriage’ element containing only *sitt*, like the following:

[qāla ’abī]⁴⁶² tazawwaja al-nabiyy^u ‘ā’iṣat^a wa-hiya [ibnat/bint]^u sitt^{i[n]} [sinīn^a] wa-[[baná bi-hā]/[’udkilat ’alay-hi]] wa-hiya [ibnat/bint]^u tis^{’i[n]} [sinīn^a].

⁴⁶¹ Speculative.

⁴⁶² Speculative.

There may also have been a *munqaṭi*‘ version with a ‘marriage’ element containing only *sab*‘, but no iteration of such has survived.

At a later phase, Hišām formulated a raised version of this hadith, as follows:

[ʔakbara-nī ʔabī]⁴⁶³ ʿan ʿāʾiṣat^a qālat tazawwaja-nī rasūl^u allāhⁱ wa-ʔanā [bint/ibnat]^u sittⁱ sinīn^a ʔaw sab^{ʿin} wa-banā bī wa-ʔanā [bint/ibnat]^u tis^{ʿi[n]} [sinīn^a].

At times, Hišām specified ʿĀʾiṣah’s marital age to have been seven:

[ʔakbara-nī ʔabī]⁴⁶⁴ ʿan ʿāʾiṣat^a qālat tazawwaja-nī rasūl^u allāhⁱ wa-ʔanā [bint/ibnat]^u sab^{ʿi} sinīn^a wa-banā bī wa-ʔanā [bint/ibnat]^u tis^{ʿi[n]} [sinīn^a].

Most of the time, however, Hišām specified ʿĀʾiṣah’s marital age to have been six:

[ʔakbara-nī ʔabī]⁴⁶⁵ ʿan ʿāʾiṣat^a qālat tazawwaja-nī rasūl^u allāhⁱ wa-ʔanā [bint/ibnat]^u sittⁱ sinīn^a wa-banā bī wa-ʔanā [bint/ibnat]^u tis^{ʿi[n]} [sinīn^a].

Version 2: marriage, consummation, together nine years.

The second set of reports ascribed to Hišām comprise the following elements: ʿĀʾiṣah was married at six, consummated in marriage at nine, and was married to the Prophet for nine years. These were recorded by Sufyān al-Ṭawrī, Wuhayb b. Kālid, and ʾAḥmad al-ʿUṭāridī. There is the problem with al-ʿUṭāridī’s transmission, however: his version states that the Prophet died when ʿĀʾiṣah was eighteen years old (*wa-māta rasūl allāh wa-ʿāʾiṣah ibnat ṭamānī ʿašrah sanah*), whereas the other two state that ʿĀʾiṣah lived with the Prophet for nine years (*makaṭat/kānat ʿinda-hu tisʿ [sinīn]*). Although representing basically the same proposition (such that we can count all three exemplifying the same element), al-ʿUṭāridī’s wording diverges noticeably from the other two. More importantly, al-ʿUṭāridī’s wording is much more similar to the corresponding element in numerous other reports (for example, the redaction of ʾAbū

⁴⁶³ Speculative.

⁴⁶⁴ Speculative.

⁴⁶⁵ Speculative.

Mu‘āwiyah, from al-‘A‘maš)⁴⁶⁶ than it is to that found in the two other attributions of this element to Hišām. Even when the combination of this ‘death’ element with the ‘marriage’ and ‘consummation’ elements is taken into account, al-‘Uṭāridī’s version is noticeably more similar to Muslim’s transmission from ‘Abū Mu‘āwiyah⁴⁶⁷ and, to a lesser extent, al-Faḍl b. Nu‘aym’s redaction (from ‘Isrā’īl, from ‘Abū ‘Ishāq) and certain sub-versions descended from ‘Abd al-Razzāq’s redaction (from Ma‘mar, from both Hišām and al-Zuhrī).⁴⁶⁸ It is thus extremely likely that al-‘Uṭāridī’s version is at the very least contaminated, whether at his hands or by his source Ibn Bukayr.

Additionally, al-‘Uṭāridī’s version contains a sub-clause about Ẓadījah’s death in the middle of the ‘marriage’ element, which is uncorroborated most other transmissions from Hišām, and differs in wording from those few transmissions from Hišām that do mention Ẓadījah’s death. This is consistent with the sub-clause in al-‘Uṭāridī’s version being contaminated (probably by another hadith from Hišām⁴⁶⁹), either by al-‘Uṭāridī or his source Ibn Bukayr.

Despite all of this, the archaic *munqaṭi‘* ascription in al-‘Uṭāridī’s transmission suggests that the original version of the report—a hypothetical, pre-interpolated or pre-contaminated version—indeed derives from the 8th Century CE, which is consistent with an ultimate origin with Hišām. Even if that is the case, however, there is no way to know whether the original version belonged to Version 1 or Version 2 of Hišām’s hadith, rendering it useless in the present analysis.

This leaves us with the redactions of Sufyān al-Ṭawrī and Wuhayb, but here we are on more solid ground: in addition to sharing the same elements, with similar wordings, in the same order, these two reports are more similar to each other than to all other versions of the marital-age hadith. We thus have a distinctive sub-tradition that matches a common ascription, which is consistent with both reports in question reflecting a distinctive redaction from Hišām. The variation between them is noticeable, but usually not at the expense of meaning, and is consistent with controlled paraphrasing (i.e., the sort of thing usually envisaged by *al-riwāyah bi-al-ma‘nā*).

There are two notable differences, however. Firstly, Sufyān’s version has a *munqaṭi‘* ascription where Wuhayb’s is *muttaṣil*, which is consistent with the latter’s having

⁴⁶⁶ See the section on ‘Abū Mu‘āwiyah, above.

⁴⁶⁷ Muslim (ed. Fāryābī), *Ṣaḥīḥ*, I, p. 642, # 72/1422.

⁴⁶⁸ See the section on ‘Abd al-Razzāq, above.

⁴⁶⁹ See the comment above, concerning ‘Abū ‘Usāmah.

been raised (by either Wuhayb or Hišām). Secondly, Wuhayb’s version includes a comment from Hišām indicating that the third element is actually an addendum from an unspecified source (i.e., other than ‘Urwah); the absence of this comment from Sufyān’s version is consistent either with Sufyān omitting it, or with Hišām’s having simply fully absorbed the element into his ascription to ‘Urwah in subsequent retellings. Either way, Hišām’s comment (as recorded by Wuhayb) reveals how Version 2 *evolved* out of Version 1, through the incorporation of a new element taken from some other source.

In light of all this, the following ur-redaction of Version 2—an approximation distilled from the extant redactions of Sufyān and Wuhayb, in conjunction with the Criterion of Dissimilarity—can be attributed to Hišām:

[qāla ‘abī]⁴⁷⁰ tazawwaja al-nabiyy^u ‘ā’iṣat^a wa-hiya [ibnat/bint]^u sitt^{i[n]}
[sinīn^a] wa-[[banā bi-hā]/[‘udkilat ‘alay-hi]] wa-hiya [ibnat/bint]^u tis^{i[n]}
[sinīn^a] wa-‘unbi’tu ‘anna-hā [kānat/makatāt] ‘inda-hu tis^{a[n]} [sinīn^a].

As should be clear, the exactly wording of Hišām’s redaction remains unclear, but the gist at least—along with some of the wording—is recoverable.

Version 3: ‘Urwah’s letter

The third set of reports ascribed to Hišām take the form of a letter composed by ‘Urwah and addressed to a Marwanid caliph, in which the marriage and consummation of ‘Ā’iṣah are mentioned. These were recorded by al-Ṭabarī and al-Ḥākim al-Naysābūrī. Despite only reaching back to Hišām via lengthy SSs, these two reports are far more similar to each other (sharing not just a letter form, but the same core sequence and many specific wordings) than they are to all other versions of the marital-age hadith, which—in conjunction with their common ascription to Hišām—is consistent with both reflecting a common redaction from Hišām. Again, a distinctive sub-tradition correlates with a particular source.

⁴⁷⁰ Speculative.

However, the level of variation between these two extant redactions of this letter is far greater than any we have encountered in the transmissions of Versions 1 and 2 of Hišām's hadith: al-Ṭabarī's version is addressed to Caliph 'Abd al-Malik, where al-Ḥākim's version is addressed to Caliph al-Walīd b. 'Abd al-Malik; al-Ṭabarī's version begins with a comment to the recipient and information about Ẓadījah's death, all absent in al-Ḥākim's version; and al-Ḥākim's version ends with information about 'Ā'īshah's death, absent in al-Ṭabarī's version. Moreover, even where the two versions share the same elemental sequence ('Ā'īshah's marriage; Ẓadījah's death; the Prophet's dream-vision of 'Ā'īshah; 'Ā'īshah's marriage at age six; 'Ā'īshah's marital consummation, after the Hijrah, at age nine), their wordings are plagued by additions, omissions, and substitutions, all of which is consistent with fairly sloppy or loose paraphrasing.⁴⁷¹ This is extremely ironic: of all the reports under consideration, an alleged *letter* surely had the best chance of being transmitted reliably, either directly in writing, or through reading out the letter—either way, not purely orally or from memory. And yet, this alleged letter is one of the worst-preserved reports in the set under consideration: the only question is whether Hišām or his students were responsible for the lion's share of this distortion.

Still, an outline or approximation of the original letter—which is to say, Hišām's redaction—can be reconstructed, even if much of the wording is uncertain and some elements are dubious:

kataba [ʿabī]⁴⁷² ʿilā [al-walīdī bnī] ʿabdi al-maliki bnī marwānā [ʿinna-ka katabta ʿilayya fī ẓadījatā bintī kuwaylidīn tasʿalu-nī matā tuwuffiyat wa-ʿinna-hā tuwuffiyat qabla maḵrajī rasūlī allāhī min makkatā bi-ṭalātī sinīnā ʿaw qarībān min dālika] wa-nakaḥa [ʿāʾīṣatā/rasūlū allāhī] [ʿinda] mutawaffā ẓadījatā [ʿāʾīṣatā] [wa-]kāna rasūlū allāhī [[ʿuriya-hā]/[raʾā ʿāʾīṣatā]] [fī al-manāmī] [[ṭalātā mirārīn]/[marrataynī]] yuqālu [la-hu] ḥādihī imraʾatu-ka [ʿāʾīṣatū] wa-[kānat] ʿāʾīṣatū yawma[-ʾidin] [nakaḥa-hā rasūlū allāhī] [bintā/ibnatū] sittī sinīnā tumma [ʿinna rasūlā allāhī] banā bi-[hā/ʿāʾīṣatā] [yawma/baʿda mā] qadīma al-madīnat wa-hiya [yawma banā bi-hā] [bint/ibnatū] tisʿī sinīnā [wa-mātat ʿāʾīṣatū ʿummū al-muʿminīnā laylatā al-ṭulātā] baʿda ṣalātī al-witrī wa-dufinat min laylati-hā bi-al-baqīʿi li-ḵamsī ʿaṣratā laylatān ḵalat min ramadānā

⁴⁷¹ In light of this, the comment in Anthony, *Muhammad*, 103, that the “exact wording” of such letters “likely” does “not survive” due to “the vagaries of their transmission”, seems like an understatement: whole elements have been added or omitted.

⁴⁷² Speculative.

wa-ṣallā ‘alay-hā ‘abū hurayrat^a wa-kāna marwān^u ḡā’ib^{an} wa-kāna ‘abū hurayrat^a yaḵlufu-hu].

Sean Anthony has recently argued for a general acceptance of such letters all the way back to ‘Urwah, based on two main sets of “internal features”.⁴⁷³ Firstly (following the research of Görke), the letters are unmiraculous and unembellished,⁴⁷⁴ which is consistent with their reflecting “an early, even relatively primitive, sampling of the historical memory of Medinan elites”, which is in turn consistent with ‘Urwah’s authorship.⁴⁷⁵ Secondly, “much of the letters’ contents evoke themes and stories potentially conducive to a Zubayrid-Umayyad reconciliation, or at least reflecting their shared interests” (in contrast to later Abbasid interests), which is again consistent with ‘Urwah’s authorship.⁴⁷⁶ Thus, the best explanation for the evidence—for the existence of these letters ascribed to ‘Urwah, in light of the particularities of their content—is that most of them are (broadly) accurately preserved letters composed by ‘Urwah himself.

There are several problems with this argumentation. Firstly, Anthony faces a contradiction: he cites Görke’s analysis on the unmiraculous and unembellished content of these letters to show that they reflect an “early” or “primitive” layer (i.e., relative to later layers of tradition, which are full of miracles and embellishments), yet it was none other than Görke who observed, in an ICMA of ‘Urwah’s hadith about al-Ḥudaybiyyah, that ‘Urwah’s original formulation thereof was already diffused with miracles and embellishments.⁴⁷⁷ In other words, the letters and the hadith belong to the same layer of tradition (i.e., ‘Urwah’s era and material); the letters are unmiraculous and unembellished, and the hadith is miraculous and embellished; but the lack of miracles and embellishments in the letters is supposed to indicate that they belong to an early layer *vis-à-vis* later, miraculous, embellished layers—in which case, they should belong to a different layer from the miraculous, embellished hadith. How is this contradiction be resolved? Anthony might conclude (*contra* Görke) that the hadith cannot be traced back to ‘Urwah, since it is miraculous and embellished, and

⁴⁷³ Anthony, *Muhammad*, 103.

⁴⁷⁴ Also see Görke, ‘Prospects and Limits’, in Boekhoff-van der Voort *et al.* (eds.), *Transmission and Dynamics*, 146; *id. et al.*, ‘First Century Sources’, 20-21.

⁴⁷⁵ Anthony, *Muhammad*, 103-104.

⁴⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, 104-105.

⁴⁷⁷ Görke, ‘The historical tradition about al-Ḥudaybiya’, in Motzki (ed.), *Biography*, 260-262.

thus must belong to a later layer than the letters—but Anthony in fact seems to accept Görke’s conclusions thereon.⁴⁷⁸ Consequently, Anthony is committed either to rejecting ‘Urwah’s authorship of the letters (since the letters clearly do not belong to ‘Urwah’s layer of tradition, being as it was full of miracles and elaborations), or to conceding that an absence of miracles and embellishments is not indicative of belonging to an early layer—in which case, Anthony’s first argument for the general authenticity of these letters’ collapses.⁴⁷⁹

Moreover, alternative explanations for the absence of miracles and elaborations in these letters can be speculated, further revealing Anthony’s explanation therefor to be *ad hoc*. For example, it could simply be a matter of *genre*: these letters are *prosopographical* and *exegetical*, clarifying specific historical questions; by contrast, miracles and embellishments are more expected in the *narrative* and *edifying* context of Hadith, which, in this early period, were only just becoming distinguished from popular, oral storytelling and preaching. In fact, we might actually *invert* Anthony’s schema: surely the era of the greatest miraculous embellishment was the 1st Islamic Century, when early, victorious Muslims were riding on an apocalyptic high, and their whole world seemed God-infused? Moreover, surely the oral storytellers and preachers of the early period, who so profoundly shaped early Islamic historical memory,⁴⁸⁰ were the most prolific in embellishing stories with miracles? In other words, why could we not see the lack of miracles and embellishments in the letters ascribed to ‘Urwah as being indicative of a later layer of the tradition (i.e., as the product of more sober, professional traditionists, in contrast to early storytellers)? This is of course quite speculative, but the point is: Anthony’s interpretation seems *ad hoc*, and would need to be justified against such a counter-view.

As for Anthony’s second argument, this too is problematic. Firstly, it would not follow, even if “much of the letters’ contents evoke themes and stories potentially conducive to a Zubayrid-Umayyad reconciliation, or at least reflecting their shared

⁴⁷⁸ Anthony, *Muhammad*, 104, n. 6. When Anthony very generously sent a draft of this chapter to me in January of 2019, this footnote was absent—its subsequent appearance, in the published version of his book, is thus possibly a response to my having pointed out to him all of these issues, including the specific Görke reference. However, Anthony’s caveat in this footnote seems insufficient to me: *acknowledging* the contradiction (i.e., that ‘Urwah’s other material already contained embellishments and miracles) is not the same thing as *resolving* the contradiction.

⁴⁷⁹ See also Schoeler (trans. Vagelpohl), *The Biography of Muḥammad*, 7.

⁴⁸⁰ Cook, *Muhammad*, 66-67; Juynboll, *Muslim tradition*, 11-15, 74; Crone, *Meccan Trade*, ch. 9; *ead.*, “Two legal problems”, 13-21.

interests”, that the letters can be traced all the way back to ‘Urwah: such themes and interests would fit equally well with the Marwanid period more broadly, and with the milieux and interests of al-Zuhrī and Hišām in particular.

Of course, this is to say that, historically, ‘Urwah did not write letters to the Marwanids. The fact that three of ‘Urwah’s students (including his son) ascribed letters to him is most easily explained by the fact that ‘Urwah was broadly remembered as having sent some letters in the first place—otherwise, why would such ascriptions be plausible? However, it does not follow therefrom that any of those original letters have survived, i.e., that any of the surviving letter-ascriptions to ‘Urwah are the actual letters he composed.⁴⁸¹

Finally, even if a compelling case can be made for the *general* authenticity of the letters, which specific wordings and elements therein can be identified as actually going back to ‘Urwah, versus later additions and alterations by (for example) Hišām and even later tradents? As we have already seen, this is not a hypothetical problem: the extant redactions of Version 3 of Hišām’s marital-age hadith exhibit substantial discrepancies, and if such variation could occur merely between Hišām and his students, it is reasonable to expect that the level of variation that occurred between ‘Urwah and Hišām must have been quite serious indeed.⁴⁸²

Version 4: ‘Ā’iṣah’s elaborate anecdote

The fourth set of reports ascribed to Hišām comprise of an elaborate, autobiographical narration by ‘Ā’iṣah, in which she mentions her marriage, the Hijrah, her shoulder-length hair, her playing on a swing, her being prepared for marriage, and her marital consummation. These were recorded by Ḥammād b. Salamah, ‘Alī b. Mushir, and ‘Abū ‘Usāmah Ḥammād. In general, these three reports are much more similar to each other than to all other versions of the marital-age hadith,⁴⁸³ with one exception: the redaction of Muḥammad b. ‘Amr (which supposedly derives from an independent

⁴⁸¹ Also see Shoemaker, ‘In Search of ‘Urwah’s *Sīra*’, 282.

⁴⁸² Also see Görke *et al.*, ‘First Century Sources’, 21, who acknowledge that the letters were transmitted orally and paraphrastically.

⁴⁸³ Even the closest report (aside from the redaction of Muḥammad b. ‘Amr), which is an interpolated transmission from Ḥammād b. Zayd (see above), differs noticeably from these three in its inclusion of the ‘dolls’ element and in its omission of the *j-m-m* root from the ‘hair/illness’ element.

source) is specifically more similar to ‘Alī’s transmission from Hišām, which is a sure sign of borrowing or major contamination. However, given that ‘Alī’s version is in certain respects more similar to these other two transmissions from Hišām (i.e., in only comprising the ‘Ā’iṣah story; in lacking the *‘aḍqayn* detail in the ‘swing’ element; and in lacking the element of Sa’d b. ‘Ubādah altogether), the simplest stemma thereof places Muḥammad b. ‘Amr as an outgrowth from ‘Alī’s version or a close common ancestor with ‘Alī’s version, with both in turn descending from a more distant common ancestor alongside the versions of ‘Abū ‘Usāmah and Ḥammād. (For more on this, see below.) Since this inferable common source matches the common ascription to Hišām given by ‘Abū ‘Usāmah, ‘Alī, and Ḥammād, it is reasonable to conclude that this distinctive sub-tradition—Version 4—also derives from Hišām.

An obvious problem still remains, however: Ḥammād’s redaction differs markedly from those of ‘Alī and ‘Abū ‘Usāmah. Even when the narrative about the Prophet’s dream-vision of ‘Ā’iṣah is removed (since Ḥammād obviously joined together two discrete hadiths, as even the *fa-qālat ‘ā’iṣah* separating the two indicates),⁴⁸⁴ the elemental sequence of the remaining hadith differs in a key respect (i.e., in the location of the ‘hair’ element. Even when this is set aside, the specific wordings of Ḥammād’s elements differ noticeably from those of ‘Alī and ‘Abū ‘Usāmah. Clearly, the versions of ‘Alī and ‘Abū ‘Usāmah are more closely related to each other than to Ḥammād—but why? This could be explained by positing that either ‘Alī or ‘Abū ‘Usāmah borrowed from the other, but given the great variety in Ḥammād’s transmissions to his students (discussed already), it is plausible that Ḥammād himself was responsible for much of the divergences in his version(s). Additionally, Hišām may simply have told this hadith in different ways at different times, with ‘Abū ‘Usāmah and ‘Alī hearing it together in one instance, and Ḥammād hearing it a different way in another instance. As it happens, the biographical data concerning these tradents corroborates such a supposition: ‘Alī and ‘Abū ‘Usāmah were both Kufan, whereas Ḥammād was Basran, which is consistent with Hišām’s having related this hadith in different ways in different places.

As such, there is likely not a single, underlying redaction of Version 4 that can be traced back to Hišām: at the very least, there were probably two—one disseminated in Kufah, and one disseminated in Basrah. Of these, the Kufan version is the best

⁴⁸⁴ For more on this, see the section on Ḥammād b. Salamah, above.

represented, thanks to the redactions of ‘Alī and ‘Abū ‘Usāmah; but even this version is difficult to reconstruct, due to numerous divergences in wording and even—in one case—elemental sequence between these two. Still, in those places where at least two of these three (‘Alī, ‘Abū ‘Usāmah, and Ḥammād) agree on an elemental sequence or wording, it is reasonable to infer that we have thereby an echo of something that Hišām related to his students. Thus, whilst no single, coherent (say, Kufan or Basran) sub-redaction of Version 4 from Hišām can be reconstructed, the following *wordings* and *sequence* can at least be traced back to him:

[ʔakbara-nī ʔabī]⁴⁸⁵ ʔan ʔāʔiṣat^a qālat tazawwaja-nī rasūl^u allāhⁱ wa-ʔanā [ibnat/bint]^u sittⁱ sinīn^a [ʔaw sab^{ci} sinīn^a] fa-qadimnā al-madīnat^a fa-wuʔiktu fa-[tamazzaqa/wafá] šaʔ[a]rī [fa-ʔawfá] jumaymat^{an} fa-ʔatat-nī ʔumm^u rūmān^a wa-ʔanā ʔalá ʔurjūḥatⁱⁿ wa-maʔī ṣawāḥib[ī/āt^{un} lī] fa-ṣarakat bī fa-ʔataytu-hā wa-mā ʔadrī mā [turīdu/yurādu] bī fa-ʔaḳadāt bi-yadī fa-ʔawqafat-nī ʔalá [al-]bābⁱ [al-dārⁱ] [[wa-ʔinnī la-ʔanhaju]/[fa-qultu hah hah]] ḥattá [dahaba/sakana] [baʔḍ^u] nafasī [tumma/fa-]ʔadḳalat-nī [al-dār^a/bayt^{an}] fa-ʔiḳā niswat^{un} min^a al-ʔanṣārⁱ fa-qulna ʔalá al-ḳayrⁱ wa-al-barakatⁱ wa-ʔalá ḳayrⁱ ṭāʔirⁱⁿ fa-ʔaslamat-nī ʔilay-hinna [f/w]a-ʔaṣlahna-nī fa-lam yaruʔ-^{nī} ʔillā rasūl^u allāhⁱ ḍuḥ^{an} fa-ʔaslamna-nī ʔilay-hī [f/w]a-banā bī wa-ʔanā [bint/ibnat]^u tis^{ci} sinīn^a

Again, Hišām may never have articulated Version 4 in exactly this way—but he likely articulated most of the constitutive elements and wordings that way, at different times and in different places.

The version of Maʔmar

There are three other versions of the marital-age hadith ascribed to Hišām, all of which are isolated and problematic. The first is the redaction of the PCL Maʔmar, as previously reconstructed from the redaction of ‘Abd al-Razzāq and a report from Ibn Saʔd.⁴⁸⁶ There are three issues here. Firstly, the report is ascribed to both Hišām and al-Zuhrī, and it is not clear which was intended to be the actual source, and which is just being invoked for having allegedly said something vaguely similar. Secondly, this report

⁴⁸⁵ Speculative.

⁴⁸⁶ See the section on Maʔmar, above.

comprises a mere statement ascribed to Hišām and al-Zuhrī, rather than a report from ‘Urwah, unlike every other transmission from Hišām and al-Zuhrī. Thirdly, the *matn* of the report is extremely divergent from all of the other transmissions from Hišām (not to mention al-Zuhrī), since it only comprises the ‘marriage’ element. Of course, this could simply be a limitation of my ICMA and the available evidence: since Ma‘mar’s redaction was reconstructed from only two reports (from ‘Abd al-Razzāq and Ibn Sa‘d), and one of them (the version recorded by Ibn Sa‘d) is quite short, only a short *matn* can be traced back to Ma‘mar. In other words, it is possible that Ibn Sa‘d’s version is actually an abridgement, and that the original was longer and, thereby, more similar to other transmissions from Hišām. However, the aberrant wording of that which can be traced back to Ma‘mar—in conjunction with the Criterion of Dissimilarity and principle of *lectio difficilior potior*—remains: where every other transmission from Hišām has him report that ‘Ā’īshah was married (*tazawwaja*, *nakaḥa*) at age six or seven and consummated in marriage (*baná*, *daḳala*) at nine, this version has him state that ‘Ā’īshah was married (*nakaḥa*) at nine or seven, thereby conflating or confusing the ‘marriage’ and ‘consummation’ elements.

For all of these reasons, Ma‘mar’s version cannot be attributed to Hišām: if Hišām did transmit a version of his hadith to Ma‘mar, the latter seems to have corrupted it quite badly. This is actually not unexpected: according to the later Hadith critic Yaḥyá b. Ma‘īn, Ma‘mar’s transmissions from Hišām were “inconsistent” (*muḍṭarib*) and “full of errors” (*kaṭīr al-’awhām*).⁴⁸⁷

That said, it is questionable whether Ma‘mar even received this hadith directly from Hišām: the poor state thereof is consistent with its having passed through considerable mutation (such that even the core element has been altered), meaning that it may have passed through several hands before reaching Ma‘mar. Thus, where every other PCL transmission from Hišām has only suffered from his reformulations and the alterations of the PCL (whose distinctive redaction was henceforth preserved fairly accurately, in most cases), Ma‘mar’s version may have undergone a more protracted process of alteration via some intermediary tradent(s). Of course, this would mean that Ma‘mar has obscured his true source by suppressing an intermediary—or several—between him and Hišām, but again, this is not unexpected: according to the later Hadith scholar

⁴⁸⁷ Cited in Ḍahabī (ed. ‘Arna’ūṭ *et al.*), *Siyar*, VII, p. 11.

Ibn al-ʿAṭṭār, “he used to deceive” (*inna-hu yudallisu*) in his *ʿisnāds* (i.e., suppress sources).⁴⁸⁸

Finally, it is worth noting that the Arabic words for ‘seven’ (سبع) and ‘nine’ (تسع) share a similar-looking consonantal skeleton or *rasm* (namely, سسع), which could be confused with each other in the reading or copying of unvowelled and undotted writing. In other words, we might have a scenario in which Maʿmar (or a now-suppressed intermediary) acquired his version of the tradition from an ambiguous transcription (rather than a direct transmission from Hišām or an intermediary), or else forgot what he had once memorised and had to resort to personal notebooks written in rudimentary Arabic.⁴⁸⁹ However, this does not explain the absence of a distinct ‘consummation’ element in Maʿmar’s version of the hadith, in light of which, some kind of more intensive confusion or conflation—of the ‘marriage’ and ‘consummation’ elements—seems more likely.

The version of al-Baḡawī from al-Hayṭam

The second isolated and problematic version of the marital-age hadith ascribed to Hišām is the discussion that reportedly occurred between him and al-Hayṭam, in which Hišām related information about the Prophet’s wives and children from his father.⁴⁹⁰ The *munqaṭiʿ* ascription of this report makes it seem archaic, which means that, at the very least, it probably does originate as early as al-Hayṭam. There is a problem with the content thereof, however: most of Hišām’s statements therein are near-identical to a report recorded by Ibn Saʿd.⁴⁹¹ Since this report is similarly archaic-looking (again, with a *munqaṭiʿ* ascription), it cannot be ruled out that al-Baḡawī’s hadith was straightforwardly ripped therefrom, either by al-Baḡawī himself, or by his source al-ʿAlāʾ b. Mūsá, or even by al-Hayṭam. As it happens, al-Baḡawī was reportedly “weak” (*ḍaʿīf*),⁴⁹² whilst al-Hayṭam was reportedly “abandoned in Hadith” (*matrūk al-ḥadiṭ*), “a liar” (*kaḍḍāb*), and “passed over” (*sakatū ʿan-hu*) by other traditionists.⁴⁹³

⁴⁸⁸ Cited in Suyūṭī (ed. Naṣṣār), *ʿAsmāʾ al-Mudallisīn*, p. 94, # 56.

⁴⁸⁹ I owe thanks to Christopher Melchert for pointing out this possibility.

⁴⁹⁰ See the section on al-Baḡawī, above.

⁴⁹¹ Ibn Saʿd (ed. Brockelmann), *Biographien*, VIII, p. 39.

⁴⁹² ʿAbd al-Raḥmān b. ʿAlī b. al-Jawzī (ed. ʿAbd Allāh al-Qāḍī), *Kitāb al-Ḍuʿafāʾ wa-al-Matrūkīn*, vol. 2 (Beirut, Lebanon: Dār al-Kutub al-ʿIlmiyyah, 1986), p. 139, # 2109.

⁴⁹³ Ḍahabī (ed. ʿArnaʿūṭ *et al.*), *Siyar*, X, pp. 103-104.

The version of al-Ṭabarānī from ‘Abd Allāh b. Muḥammad

The third isolated and problematic version of the marital-age hadith ascribed to Hišām is recorded by al-Ṭabarānī.⁴⁹⁴ There are two problems here. Firstly, this report only reaches back to ‘Abd Allāh b. Muḥammad via a SS, such that he cannot be considered a confirmed PCL. Secondly, the *matn* thereof is markedly divergent from most other transmissions from Hišām, with uncorroborated chronological elaborations in both the ‘marriage’ and ‘consummation’ elements. Ḥammād b. Salamah’s transmission from Hišām does have a similar elaboration in the ‘marriage’ element, but his redaction belongs to Version 4; and al-Ṭabarī and al-Ḥākim do have a similar elaboration in the ‘consummation’ element, but their redactions belong to Version 3. In other words, the only transmissions from Hišām with similar elaborations belong to different versions, and none share *both* elaborations simultaneously. Al-Ṭabarānī’s report thus stands out as interpolated or fabricated: it looks as though someone took an iteration of Version 1 and updated it—based on a chronology of ‘Ā’iṣah’s life that had been synthesised from various different hadiths—to be more chronologically precise.

Who then was responsible for fabricating or interpolating this hadith? As it happens, various Hadith critics identified two of the tradents cited in the *’isnād* thereof as unreliable: firstly, Ya‘qūb b. Ḥumayd was “nothing” (*laysa bi-ṣay*), according to Ibn Ma‘īn and al-Nasā’ī⁴⁹⁵; “unreliable” (*laysa bi-ṭiqah*), according to Ibn Ma‘īn⁴⁹⁶; and “weak in Hadith” (*ḍa‘īf al-ḥadīth*), according to ‘Abū Ḥātim al-Rāzī⁴⁹⁷; and secondly, ‘Abd Allāh b. Muḥammad was “abandoned in Hadith” (*matrūk al-ḥadīth*), according to ‘Abū Ḥātim⁴⁹⁸; “rejected in Hadith” (*munkar al-ḥadīth*), according to al-Dāraquṭnī⁴⁹⁹; “a possessor of rejected and false hadiths” (*ṣāhib manākīr wa-bawāṭil*), according to ‘Abū Nu‘aym⁵⁰⁰; and “one of those who transmitted fabricated hadiths from reliable

⁴⁹⁴ Ṭabarānī (ed. Salafī), *al-Mu‘jam al-Kabīr*, XXIII, p. 22, # 50.

⁴⁹⁵ Cited in Ibn ‘abī Ḥātim, *Jarḥ*, IX, p. 206; Ibn ‘Adī (ed. Sarsāwī), *Kāmil*, X, p. 423, # 2067.

⁴⁹⁶ Cited in Ibn ‘abī Ḥātim, *Jarḥ*, IX, p. 206.

⁴⁹⁷ Cited in *ibid.*

⁴⁹⁸ Cited in ‘Abd al-Raḥmān b. ‘Alī b. al-Jawzī (ed. ‘Abd Allāh al-Qādī), *Kitāb al-Ḍu‘afā’ wa-al-Matrūkīn*, vol. 2 (Beirut, Lebanon: Dār al-Kutub al-‘Ilmiyyah, 1986), p. 141, # 2116.

⁴⁹⁹ ‘Alī b. ‘Umar al-Dāraquṭnī (ed. Ḳalīl b. Muḥammad ‘Arabī), *Ta’līqāt al-Dāraquṭniyy ‘alā al-Majrūḥīn li-Ibn Ḥibbān* (Cairo, Egypt: Dār al-Maktab al-‘Islāmiyy, 1994), p. 143, # 172.

⁵⁰⁰ ‘Abū Nu‘aym (ed. Ḥamādah), *Ḍu‘afā’*, p. 94, # 107.

tradents (*yarwī al-mawḍūʿāt ʿan al-ʿaṭbāt*); indeed, “he brought forth (*yaʿtī*) from Hišām b. ʿUrwah hadiths that Hišām never, ever transmitted (*mā lam yuḥaddiṭ bi-hi hišām qaṭṭ*),” according to Ibn Ḥibbān.⁵⁰¹ Given the chronological interest of the Hadith, and given that an interest in precise dating is generally a feature of later rather than earlier scholarship, it seems to me that the culprit is more likely Yaʿqūb than ʿAbd Allāh. That said, there is no reason for us to be constrained by the judgements and sensibilities of the Hadith critics: the true culprit could well have been al-Tustarī, or perhaps even al-Ṭabarānī.

Addendum: the dolls hadith

Hišām is also the CL for a widely-transmitted hadith concerning ʿĀʾiṣah’s playing with dolls with her friends,⁵⁰² and it is possible that he sometimes combined this hadith with the marital-age hadith in some instances. Most transmissions of the marital-age hadith from Hišām that contain a ‘dolls’ element have been exposed as having been interpolated or contaminated in that regard *subsequent* to Hišām,⁵⁰³ however, leaving only the redactions of the PCLs Ibn ʿabī al-Zinād and ʿAbdah b. Sulaymān—which differ considerably from each other—as evidence for Hišām’s combination of these two reports.

ʾIsmāʿīl b. ʾabī Kālid (d. 146/763-764)

I have collated nine reports constituting the *faḍāʾil* tradition ascribed to the Kufan tradent and putative CL ʾIsmāʿīl b. ʾabī Kālid: five unabridged versions in the *Muṣannaf* of Ibn ʾabī Šaybah,⁵⁰⁴ the *Taʾrīk* of al-Ṭabarī,⁵⁰⁵ al-Ṭabarānī’s *al-Muʿjam al-Kabīr*,⁵⁰⁶ the

⁵⁰¹ Muḥammad b. Ḥibbān al-Bustī (ed. Maḥmūd ʾIbrāhīm Zāyid), *Kitāb al-Majrūhīn*, vol. 2 (Beirut, Lebanon: Dār al-Maʿrifah, 1992), p. 11.

⁵⁰² Juynboll, *Encyclopedia*, 196.

⁵⁰³ See the sections on ʾAbū Kayṭamah Zuhayr, Sufyān b. ʿUyaynah, Jarīr b. ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd, Ḥammād b. Zayd, and Maʿmar b. Rāšid, above.

⁵⁰⁴ Ibn ʾabī Šaybah (ed. ʾUsāmah), *Muṣannaf*, X, pp. 527-528, # 32877.

⁵⁰⁵ Ṭabarī (ed. de Goeje), *Annales*, III, pp. 1261-1262.

⁵⁰⁶ Ṭabarānī (ed. Salafī), *al-Muʿjam al-Kabīr*, XXIII, p. 31, # 77.

Mustadrak of al-Ḥākim al-Naysābūrī,⁵⁰⁷ and the *Ḥujjah* of ʿIsmāʿīl al-ʿAṣbahānī⁵⁰⁸; and four abridgements or references in the *Taʾrīk* of al-Buḵārī.⁵⁰⁹ All of these versions are ascribed unto ʿIsmāʿīl via SSs, making him a potential spider. Moreover, the texts (of the unabridged versions) are extremely similar, despite the hadith’s being rather long—this is unexpected given the usual rates of mutation exhibited by CLs and PCLs in transmission from the middle of the 8th Century CE to the beginning of the 9th Century CE.⁵¹⁰ In other words, this tradition as a whole looks suspiciously homogenous, in addition to being suspiciously transmitted via SSs alone. The situation worsens considerably when *matns* are taken into account: al-Buḵārī and ʿIsmāʿīl al-ʿAṣbahānī both claim to transmit a variant of this hadith from the putative PCL Marwān b. Muʿāwiyah (via SSs), but their *matns* (or at least, what is available thereof) are more different from each other than either is to allegedly more distant versions. Where al-Buḵārī has *daḵala ʿabd allāh*, ʿIsmāʿīl al-ʿAṣbahānī has the more standard *ʿabd allāh bn ṣafwān wa-ʿākar maʿa-hu ʿatayā*: the use of *daḵala* in the former is more similar to two other versions (also recorded by al-Buḵārī) ascribed to two other transmitters from ʿIsmāʿīl b. ʿabī Ḳālid),⁵¹¹ whereas the use of *ʿatayā*, the syntax, and the inclusion of *wa-ʿākar maʿa-hu* in the latter are all more similar to several other versions ascribed to other transmitters from ʿIsmāʿīl b. ʿabī Ḳālid. The same goes for the putative PCL ʿAbū Ṣihāb: al-Buḵārī has *daḵala* (which is more similar to al-Buḵārī’s other variants), where al-Ḥākim al-Naysābūrī has *ʿatā* (which is more similar to the usual *ʿatayā* in most other versions). In other words, the attribution of this hadith to ʿIsmāʿīl b. ʿabī Ḳālid is based entirely on SSs, and even the convergence of some of some of these (in two instances)

⁵⁰⁷ Ḥākim, *Mustadrak*, VII, pp. 29-30, # 6899.

⁵⁰⁸ ʿIsmāʿīl b. Muḥammad al-ʿAṣbahānī (ed. ʿAbū Raḥīm Muḥammad b. Maḥmūd), *al-Ḥujjah fī Bayān al-Maḥajjah wa-Ṣarḥ ʿAqīdat ʿAhl al-Sunnah*, vol. 2 (Riyadh, KSA: Dār al-Rāyah, 1990), pp. 371-372, # 368.

⁵⁰⁹ For the first, see Muḥammad b. ʿIsmāʿīl al-Buḵārī (ed. Muḥammad ʿAbd al-Muʿīd Ḳān), *al-Taʾrīk al-Kabīr*, vol. 3 (Hyderabad, India: Dāʾirat al-Maʿārif al-ʿUṭmāniyyah, n. d.), p. 345, # 1096; also see Yūsuf b. ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-Mizzī (ed. Baṣṣār ʿAwwād Maʿrūf), *Tahḍīb al-Kamāl fī ʿAsmāʾ al-Rijāl*, vol. 17 (Beirut, Lebanon: Muʾassasat al-Risālah, 1992), p. 394, # 3951. For the second, see Buḵārī (ed. Ḳān), *al-Taʾrīk al-Kabīr*, III, p. 345, # 1096; also see Mizzī (ed. Maʿrūf), *Tahḍīb al-Kamāl*, XVII, p. 394, # 3951. For the third, see Buḵārī (ed. Ḳān), *al-Taʾrīk al-Kabīr*, III, pp. 345-346, # 1096; also see Mizzī (ed. Maʿrūf), *Tahḍīb al-Kamāl*, XVII, pp. 394-395, # 3951. For the fourth, see Muḥammad b. ʿIsmāʿīl al-Buḵārī (ed. Muḥammad b. Ṣāliḥ b. Muḥammad al-Dabbāsī), *al-Taʾrīk al-Kabīr*, vol. 6 (Riyadh, KSA: al-Nāṣir al-Mutamayyiz, 2019), p. 442; also see Mizzī (ed. Maʿrūf), *Tahḍīb al-Kamāl*, XVII, p. 394, # 3951.

⁵¹⁰ For a similar point (albeit concerning ascriptions to Followers and Companions), see Mitter, ‘Origin and Development of the Islamic Patronate’, in Bernards & Nawas (eds.), *Patronate and Patronage in Early and Classical Islam*, 77, n. 32.

⁵¹¹ I.e., the versions transmitted from Saʿīd b. Sulaymān and ʿAḥmad b. Yūnus; see above.

on putative PCLs display major textual inconsistencies (where the abridgement allows for such comparisons): particular wordings do not correlate with particular tradents. We thus probably have some borrowing and suppression occurring in the *'isnāds*: some of the extant versions were probably obtained from late transmitters of the others and supplied with false, alternative *'isnāds* back to 'Ismā'īl b. 'abī Kālid. Otherwise, some major contamination has occurred between the relevant tradents.

And yet, for all that, the tradition as a whole at least plausibly derives from 'Ismā'īl, even if the precise wording is in question: the hadith is at least as old as Ibn 'abī Šaybah (d. 235/849), and since the era of the creation or formulation of most hadiths (on the Revisionist view) coincides with the lifetime of 'Ismā'īl (i.e., the middle of the 8th Century CE), it makes sense to suppose that this particular hadith originates with him. This hypothesis becomes even more plausible given that the hadith fits the polemical context of 8th-Century Kufah (as a proto-Sunnī defence against proto-Šī'ī criticisms of 'Ā'īšah) and, as it happens, 'Ismā'īl was both Kufan and a proto-Sunnī: "He was not attributed with Shi'ism (*lam yunbaz bi-tašayyu'*), nor any other innovation (*wa-lā bid'ah*)," as al-Ḍahabī put it.⁵¹² Thus, on historical-critical grounds, the underlying redaction of the hadith can still be plausibly attributed to 'Ismā'īl. This is strengthened by the originally-*munqaṭi'* ascription of this hadith (see below), which again points to an 8th-Century provenance.

Moreover, *in general or overall*, the ascriptions to 'Ismā'īl are much more alike than all other relevant hadiths: this gives us a reason to think that the hadith as a whole embodies his distinctive redaction, even if some contamination, borrowing, interpolation, and/or occurred amongst his students and later transmitters. Still, the situation is not as neat or clear as with other CLs, where the PCLs constitute distinctive bundles, etc.

The *'isnāds* of this hadith are problematic in other respects, however. Everyone agrees that 'Ismā'īl claimed to have received his *'isnād* from a certain 'Abd al-Raḥmān b. 'abī al-Ḍaḥḥāk, but who was he? Even after a search of the Islamweb and Shamela electronic databases, all mentions of him—and all information about him—appear to derive entirely from this very hadith and its *'isnād*. He appears in no other *'isnāds*, and no prosopographer has any further information about him—only what is inferable

⁵¹² Ḍahabī (ed. 'Arna'ūṭ *et al.*), *Siyar*, VI, p. 177.

from this *ʿisnād*.⁵¹³ In other words, ʿIsmāʿīl’s immediate source for this hadith is a *majhūl*, which is consistent with ʿIsmāʿīl’s inventing a source on the spot for a *faḍāʾil* hadith that he himself had cobbled together from elements obtained from his contemporaries in early Abbasid Iraq.

The problems with the *ʿisnāds* of this hadith only worsen thereafter. Al-Ḥākim al-Naysābūrī seemingly depicts “ʿAbd al-Raḥmān b. al-Ḍaḥḥāk” (sic) as the source or narrator of the hadith, but this is probably a scribal error: an earlier source (as in every other version) was probably dropped from the text in the same way as the “ʿabī” in “ʿAbd al-Raḥmān b. ʿabī al-Ḍaḥḥāk”, by some sloppy copyist or editor of the manuscript. That aside, then, who then did (the plausibly fictitious) ʿAbd al-Raḥmān transmit from, according to ʿIsmāʿīl? Most versions depict him transmitting directly from ʿAbd al-Raḥmān b. Muḥammad b. Zayd b. Judʿān, with one exception: in al-Ṭabarī’s *Taʾrīḫ*, Ibn ʿabī al-Ḍaḥḥāk transmits from ʿAbd al-Raḥmān b. Muḥammad via *rajul min qurayš* (i.e., another *majhūl*). Since this is absent from most other versions, and even from another manuscript of al-Ṭabarī,⁵¹⁴ this may be another error. Probably, *rajul min qurayš* was meant to refer to ʿAbd al-Raḥmān b. Muḥammad,⁵¹⁵ whom a confused scribe (aware of alternative transmissions of this hadith that explicitly name ʿAbd al-Raḥmān) readded into the *ʿisnād*.

Who then was ʿAbd al-Raḥmān b. Muḥammad b. Zayd b. Judʿān? Once again, we have a tradent about whom the prosopographical sources possess no data other than that found in the handful of *ʿisnāds* in which he appears.⁵¹⁶ According to al-Bukārī, he transmitted one hadith (about ʿĀʾiṣah’s nine *ḵilāl*) to Ibn ʿabī al-Ḍaḥḥāk, and another hadith (about Ibn ʿUmar saying *udḵul bi-salām*) to ʿAbū Jaʿfar al-Farrāʾ.⁵¹⁷ According to Ibn Ḥibbān, he also transmitted one hadith (about how the *mustašār* is a *muʾtaman*) to Dāwūd b. ʿabī ʿAbd Allāh,⁵¹⁸ and my own search of Hadith databases has yielded a

⁵¹³ Bukārī (ed. Ḳān), *al-Taʾrīḫ al-Kabīr*, V, p. 345, # 1096 (s.v. ʿAbd al-Raḥmān b. Muḥammad b. Zayd b. Judʿān); Ibn ʿabī Ḥātim, *Jarḥ*, V, pp. 246-247, # 1176; Ibn Ḥibbān (ed. Ḳān), *Tiḳāt*, V, p. 102 (s.v. ʿAbd al-Raḥmān b. Muḥammad b. Zayd b. Judʿān); *ibid.*, VIII, p. 371; ʿAḥmad b. ʿAlī al-Ḳaṭīb al-Baḡdādī (ed. Yaḥyā b. ʿAbd Allāh al-Bakrī al-Šahrī), *Ġunyāt al-Multamīs ʾĪdāḥ al-Multabīs* (Riyadh, KSA: Maktabat al-Ruṣd, 2001), pp. 264-265, # 327; Mizzī (ed. Maʾrūf), *Tahḍīb al-Kamāl*, XVII, pp. 394-395, # 3951; ʿAḥmad b. ʿAlī b. Ḥajar al-ʿAsqalānī, *Tahḍīb al-Tahḍīb*, vol. 6 (Beirut, Lebanon: Dār Ṣādir, 1968), pp. 267-268.

⁵¹⁴ Cf. Ṭabarī (ed. de Goeje), *Annales*, III, p. 1262, n. a.

⁵¹⁵ See the clue in Bukārī, cited below.

⁵¹⁶ The one exception is telling: Bukārī (ed. Ḳān), *al-Taʾrīḫ al-Kabīr*, V, p. 345, # 1096, seemingly has to surmise that he was from the Qurayš (ʿarā-hu al-qurašīyy).

⁵¹⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 345-346, # 1096.

⁵¹⁸ Ibn Ḥibbān (ed. Ḳān), *Tiḳāt*, VI, p. 283 (s.v. Dāwūd b. ʿabī ʿAbd Allāh).

second hadith (about a *waṣīfah* who *ʿabṭaʿat*) likewise transmitted to Dāwūd.⁵¹⁹ Finally, according to al-Mizzī (on the authority of al-Nasāʾī), he also transmitted something to al-Zuhrī under the name ʿAbd al-Raḥmān b. Muḥammad,⁵²⁰ although no indication of the hadith is given, and I have thus far failed to find any earlier source where al-Nasāʾī mentions this, nor any hadith in which someone called al-Zuhrī⁵²¹ transmits from anyone called ʿAbd al-Raḥmān b. Muḥammad other than ʿAbd al-Raḥmān b. Muḥammad b. ʿUmar b. ʿabī Salamah.⁵²² That aside, then, Ibn Judʿān seemingly only transmitted to three people, in the entire Hadith corpus: Ibn ʿabī al-Ḍaḥḥāk (a *majhūl* cited by ʿIsmāʿīl, a Kufan),⁵²³ ʿAbū Jaʿfar al-Farrāʾ (a Kufan),⁵²⁴ and Dāwūd b. ʿabī ʿAbd Allāh (yet another Kufan).⁵²⁵ Ibn Judʿān is thus also on the verge of being *majhūl*, being cited by only two known Kufans and a *majhūl*.⁵²⁶ It is thus conceivable that he is someone who was invented by a Kufan (most likely ʿIsmāʿīl), only to be borrowed in two or three other Kufan *ʿisnāds*. Of course, he may simply have been an extremely obscure figure.

Be that as it may, Ibn Judʿān is depicted as the source of this hadith in most versions, relating *about* rather than *from* ʿĀʾiṣah and her two interlocutors.⁵²⁷ The original version of the hadith was thus *munqaṭiʿ* (since Ibn Judʿān is not presented as a witness, nor as citing a witness), in addition to containing one definite *majhūl* (Ibn ʿabī al-Ḍaḥḥāk) and another conceivable *majhūl* (Ibn Judʿān).

And yet, there are still more problems with the *ʿisnāds*: in the earliest extant version of this hadith, recorded by Ibn ʿabī Šaybah, the source of the story is *not* Ibn Judʿān, but rather, some unnamed earlier source: “It was related to us that (*ḥuddiṭnā ʿanna*) ʿAbd

⁵¹⁹ Cited in the *Musnad* of ʿAbū Yaʿlā, al-Ṭabarānī’s *al-Muʿjam al-Kabīr*, and the *Ḥilyah* of ʿAbū Nuʿaym, with all three converging in their *ʿisnāds* upon Wakīʿ—Dāwūd—Ibn Judʿān—his grandmother (or in one version, some other unnamed tradent)—ʿUmm Salamah—the Prophet.

⁵²⁰ Mizzī (ed. Maʿrūf), *Tahḍīb al-Kamāl*, XVII, p. 395, # 3951.

⁵²¹ Probably Yaʿqūb b. Muḥammad al-Zuhrī, rather than Ibn Šihāb al-Zuhrī; see the following reference.

⁵²² Ibn ʿabī Ḥātim, *Jarḥ*, V, p. 281, # 1340; Ibn Ḥibbān (ed. Kān), *Ṭiqāt*, VII, p. 88; *ibid.*, VIII, p. 377.

⁵²³ See above.

⁵²⁴ Yūsuf b. ʿAbd Allāh b. ʿAbd al-Barr (ed. ʿAbd Allāh Marḥūl al-Sawāmah), *al-Istiḡnāʾ fī Maʿrifat al-Mašhūrīn min Ḥamalat al-ʿIlm bi-al-Kunā*, vol. 1 (Riyadh, KSA: Dār Ibn Taymiyyah, 1985), pp. 502-503, # 514: *kūfiyy ṭiqāh*.

⁵²⁵ This is implied in Ibn Ḥibbān (ed. Kān), *Ṭiqāt*, VI, p. 283 (where it is mentioned that Dāwūd transmitted to Wakīʿ and *al-kūfiyyūn*), and made explicit in Kaṭīb (ed. Šahrī), *Ġunyah*, p. 183.

⁵²⁶ He is called *majhūl* in Faḍl Allāh al-Jilānī, *Faḍl Allāh al-Šamad fī Tawḍīḥ al-ʿAdab al-Mufrad*, vol. 1 (Cairo, Egypt: al-Maṭbaʿah al-Salafiyyah wa-Maktabatu-hā, 1958), p. 276.

⁵²⁷ In al-Buḳārī (from both al-Muʿammal and ʿAḥmad), al-Ṭabarī, and ʿIsmāʿīl al-ʿAṣbahānī. Probably also in al-Buḳārī—Muḥammad b. Bišr, as recorded in al-Mizzī. For all of these, see above.

Allāh b. Ṣafwān and another with him came to ‘Ā’iṣah,” as Ibn Jud‘ān is made to say. Incredibly, this means that Ibn ‘abī Ṣaybah’s version derives from a definite *majhūl* (Ibn ‘abī al-Ḍaḥḥāk), from a conceivable *majhūl* (Ibn Jud‘ān), from yet another *majhūl*! This could be an error by Ibn ‘abī Ṣaybah or some later scribe, or it could reflect the very earliest version of the hadith; either way, those who transmitted this hadith from Ibn ‘abī Ṣaybah emended their versions to remove this particular ambiguity: al-Buḳārī simply has Ibn Jud‘ān as the source of the hadith,⁵²⁸ whereas al-Ṭabarānī (or an intermediary between him and Ibn ‘abī Ṣaybah) turned the unnamed *majhūl* into ‘Ā’iṣah herself (see below). Interestingly, in al-Mizzī’s quotation of al-Buḳārī, the *’isnād* has likewise been raised unto ‘Ā’iṣah: “‘Ā’iṣah reported this to us (*’aḳbarat-nā ‘ā’iṣah bi-hāḍā*),” as Ibn Jud‘ān is made to say.⁵²⁹ Thus, where al-Buḳārī seemingly emended Ibn ‘abī Ṣaybah to remove an unnamed *majhūl* from behind Ibn Jud‘ān, al-Mizzī (or some intermediary in the many centuries between him and al-Buḳārī) then re-extended the *’isnād* back behind Ibn Jud‘ān, this time explicitly back to ‘Ā’iṣah.

In one version recorded by al-Buḳārī, however, the source of the hadith has been transformed into a completely different person: ‘Abd al-Raḥmān b. Muḥammad b. Zayd b. Jud‘ān has become ‘Abd al-Raḥmān b. Muḥammad b. Jubayr b. Muṭ‘im, presumably at the hands of one of the intermediaries between al-Buḳārī and ‘Ismā‘īl (i.e., Sa‘īd b. Sulaymān or ‘Abbād b. ‘Awwām).⁵³⁰ As it happens, Jubayr b. Muṭ‘im was remembered as someone to whom ‘Ā’iṣah was initially engaged (as in the tradition of Muḥammad b. ‘Amr—see below), so this change is probably not a coincidence: what we have here is the grandson of ‘Ā’iṣah’s ex-fiancé attesting to her virtues.⁵³¹ It is easy to imagine a storyteller or tradent delighting in such a connection, or thinking that such a connection adds weight to the story: even the family of ‘Ā’iṣah’s *ex* related her virtues, after all. Despite such an appeal, this version never caught on. Moreover, this grandson was probably invented by whoever was responsible for the alteration of the relevant

⁵²⁸ Buḳārī (ed. Ḳān), *al-Ta’rīk al-Kabīr*, III, p. 345, # 1096.

⁵²⁹ Mizzī (ed. Ma’rūf), *Tahḍīb al-Kamāl*, XVII, pp. 394, # 3951.

⁵³⁰ Buḳārī (ed. Ḳān), *al-Ta’rīk al-Kabīr*, III, p. 345, # 1096; also see Mizzī (ed. Ma’rūf), *Tahḍīb al-Kamāl*, XVII, p. 394, # 3951.

⁵³¹ Buḳārī (ed. Ḳān), *al-Ta’rīk al-Kabīr*, III, p. 345, # 1096; also see Mizzī (ed. Ma’rūf), *Tahḍīb al-Kamāl*, XVII, p. 394, # 3951.

ʿisnād: he appears in no other source that I have been able to find.⁵³² Thus, in this version of the hadith, we have yet another *majhūl* in the *ʿisnād*.

Finally, in the version recorded by al-Ṭabarānī, the *ʿisnād* has been raised: where most versions of this hadith depict Ibn Judʿān as the source of the story, al-Ṭabarānī has him relate from (ʿan) ʿĀʾiṣah.⁵³³ Given that al-Ṭabarānī’s version purports to derive ultimately via either Ibn ʿabī Ṣaybah or ʿAbū Ṣihāb, and given also that Ibn ʿabī Ṣaybah’s extant version of this hadith is unraised,⁵³⁴ and an alternative transmission from ʿAbū Ṣihāb is likewise unraised,⁵³⁵ the raising of al-Ṭabarānī’s version presumably occurred between them and him.

In sum, we have a series of SSs that attribute the hadith of ʿĀʾiṣah’s nine *kilāl* to the putative Kufan CL ʿIsmāʿīl b. ʿabī Kālid (d. 146/763-764), although an ICMA thereof suggests that some of them are probably false or misleading, disguising later borrowings or contaminations. It is plausible that the hadith does originate with ʿIsmāʿīl, but this cannot be rigorously confirmed. The original version of the hadith (whether originating with ʿIsmāʿīl, or a later tradent from whom others borrowed) claimed that ʿIsmāʿīl received the hadith from Ibn ʿabī al-Ḍaḥḥāk (a *majhūl* who left no other trace within the extant Hadith corpus), who in turn allegedly received it from Ibn Judʿān (a conceivable *majhūl*, cited by only two non-*majhūl* tradents within the extant Hadith corpus), who in turn related the story about ʿĀʾiṣah from no specified source (making the hadith *munqaṭiʿ* to boot). Subsequent tradents then corrupted or interpolated the *ʿisnād*, variously adding, subtracting, or substituting early tradents in the earliest segment.

When the extant transmissions of this hadith are collated and compared, the following urtext (albeit with some uncertain wordings) obtains:

...ʿabdi al-raḥmāni bni ʿabī al-ḍaḥḥākⁱⁿ ʿan ʿabdi al-raḥmāni bni muḥammadⁱ
bni zaydi bni judʿān^a [[qāla daḡala]/[ʿanna]] ʿabd[u/a] allāhi [bn^a ṣafwān^a]
wa-ʾāḡar[u/a] maʿa-hu [ʿalā/ʾatayā] ʿāʾiṣat^a fa-qālat ʿāʾiṣat^u yā fulān^u
[hal/hallā/ʾa-]samiʿta ḥadīṡ^a ḥafṣat^a [fa-]qāla [la-hā] naʿam yā ʿumma al-

⁵³² Thus, a Shamela search yielded only al-Buḡārī, and al-Mizzī citing al-Buḡārī. An editor’s footnote in one edition of the *Dalāʾil* of al-Bayhaqī mentions a certain “Ḥuṣayn b. ʿAbd al-Raḥmān b. Muḥammad b. Jubayr b. Muṭʿim” cited by Ibn Ḥanbal, but this is a typographical error on the part of said editor: the original *ʿisnād* in the *Musnad* of Ibn Ḥanbal has Ḥuṣayn b. ʿAbd al-Raḥmān *from* (ʿan) Muḥammad b. Jubayr b. Muṭʿim, not *the son of* (bn) Muḥammad b. Jubayr b. Muṭʿim.

⁵³³ Ṭabarānī (ed. Salāfi), *al-Muʿjam al-Kabīr*, XXIII, p. 31, # 77.

⁵³⁴ Ibn ʿabī Ṣaybah (ed. ʿUsāmah), *Muṣannaʿ*, X, pp. 527-528, # 32877.

⁵³⁵ Buḡārī (ed. Dabbāsī), *al-Taʾrīkh al-Kabīr*, VI, p. 442.

mu'minīn^a fa-qāla la-hā 'abd^u allāhⁱ bn^u ṣafwān^a wa-mā dāka yā 'umma al-mu'minīn^a qālat kilāl^{un} fiyya tis^{'un} lam [t/y]akun fī 'aḥadⁱⁿ min^a al-nisa'ⁱ 'illa mā 'atā allāh^u maryam^a bint^a 'imrān^a wa-allāhⁱ mā 'aqūlu hādā [fakr^{an}/'annī 'aftakiru] 'alā 'aḥadⁱⁿ min [ṣawāḥibī/ṣawāḥibātī] fa-qāla la-hā 'abd^u allāhⁱ bn^u ṣafwān^a wa-mā hunna yā 'umma al-mu'minīn^a qālat nazala al-malak^u bi-ṣūratī wa-tazawwaja-nī rasūl^u allāhⁱ li-sab^{'i} sinīn^a wa-'uhdītu 'ilay-hi li-tis^{'i} sinīn^a wa-tazawwaja-nī bikr^{an} lam [yašrak/yušrik]-hu fiyya 'aḥad^{un} min^a al-nāsⁱ wa-kāna ya'tī-hi al-waḥy^u wa-'anā wa-huwa fī lihāfⁱⁿ wāḥidⁱⁿ wa-kuntu min 'aḥabbⁱ al-nāsⁱ 'ilay-hi wa-nazala fiyya 'āyāt^{un} min^a al-qur'ānⁱ kādatⁱ al-'ummat^u ['an] tahlik[u/a] fī-hinna wa-ra'aytu jibrīl^a wa-lam yarahū 'aḥad^{un} min nisā'ⁱ-hi ḡayrī wa-qubīḍa fī baytī lam yali-hi 'aḥad^{un} ḡayr^u al-malakⁱ wa-'anā.

Again, however, some of the corroborated wordings underpinning this reconstructed urtext may be the result of contamination or borrowing, given the problems mentioned above.

There is no question about pushing this hadith back into the Umayyad period; in the best-case scenario, it can be reconstructed as far back as 'Ismā'īl, operating in the first decade or so of Abbasid Kufah. Since 'Ismā'īl's sources are a string of definite and conceivable *majhūlūn*, it is plausible (if indeed he was the hadith's creator) that he invented Ibn 'abī al-Ḍaḥḥāk (and possibly even Ibn Jud'ān) on the fly when he first formulated the narrative. Moreover, the fact that this narrative contains the distinctive elemental sequence usually associated with 'Ismā'īl's contemporary Hišām b. 'Urwah ('Ā'īṣah's being married at seven and consummated in marriage at nine), along with the fact that Hišām just so happened to be in Kufah at exactly the same time, is consistent with 'Ismā'īl's having borrowed these elements from Hišām when he cobbled together his *faḍā'il* hadith.

In short, I cannot disagree with al-Dāraquṭnī's judgement on the matter: "'Ismā'īl b. 'abī Kālid transmitted this hadith, from 'Abd al-Raḥmān b. 'abī al-Ḍaḥḥāk, from 'Abd al-Raḥmān b. Muḥammad b. Zayd b. Jud'ān, from 'Ā'īṣah, but there is nothing sound about it (*wa-laysa fī-hā šay' ṣaḥīḥ*)."⁵³⁶

Addendum: related *faḍā'il* hadiths

⁵³⁶ 'Alī b. 'Umar al-Dāraquṭnī (annotated by Muḥammad b. Šāliḥ b. Muḥammad), *al-'Ilal*, vol. 15 (Dammam, KSA: Dār Ibn al-Jawzī, 1427 AH), p. 166.

'Ismā'īl's list of special attributes bestowed upon 'Ā'ishah was not the only one circulating in Kufah in the early Abbasid period: al-Ṭabarānī also recorded a list of seven special attributes, supported by a distinctively Kufan SS ('Abū Ḥanīfah—al-Šaybānī—al-Ša'bī—Masrūq) unto 'Ā'ishah,⁵³⁷ and al-Dāraquṭnī recorded an additional, similar Kufan SS ('Abū Ḥanīfah—'Awn—al-Ša'bī) for the same hadith.⁵³⁸ This hadith shares five elements with 'Ismā'īl's, often with very similar wordings: 'Ā'ishah was the only virgin wife; revelations came whilst 'Ā'ishah was alone with the Prophet in a blanket; 'Ā'ishah was the most-beloved; a revelation exonerated 'Ā'ishah, at a time of communal strife; and 'Ā'ishah was present when the Prophet died.

Meanwhile, another list of nine special attributes—which also compares 'Ā'ishah to Mary—is ascribed via two Baghdadian-Kufan SSs (Bišr b. al-Walīd—'Abū Ḥaṣṣ 'Umar—al-Šaybānī, on the one hand; and 'Aḥmad b. Yaḥyá al-Sūsī—'Abū Badr Šujā'—Ḥaṣṣ al-Ḥalabī, on the other) unto a putative Basran CL named 'Alī b. Zayd b. Jud'ān, who allegedly received this list from 'Ā'ishah via a relative.⁵³⁹ The similarities are striking: with 'Alī's hadith and 'Ismā'īl's, we have two lists of 'Ā'ishah's special attributes, both transmitted from Kufans, both comprising nine attributes, both comparing her to Mary, and both claiming to derive via someone called Ibn Zayd b. Jud'ān. They even share five out of nine elements, often with very similar wordings: the angel brought 'Ā'ishah's image; 'Ā'ishah was the only virgin wife; 'Ā'ishah was present when the Prophet died; revelations came whilst 'Ā'ishah was alone with the Prophet in a blanket; and a revelation exonerated her.

Meanwhile, yet another list of *ten* special attributes is recorded by Ibn Sa'd and ascribed via a Basro-Madinan SS (Ḥajjāj b. Nuṣayr—'Īsá b. Maymūn—al-Qāsim b. Muḥammad) unto 'Ā'ishah,⁵⁴⁰ which shares with 'Ismā'īl's hadith an introduction in which someone is prompted by 'Ā'ishah to ask her about her special attributes, along with five other elements: 'Ā'ishah was the only virgin wife; a revelation exonerated

⁵³⁷ Ṭabarānī (ed. Salafī), *al-Mu'jam al-Kabīr*, XXIII, p. 30, # 75.

⁵³⁸ Dāraquṭnī, *ʿIlal*, XV, p. 166.

⁵³⁹ 'Abū Ya'lá (ed. 'Asad), *Musnad*, VIII, pp. 90-91, # 4626/270; 'Ājurri (ed. Ibn Muḥammad), *Šarī'ah*, III, pp. 448-449, # 1907/672; *ibid.*, p. 484, # 1961/1256; 'Ismā'īl al-'Aṣbahānī (ed. Ibn Maḥmūd), *Hujjah*, II, pp. 372-373, # 369-370; 'Abd al-Karīm b. Muḥammad b. 'Abd al-Karīm al-Rāfi'ī (ed. 'Azīz Allāh al-'Utāridī), *al-Tadwīn fī 'Akbār Qazwīn*, vol. 3 (Beirut, Lebanon: Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyyah, 1987), pp. 468-469; 'Umar b. 'Aḥmad b. al-'Adīm (ed. Suhayl Zakkār), *Buḡyat al-Ṭalab fī Ta'rīk Ḥalab*, vol. 6 (Beirut, Lebanon: Dār al-Fikr, 1988), p. 2856. Cf. Ṭabarānī (ed. Salafī), *al-Mu'jam al-Kabīr*, XXIII, pp. 30-31, # 76, in which *tis* has been changed to *sitt*.

⁵⁴⁰ Ibn Sa'd (ed. Brockelmann), *Biographien*, VIII, pp. 43-44.

‘Ā’iṣah; Gabriel brought ‘Ā’iṣah’s image; revelations came whilst ‘Ā’iṣah was alone with the Prophet; and ‘Ā’iṣah was present when the Prophet died, and he was buried in her house.

Finally, as we have already seen, yet another list of special attributes was transmitted by the Kufan CL ‘Abū ‘Awānah al-Waḍḍāḥ (d. 176/792), on the authority of his Kufan predecessor ‘Abd al-Malik b. ‘Umayr, from ‘Ā’iṣah.⁵⁴¹ All six of the attributes in ‘Abū ‘Awānah’s hadith are shared by ‘Ismā‘īl’s hadith: ‘Ā’iṣah was married at age six; the angel brought ‘Ā’iṣah’s image; ‘Ā’iṣah’s marriage was consummated at age nine; ‘Ā’iṣah alone saw Gabriel; ‘Ā’iṣah was the most-beloved; and ‘Ā’iṣah was present when the Prophet died.

‘Abū Ḥanīfah	‘Alī b. Zayd	‘Abū ‘Awānah	Ibn Sa‘d	‘Ismā‘īl
			Conversation	Conversation with two others
Seven attributes	Nine attributes	Attributes [no specified number]	Ten attributes	Nine attributes
	Comparison to Mary			Comparison to Mary
[1] She was the most-beloved	[1] The angel Gabriel brought her image to the Prophet	[1] She was married at seven	[1] She was the Prophet’s only virgin wife	[1] An angel brought her image to the Prophet
[2] Her father was the most-beloved	[2] She was the Prophet’s only virgin wife	[2] An angel brought her image to the Prophet	[2] She was the only daughter of emigrants whom the Prophet married	[2] She was married at seven
[3] She was the Prophet’s only virgin wife	[3] She was with the Prophet when he died	[3] The marriage was consummated at nine	[3] God exonerated her	[3] The marriage was consummated at nine
[4] The revelation came whilst she was with	[4] The Prophet was buried in her house	[4] She alone saw Gabriel	[4] Gabriel brought her image to the Prophet from Heaven, in silk,	[4] She was the Prophet’s only virgin wife

⁵⁴¹ See the section on ‘Abū ‘Awānah al-Waḍḍāḥ, above.

the Prophet in a blanket			and he was informed that she would be his wife	
[5] She stayed with the Prophet for two days and nights per week	[5] The angels surrounded her house	[5] She was the most-beloved, and her father was the most-beloved	[5] She used to wash whilst sharing a single vessel with the Prophet	[5] The revelation came whilst she was with the Prophet in a blanket
[6] A revelation exonerated her, when a group almost destroyed her	[6] The revelation came whilst she was with the Prophet in a blanket	[6] She was with the Prophet when he died, with the angels	[6] The Prophet used to pray whilst she was lying in front of him	[6] She was the most-beloved
[7] She was with the Prophet when he died	[7] She was the daughter of the Prophet's successor and friend		[7] The revelation came whilst she was alone with the Prophet	[7] A revelation exonerated her, when the community was almost destroyed
	[8] A revelation exonerated her		[8] The Prophet was resting against her when he died	[8] She saw Gabriel
	[9] She was created good, and blessed		[9] The Prophet died on the night that would have been her round	[9] She was with the Prophet when he died, with the angels
			[10] He was buried in her house	

The hadith recorded by Ibn Sa'd cannot be subjected to an ICMA, since I was able to find no parallel transmissions thereof. Additionally, the alleged Basran provenance of the hadith is less expected than a Kufan origin (see below), which raises the possibility that the hadith is a Basran dive.

The hadith transmitted via 'Abū Ḥanīfah likewise cannot be subjected to an ICMA, since I was only able to find a single *matn* and two differing *'isnāds* therefor. Based on the Criterion of Dissimilarity, however, we can infer which of these *'isnāds* is earlier

than the other: where one version has al-Ša‘bī—Masrūq—‘Ā’iṣah, the other has omitted the superfluous tradent Masrūq (since al-Ša‘bī was remembered as having transmitted from ‘Ā’iṣah directly). In other words, the latter has a shorter *’isnād*, whilst retaining connectedness therein—and, given that traditionists came to prize the shortest possible *’isnāds*, it more likely that the longer *’isnād* was shortened by a tradent in the course of transmission, rather than *vice versa*. In short, the less elegant or economical *’isnād*—the *’isnād* that accords less to later ideals and preferences—is more likely to be the original.

Something can also be said about the probable provenance of this hadith. The fact that it reduces in both *’isnāds* to a string of early Kufans is consistent with the hadith’s having originated in Umayyad-era or early Abbasid-era Kufah, as indeed is the content: Kufah was the centre of Shi’ism in the 8th Century CE, which would make Kufah the place where proto-Sunnīs had the greatest need for *faḍā’il* of ‘Ā’iṣah at that time. In other words, the hadith is exactly the sort of thing that we would expect to be created by proto-Sunnī Kufans in the 8th Century CE—and, given other evidence concerning the mass-creation of Hadith in this period,⁵⁴² we have all the more reason to suspect the falsity of the hadith’s ascription all the way back to ‘Ā’iṣah. Again, I must concur with al-Dāraqūṭnī’s judgement on the matter:

’Abū Ḥanīfah transmitted this hadith, but it varied from him (*wa-iḳṭalafa ‘an-hu*): ‘Abd Allāh b. Buzay’ transmitted it, from ’Abū Ḥanīfah, from al-Šaybānī, from al-Ša‘bī, from Masrūq, from ‘Ā’iṣah; but ’Iṣḥāq al-’Azraq contradicted him (*wa-kāḷafa-hu*); he transmitted it from ’Abū Ḥanīfah, from ‘Awn b. ‘Abd Allāh, from al-Ša‘bī, from ‘Ā’iṣah. There is nothing sound about it (*wa-laysa fī-hā šay’ yaṣiḥḥu*).⁵⁴³

More can be said about the hadith transmitted via ‘Alī b. Zayd, of which there are seven versions (discounting duplicates), with SSs that converge upon two putative PCLs: the Baghdadian tradent Bišr b. al-Walīd (d. 238/853),⁵⁴⁴ and the Baghdadian tradent ’Aḥmad b. Yaḥyá al-Sūsī (d. 263/876).⁵⁴⁵ As it happens, the versions attributed via each PCL are more similar to each other than they are to those attributed via the other PCL: where all the Bišr versions have ‘Alī b. Zayd relating the hadith from his grandmother

⁵⁴² See the previous chapter of the present work.

⁵⁴³ Dāraqūṭnī, *Ilal*, XV, p. 166.

⁵⁴⁴ Ḍahabī (ed. ’Arna’ūṭ *et al.*), *Siyar*, X, pp. 673-676.

⁵⁴⁵ Kaṭīb (ed. Ma’rūf), *Ta’rīḳ Madīnat al-Salām*, VI, pp. 444-445, # 2946.

(*jaddah*), all the 'Aḥmad versions have him relating it from either his mother (*'umm*) or his father (*'ab*); where all the Bišr versions have *mā 'uṭṭiyat-hā*, all the 'Aḥmad versions have *lam tuṭṭi-hi/yaṭṭi-hi/yaṭṭi-hinna*; where all the Bišr versions have *imrā'ah*, all the 'Aḥmad versions have *al-nisā'*; where all the Bišr versions have *rāḥati-hi*, all the 'Aḥmad versions have *kaffi-hi*; where most the Bišr versions have *mā tazawwaja*, all the 'Aḥmad versions have *lam yatazawwaj*; where all the Bišr versions have *'in kāna al-waḥy la-yanzilu*, all the 'Aḥmad versions have *kāna yanzilu al-waḥy*; where all the Bišr versions have *'innī*, all the 'Aḥmad versions have *'anā*; all the Bišr versions lack *fī al-qur'ān*, which is present in all the 'Aḥmad versions; where all the Bišr versions have *kulīqtu*, all the 'Aḥmad versions have *ju'iltu*; and so on.

In other words, an analysis of the *matns* of these hadiths yields two clusters of reports that each derive from a recent common ancestor, both of which in turn share an ultimate common ancestor; and as it happens, this is exactly what the *'isnād* bundle depicts, with two PCLs (Bišr and 'Aḥmad) and a CL ('Alī b. Zayd). We thus have a reason to accept that the original version derives from 'Alī b. Zayd b. Jud'ān, a Basran traditionist (or possibly, a Meccan who moved to Basrah), who died 131/748-749.⁵⁴⁶ Thus, (the underlying redaction of) the hadith can seemingly be traced at least as far back as someone operating in Basrah during the late Umayyad period.

This has significance for 'Ismā'il's hadith: 'Alī was operating in Iraq before Hišām settled in the region and, as it happens, 'Alī's version of the *faḍā'il* hadith lacks the marital-age elements associated with Hišām; by contrast, 'Ismā'il was operating in Iraq for a decade or more longer than 'Alī, contemporaneously with Hišām, and, as it happens, 'Ismā'il's version of the *faḍā'il* hadith incorporates the marital-age elements associated with Hišām. In other words, 'Alī's hadith can be understood to reflect an earlier phase of the *faḍā'il* material about 'Ā'ishah in Iraq, before the arrival of Hišām and his dissemination of the marital-age elements. Meanwhile, 'Ismā'il's hadith can be understood as an updated version of 'Alī's hadith (or the material embodied therein), retaining most of the elements and the attribution of the hadith via a certain Ibn Zayd b. Jud'ān, but incorporating some other elements, including two from Hišām.

⁵⁴⁶ Ibn 'Adī (ed. Sarsāwī), *Kāmil*, VIII, p. 137, # 1354, states that he was *makkiyy*, *nazala al-baṣrah*, but 'Aḥmad b. 'Alī b. Manjuwayh al-'Aṣbahānī (ed. 'Abd Allāh al-Layṭī), *Rijāl Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, vol. 2 (Beirut, Lebanon: Dār al-Ma'rifah, 1987), p. 56, # 1138, states that he was *al-baṣriyy*, *wa-yuqālu al-makkiyy nazala al-baṣrah*, seemingly regarding his Meccan origin with some doubt. Most of the time (e.g., in the various reports cited by Ibn 'Adī), he is simply called Basran. Likewise, Ḍahabī (ed. 'Arna'ūṭ *et al.*), *Siyar*, V, pp. 206-208, only calls him *al-baṣriyy*.

There are several problems with the attribution of ‘Alī b. Zayd’s hadith all the way back to him, however. Firstly, ‘Alī was operating in Basrah, yet the hadith (with its defence of ‘Ā’iṣah, evidently against proto-Šī‘ī criticisms) better fits a Kufan context—and, as it happens, all versions of this hadith (not to mention related hadiths, like those of ‘Ismā‘īl and ‘Abū Ḥanīfah) derive via Kufans. This is consistent with the hadith’s originating in Kufah, not Basrah.

Secondly, ‘Alī b. Zayd was reportedly a Šī‘ī,⁵⁴⁷ which is extremely suspicious: this is the sort of hadith that we would expect a Šī‘ī to reject, not disseminate. This makes it look like someone ascribed the hadith via ‘Alī b. Zayd *post facto*, to give the hadith more legitimacy or polemical utility against Šī‘īs (i.e., as a kind of Trojan horse).

Finally, the two PCL sub-traditions comprising the broader tradition are extremely similar (indeed, mostly identical) in wording, which would suggest a very *recent* ultimate common ancestor for both sub-traditions—yet the *’isnāds* depict a century or more of transmission between the CL and his two PCLs, i.e., a very *distant* ultimate common ancestor.⁵⁴⁸ To put things into perspective, there are far more differences and paraphrases between Ibn Rāhwayh (d. 238/853) and Ibn Ḥanbal (d. 241/855)’s respective transmissions of the Ḳawlah hadith directly from Muḥammad b. Bišr (d. 203/818-819)⁵⁴⁹ than there are between Bišr (d. 238/853) and ‘Aḥmad (d. 263/876)’s respective transmissions of this *faḍā’il* hadith all the way back from ‘Alī b. Zayd (d. 131/748-749). Not only did the former transmission (from Ibn Bišr to both Ibn Rāhwayh and Ibn Ḥanbal) take place for only half a century, it also occurred from the turn of the 9th Century CE onwards, when the transmission and preservation of Hadith in writing was becoming normalised. By contrast, the latter transmission (from ‘Alī to both Bišr and ‘Aḥmad) occurred for a century or more, beginning in an era of heavy paraphrastic transmission (i.e., the middle of the 8th Century CE). The implication is clear: if Bišr and ‘Aḥmad’s *’isnāds* were genuine, such that their respective versions truly derived via a century of transmission (from the end of the Umayyad period to the

⁵⁴⁷ Ibn ‘Adī (ed. Sarsāwī), *Kāmil*, VIII, p. 139, citing Yazīd b. Zuray‘: *kāna rāfiḍiyyan*. *Ibid.*, p. 153: *kāna yuḡālī fī al-taṣayyū’*. Ḍahabī (ed. ‘Arna’ūṭ *et al.*), *Siyar*, V, p. 206: *taṣayyū’ qalīl fī-hi*. *Ibid.*, p. 207, citing al-‘Ijlī: *kāna yataṣayya’u*.

⁵⁴⁸ Thus, we have Bišr b. al-Walīd (d. 238/853) the Baghdadian, from ‘Abū Ḥaṣṣ ‘Umar (fl. late 8th C. CE) the Kufan, from Sulaymān al-Šaybānī (d. 129-142/746-760) the Kufan, from ‘Alī b. Zayd b. Jud‘ān (d. 131/748-749) the Basran; and ‘Aḥmad b. Yaḥyā al-Sūsī (d. 263/876) the Baghdadian, from ‘Abū Badr Šujā‘ b. al-Walīd (d. 204-205/819-821) the Kufo-Baghdadian, from Ḥaṣṣ al-Ḥalabī, a *mawla* of the Sakūn (and a *majhūl*), from ‘Alī b. Zayd b. Jud‘ān (d. 131/748-749) the Basran.

⁵⁴⁹ See the section on Muḥammad b. Bišr, above.

middle of the 9th Century CE), then it would be reasonable to expect far greater divergences between their respective versions.⁵⁵⁰

We thus have multiple reasons to reject the ascription of this hadith back to ‘Alī b. Zayd, which also robs us of the neat chronology outlined above (*vis-à-vis* ‘Ismā‘īl’s version). The attribution of the two versions of the hadith to Bišr and ‘Aḥmad respectively still seems secure, but from thereon backwards, the *matns* imply a much more recent common ancestor than ‘Alī, and non-Šī‘ī Kufan one at that. From Bišr and ‘Aḥmad backwards, the relevant *‘isnāds* cannot be trusted.

The aforementioned chronology is salvageable, however, provided we assume that Bišr’s transmission from ‘Abū Ḥaṣṣ ‘Umar b. ‘Abd al-Raḥmān (fl. late 8th C. CE) is genuine, and that the latter’s transmission from ‘Abū ‘Ishāq Sulaymān b. ‘abī Sulaymān al-Šaybānī (d. 129-142/746-760) is genuine. If some earlier version of this hadith does indeed derive from al-Šaybānī, as Bišr claimed, then we would still have a version of the *faḍā’il* hadith slightly earlier than ‘Ismā‘īl’s, and plausibly from the late Umayyad period as well: al-Šaybānī was reportedly born when Companions such as Ibn ‘Umar and Jābir were still alive (i.e., the 690s CE at the latest), and died in 129/746-747, or 138/755-756, or 139/756-757, or 142/759-760,⁵⁵¹ all of which places him at least slightly earlier than ‘Ismā‘īl (d. 146/763-764). Thus, if some version of the hadith goes back to al-Šaybānī, it can still be understood as an earlier version than ‘Ismā‘īl’s, which may also explain the absence of Hišām’s distinctive elements therefrom. (Unlike in the case of ‘Alī b. Zayd, however, al-Šaybānī may have lived long enough to meet Hišām in Iraq, so the chronology is not as neat as before.)

Why should we believe that some version of the hadith does indeed go back to al-Šaybānī? There are several reasons, all of which are admittedly weak. Firstly, al-Šaybānī is cited in Bišr’s *‘isnād* therefor. Secondly, al-Šaybānī was Kufan, which matches the probable context of the hadith’s creation. Thirdly, al-Šaybānī is also cited in the *‘isnād* for the earlier version of the two *faḍā’il* hadiths ascribed via ‘Abū Ḥanīfah (see above), which is consistent with his being the disseminator of several different

⁵⁵⁰ For a similar point (albeit concerning ascriptions to Followers and Companions), again see Mitter, cited above.

⁵⁵¹ Muḥammad b. Ḥibbān al-Bustī (ed. Majdī b. Maṣṣūr b. Sayyid al-Šūrā), *Mašāhīr ‘Ulamā’ al-‘Amṣār* (Beirut, Lebanon: Dār al-Kutub al-‘Ilmiyyah, 1995), p. 137, # 844; ‘Ijlī (ed. Qal‘ajī), *Tiqāt*, pp. 202-203, # 612; Ḍahabī (ed. ‘Arna’ūṭ *et al.*), *Siyar*, VI, pp. 193-195.

versions of the hadith: one via al-Ša'bī and Masrūq unto 'Ā'īṣah, and another via 'Alī b. Zayd and his relative unto 'Ā'īṣah.

But all of that is *ad hoc*: the attribution of Bišr's version of the hadith to al-Šaybānī may simply be the product of a Kufan retrojection to a suitable local authority, and the appearance of al-Šaybānī in the *'isnād* of a similar hadith may simply be the product of later borrowing and suppression or error amongst the transmitters and redactors of these hadiths. All we can say for sure is that the *faḍā'il* hadith probably originated in Kufah, somewhere between middle and the end of the 8th Century CE.

There is however a final consideration that strengthens the idea that 'Ismā'īl's version of the hadith is later than the other two attributed to 'Abū Ḥanīfah and 'Alī b. Zayd: 'Ismā'īl's is noticeably more elaborate, framing the exposition of 'Ā'īṣah's nine special attributes in a discussion that arose when 'Abd Allāh b. Šafwān and someone else visited 'Ā'īṣah. In other words, we have a clear instance of what Schacht described as the insertion of "spurious circumstantial details", intended "to provide an authentic touch" to a fabricated hadith.⁵⁵² (Incidentally, the employment of such techniques by 'Ismā'īl makes him come across as more of a storyteller than a simple tradent.) Since elaboration (rather than abbreviation) is the norm in the transmission of traditions, such that details in reports accumulate over time, the more detailed version of any set of reports is more likely to reflect a later formulation, whereas a simpler version is more likely to reflect an earlier formulation, generally speaking—this is the textual-critical principle of *lectio brevior potior*.⁵⁵³ We thus have another reason to think that 'Ismā'īl's version of the *faḍā'il* hadith about 'Ā'īṣah is later than those ascribed to both 'Abū Ḥanīfah and 'Alī b. Zayd. And, if this version attributed to 'Ismā'īl was indeed formulated later than the other two, and this version attributed to 'Ismā'īl truly derives from 'Ismā'īl (d. 146/763-764), then it follows that the other two versions must be earlier still—plausibly earlier than Hišām's settlement in Iraq (c. 754 CE). Provided all of that stands, we again have a chronology that explains the absence of the distinctive marital-age elements in the two hadiths ascribed via 'Abū Ḥanīfah and 'Alī b. Zayd, and the presence of said elements in the hadith of 'Ismā'īl: the former two were formulated before the spread of Hišām's distinctive marital-age elements in Kufah, whereas the latter was formulated thereafter, incorporating these newly-available elements.

⁵⁵² Schacht, *Origins*, 97, 153, 156, 157, 160, 266-267.

⁵⁵³ See Pavlovitch, *Formation*, 37-39.

Finally, a form-critical analysis of all of these *faḍā'il* hadiths together can yield some deeper conclusions about their pre-history (i.e., beyond their *'isnāds*). As we have seen, their *matns* exhibit a huge amount of overlap in terms of elements and even wordings, which cannot be a coincidence: all of these hadiths must share some kind of common origin. If it is ruled out that 'Ā'īshah herself went around constantly declaring contradictory and ever-changing lists of her own (six, or seven, or nine, or ten) virtues, the heavy overlap between these hadiths has to be explained by widespread borrowing and contamination on the part of those involved in their formulation or dissemination, and/or by the fact that these hadiths represent various combinations of a common pool of *faḍā'il* material that was circulating at least as early as the middle of the 8th Century CE. This kind of creation and remixing of material immediately suggests the agency of popular, oral storytellers and preachers in the dissemination of these hadiths.⁵⁵⁴

Since the material is attested most densely for Kufah and perfectly fits a Kufan context, it seems probable that it originated in Kufah in particular. Consequently, the claims of two of the hadiths in question—that ascribed to Ibn Jud'ān, and that recorded by Ibn Sa'd—to derive via independent Basran and Basro-Madinan lines of transmission back to 'Ā'īshah must be discarded: the shared elements and wordings cannot have arisen independently and must share a single source, and if that source was the storytellers and preachers of Kufah, such *'isnāds*—which ultimately or completely bypass Kufan sources—must be false.

'Abū Ḥujayyah al-'Ajlaḥ (d. 145/762-763 or later)

I have collated four reports ascribed to the Kufan tradent and putative CL 'Abū Ḥujayyah al-'Ajlaḥ b. 'Abd Allāh al-Kindī, recorded by Ibn Sa'd,⁵⁵⁵ Ibn Rāhwayh (twice),⁵⁵⁶ and al-Ṭabarānī.⁵⁵⁷ These reports (all of which derive from Kufan SSs) are extremely divergent: Ibn Sa'd's version lacks the full 'marriage' element, and the 'consummation' element altogether; the 'marriage' and 'consummation' elements in

⁵⁵⁴ For more on the early storytellers, see the previous chapter of the present work.

⁵⁵⁵ Ibn Sa'd (ed. Brockelmann), *Biographien*, VIII, 40.

⁵⁵⁶ Ibn Rāhwayh (ed. Balūšī), *Musnad*, II, p. 650, # 1238/694; *ibid.*, p. 1033, # 1784/1242.

⁵⁵⁷ Ṭabarānī (ed. Salafī), *al-Mu'jam al-Kabīr*, XXIII, p. 26, # 62.

Ibn Rāhwayh's version (especially the relatively uncommon *daḡala bi-hā* in the latter) are more similar to those in various transmissions from the Kufan tradents 'Isrā'īl⁵⁵⁸ and Šarīk,⁵⁵⁹ both on the authority of 'Abū 'Ishāq, than they are to al-Ṭabarānī's version; and both Ibn Sa'd and al-Ṭabarānī's versions are together more similar, *at a very general level*, to the tradition of the Kufan CL Muḥammad b. 'Amr (in particular, concerning 'Ā'īshah's engagement to Jubayr),⁵⁶⁰ than they are to Ibn Rāhwayh's version. Still, the short account of 'Ā'īshah's engagement to Jubayr shared by Ibn Sa'd and al-Ṭabarānī's reports is distinctive, which is consistent with their common ascription to al-'Ajlaḥ: this part of the hadith at least plausibly derives therefrom, despite considerable variation in the wording of the extant versions. The genesis of the original form of this hadith as early as al-'Ajlaḥ is also consistent with the *munqaṭi'* ascription shared by Ibn Sa'd and al-Ṭabarānī's versions, against which Ibn Rāhwayh's version stands out as secondary.

What then was the original form of this hadith? Did al-'Ajlaḥ include therein a mention of 'Ā'īshah's marital age, or are these later accretions, contaminations, or interpolations? At first glance, it might seem as though the first scenario is beyond dispute—after all, two of the three transmissions from al-'Ajlaḥ manifest such. And yet, as noted already, Ibn Rāhwayh's version (1) is *muttaṣil* (which already makes it seem secondary), (2) lacks the distinctive account of 'Ā'īshah's engagement to Jubayr (which is the only component that makes an origin with al-'Ajlaḥ seem likely in the first place), and (3) is much more similar to other transmissions than to either Ibn Sa'd and al-Ṭabarānī's versions, all of which makes it seem all the world like Ibn Rāhwayh or (more likely) one of his Kufan sources (Yaḥyá b. 'Ādam or 'Abū Bakr b. 'Ayyāš) completely replaced al-'Ajlaḥ's original *matn* with one borrowed from another Kufan source, and improved the ascription (from *munqaṭi'* to *muttaṣil*) along the way. As it happens, even traditional Islamic Hadith scholarship was suspicious of Ibn Rāhwayh's version, with none other than al-Ṭabarānī commenting thereon: "No one transmitted this hadith from al-'Ajlaḥ except for 'Abū Bakr b. al-'Ajlaḥ, nor from 'Abū Bakr except for Yaḥyá b. 'Ādam. 'Ishāq b. Rāhwayh transmitted it in isolation (*tafarrada bi-hi*)."⁵⁶¹ As Melchert

⁵⁵⁸ Ibn Sa'd (ed. Brockelmann), *Biographien*, VIII, p. 41; Tirmidī (ed. Sāmarrā'ī et al.), *ʾIlal*, p. 169, # 296; Balāḍurī (ed. Zakkār & Ziriklī), *ʾAnsāb al-ʾAšraf*, II, pp. 40-41.

⁵⁵⁹ Ṭabarānī (ed. Salāfi), *al-Muʾjam al-Kabīr*, X, p. 184, # 10279.

⁵⁶⁰ See below, in the section on Muḥammad b. 'Amr.

⁵⁶¹ Ṭabarānī (ed. Ṭāriq & Ḥusaynī), *al-Muʾjam al-ʾAwsaṭ*, VIII, p. 108, # 8116.

notes, for the Hadith critics, such *tafarrud* “is usually a sign that something is wrong.”⁵⁶²

This leaves us with Ibn Sa‘d and al-Ṭabarānī’s reports, and the following question: is the former (in which any mention of ‘Ā’iṣah’s age is absent) abridged, or is the latter (which includes full versions of the ‘marriage’ and ‘consummation’ elements, along with a comment on the period there-between) interpolated? Based on the principle of *lectio brevior potior*, the latter scenario is more likely: al-ʿAjlāḥ’s original formulation probably did not mention ‘Ā’iṣah’s marital age, which means that al-Ṭabarānī’s version represents yet another instance of the marital-age hadith contaminating an initially-unrelated hadith.

Consequently, only the following approximate wording can be traced back to the Kufan CL al-ʿAjlāḥ:

...[‘**abdⁱ allāhⁱ**] [i]bnⁱ ʿabī mulaykata qāla **kaṭaba [al-nabiyy^u/rasūl^u allāhⁱ]**
 ʿā’iṣata ʾilā ʿabī bakrⁱⁿ [al-ṣiddīqⁱ] [[wa-kāna ʿabū bakrⁱⁿ qad zawwaja-hā
 jubayr^a bn^a muṭʿimⁱⁿ fa-ḵalaʿa-hā min-hu]/[fa-qāla yā rasūl^a allāhⁱ ʾinnī
 kuntu ʿaṭaytu-hā muṭʿim^{an} li-ibni-hi jubayrⁱⁿ fa-daʿ-nī ḥattá ʾasullu-hā
 min-hum fa-istasalla-hā min-hum fa-ṭallaqa-hā]] **fa-[ta]zawwaja-hā**
rasūl^u allāhⁱ.

Given the major variation in wording between the extant derivations from al-ʿAjlāḥ (recorded by Ibn Sa‘d and al-Ṭabarānī), most of his original formulation remains unclear, leaving us with little more than a gist. This is consistent with the loose or sloppy paraphrastic transmission of this hadith from al-ʿAjlāḥ to his students, which fits well with the relevant time-period (i.e., the mid-to-late 8th Century CE, before the predomination of written transmission).

Muḥammad b. ʿAmr (d. 144-145/761-763)

I have collated eight reports ascribed to the Madinan tradent and putative CL Muḥammad b. ʿAmr b. ʿAlqamah al-Layṭī (usually on the authority of ʿAbū Salamah b. ʿAbd al-Raḥmān and/or Yaḥyá b. ʿAbd al-Raḥmān), recorded by Muḥammad b. Bišr

⁵⁶² Melchert, *Ahmad*, 54.

(reconstructed),⁵⁶³ Ibn Sa'd,⁵⁶⁴ Ibn Rāhwayh,⁵⁶⁵ Sa'īd b. Yaḥyá (reconstructed),⁵⁶⁶ 'Aḥmad b. 'Abd al-Jabbār (reconstructed),⁵⁶⁷ 'Abū Dāwūd,⁵⁶⁸ al-Balāḍurī,⁵⁶⁹ and 'Abū Ya'lá.⁵⁷⁰ The level of variation between some of these reports is astonishing, although this is to some degree misleading: the reports of Ibn Rāhwayh and 'Abū Dāwūd are clearly just abridged versions of the long tradition shared by Muḥammad b. Bišr, Sa'īd b. Yaḥyá, and 'Aḥmad b. 'Abd al-Jabbār, since what little content there is in the former lines up closely to the corresponding content in the latter. As such, we have five reports from Muḥammad b. 'Amr that line up fairly well and clearly embody a distinctive tradition, being more similar to each other than to all other versions of the marital-age hadith; and three other reports, recorded by Ibn Sa'd, al-Balāḍurī, and 'Abū Ya'lá, that diverge sharply therefrom and from each other.

The version recorded by Ibn Sa'd is the most similar to the common tradition shared by most of the other transmissions from Muḥammad b. 'Amr, sharing therewith multiple elements: Ḳawlah arranges the Prophet's marriages to Sawdah and 'Ā'īshah; 'Ā'īshah is married at age six; and her marriage is consummated after the Hijrah. Still, most of the elements in the common tradition are absent from Ibn Sa'd's version, and even the corresponding elements are mostly worded very differently. Moreover, Ibn Sa'd's version is actually more similar to a section of al-Baḡawī's transmission from Hišām b. 'Urwah than it is to the common tradition from Muḥammad b. 'Amr, as was noted previously. However, both Ibn Sa'd's version and the relevant section in al-Baḡawī's report are broadly more similar to other transmissions from Muḥammad b. 'Amr than to other transmissions from Hišām, and Ibn Sa'd's version is attested earlier in any case, all of which makes it more likely that Ibn Sa'd's version is (1) the original and (2) ultimately originated with something that Muḥammad b. 'Amr actually said. Moreover, the ascription in Ibn Sa'd's version is *munqaṭi'*, which is consistent with an early origin. Still, the wording in Ibn Sa'd's version is far removed from the common tradition, which is consistent with its having undergone extreme mutation in the

⁵⁶³ See the section on Muḥammad b. Bišr, above.

⁵⁶⁴ Ibn Sa'd (ed. Brockelmann), *Biographien*, VIII, p. 39.

⁵⁶⁵ Ibn Rāhwayh (ed. Balūšī), *Musnad*, II, p. 561, # 1335/592.

⁵⁶⁶ See the section on Sa'īd b. Yaḥyá, above.

⁵⁶⁷ See the section on 'Aḥmad b. 'Abd al-Jabbār, above.

⁵⁶⁸ 'Abū Dāwūd (ed. 'Abd al-Ḥamīd), *Sunan*, IV, p. 285, # 4937.

⁵⁶⁹ Balāḍurī (ed. Zakkār & Ziriklī), *'Ansāb al-'Ašraf*, II, p. 39.

⁵⁷⁰ 'Abū Ya'lá (ed. 'Asad), *Musnad*, VIII, pp. 132-133, # 4683/317.

course of transmission. It is perhaps not a coincidence that Ibn Sa'd's version derives via al-Wāqidī, an infamous *kaḍḍāb*.⁵⁷¹

The version recorded by al-Balāḍurī also shares several elements with the common tradition of Muḥammad b. 'Amr (namely, in mentioning 'Ā'īshah's marital consummation, her playing with her friends, the post-Hijrah context, and the Prophet's parallel marriage to Sawdah). However, there are two additional elements in this report; the order of even the shared elements is different; and the wording of even the shared elements is extremely divergent. At the very least, this is consistent with extreme mutation. Moreover, the ascription is unusually *munqaṭi'*, being the unsourced statement not of a Follower about 'Ā'īshah, but of Muḥammad b. 'Amr himself about 'Ā'īshah. We could take this to mean that this report reflects not a hadith per se, but simply a biographical summary by Muḥammad b. 'Amr. However, one of the additional elements in this report is identical to one of the elements comprising the distinctive sub-tradition emanating from the redaction of 'Abū Mu'āwiyah,⁵⁷² which is consistent with contamination or interpolation. In other words, given the lack of corroboration for al-Balāḍurī's report, we have no way of knowing which parts thereof are the product of contamination, interpolation, and/or mutation, and which parts ultimately derive from Muḥammad b. 'Amr.

The version recorded by 'Abū Ya'lā is perhaps the most divergent of all, since it only comprises three elements, the first two of which (i.e., 'marriage' and 'consummation') are more similar to the common version of Hišām b. 'Urwah—in fact, they are nearly identical to the relevant elements in the sub-tradition of Wuhayb,⁵⁷³ and even more so to an Egypto-Madinan SS reaching back to 'Abū Salamah.⁵⁷⁴ Meanwhile, the third element in 'Abū Ya'lā's version (*zawwaja-hā 'iyyā-hu 'abū bakr*) is very similar to a wording (*zawwaja-hā 'iyyā-hu*) that appears only in Ibn Ḥanbal's redaction of Muḥammad b. Bišr's redaction of Muḥammad b. 'Amr's tradition.⁵⁷⁵ Moreover, the ascription in 'Abū Ya'lā's version is explicitly *muttaṣil* (explicitly reaching all the way back to 'Ā'īshah herself), where several of the other versions (Muḥammad b. Bišr and Ibn Sa'd, and perhaps al-Balāḍurī) are *munqaṭi'* or at least only implicitly *muttaṣil*,

⁵⁷¹ For more on al-Wāqidī and his reputation, see Chapter 3 of the present work.

⁵⁷² See the section on 'Abū Mu'āwiyah, above.

⁵⁷³ See the section on Wuhayb, above.

⁵⁷⁴ Namely, Nasā'ī (ed. Ṭayyār *et al.*), *Sunan*, p. 794, # 3379.

⁵⁷⁵ Ibn Ḥanbal (ed. Ġamrāwī), *Musnad*, VI, pp. 210-211.

evidently reflecting the original form of the hadith. All of this makes 'Abū Ya'lá's version seem not just abridged, but interpolated, contaminated, or simple cobbled together. Certainly, it cannot be traced back to Muḥammad b. 'Amr.

This leaves us with the five reports, all reflecting (albeit in abridged form, in two cases) the common tradition of Muḥammad b. 'Amr: those recorded by Muḥammad b. Bišr, Ibn Rāhwayh, Sa'īd b. Yaḥyá, 'Aḥmad b. 'Abd al-Jabbār, and 'Abū Dāwūd. There can be no doubt that the gist of this hadith derives from Muḥammad b. 'Amr, as alluded to already: the distinctive tradition embodied in these reports matches their common ascription thereto, which is consistent with their reflecting his particular redaction(s) of the marital-age hadith. However, there are some notable divergences between the redactions of Muḥammad b. 'Amr's students, in terms of the elemental sequence: where the extant (reconstructed) redactions of Muḥammad b. Bišr and Sa'īd b. Yaḥyá place the 'marriage' element at the end of the narrative about 'Abū Bakr's cancellation of 'Ā'īshah's engagement to Jubayr, that of 'Aḥmad b. 'Abd al-Jabbār places it at the beginning of 'Ā'īshah's discrete, elaborate, autobiographical narrative about the circumstances of her marital consummation. Moreover, Sa'īd's redaction intermingles the 'consummation' element with the ending about Sa'd bringing food; Muḥammad b. Bišr's redaction sandwiches the Sa'd ending completely within the 'consummation' element; and 'Aḥmad's redaction and (ostensibly) Ibn Rāhwayh's version break up the 'consummation' element, placing half in the middle of the 'swing' element, and half in-between the 'preparation' element and the Sa'd ending. Additionally, the redactions of Muḥammad b. Bišr and Sa'īd place the first half of the 'preparation' element before the 'swing' element, whereas 'Aḥmad's redaction places it after.

Even aside from elemental sequence (and when abridgements are accounted for), there are numerous divergences in wording between the extant redactions of Muḥammad b. 'Amr, including omissions, additions, and substitutions. There are also some notable discrepancies in the *'isnād* of this hadith. Firstly, who did Muḥammad b. 'Amr cite as his source? Muḥammad b. Bišr has him cite both 'Abū Salamah and Yaḥyá, where Ibn Rāhwayh, Sa'īd, 'Aḥmad, and 'Abū Dāwūd have only Yaḥyá. The ascription to 'Abū Salamah could thus simply be an addition by Muḥammad b. Bišr, although the fact that it is shared by Ibn Sa'd (whose version is otherwise hopelessly mutated) could indicate that, at certain times, Muḥammad b. 'Amr himself gave his tradition a dual ascription. In fact, Ibn Sa'd and Muḥammad b. Bišr corroborate each other on a second

key point in the *ʿisnād*, which has been alluded to previously: both of them have Muḥammad b. ʿAmr citing both ʿAbū Salamah and Yaḥyá as the ultimate sources for his tradition (i.e., a *munqaṭiʿ* ascription)—based on the Criterion of Dissimilarity, this must surely be the original version of the tradition. However, Ibn Rāhwayh, Saʿīd, ʿAḥmad, and ʿAbū Dāwūd all corroborate each other not just in citing only Yaḥyá, but in having Yaḥyá transmit from ʿĀʾiṣah (i.e., a *muttaṣil* ascription). (Ibn Rāhwayh’s addition thereto of Sawdah can immediately be dismissed as an error, since in every other version, the relevant element is part of ʿĀʾiṣah’s narration.) All of this is consistent with Muḥammad b. ʿAmr himself having transmitted his tradition with two different ascriptions: first he transmitted it as simply the statement of ʿAbū Salamah and Yaḥyá, and then he omitted ʿAbū Salamah and also raised it all the way back to ʿĀʾiṣah herself. Even this raised version is still partially *munqaṭiʿ*, however: in the first half at least, the narrative speaks about ʿĀʾiṣah in the third person and covers events where she was not present. Both versions could be considered *muttaṣil* in their second halves, however, since ʿĀʾiṣah (who was remembered as having transmitted to both ʿAbū Salamah and Yaḥyá) is there introduced as a source and narrator.

Despite all of this, much of Muḥammad b. ʿAmr’s original wordings survive, thanks to the survival of three full redactions and two abridged redactions of his students and the students of his students. Of course, many wordings remain uncertain, and it seems likely that Muḥammad b. ʿAmr himself paraphrased his hadith in the course of successive retellings, such that that there is no single original redaction that can be reconstructed. Still, the following *wordings* and *sequence* can at least be traced back to Muḥammad b. ʿAmr, even if he never articulated his hadith in exactly this way in a single instance:

...ʿabū salamat^a wa-yaḥyá bn^u ʿabdi al-raḥmāni bnⁱ ḥāṭibⁱⁿ qālā lammā [mātat/halakāt/tuwuffiyat] kadījat^u jāʿat kawlat^u bint^u ḥakīmⁱⁿ imraʿat^u ʿuṭmān^a bnⁱ mazʿūnⁱⁿ ʾilā rasūlⁱ allāhi [fa-]qālat yā rasūl^a allāhi ʾa-lā tuzawwija qāla wa-man qālat ʾin šīʿta bikr^{an} wa-ʾin šīʿta ṭayyib^{an} qāla wa-manⁱ al-bikr^u qālat ibnat^u ʾaḥabbⁱ kalqⁱ allāhi ʾilay-ka ʾāʾiṣat^u bint^u ʾabī bakrⁱⁿ qāla wa-manⁱ al-ṭayyib^u qālat sawdat^u bint^u zamʿat^a qad ʾāmanat bi-ka wa-ittabaʿat-ka ʾalā mā [taqūlu/alladī] ʾanta ʾalay-hi qāla fa-idḥabī fa-udkurī-himā ʾalayya [fa-jāʿat] fa-daḥalat bayt^a ʾabī bakrⁱⁿ fa-qālat yā ʾumma rūmān^a māḍā ʾadḳala allāh^u ʾalay-kum min^a al-ḳayrⁱ wa-al-barakatⁱ qālat wa-mā ḍāka qālat ʾarsala-nī rasūl^u allāhi ʾaḳṭubu ʾalay-hi ʾāʾiṣat^a qālat intaḏirī ʾabā bakrⁱⁿ fa-ʾinna[-hu] ʾāṭin^u fa-jāʿa ʾabū bakrⁱⁿ fa-qālat yā ʾabā bakrⁱⁿ māḍā ʾadḳala allāh^u ʾalay-kum min^a al-ḳayrⁱ wa-al-barakatⁱ [qāla wa-mā ḍāka

qālat] 'arsala-nī rasūlu allāhi 'aqtubu 'alay-hi 'ā'īṣat^a qāla wa-hal taṣluḥu la-hu 'inna-mā hiya ibnatu 'akī-hi fa-raja'at 'ilā rasūli allāhi fa-ḍakarat ḍālika la-hu fa-qāla irja'ī 'ilay-hi fa-qūlī la-hu 'anā 'akū-ka wa-'anta 'akī fī al-'islāmī wa-ibnatu-ka taṣluḥu lī fa-[[**raja'at 'ilay-hi**]/[**'atat 'abā bakrⁱⁿ**]] fa-ḍakarat ḍālika la-hu qāla intazirī [[**ḥattá 'arji'a**]/[**wa-ḡaraja**]] fa-qālat 'umm^u rūmān^a 'inna al-muṭ'im^a bn^a 'adiyyⁱⁿ kāna ḍakara-hā 'alā ibni-hi wa-allāhi mā wa'ada wa'd^{an} qaṭṭu fa-'aqlafa[-**hu**] fa-daḡala 'abū bakrⁱⁿ 'alā muṭ'imⁱⁿ wa-'inda-hu imra'atu-hu 'umm^u [**al-fatá/ibni-hi**] fa-qālat yā ibn^a 'abī quḥāfat^a la'alla-ka 'in [**'ankaḥnā/zawwajnā**] hāḡā al-fatá [**ibnata-ka/'ilay-ka**] [**tuṣību-hu/'an tuṣbi'a-hu**] wa-tudḡila-hu fī dīni-ka allāḡī 'anta 'alay-hi fa-'aqbala [[**'alay-hi 'abū bakrⁱⁿ**]/[**'abū bakrⁱⁿ 'alā al-muṭ'imⁱ bnⁱ 'adiyyⁱⁿ**]/[**'alā zawji-hā al-muṭ'imⁱ**]] fa-qāla mā taqūlu hāḡihi fa-qāla 'inna-hā [la-]taqūlu ḡā[**lī**]ka fa-ḡaraja 'abū bakrⁱⁿ wa-qad 'aḡhaba allāhu [[**mā kāna**]/[**al-'idat^a allatī kānat**]] fī nafsi-hi min 'idati-hi allatī wa'ada-[[**hu**]/[**hā 'iyyā-hu**]] fa-qāla li-ḡawlat^a id'ī lī rasūla allāhi fa-da'at-hu fa-jā'a fa-[**zawwaja/'ankaḡa/malaka**]-hā **wa-hiya yawma-'idⁱⁿ ibnat^u sittⁱ sinīn^a** tumma ḡarajat fa-daḡalat 'alā sawdat^a fa-qālat [**la-hā**] māḡā 'adḡala allāhu 'alay-ki min^a al-ḡayrⁱ wa-al-barakatⁱ qālat wa-mā ḡāka qālat 'arsala-nī rasūlu allāhi 'aqtubu-ki 'alay-hi fa-qālat wadidtu udḡulī 'alā 'abī fa-udḡurī ḡā[**lī**]ka **la-hu [qālat]** wa-[**huwa/'abū-hā/kāna**] ṣayḡ^{un} kabīr^{un} qad taḡallafa 'anī al-ḡajjī fa-[**daḡalat/daḡaltu**] 'alay-hi fa-[ḡayyat/ḡayyaytu]-hu bi-taḡiyyatī 'ahlī al-jāhiliyyatī fa-qāla man 'anti fa-qālat ḡawlat^u bint^u ḡakīmⁱⁿ [**wa**]qāla [**w/f**]a-mā [[**ṣa'nu-ki**]/[**ṣā'a allāhu 'an yaqūla**]] [**fa**]qālat [**qultu**] [**'arsala-nī**] muḡammad^u bn^u 'abdi allāhi bnī 'abdi al-muṭṭalibī [**'arsala-nī**] 'aqtubu 'alay-[**ka/hi**] sawdat^a [**fa**]qāla kuḡ^{un} karīm^{un} māḡā taqūlu ṣāḡibatu-ki qālat tuḡibbu ḡālika [**fa**]qāla [**fa**]id'ī-hā [**lī/'ilayya**] fa-da'at-hā [**fa-jā'at**] fa-qāla 'ay [**bunayyat^u/sawdat^u**] [**za'amat hāḡihi**]/[**'inna hāḡihi taz'umu**] 'anna muḡammad^a bn^a 'abdi allāhi bnī 'abdi al-muṭṭalibī 'arsala yaqtubu-ki wa-huwa kuḡ^{un} karīm^{un} 'a-[**fa**]tuḡibbīna 'an 'uzawwija-ki-hi qālat na'am qāla id'ī-hi lī fa-da'at-hu fa-jā'a [**rasūlu allāhi**] fa-zawwaja-hā **fa-[[jā'a-hā 'akū-hā]/[qadima]** 'abdu bn^u zam'at^a min^a al-ḡajjī fa-ja'ala yaḡṭ[**ū/i**] fī ra'si-hi al-turāb^a fa-qāla ba'da 'an 'aslama la-'amru-ka 'innī la-safīḡ^{un} yawma 'aḡṭ[**ū/i**] fī ra'sī al-turāb^a 'an tazawwaja rasūlu allāhi sawdat^a bint^a zam'at^a qālat 'ā'īṣat^u **fa-[lammā]** qadimnā al-madīnat^a [**fa**]nazaḡnā [**al-sunḡa**]/ fī banī al-ḡarīṭī bnī al-ḡazrajī [**/fi al-sunḡi**] qālat fa-jā'a rasūlu allāhi fa-daḡala bayta-nā fa-ijṭama'a 'ilay-hi rijāl^{un} min^a al-'anṣārī wa-nisā'^{un} [**fa-jā'at-nī 'ummī**]/ wa-[**'innī/'anā**] [**la**]-[[**fi**/'alā] 'urjūḡatⁱⁿ bayna 'adḡaynī [**yurjaḡu/tarjaḡu**] bī [**/fa-jā'at-nī 'ummī**] fa-'anzalat-nī [**[wa-lī jumaymat^{un}]/[wa-faraḡat jumaymat^{an} kānat lī]**] wa-masaḡat wajḡī bi-ṣay'ⁱⁿ min mā'ⁱⁿ tumma 'aqbalat taqūdu-nī ḡattá waḡafat bī 'inda al-bābī wa-'innī la-'anhaju ḡattá [**[sakana bī min]/[ḡahaba ba'd^u]**] nafasī tumma daḡalat bī 'alā rasūlu allāhi [**[wa-huwa]/[fa-'idā rasūlu allāhi]**] jālis^{un} 'alā sarīrⁱⁿ fī bayti-nā [**wa-'inda-hu**] rijāl^{un} wa-nisā'^{un} [**min^a al-'anṣārī**] fa-'ajlasat-nī fī ḡijri-hi fa-qālat hā'ulā'ⁱ 'ahlu-ki fa-bāraka allāhu la-ki fī-him wa-bāraka la-hum fī-ki fa-wataba al-rijāl^u wa-al-nisā'^u fa-ḡarajū **fa-banā bī rasūlu allāhi [fi bayti-nā] [wa-**mā nuḡirat 'alayya jazūr^{un} wa-lā ḡubīḡat 'alayya ṣāt^{an} ḡattá 'arsala 'ilay-nā sa'd^u bn^u 'ubādat^a bi-jafnatⁱⁿ kāna yursilu bi-hā 'ilā rasūli allāhi 'idā dāra [**fi/bayna**] nisā'i-hi **wa-'anā yawma-'idⁱⁿ [bint/ibnat^u]** tis'ī sinīn^a.

The students of Muḥammad b. ‘Amr preserved the gist of this lengthy hadith quite accurately (abridgements aside), and many wordings as well—this would suggest a written transmission. However, the extensive divergences in wording between the redactions of Muḥammad b. ‘Amr’s students, not to mention divergences in the order of elements, suggest paraphrastic oral transmission. In other words, in the course of transmission from Muḥammad to his students, his tradition evidently underwent substantial but constrained paraphrasing. All of this is consistent with some kind of combined oral and written transmission, as if paraphrasing occurred alongside a basic written outline of the hadith.

The structure of hadith’s narrative and content has important implications for its prehistory and provenance. The hadith begins with an omniscient narrator describing the death of Ẓadījah, and Ẓawlah’s suggestion to the Prophet that he should remarry; Ẓawlah then visits ‘Abū Bakr to bring him the Prophet’s proposal of marriage to ‘Ā’iṣah, and at this point, the omniscient narrator leaves Ẓawlah and follows ‘Abū Bakr as he visits and speaks to the pagan family of Jubayr about cancelling ‘Ā’iṣah’s prior engagement thereto; thereafter, the omniscient narrator follows ‘Abū Bakr back to Ẓawlah, who is instructed to relay the news to the Prophet—at which point, the Prophet comes and marries her.⁵⁷⁶ (In some versions, the omniscient narrator then specifies that ‘Ā’iṣah was six years old at the time.) Thereafter, the omniscient narrator follows Ẓawlah as she visits Sawdah to bring her the Prophet’s proposal of marriage, and after a discussion with Sawdah’s venerable father, the match is approved and the news is relayed to the Prophet—at which point, the Prophet comes and marries her.⁵⁷⁷ Finally, the omniscient narrator recounts how Sawdah’s brother was still at that time an intransigent pagan, who later converted to Islam and regretted not celebrating this wedding at the time.

At this point, there is a definite shift in the hadith: ‘Ā’iṣah is explicitly introduced as the narrator (*qālat ‘ā’iṣah*), and henceforth recounts in great detail the events leading up to her marital consummation: how her family emigrated to Madinah and settled in al-Sunḥ, amongst the Banū al-Ḥārith b. al-Ẓazraj; how men and women from the ‘Anṣār were present when the Prophet came to marry her; how she was playing on a swing

⁵⁷⁶ ...*fa-jā’a fa-[zawwaja/’ankaḥa/malaka]-hā*....

⁵⁷⁷ ...*fa-jā’a [rasūl allāh] fa-zawwaja-hā*....

between two palm trees when her mother came for her; how she had shoulder-length hair at the time; how her face was washed; how she was out of breath; how she was led into a house, where the Prophet was waiting, and some men and women congratulated her; how the men and women departed, and the Prophet consummated his marriage to her; how Sa'd b. 'Ubadah brought her food; and, finally, how she was nine years old at the time.

It is clear that Muḥammad b. 'Amr's hadith is actually two distinct narratives that have been stitched together: one from an omniscient narrator (who is perhaps meant to be Yaḥyá), who follows Kāwlah around as she arranges the Prophet's marriages to both 'Ā'īshah and Sawdah, and who also switches to following 'Abū Bakr at one point; and one from 'Ā'īshah, who narrates her own marital consummation in excruciating detail. There is no way that 'Ā'īshah could be the narrator in the first section: the events mostly occur in her absence, and she is described therein in the third person. Thus, at minimum, Muḥammad b. 'Amr's hadith comprises *two distinct narrations*. Indeed, the presence of *qālat 'ā'īshah* between the two sections even remains as a kind of stitch line, showing where the two initially-discrete narratives were joined together.

The initial discreteness of the two narratives can also be discerned in a subtle tension therebetween: in the first narrative, the Prophet comes and marries 'Ā'īshah immediately after 'Abū Bakr's successful cancellation of her prior engagement to Jubayr (i.e., in Makkah, before the Hijrah); but in the second narrative, 'Ā'īshah is married in Madinah, after the Hijrah. Of course, this discrepancy is explained away in light of the second narrative: 'Ā'īshah was merely *engaged* to the Prophet in Makkah, and it was only in Madinah that their marriage was *consummated*. And yet, there is no hint in the first narrative of a prolonged engagement, no hint that 'Ā'īshah's marital consummation was delayed for years: only the second narrative would lead us to read such into the first. Moreover, 'Ā'īshah's marriage to the Prophet is described *in identical terms* to his marriage to Sawdah, which is usually understood to have been consummated soon afterwards (i.e., in Makkah, before the Hijrah).⁵⁷⁸ Given the parallel language used for 'Ā'īshah and Sawdah (not to mention the fact that 'Ā'īshah is depicted here as being married *before* Sawdah), we would naturally assume that both 'Ā'īshah and

⁵⁷⁸ E.g., Barbara F. Stowasser, *Women in the Qur'an, Traditions, and Interpretation* (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 1994), 170, n. 60 (citing various reports from Ibn Sa'd); 'Ismā'īl b. 'Umar b. Kaṭīr (ed. Muṣṭafá 'Abd al-Wāḥid), *al-Sīrah al-Nabawīyyah*, vol. 2 (Beirut, Lebanon: Dār al-Ma'rifah, 1976), p. 144.

Sawdah were fully married to the Prophet (i.e., consummated) in Makkah, before the Hijrah. At the very least, the first narrative seems ignorant of the second, which is consistent with both reflecting independent—or originally-independent—streams of marriage tradition pertaining to ‘Ā’ishah.

If Muḥammad b. ‘Amr indeed combined two separate narratives into a single hadith, whence came said narratives? Did he simply take two reports from the same source (e.g., Yaḥyá) and combine them into one, or did he instead combine two different reports from two different sources? As it happens, several of the elements comprising the first narrative can be found in other hadiths, including one disseminated by the Egyptian CL al-Layṭ b. Sa’d (d. 175/791), citing an Egypto-Madinan SS back to ‘Urwah⁵⁷⁹; one recorded by Ibn Sa’d, citing an Iraqi SS back to Kufan Follower ‘Aṭīyyah al-‘Awfī⁵⁸⁰; and one recorded by Ibn Sa’d, citing a Kufan SS back to Ibn ‘Abbās.⁵⁸¹ It is thus possible that Muḥammad b. ‘Amr constructed the first narrative in his hadith out of a set of existing elements, some of which survive independently in hadiths such as those just cited. However, since all of these reports—at least in their extant forms—postdate Muḥammad b. ‘Amr, the direction of causation could be reversed: it is possible that the spread of Muḥammad b. ‘Amr’s hadith spawned spinoff traditions, such as those just cited. Alternatively, it may be the case that all of these hadiths, including Muḥammad b. ‘Amr’s hadith, reflect common tradition that was circulating even earlier than Muḥammad b. ‘Amr. At this stage, little more can be said thereon.

By contrast, the origin of the second narrative comprising Muḥammad b. ‘Amr’s hadith can be pinpointed fairly precisely: there is little doubt that it was borrowed from Version 4 of Hišām b. ‘Urwah’s marital-age hadith, either directly from Hišām, or from one of Hišām’s students, such as ‘Abū ‘Usāmah, Ḥammād b. Salamah, or ‘Alī b. Mushir. There are several reasons to think this. Firstly, the redactions of ‘Abū ‘Usāmah, Ḥammād, ‘Alī, and Muḥammad b. ‘Amr (i.e., his second narrative) are all markedly more similar to each other than to all other versions of the marital-age hadith: in all of them, ‘Ā’ishah recounts how, after her emigration to Madinah, a woman came to her

⁵⁷⁹ Bukārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, III, p. 1065; Bayhaqī (ed. Turkī), *al-Sunan al-Kubrā*, XIV, p. 256, # 14031; ‘Ubayd Allāh b. Baṭṭah al-‘Ukbarī (ed. Riḍā Muṭī *et al.*), *al-‘Ibānah al-Kubrā*, vol. 9 (Riyadh, KSA: Dār al-Rāyah, n. d.), p. 675, # 184.

⁵⁸⁰ Ibn Sa’d (ed. Brockelmann), *Biographien*, VIII, p. 40.

⁵⁸¹ *Ibid.*, p. 39.

whilst she was playing on a swing, when she had shoulder-length hair; she was cleaned and beautified; and she was consummated in marriage at age nine. This immediately implies that all four redactions constitute a common tradition and share a more recent common ancestor *vis-à-vis* all other versions of the marital-age hadith—a recent common ancestor comprising all of these inherited elements. This already fits awkwardly with the claim of the relevant *ʿisnāds* that ʿĀʾiṣah, operating in the distant depths of the 7th Century CE, is the source for (i.e., the formulator of) this textual recent common ancestor: given the rates of mutation established for the 1st Islamic Century already, a much more recent source therefor would be expected.⁵⁸² This problem is immediately solved if Muḥammad b. ʿAmr’s claim to an alternative path back to ʿĀʾiṣah is disregarded: the other three *ʿisnāds* all cite Hiṣām as their common source, who—chronologically—fits perfectly as the formulator of the textual recent common ancestor of this distinctive tradition.

However, an even stronger case can be made. In terms of elemental sequence and specific wording, the redactions of ʾAbū ʾUsāmah and ʾAlī are much closer to each other than they are to either Ḥammād’s or Muḥammad b. ʿAmr’s.⁵⁸³ At the same time, the redactions of ʾAbū ʾUsāmah, ʾAlī b. Mushir, *and* Muḥammad b. ʿAmr are much closer to each other than they are to Ḥammād’s.⁵⁸⁴ This implies that the redactions of ʾAbū ʾUsāmah, ʾAlī, and Muḥammad b. ʿAmr all share an even more recent common ancestor *vis-à-vis* Ḥammād’s, despite the fact that Muḥammad b. ʿAmr claimed a more distant common source *vis-à-vis* ʾAbū ʾUsāmah, ʾAlī, and Ḥammād. Since the differences between ʾAbū ʾUsāmah, ʾAlī, and Ḥammād’s redactions are partially explained by their common source, Hiṣām, having transmitted the hadith in different ways in different places (see above), this means that Muḥammad b. ʿAmr’s redaction is not just broadly similar to a tradition emanating from Hiṣām, but is most similar to *a specific sub-tradition* emanating from Hiṣām. The simplest explanation for this pattern is that

⁵⁸² Similarly, see Mitter, cited previously.

⁵⁸³ E.g., both have *wuʾiktu* and *šaʿ[ar]ī*, absent in the others; both have *ʾatat-nī ʾummī ʾumm rūmān*, where Muḥammad has *jāʾat-nī ʾummī* and Ḥammād has *jāʾa-nī niswah*; both have *wa-maʾī ṣawāhib[ī/āt]*, absent in the others; both have *fa-ṣaraḳat bī*, etc., absent in the others; both have *fa-ʾidā niswah min al-ʾanṣār*, where Muḥammad has *fa-ijtamaʿa ʾilay-hi rijāl min al-ʾanṣār wa-nisāʾ*, and Ḥammād has nothing; both have the *ʾanṣār* bestowing a *barakah*, where Muḥammad has ʿĀʾiṣah’s mother invoke *bāraka allāh*, and Ḥammād has nothing; both have *duḥʾan*, absent in the others; etc.

⁵⁸⁴ E.g., all three have *jumaymah*, where Ḥammād has *mujammamah*; all three have ʿĀʾiṣah’s mother (ʾummī or ʾumm rūmān), where Ḥammād has plural, anonymous women (*niswah*); all three mention a *bāb*, absent in Ḥammād; all three have *nafasī*, absent in Ḥammād; all three mention the *ʾanṣār*, absent from Ḥammād; all three mention blessings (i.e., variants of the *b-r-k* root), absent in Ḥammād.

Muḥammad b. ‘Amr borrowed a specific iteration of Hišām’s Version 4 hadith, out of a range of iterations thereof.

That said, in three instances, the redactions of Muḥammad b. ‘Amr and ‘Alī are more similar to each other than either is to the other two,⁵⁸⁵ even though ‘Alī and ‘Abū ‘Usāmah’s redactions are still generally more similar to each other. This is easily explained by ‘Alī’s redaction’s having been contaminated by the spreading hadith of Muḥammad b. ‘Amr (following Muḥammad’s initial borrowing from Hišām); after all, most of the relevant tradents (i.e., ‘Alī b. Mushir and Muḥammad’s students—Muḥammad b. Bišr, Yaḥyá b. Sa‘īd, ‘Abd Allāh b. ‘Idrīs, *et al.*) were operating in Kufah at the same time. That said, if ‘Alī’s version was indeed influenced by Muḥammad’s version, it seems odd that the elaborations and details in the latter are absent from the former. However, there is actually no need to posit a secondary contamination, since the pattern of evidence is consistent with only a single instance of borrowing by Muḥammad b. ‘Amr. If Hišām alternated his hadith in successive retellings (as has been argued already), then the pattern of similarities and differences can be explained as follows:

- **Firstly**, Hišām formulated Version 4, which was originally more similar to Ḥammād’s redaction, and which Ḥammād received (and paraphrased to some degree). Given that Ḥammād’s redaction is much simpler than the rest,⁵⁸⁶ it makes sense that his would reflect an earlier phase (i.e., a less elaborated version) of Version 4.
- **Secondly**, Hišām transmitted a more elaborate iteration of Version 4 containing the wordings shared by the redactions of both Muḥammad b. ‘Amr and ‘Alī, which Muḥammad b. ‘Amr borrowed and subsequently paraphrased in his own retellings—thus, the appearance of certain novel features in his redactions.⁵⁸⁷ The greater degree of paraphrase in Muḥammad b. ‘Amr’s version (compared to those of ‘Alī and ‘Abū ‘Usāmah) is only to be expected, given that he belonged to an earlier generation.

⁵⁸⁵ Both Muḥammad and ‘Alī have the line *nazalnā fī banī al-ḥārīt bn al-kazraj*; Muḥammad has *masaḥat wajhī bi-šay’ min mā’* and ‘Alī has *šay’^{an} min mā’ fa-masaḥat bi-hi wajhī*; and both have *’anhaju*.

⁵⁸⁶ Not just in terms of elements, but also in terms of some details within elements—notably, the vague *niswah*.

⁵⁸⁷ E.g., *al-ṣunḥ* in the ‘Hijrah’ element; *’aḍqayn* in the ‘swing’ element; the entire element of Sa‘d’s bringing food; etc.

- **Thirdly**, Hišām transmitted another—still elaborate—iteration of Version 4 containing *both* the wordings shared by the redactions of both Muḥammad b. ‘Amr and ‘Alī *and* the wordings shared by the redactions of ‘Alī and ‘Abū ‘Usāmah, which ‘Alī inherited and transmitted to his students.
- **Fourthly**, Hišām transmitted a slightly different—but still elaborate—iteration of Version 4 (i.e., one that was still very close to that which he transmitted to ‘Alī) to ‘Abū ‘Usāmah. **Alternatively** (and this is probably the simpler explanation), Hišām transmitted the same iteration to both ‘Alī and ‘Abū ‘Usāmah, and the latter simply omitted the three wordings shared by both Muḥammad b. ‘Amr and ‘Alī in the course of his own paraphrasing.

Regardless of which specific scenario we opt for, the bottom line is this: Muḥammad b. ‘Amr’s redaction is most similar to *specific sub-versions* of Version 4 of Hišām’s marital-age hadith, which is most easily explained in general by his redaction being a derivation therefrom. If Muḥammad b. ‘Amr’s redaction and Hišām’s Version 4 coequally descended (via Yaḥyá and ‘Urwah, respectively) from ‘Ā’iṣah, without the occurrence of any contamination, then Muḥammad b. ‘Amr’s redaction should be the outlier *vis-à-vis* the various transmissions from Hišām, since the latter transmissions would all share a more recent common source. Instead, Muḥammad b. ‘Amr’s redaction seems to reflect one out of a range of sub-versions emanating from Hišām.

Muḥammad b. ‘Amr did not simply copy and paste a version of Version 4 of Hišām’s hadith, however: in addition to paraphrasing what he received, he sometimes relocated the ‘marriage’ element therefrom into the first narrative in his composite hadith, at the end of the section dealing with ‘Ā’iṣah’s engagement to the Prophet.⁵⁸⁸ This makes chronological sense: since Hišām’s hadith focuses upon the marital consummation, and the first narrative in Muḥammad b. ‘Amr’s hadith focuses on marital engagement, it makes sense that Muḥammad b. ‘Amr would relocate the one element in Hišām’s hadith pertaining to the marital engagement to the section in the first narrative dealing with that issue. Still, in some instances (perhaps reflecting the earliest phase of his transmission of this composite hadith), Muḥammad b. ‘Amr

⁵⁸⁸ Attested by Muḥammad b. Bišr and Sa‘īd b. Yaḥyá; see the relevant sections thereon, above.

retained the ‘marriage’ element in its original position, in the second narrative within his composite hadith.⁵⁸⁹

Finally, the last element in Muḥammad b. ‘Amr’s hadith, concerning Sa’d b. ‘Ubādah’s bringing of some food to ‘Ā’iṣah after her marital consummation, can be found in various forms in several reports recorded by Ibn Sa’d, citing numerous Madinan SSs back to early Madinan authorities. Thus, the Madinan Followers ‘Abū Bakr b. Ḥazm,⁵⁹⁰ ‘Āṣim b. ‘Umar b. Qatādah,⁵⁹¹ and Muḥammad b. ‘Abd al-Raḥmān b. Zurārah⁵⁹² each reportedly narrated about the bowl (*jafnah*) of Sa’d b. ‘Ubādah; the Madinan Follower ‘Umārah b. Ġaziyyah and a certain ‘Amr b. Yaḥyá⁵⁹³ both reportedly narrated about the content of Sa’d’s bowl, and how he would dispatch it (*yab‘aṭu bi-hā*) to the Prophet whenever he made his rounds (*dāra*)⁵⁹⁴; and the early Madinot-Syrian traditionist Ibn Šihāb al-Zuhrī reportedly also mentioned how the bowl of Sa’d used to make the rounds with him,⁵⁹⁵ as did the Madinan Companion (and wife of the Prophet) ‘Umm Salamah.⁵⁹⁶ All of this is consistent with the element of Sa’d’s bowl’s being in circulation in Madinah in the 8th Century CE, and with Muḥammad b. ‘Amr’s having incorporated this element into his composite hadith. However, absent a dedicated ICMA of these hadiths, this conclusion remains speculative.

‘Abd Allāh b. Muḥammad b. ‘Uqayl (d. post-140/757-758)

⁵⁸⁹ Attested by ‘Aḥmad b. ‘Abd al-Jabbār; see the relevant section thereon, above.

⁵⁹⁰ Ibn Sa’d (ed. Brockelmann), *Biographien*, VIII, p. 116: Muḥammad b. ‘Umar [Madinan]—‘Abd Allāh b. Ja‘far b. ‘Abd al-Raḥmān b. al-Miswar [Madinan]—‘Abd al-Wāḥid b. ‘abī ‘Awn [Madinan]—‘Abū Bakr b. Muḥammad b. ‘Amr b. Ḥazm [Madinan].

⁵⁹¹ *Ibid.*: Muḥammad b. ‘Umar [Madinan]—Muḥammad b. Šāliḥ b. Dīnār [Madinan]—‘Āṣim b. ‘Umar b. Qatādah [Madinan]—Prophet.

⁵⁹² *Ibid.*: Muḥammad b. ‘Umar [Madinan]—Qudāmah b. Mūsá [Madinan]—Muḥammad b. ‘Abd al-Raḥmān b. Zurārah [Madinan].

⁵⁹³ In contrast to the others, I was not able to identify ‘Amr b. Yaḥyá.

⁵⁹⁴ *Ibid.*: Muḥammad b. ‘Umar [Madinan]—Sa’d b. Muḥammad b. ‘abī Zayd [Madinan]—‘Umārah b. Ġaziyyah [Madinan] & ‘Amr b. Yaḥyá [Meccan].

⁵⁹⁵ *Ibid.*: Muḥammad b. ‘Umar [Madinan]—[‘Abd Allāh b.] ‘Abd al-‘Azīz al-Layṭī [Madinan]—Ibn Šihāb al-Zuhrī [Madinan].

⁵⁹⁶ *Ibid.*: pp. 116-117: Muḥammad b. ‘Umar [Madinan]—Mūsá b. Ya‘qūb [Madinan]—‘Umm Salamah [Madinan].

The prominent Andalusian Mālikī jurist and Hadith scholar Yūsuf b. ‘Abd Allāh b. ‘Abd al-Barr (d. 463/1071) recorded the following in his *al-Tamhīd li-mā fī al-Muwaṭṭa’ min al-Ma‘ānī wa-al-’Asānīd*:

‘Abd al-Wārīṭ related to us: “Qāsim related to us: “‘Aḥmad b. Zuhayr related to us—he said: “Mūsá b. ‘Ismā‘īl related to us—he said: “Ḥammād b. Salamah related to us....” [And] ‘Aḥmad b. Zuhayr [also] said: “My father related to us—he said: “Jarīr related to us....” They [i.e., Ḥammād and Jarīr] said: “Ḥiṣām b. ‘Urwah reported to us, from his father, from ‘Ā’iṣah, who said: “The Messenger of God married me when I was a girl of six or seven years, and consummated the marriage with me when I was a girl of nine years.”””””””””””

And [it is reported] in the transmission of al-’Aswad, from ‘Ā’iṣah, that the Messenger of God married her when she was a girl of nine years, whilst ‘Abd Allāh b. Muḥammad b. ‘Uqayl said: “The Messenger of God married her when she was a girl of ten years (*tazawwaja-hā rasūl allāh wa-hiya ibnat ‘aṣr sinīn*).”⁵⁹⁷

Ibn ‘Abd al-Barr’s summary of hadiths features some familiar transmissions, but to these he adds the statement of a certain ‘Abd Allāh b. Muḥammad b. ‘Uqayl, who would seem to be the Madinan Follower ‘Abū Muḥammad ‘Abd Allāh b. Muḥammad b. ‘Uqayl/‘Aqīl b. ‘abī Ṭālib al-Ḥāṣimī (d. post-140/757-758), who was remembered as having transmitted Hadith to Ḥammād b. Salamah, Sufyān al-Tawrī, and Sufyān b. ‘Uyaynah, amongst others.⁵⁹⁸ ‘Abd Allāh b. Muḥammad’s statement is striking, since he places ‘Ā’iṣah’s marital engagement (*tazawwuj*) at age ten, rather than the usual six or seven, or even the unusual nine. This could be the product of simple error, or it could reflect a lingering, alternative tradition of ‘Ā’iṣah’s marital age. Unfortunately, there is no way to tell: even the attribution of this statement to ‘Abd Allāh b. Muḥammad cannot be confirmed, since I was unable to find a single other reference thereto, besides Ibn ‘Abd al-Barr’s. Moreover, Ibn ‘Abd al-Barr does not even provide an *’isnād* for this statement back to ‘Abd Allāh b. Muḥammad, which only compounds the matter. Suffice to say, ‘Abd Allāh b. Muḥammad cannot be considered a credible tradent or source within the broader marital-age tradition.

⁵⁹⁷ Ibn ‘Abd al-Barr (ed. ‘A’rāb), *Tamhīd*, XIX, p. 108.

⁵⁹⁸ Ḍahabī (ed. ‘Arna’ūṭ *et al.*), *Siyar*, VI, pp. 204-205.

ʿIsmāʿīl b. Jaʿfar (d. pre-148/765)

I was able to find a single report ascribed to the ʿIsmāʿīlī imam ʿIsmāʿīl b. Jaʿfar (who lived in Madinah), recorded as follows by the eminent Twelver traditionist Muḥammad b. Yaʿqūb al-Kulaynī/al-Kulīnī (d. 328/939-940) in his *al-Furūʿ min al-Kāfī*:

ʿAlī b. ʿIbrāhīm [related] from Muḥammad b. ʿĪsā, from Yūnus, from ʿAbū ʿAyyūb al-Ḳazzāz, who said: “I asked ʿIsmāʿīl b. Jaʿfar: “When is the testimony of a boy permissible?” He said: “When he attains ten years.””

He [i.e., ʿAbū ʿAyyūb] said: “I said: “And is his authority [over himself] permissible?””

He [i.e., ʿAbū ʿAyyūb] said: “Then he said: “Verily the Messenger of God consummated his marriage with ʿĀʾiṣḥāh when she was a girl of ten years (*ʿinna rasūl allāh daḳala bi-ʿāʾiṣḥāh wa-hiya bint ʿaṣr sinīn*), and a girl’s marriage cannot be consummated until she is a woman, so when a boy attains ten years, his authority [over himself] is accepted and his testimony is accepted.””⁵⁹⁹

The same hadith is recorded by the eminent Twelver traditionist Muḥammad b. al-Ḥasan al-Ṭūsī (d. 460/1067) in his *Tahḏīb al-ʾAḥkām*.⁶⁰⁰

ʿIsmāʿīl’s statement is striking, since he places ʿĀʾiṣḥāh’s marital consummation (*duḳūl*) at age ten, rather than the usual nine. The only other reference to such a late marital-consummation age that I have found is the following biographical summary by the Basro-Egyptian scholar ʿAbd al-Malik b. Hišām (d. 213/828-829 or 218/833), which he appended to his recension of the famous *Kitāb al-Maḡāzī* of Muḥammad b. ʾIshāq:

The Messenger of God married (*tazawwaja*) ʿĀʾiṣḥāh bt. ʾabī Bakr al-Ṣiddīq in Makkah, when she was a girl of seven years (*wa-hiya ibnat sabʿ sinīn*), and consummated the marriage with her (*wa-banā bi-hā*) in Madinah, when she was a girl of nine years or ten (*wa-hiya bint tisʿ sinīn ʾaw ʿaṣr*). The Messenger of God did not marry any virgin except her (*wa-lam yatazawwaj rasūl allāh bikra^{an} ḡayra-hā*). Her father ʾAbū Bakr gave her in marriage to him, and the Messenger of God fixed a 400-dirham dowry for her.⁶⁰¹

⁵⁹⁹ Muḥammad b. Yaʿqūb al-Kulaynī (ed. ʿAlī ʾAkbar al-Ġaffārī), *al-Furūʿ min al-Kāfī*, vol. 3 (Qom, Iran: Muʾassasat ʾAnṣāriyyān, 2005), p. 1903, # 14442/1.

⁶⁰⁰ Muḥammad b. al-Ḥasan al-Ṭūsī (ed. Ḥasan al-Ḳarsān), *Tahḏīb al-ʾAḥkām*, vol. 2 (Qom, Iran: Muʾassasat ʾAnṣāriyyān, 2005), p. 856, # 7649/49.

⁶⁰¹ ʿAbd al-Malik b. Hišām (ed. Ferdinand Wüstenfeld), *Kitāb Sīrat Rasūl Allāh / Das Leben Muhammed’s*, 2 Volumes in 1 (Göttingen, Germany: Dieterichsche Universitäts-Buchhandlung, 1858-1860), p. 1001.

This could be the product of simple error, or it could reflect a lingering, alternative tradition of ‘Ā’iṣah’s marital age. Unfortunately, there is no way to tell: even the attribution of this statement to ‘Ismā‘īl cannot be confirmed, since I was unable to find a single other reference thereto, besides al-Kulaynī’s and al-Ṭūsī’s. Moreover, there is a positive reason to doubt the authenticity of this ascription, given its broader context in early Shi’ism: the report plausibly reflects later intra-Šī‘ī polemics. Some light thereon is shed by the eminent Persian Twelver Šī‘ī Hadith-scholar ‘Allāmah Majlisī (d. 1110/1698) in his *Mir’ât al-‘Uqūl fī ‘Akbār ‘Âl al-Rasūl*, who commented regarding this report:

Sound (*ṣaḥīḥ*). Perhaps their recounting of this saying—founded upon invalid analogy—from ‘Ismā‘īl was for proof of the nullity of his fitness for the Imamate.⁶⁰²

In other words, this hadith was understood to have theological or sectarian implications: ‘Allāmah Majlisī, al-Ṭūsī, and al-Kulaynī were all Imamite or Twelver Šī‘īs, whose sect or tradition diverged from the ‘Ismā‘īlīs over whether the Imamate had passed from Ja‘far al-Šādiq to his older son ‘Ismā‘īl (as the ‘Ismā‘īlīs believed) or his younger son Mūsá (as the ‘Ismā‘īlīs and Twelvers believed). Given that Šī‘ī Imams were supposed to be infallible, and given that ‘Ismā‘īl had supposedly engaged in invalid legal reasoning (according to ‘Allāmah Majlisī), this hadith constituted evidence for the Twelver view against the ‘Ismā‘īlī view. This would explain why Twelver Hadith collections recorded such a dictum from ‘Ismā‘īl in the first place, as ‘Allāmah Majlisī suggested, but it also raises the possibility that the report is a polemical fabrication.

Given all of the above (especially the lack of corroboration), this report cannot be attributed to ‘Ismā‘īl b. Ja‘far: he is not a credible tradent or source within the broader marital-age tradition.

‘Abū ‘Ishāq al-Sabī‘ī (d. 127-128/744-746)

⁶⁰² Muḥammad Bāqir al-Majlisī (ed. Hāšim al-Rasūlī), *Mir’ât al-‘Uqūl fī ‘Akbār ‘Âl al-Rasūl*, vol. 24 (Tehran, Iran: Dār al-Kutub al-‘Islāmiyyah, 1983), p. 235.

I have collated seven reports ascribed to the Kufan tradent and putative CL 'Abū 'Ishāq 'Amr b. 'Abd Allāh al-Sabī'ī, variously recorded by 'Isrā'īl b. Yūnus (reconstructed),⁶⁰³ 'Abṭar b. al-Qāsim (reconstructed),⁶⁰⁴ Ibn Sa'd,⁶⁰⁵ and al-Ṭabarānī (who recorded four).⁶⁰⁶ As we have already seen, there are serious problems in these ascriptions to 'Abū 'Ishāq. Firstly, the three ascribed via the seeming PCL Sufyān al-Ṭawrī are not more similar to each other than they are to transmissions from other sources: Ibn Sa'd's transmission from Sufyān looks like it was contaminated by a transmission from 'Abū Mu'āwiyah and/or borrowed from 'Isrā'īl's redaction; the elemental composition of al-Ṭabarānī's first transmission from Sufyān contradicts every other transmission therefrom, and some of the specific wording therein looks like it was borrowed from—or contaminated by—the redactions of Qabīṣah and al-Firyābī (both from Sufyān, *from Hiṣām b. 'Urwah*); and the elemental composition of al-Ṭabarānī's second transmission from Sufyān similarly contradicts most other transmissions therefrom, and some of the specific wording therein likewise looks like it was borrowed from—or contaminated by—the redactions of Qabīṣah and al-Firyābī (both from Sufyān, *from Hiṣām b. 'Urwah*). There is thus no redaction of the tradition of 'Abū 'Ishāq that can be attributed to Sufyān, which is to say, he is not a credible PCL therefor (i.e., he looks like a spider).⁶⁰⁷

Secondly, the two reports ascribed via the seeming PCL Šarīk b. 'Abd Allāh are not more similar to each other than they are to transmissions from other sources: they differ in terms of ascription (Ibn Mas'ūd vs. 'Ā'īṣah), the core detail of the first element (*sitt* vs. *sab*'), and the verb in the second element (*daḳala* vs. *banā*); they even differ in terms of elemental composition, with the second report lacking the 'death' element altogether. Moreover, the second report is more similar to various transmissions from Hiṣām b. 'Urwah, and the first is more similar to certain, specific transmissions from 'Isrā'īl—and, as it happens, one of its transmitters (Yaḥyā b. 'Ādam) also ostensibly transmitted the hadith of 'Isrā'īl, with a nearly-identical *matn*. There is thus no

⁶⁰³ See the section on 'Isrā'īl, above.

⁶⁰⁴ See the section on 'Abṭar, above.

⁶⁰⁵ Ibn Sa'd (ed. Brockelmann), *Biographien*, VIII, p. 41.

⁶⁰⁶ Ṭabarānī (ed. Salafī), *al-Mu'jam al-Kabīr*, X, p. 184, # 10279 [this edition should be emended (to include the missing line *wa-qubīḍa wa-hiya bint*) in light of the 1984 Wizārat al-'Awqāf wa-al-Shu'ūn al-Dīniyyah, al-Jumhūriyyah al-'Irāqīyyah edition (also at # 10279)]; *ibid.*, XXIII, p. 23, ## 54-56.

⁶⁰⁷ For all of this, see the section on Sufyān al-Ṭawrī, above.

redaction of the tradition of 'Abū 'Ishāq that can be attributed to Šarīk, which is to say, he is not a credible PCL therefor (i.e., he looks like a spider).⁶⁰⁸

Thirdly, the redaction of 'Abṭar is much more similar to the tradition of al-'A'maš than it is to the other transmissions from 'Abū 'Ishāq,⁶⁰⁹ bar one—and even this one, recorded by al-Ṭabarānī, from Ḥaṣṣ, from Qabīṣah, from Sufyān, is more similar in wording to transmissions from Qabīṣah and al-Firyābī, from Sufyān, *from Hišām b. 'Urwah* (as noted already). Thus, 'Abṭar's redaction was likely borrowed from or contaminated by tradition of al-'A'maš, whilst the only other ascription to 'Abū 'Ishāq that is similar is clearly a corruption of Qabīṣah's transmission from Hišām b. 'Urwah.

All of this leaves only 'Isrā'īl's ascription to 'Abū 'Ishāq, which we have no reason to accept: it is possible that 'Isrā'īl genuinely received his hadith from 'Abū 'Ishāq, but it is equally possible that he simply paraphrased and reattributed Version 2 of Hišām b. 'Urwah's hadith—or Version 1, in combination with the 'death' element taken from the hadith of 'Abū Mu'āwiyah—thereto. Certainly, we have no distinctive redaction that correlates with 'Abū 'Ishāq: the ascriptions to him are extremely disparate and mostly similar to transmissions from other sources, which makes 'Abū 'Ishāq look like a Juynbollian spider.

Only one of these parallel transmissions from 'Abū 'Ishāq—one of the conflicting ascriptions via Šarīk, recorded by al-Ṭabarānī—even matches the elemental sequence and details of *some* of the transmissions from 'Isrā'īl, such that they could conceivably embody a common tradition from 'Abū 'Ishāq together. However, this parallel transmission derives via a lengthy SS and—as noted already—derives via a transmitter of 'Isrā'īl's version, Yaḥyá b. 'Ādam, who is credited in an earlier source with a nearly-identical *matn*. This is exactly what it would look like if Yaḥyá or a later tradent reattributed his transmission from 'Isrā'īl to Šarīk, which is to say: this ascription to Šarīk looks like a Juynbollian dive. Given such suspicious circumstances, 'Isrā'īl's ascription to 'Abū 'Ishāq cannot be corroborated thereby.

Ibn Šihāb al-Zuhrī (d. 124/741-742)

⁶⁰⁸ For all of this, see the section on Šarīk, above.

⁶⁰⁹ See the section on al-'A'maš, above.

I have collated five reports ascribed to the Madino-Syrian tradent and putative CL Muḥammad b. Muslim b. Šihāb al-Zuhrī, variously recorded by Ma‘mar (reconstructed),⁶¹⁰ al-Ḥajjāj b. ‘abī Manī‘ (reconstructed),⁶¹¹ and Ibn Sa‘d (twice).⁶¹² Given the potential match between ‘Abd al-Razzāq’s redaction of Ma‘mar’s redaction, on the one hand, and one of Ibn Sa‘d’s reports, on the other, I have opted to cite the pre-reconstructed ascriptions via Ma‘mar as well, recorded by ‘Abd al-Razzāq (reconstructed)⁶¹³ and Ibn Sa‘d.⁶¹⁴ At first glance, there seems to be some promise in this cluster of reports: three of them share the elemental combination of ‘marriage’, ‘consummation’, and ‘death’, giving the impression of a distinctive sub-tradition. Upon closer examination, however, there are serious problems therewith. Firstly, there are major differences in the ascriptions of these reports: both transmissions from Ma‘mar have him cite both Hišām and al-Zuhrī, but only ‘Abd al-Razzāq has them cite ‘Urwah in turn; Ibn Sa‘d has Muḥammad b. ‘Umar cite both Kaṭīr b. Zayd, from al-Muṭṭalib b. ‘Abd Allāh b. Ḥanṭab, and Muḥammad b. ‘Abd Allāh, from al-Zuhrī; and both Ibn Sa‘d and al-Ḥajjāj cite just al-Zuhrī. In other words, all of these reports are *munqaṭi‘*, but in different ways: one has an ascription to ‘Urwah; two have dual ascriptions, to both al-Zuhrī and someone else; and two have ascriptions just to al-Zuhrī. It is thus unclear whether the transmissions from Ma‘mar are even meant to convey a *matn* from al-Zuhrī rather than Hišām, or whether Ibn Sa‘d—Muḥammad b. ‘Umar is meant to convey a *matn* from al-Zuhrī rather than al-Muṭṭalib.

Moreover, the core elements of these reports are unusually divergent—for example:

‘Abd al-Razzāq, from Ma‘mar	Ibn Sa‘d, from Ibn Ḥumayd, from Ma‘mar	Ibn Sa‘d, from Kaṭīr, from Ja‘far	al-Ḥajjāj, from ‘Ubayd Allāh	Ibn Sa‘d, from Muḥammad b. ‘Umar, from Muḥammad & Kaṭīr
nakaha al-nabiyy ‘ā’iṣah	nakaha al-nabiyy ‘ā’iṣah	malaka rasūl allāh ‘ uqdah ‘ā’iṣah	ṭumma tazawwaja rasūl allāh ‘ā’iṣah [ba‘da ḵadījah] wa-	ṭumma tazawwaja ‘alā ‘aṭari-hā ‘ā’iṣah bint ‘abī bakr al-ṣiddīq

⁶¹⁰ See the section on Ma‘mar, above.

⁶¹¹ See the section on al-Ḥajjāj b. ‘abī Manī‘, above.

⁶¹² Ibn Sa‘d (ed. Brockelmann), *Biographien*, VIII, p. 42; *ibid.*, pp. 156-157.

⁶¹³ See the section on ‘Abd al-Razzāq, above.

⁶¹⁴ Ibn Sa‘d (ed. Brockelmann), *Biographien*, VIII, p. 42.

			kāna qad [ra'á/'uriya] fī al-nawm marratayn yuqālu [la-hu] hiya imra'atu- ka wa-‘ā’iṣah yawma-’id [ibnat/bint] sitt sinīn fa- nakaḥa-hā rasūl allāh	
			bi-makkah	bi-makkah
wa-hiya bint sitt sanawāt ’aw sab’	wa-hiya ibnat tis’ sanawāt ’aw sab’	wa-hiya ibnat sitt sinīn	wa-hiya [bint/ibnat] sitt sinīn	wa-hiya ibnat sitt sinīn
				fī šawwāl
				sanat ‘ašr min al-nubuwwah

Likewise:

‘Abd al- Razzāq, from Ma‘mar	Ibn Sa‘d, from Ibn Ḥumayd, from Ma‘mar	Ibn Sa‘d, from Kaṭīr, from Ja‘far	al-Ḥajjāj, from ‘Ubayd Allāh	Ibn Sa‘d, from Muḥammad b. ‘Umar, from Muḥammad & Kaṭīr
wa-zuffat ’ilay-hi		wa-jama‘a-hā	ṭumma ’inna rasūl allāh baná bi- ‘ā’iṣah	wa-baná bi-hā
			ba‘da-mā qadima al- madīnah	bi-al-madīnah
wa-hiya bint tis’ [sinīn]		wa-hiya ibnat tis’ sinīn	wa-‘ā’iṣah yawma baná bi-hā [rasūl allāh] bint tis’ sinīn	wa-hiya ibnat tis’ sinīn
				fī šawwāl
				‘alá ra’s ṭamāniyat ’ašhur min al- muhājar

Of course, this level of variation could just be chalked up to the extremely loose or sloppy paraphrastic transmission that predominated in the early-to-mid 8th Century CE, when al-Zuhrī would have transmitted to his students.

However, there is a deeper problem: in addition to being extremely divergent in their core elements, some of these reports are more similar to transmissions from other authorities, in terms of specific wording and elemental composition, than they are to each other. Thus, the wording of the ‘death’ element in ‘Abd al-Razzāq’s transmission from Ma‘mar—which is uncorroborated by Ibn Sa‘d’s transmissions from Ma‘mar—is much more similar to (in fact, nearly identical to) the corresponding element in ‘Abū Mu‘āwiyah’s hadith⁶¹⁵ and several false transmissions from ‘Abū Mu‘āwiyah and ‘Abū ‘Ishāq.⁶¹⁶ Meanwhile, the ‘death’ elements in Ibn Sa‘d’s transmissions from both Kaṭīr and Muḥammad b. ‘Umar are more similar to certain transmissions from ‘Abū Mu‘āwiyah⁶¹⁷ and especially ‘Isrā’īl.⁶¹⁸ Finally, Ibn Sa‘d’s dual transmission (via Muḥammad b. ‘Umar) from both al-Zuhrī and al-Muṭṭalib is strikingly similar, in terms of broad outline and sequence, to the following parallel transmission from al-Zuhrī, which can be reconstructed back to al-Zubayr b. Bakkār (d. 256/870):

tnā al-zubayr^u [bn^u bakkārⁱⁿ] ḥaddaṭa-nī muḥammad^u bn^u [al-]ḥasanī^[n] ‘an [ḡayrⁱ wāḥidⁱⁿ min ‘ahlⁱ al-‘ilmⁱ min-hum] ‘usāmat^[u/a] bn^[u/i] ḥafṣⁱⁿ ‘an [yūnus^a/mūsā] ‘an ibnⁱ šihābⁱⁿ ‘anna rasūl^a allāhⁱ tazawwaja ‘ā’iṣat^a bint^a ‘abī bakrⁱⁿ fī šawwālⁱⁿ [sanat^a ‘ašrⁱⁿ min^a al-nubuwwatⁱ qabla al-hijratⁱ bi-ṭalātⁱ sinīn^a] wa-‘a’rasa bi-hā bi-al-madīnatⁱ fī šawwālⁱⁿ ‘alā ra’sⁱ [sittat^a/ṭamāniyat^a] ‘ašar^a šahr^{an} min muḥājari-hi ‘ilā al-madīnatⁱ wa-tuwuffiyat ‘ā’iṣat^u laylat^a al-ṭulāt^a li-sab‘^a ‘ašrat^a maḍat min ramadān^a ba‘da al-witrⁱ sanat^a ṭamānⁱⁿ wa-ḡamsīn^a wa-dufinat min laylati-hā.⁶¹⁹

⁶¹⁵ See the section on ‘Abū Mu‘āwiyah, above.

⁶¹⁶ Ibn Sa‘d (ed. Brockelmann), *Biographien*, VIII, p. 41 (Wakī‘—Sufyān—‘Abū ‘Ishāq—‘Abū ‘Ubaydah); Yaḥyā b. Yaḥyā’s redaction of ‘Abū Mu‘āwiyah’s redaction (‘Abū Mu‘āwiyah—al-‘A‘maš—‘Ibrāhīm—al-‘Aswad—‘Ā’iṣah); Ṭabarānī (ed. Salafī), *al-Mu‘jam al-Kabīr*, XXIII, p. 22, # 51 (Muḥammad b. ‘Abd Allāh al-Ḥaḍramī—Muḥammad b. ‘Abd Allāh b. Numayr & Yaḥyā al-Ḥimmānī & Hannād b. al-Sarī & ‘Ibrāhīm b. ‘abī Mu‘āwiyah—‘Abū Mu‘āwiyah—al-‘A‘maš—‘Ibrāhīm—al-‘Aswad—‘Ā’iṣah).

⁶¹⁷ Ibn Rāḥwayh (ed. Balūšī), *Musnad*, II, p. 870, # 1537/995 (‘Abū Mu‘āwiyah—al-‘A‘maš—‘Ibrāhīm—al-‘Aswad—‘Ā’iṣah).

⁶¹⁸ Ibn Mājah (ed. ‘Abd al-Bāqī), *Sunan*, I, p. 604, # 1877 (‘Aḥmad b. Sinān—‘Abū ‘Aḥmad—‘Isrā’īl—‘Abū ‘Ishāq—‘Abū ‘Ubaydah—‘Abd Allāh).

⁶¹⁹ Synthesised from [Muḥammad b. al-Ḥasan b. Zabālah &] al-Zubayr b. Bakkār b. ‘Abd Allāh (ed. ‘Akram Ḍiyā’ al-‘Umarī) *al-Muntaḡab min Kitāb ‘Azwāj al-Nabiyy* (Madinah, KSA: Maṭba‘at al-Jāmi‘ah al-‘Islāmiyyah, 1981), p. 39, and Ṭabarānī (ed. Salafī), *al-Mu‘jam al-Kabīr*, XXIII, p. 28, # 71.

Ibn Sa‘d and al-Zubayr’s reports share the same distinctive skeleton in their *matns*, and although this skeleton is not unique,⁶²⁰ it is at least plausible that it derives from al-Zuhrī—certainly, Ibn Sa‘d’s secondary ascription to al-Muṭṭalib can be discarded. However, the skeleton shared by al-Zubayr and Ibn Sa‘d’s reports—that which can be plausibly ascribed all the way back to al-Zuhrī—is the following:

...[rasūla allāhi] tazawwaja ‘ā’iṣata binta ‘abī bakrⁱⁿ fī ṣawwālⁱⁿ sanat^a ‘aṣrⁱⁿ min^a al-nubuwwati [qabla al-hijratⁱ bi-ṭalātⁱ sinīn^a] [wa-‘a‘rasa bi-hā bi-al-madīnatⁱ] fī ṣawwālⁱⁿ ‘alā ra’sⁱ ṭamāniyatⁱ [‘aṣhurⁱⁿ/‘aṣar^a ṣahr^{an}] min^[a] [al-]muhājari[-hi] ‘ilā al-madīnatⁱ]...

In other words, Ibn Sa‘d’s version lacks the element about ‘Ā’iṣah’s death, and al-Zubayr lacks any mention of ‘Ā’iṣah’s age at marital engagement, marital consummation, and the Prophet’s death: this is consistent with al-Zuhrī’s simple, original formulation’s having been contaminated, updated, or elaborated in the century of transmission between him and the extant recorders thereof (i.e., Ibn Sa‘d and al-Zubayr). At the very least, all of this is consistent with Ibn Sa‘d’s report’s being interpolated, such that it cannot be used to reconstruct a version of the marital-age hadith back to al-Zuhrī.⁶²¹

This leaves us with only four reports, which together exhibit an unusual level of divergence in both elemental composition and specific wording, and some of which are more similar in wording to other hadiths. Certainly, they do not constitute a distinctive sub-tradition within the broader marital-age hadith-tradition, which means that there is no particular redaction that can be correlated with and attributed to al-Zuhrī. All of this is consistent with al-Zuhrī’s being a Juynbollian spider, but this comes as no surprise. After all, in light of the kind of oral transmission that predominated in the 8th Century CE, it is only to be expected that any genuine traditions about ‘Ā’iṣah’s marriage (but not her age) deriving from al-Zuhrī would be subject to updating by tradents with access to more detailed or specific information thereon (as seems to have happened with the skeleton shared by Ibn Sa‘d and al-Zubayr, and may have occurred also in the case of al-Ḥajjāj’s report). Likewise, given al-Zuhrī’s towering status in both legal and biographical Hadith, it is not surprising that he would be the target of at least

⁶²⁰ See the section on ‘Amrah, below.

⁶²¹ For more on this, see also the section on ‘Amrah, below.

a few dives, as some transmitters of Hišām's hadith and others sought alternative or parallel paths of transmission therefor. Either way, al-Zuhrī is not a credible CL in the marital-age tradition—instead, he looks like a spider.

Qatādah b. Di'āmah (d. 177-178/735-736)

I was able to find a single report ascribed to the Basran traditionist Qatādah b. Di'āmah, recorded by al-Ṭabarānī.⁶²² This transmission is completely isolated, with only a SS stretching all the way back from al-Ṭabarānī to Qatādah. There can thus be no correlation between a putative CL and a distinctive sub-tradition in such a situation—Qatādah is not even a Juynbollian spider. In other words, even the transmission of this hadith from Muḥammad b. Ja'far to al-Ṭabarānī cannot be confirmed, let alone from 'Aḥmad to Muḥammad b. Ja'far, let alone from Zuhayr to 'Aḥmad, let alone from Sa'īd to Zuhayr, let alone from Qatādah to Sa'īd. Even if the hadith has some kind of transmission-history before al-Ṭabarānī, we have no way of knowing how far back any given part of the wording goes, absent corroborating transmissions.

That said, a fragment of this hadith is also cited by the Baghdadian Hadith critic Ibn 'abī Kayṭamah (d. 279/892-893) in his *al-Ta'rīk al-Kabīr*, independently of al-Ṭabarānī and Muḥammad b. Ja'far:

And Qatādah said: "Ḳadījah died three years before the Hijrah." 'Aḥmad b. al-Miqdām related that to us, from Zuhayr b. al-'Alā', from Sa'īd, from Qatādah: "Then the Messenger of God married 'Ā'īshah around the time of the death of Ḳadījah (*tumma tazawwaja rasūl allāh 'ā'īshah mutawaffā kadījah*)." ⁶²³

Although at first glance this suggests that the hadith can be traced at least as far back as the Basran tradent 'Aḥmad b. al-Miqdām (d. 251/865 or 253/867), the fragment in question contains no reference to 'Ā'īshah's marital age, which could indicate that the relevant elements were absent from the original ascription to Qatādah. Absent parallel transmissions (or at least a full citation of Ibn 'abī Kayṭamah's version), we are again

⁶²² Ṭabarānī (ed. Salāfi), *al-Mu'jam al-Kabīr*, XXIII, p. 19, # 40.

⁶²³ Ibn 'abī Kayṭamah (ed. Halal), *al-Ta'rīk al-Kabīr*, I, p. 170.

left with uncertainty—all that we can say for sure is that *some version* of this hadith can be traced as far back as 'Aḥmad, even if most of the features of his original redaction cannot be identified.

In terms of elemental composition, this hadith does not match any other single version of the marital-age hadith. In terms of specific elements, however, there are plenty of matches (beyond the generic 'marriage' and 'consummation' elements):

- al-Ḥajjāj b. 'abī Manī's hadith shares therewith (1) mention of Ẹadījah's death in the 'marriage' element, (2) *hiya imra'atu-ka* in the 'angelic message' element, (3) "six" in the 'marriage' element, (4) *bi-makkah* in the 'marriage' element, and (5) the 'virgin' element (albeit differently worded).⁶²⁴
- Ibn Hišām's own biographical summary shares therewith (1) "'Ā'īṣah bt. 'abī Bakr al-Ṣiddīq" (i.e., a fuller version of her name), (2) *bi-makkah* in the 'marriage' element, (3) *bi-al-madīnah* in the 'consummation' element, and (4) the *lam* + imperfect verb version of the 'virgin' element.⁶²⁵
- Ibn Sa'd's transmission from al-Zuhrī and al-Muṭṭalib shares therewith (1) "'Ā'īṣah bt. 'abī Bakr al-Ṣiddīq" (i.e., a fuller version of her name), (2) *bi-makkah* in the 'marriage' element, (3) "six" in the 'marriage' element, (4) *bi-al-madīnah* in the 'consummation' element, and (5) the *tuwuffiya* version of the 'death' element.⁶²⁶
- Ibn Ḥanbal's transmission (via 'Abū Dāwūd al-Ṭayālīsī) from Ibn 'abī al-Zinād shares therewith (1) "six" in the 'marriage' element, (2) *bi-makkah* in the 'marriage' element, (3) mention of Ẹadījah's death at the end of the 'marriage' element, and (4) *bi-al-madīnah* in the 'consummation' element.⁶²⁷
- al-Ṭabarī's transmission (via Ibn Sa'd) from Ibn 'Abbās shares therewith (1) "'Ā'īṣah bt. 'abī Bakr" (i.e., a fuller version of her name), (2) *qabla al-hijrah* in the 'marriage' element, (3) the *tuwuffiya* version of the 'death' element, and (4) the *lam* + imperfect verb version of the 'virgin' element.⁶²⁸

⁶²⁴ See the section on al-Ḥajjāj b. 'abī Manī, above.

⁶²⁵ Ibn Hišām (ed. Wüstenfeld), *Das Leben Muhammed's*, p. 1001.

⁶²⁶ Ibn Sa'd (ed. Brockelmann), *Biographien*, VIII, pp. 156-157.

⁶²⁷ Ibn Ḥanbal (ed. Ġamrāwī), *Musnad*, VI, p. 118.

⁶²⁸ Ṭabarī (ed. de Goeje), *Annales*, IV, pp. 1770-1771.

- al-Warjlānī's transmission from Jābir shares therewith (1) "six" in the 'marriage' element, (2) the rare verbal form *ibtanā* in the 'consummation' element, (3) the 'virgin' element (albeit differently worded), and (4) the *tuwuffiya* version of the 'death' element.⁶²⁹

Thus, in addition to relying upon a mere SS, al-Ṭabarānī's ascription to Qatādah curiously exhibits recurring overlaps in content with several other hadiths—and, as it happens, most of them are connected to Basrah: Ibn Hišām and Ibn Sa'd both originated in Basrah; 'Abū Dāwūd al-Ṭayālīsī was a prominent Basran traditionist; al-Warjlānī claimed a Basran SS back to Jābir; and, of course, al-Ṭabarānī claimed a Basran SS back to Qatādah. Moreover, the 'angelic message' element (including the similar wording *hādīhi imra'atu-ka*) constitutes a well-known hadith that was disseminated by Hišām b. 'Urwah and transmitted by the notable Basran traditionist Ḥammād b. Salamah, among others.⁶³⁰ In light of all of this, it is at the very least plausible that the ascription to Qatādah was cobbled together out of various biographical elements about 'Ā'īshah that were circulating in Basrah—and Iraq more broadly—at the beginning of the 9th Century CE. Certainly, there are no grounds for identifying Qatādah as a credible source for any version of the marital-age hadith.

'Amrah bt. 'Abd al-Raḥmān (d. 98/716-717 or 106/724-725)

I was able to find a single report ascribed via the Madinan Follower 'Amrah bt. 'Abd al-Raḥmān to 'Ā'īshah, recorded by Ibn Sa'd.⁶³¹ This transmission is completely isolated, with only a SS stretching all the way back from Ibn Sa'd to 'Amrah. There can thus be no correlation between a putative CL and a distinctive sub-tradition in such a situation—'Amrah is not even a Juynbollian spider. Moreover, this report shares the same distinctive structure and content as the statements of various biographical

⁶²⁹ Yūsuf b. 'Ibrāhīm al-Warjlānī (ed. 'Abd Allāh b. Ḥumayd al-Sālimī), *Kitāb al-Tartīb fī al-Ṣaḥīḥ min Ḥadīṯ al-Rasūl* (Muscat, Oman: Maktabat Musqat, 2003), p. 326, # 750. Cf. *ibid.*, p. 238, # 528, which has *māta* instead of *tuwuffiya*.

⁶³⁰ Juynboll, *Encyclopedia*, 195, col. 1; Baššār 'Awwād Ma'rūf *et al.*, *al-Musnad al-Jāmi'*, vol. 20 (Beirut, Lebanon: Dār al-Jīl, 1993), pp. 348-349, # 17236.

⁶³¹ Ibn Sa'd (ed. Brockelmann), *Biographien*, VIII, pp. 39-40.

authorities—namely: an ascription to both al-Zuhrī and al-Muṭṭalib b. ‘Abd Allāh b. Ḥaṭṭab, recorded by Ibn Sa‘d⁶³²; an ascription to al-Zuhrī recorded by al-Zubayr b. Bakkār (reconstructed)⁶³³; a statement in the *Ta’rīk* of al-Ṭabarī⁶³⁴; and an ascription to al-Wāqidī recorded by al-Ḥākim al-Naysābūrī.⁶³⁵ Since the *matn* of al-Ṭabarī’s biographical summary and that of al-Ḥākim’s transmission from al-Wāqidī are nearly identical,⁶³⁶ they must be closely related via written transmission: either al-Ḥākim’s transmission was copied from al-Ṭabarī’s biographical summary, or both were copied from a common suppressed source, or al-Ṭabarī copied al-Wāqidī’s biographical summary. Given the accurate written preservation of al-Ḥākim’s transmission of al-Ḥusayn b. al-Faraj’s recension of al-Wāqidī’s *al-Mubtada’ wa-al-Mağāzī* elsewhere,⁶³⁷ and given that al-Wāqidī was also a major source for al-Ṭabarī (including in the relevant section of al-Ṭabarī’s work),⁶³⁸ the last scenario seems most likely. Consequently, we can provisionally treat the urtext behind al-Ṭabarī’s biographical summary and al-Ḥākim’s transmission as al-Wāqidī’s composition (i.e., al-Wāqidī’s own biographical summary).

In light of this, we are left with the following reports and statements: Ibn Sa‘d’s transmission, from al-Wāqidī, from al-Zuhrī and al-Muṭṭalib; al-Zubayr’s transmission from al-Zuhrī; Ibn Sa‘d’s transmission, via al-Wāqidī, from ‘Amrah; and (provisionally) al-Wāqidī’s own biographical summary. For a clearer comparison, consider the following breakdown of the elements and wordings of the statements and reports in question:

Ibn Sa‘d, from al-Wāqidī, from al-Zuhrī & al-Muṭṭalib	al-Zubayr, from al-Zuhrī	Ibn Sa‘d, from al-Wāqidī, from ‘Amrah	al-Wāqidī
			[wa-]‘ā’iṣah bint ‘abī bakr ‘ummu- hā ‘umm rūmān bint ‘umayr bn

⁶³² *Ibid.*, pp. 156-157.

⁶³³ See the section on Ibn Šihāb al-Zuhrī, above.

⁶³⁴ Ṭabarī (ed. de Goeje), *Annales*, IV (series III), p. 2439.

⁶³⁵ Ḥākim, *Mustadrak*, VII, p. 20, # 6881.

⁶³⁶ Ṭ. adds *wa-*; Ḥ. adds *rasūl allāh*; and Ṭ. has *ibnah* where Ḥ. has *bint*.

⁶³⁷ See the section on Muḥammad b. ‘Umar al-Wāqidī, above.

⁶³⁸ In fact, al-Wāqidī is cited in the very next sentence of al-Ṭabarī’s biographical dictionary (*loc. cit.*), following the information on ‘Ā’iṣah: “Ibn ‘Umar said....”

			‘āmīr min banī duhmān bn al-ḥārīt bn ḡanm bn mālik bn kinānah
tumma tazawwaja ‘alá ‘aṭari-hā ‘ā’iṣah bint ‘abī bakr al-ṣiddīq bi-makkah	’anna rasūl allāh tazawwaja ‘ā’iṣah bint ‘abī bakr	tazawwaja-nī rasūl allāh	tazawwaja-hā rasūl allāh
wa-hiya ibnat sitt sinīn			
fī ṣawwāl	fī ṣawwāl	fī ṣawwāl	fī ṣawwāl
sanah ‘aṣr min al-nubuwwah	[sanah ‘aṣr min al-nubuwwah	sanah ‘aṣr min al-nubuwwah	sanah ‘aṣr min al-nubuwwah
	qabla al-hijrah bi-talāt sinīn]	qabla al-hijrah li-talāt sinīn	qabla al-hijrah bi-talāt sinīn
		wa-’anā ibnat sitt sinīn	
		wa-hājara rasūl allāh fa-qadima al-madīnah yawma al-’iṭnayn li-’iṭnatay ‘aṣrah laylah ḵalat min ṣahr rabī‘ al-’awwal	
wa- baná bi-hā	wa-’a‘rasa bi-hā	wa-’a‘rasa bī	wa-‘arrasa bi-hā [rasūl allāh]
bi-al-madīnah	bi-al-madīnah		
wa-hiya ibnat tis‘ sinīn			
fī ṣawwāl	fī ṣawwāl	fī ṣawwāl	fī ṣawwāl
‘alá ra’s ṭamāniyah ’aṣhur min al-muhājar	‘alá ra’s ṭamāniyah ‘aṣar ṣahr^{an} min muhājari-hi ’ilá al-madīnah	‘alá ra’s ṭamāniyah ’aṣhur min al-muhājar	‘alá ra’s ṭamāniyah ’aṣhur min al-hijrah
		wa-kuntu yawma daḵala bī ibnat tis‘ sinīn	wa-kānat yawma ibtaná bi-hā [bint/ibnah] tis‘ sinīn
wa-tuwuffiya ‘an-hā wa-hiya ibnat ṭamāniy ‘aṣrah sanah			
	wa-tuwuffiyat ‘ā’iṣah laylat al-tulātā’ li-sab‘		

	‘ašrah maḍat min ramaḍān ba‘da al-witr sanat tamān wa- ḵamsīn wa- duḥinat min laylati-hā		
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All four reports and statements share the same structure or elemental sequence, and much of the same wording: (1) The Messenger of God married ‘Ā’iṣah bt. ‘abī Bakr, (2) during Šawwāl, (3) in the tenth year of the Prophethood, (4) three years before the Hijrah; and (5) he arranged her wedding feast, (6) during Šawwāl, (7) at the beginning of eight months since his emigration. Two of them add: (5.5) in Madinah. Additionally, two of them add: (8) and she was, on the day that he consummated the marriage with her, a girl of nine years. Clearly, these four reports are closely related—in fact, they much more similar to each other than they are to any other version of the marital-age hadith.

There are two common denominators in the *’isnāds* for these *matns*: al-Zuhrī, who is the source cited for two of them; and al-Wāqidī, who is a transmitter in two of them, and the source in another (i.e., his own biographical summary). There are two ways to explain this correlation (within the framework of an ICMA): either the common skeleton of these reports derives from a formulation by al-Zuhrī, which was inherited by al-Wāqidī and then variously elaborated and reattributed (including via ‘Amrah); or the common skeleton derives from al-Wāqidī himself and was variously reformulated and retrojected back to al-Zuhrī and others. Given al-Zubayr b. Bakkār’s independent transmission from al-Zuhrī, I am inclined to accept the first scenario—but the possibility that al-Zubayr borrowed (directly or indirectly) from al-Wāqidī cannot be discounted. That said, al-Zubayr’s report lacks some key elaborations (i.e., specific biographical details) present in all of al-Wāqidī’s versions, which we would not expect al-Zubayr to have omitted (given his interests as a biographer); consequently, it seems reasonable to infer that al-Zubayr’s report represents an independent transmission from al-Zuhrī, free from al-Wāqidī’s alterations (including references to ‘Ā’iṣah’s marital age).⁶³⁹ Consequently, the ascription to ‘Amrah—which contains these additions associated with al-Wāqidī—represents a *secondary* stage of the distinctive

⁶³⁹ For more on this, see also the section on al-Zuhrī, above.

tradition originating with al-Zuhrī (i.e., his own words), thus precluding its authenticity.

In short, Ibn Saʿd's transmission via ʿAmrah probably originated as a biographical summary by al-Zuhrī, which lacked any reference to ʿĀʾiṣah's marital age; this summary was inherited and variously updated by al-Wāqidī, who inserted references to ʿĀʾiṣah's marital age therein; then an iteration of al-Wāqidī's updated version was ascribed via ʿAmrah back to ʿĀʾiṣah.

ʿAbū Salamah (d. 94/712-713 or 104/722-723)

I have collated two reports ascribed to the Madinan Follower ʿAbū Salamah b. ʿAbd al-Raḥmān, recorded by Muḥammad b. ʿAmr (reconstructed)⁶⁴⁰ and al-Nasāʾī.⁶⁴¹ There are numerous problems with these two reports. Firstly, Muḥammad b. ʿAmr cites both ʿAbū Salamah and Yaḥyá b. ʿAbd al-Raḥmān as his source, which makes it unclear which of the two was supposed to be the actual source for the *matn*. Secondly, there is a discrepancy in the ascriptions, since al-Nasāʾī's report reaches all the way back to ʿĀʾiṣah, whereas Muḥammad b. ʿAmr only reaches back to ʿAbū Salamah (and Yaḥyá); even if we prefer the raised version of Muḥammad b. ʿAmr's hadith in this regard, the problem only gets worse, since the raised version only cites Yaḥyá, from ʿĀʾiṣah, without any mention of ʿAbū Salamah. Thirdly, the *matns* of these two reports are amongst the most dissimilar in the relevant corpus: al-Nasāʾī's is extremely short, comprising only the 'marriage' and 'consummation' elements, whereas Muḥammad b. ʿAmr's is a lengthy, disjointed narrative, comprising a multitude of elements. Moreover, where al-Nasāʾī has the 'marriage' and 'consummation' elements directly coupled, Muḥammad b. ʿAmr usually has them dispersed across his vast narrative. In fact, in terms of elemental composition and sequence, al-Nasāʾī's report is much more similar to Version 1 of Hišām's hadith. In terms of specific wording, however, it is most similar to the corresponding elements in Wuhayb's redaction of Version 2,⁶⁴² and to those in ʿAbū Yaʿlá's dubious transmission from Muḥammad b. ʿAmr, from Yaḥyá, from

⁶⁴⁰ See the section on Muḥammad b. ʿAmr, above.

⁶⁴¹ Nasāʾī (ed. Ṭayyār *et al.*), *Sunan*, p. 794, # 3379.

⁶⁴² See the section on Wuhayb, above.

‘Ā’iṣah.⁶⁴³ Regardless, these two reports are amongst the most disparate in the marital-age tradition, and certainly do not embody a distinctive sub-tradition that can be correlated with a common ascription to ‘Abū Salamah. Consequently, ‘Abū Salamah looks like another example of a Juynbollian spider, and certainly cannot be counted as a genuine CL for this hadith-tradition.

Jābir b. Zayd (d. 93/711-712 or 103/721-722)

I was able to collate two reports ascribed to the Basran Follower ‘Abū al-Ša‘tā’ Jābir b. Zayd: one recorded by al-Ḥākim al-Naysābūrī,⁶⁴⁴ and another recorded twice, in two slightly different versions, by al-Warjlānī.⁶⁴⁵ At first glance, these two/three reports appear to embody a common, distinctive tradition: both/all of them contain the elements of ‘Ā’iṣah’s marital engagement and consummation, the Prophet’s death, and ‘Ā’iṣah’s death during the reign of Mu‘āwiyah. In this respect, these reports are more similar to each other than they are to all the rest, which is consistent with their embodying the distinctive, underlying redaction of their common source, Jābir b. Zayd.

However, there are several problems with these reports. Firstly, they contradict each other on a basic detail: al-Ḥākim’s report has ‘Ā’iṣah’s marriage occurring at age seven, where al-Warjlānī’s reports have it at age six. However, this could be chalked up to the early, sloppy transmission that these reports had to have undergone in the time between Jābir and the extant sources preserving them, if indeed they originated with Jābir.

Secondly, in certain key respects, al-Warjlānī’s reports are more similar to other reports. For example, as we have seen already, al-Warjlānī’s reports share a lot of material with the hadith ascribed to Qatādah: “six” in the ‘marriage’ element; the rare verbal form *ibtanā* in the ‘consummation’ element; the ‘virgin’ element (albeit differently worded); and—in the case of one of al-Warjlānī’s reports—the *tuwuffiya*

⁶⁴³ ‘Abū Ya‘lā (ed. ‘Asad), *Musnad*, VIII, pp. 132-133, # 4683/317. Also see the section on Muḥammad b. ‘Amr, above.

⁶⁴⁴ Ḥākim, *al-Mustadrak ‘alā al-Šaḥīḥayn*, VII, p. 19, # 6879.

⁶⁴⁵ Warjlānī (ed. Sālimī), *al-Tartīb fī al-Šaḥīḥ*, p. 238, # 528; *ibid.*, p. 326, # 750

version of the ‘death’ element.⁶⁴⁶ This makes it seem like al-Warjlānī’s reports are contaminated or interpolated, if not outright cobbled together from disparate sources.

Thirdly, it is well-known that al-Warjlānī borrowed extensively from Sunnī Hadith sources in his creation of his *Musnad*, systematically (falsely) ascribing such material via the early imams of his Ibadite sect: al-Rabī‘ b. Ḥabīb, from ‘Abū ‘Ubaydah Muslim, from Jābir b. Zayd.⁶⁴⁷ In other words, there are immediate source-critical grounds for suspecting that al-Warjlānī’s versions are the product of some kind of borrowing and retrojection (i.e., Ibadite dives), rather than genuine transmission all the way back to the Ibadite leaders of 8th-Century Basrah. Indeed, it is possible that al-Warjlānī directly borrowed from the work of al-Ḥākim (or from one of al-Ḥākim’s sources for his version of the hadith in question), along with sources, in his creation of the two relevant hadiths in his collection.

If al-Warjlānī’s report was borrowed from al-Ḥākim’s report (or a source of the latter’s), however, then suspicion falls upon the latter in turn: the core of al-Ḥākim’s report is an elemental sequence matches the distinctive sub-tradition of ‘Isrā’īl b. Yūnus above all others (in particular, those transmissions from him that include the *qubīḍa* wording),⁶⁴⁸ which immediately suggests that the *matn* of al-Ḥākim’s report derives therefrom. This is only compounded by the fact that al-Ḥākim’s *matn* includes a chronological addendum—the specification that ‘Ā’īshah died in the year 57 AH, during the reign of Mu‘āwiyah—that again makes it look like a secondary construction *vis-à-vis* the transmissions of ‘Isrā’īl. To this can be added the fact that most versions of the marital-age hadith that include the ‘death’ element (especially, the traditions of ‘Isrā’īl and al-‘A‘maš) derive from Kufans citing Kufan sources, which strongly suggests that the elemental combination in question (‘Ā’īshah was married when she was a girl of X years’ and ‘the Prophet died when she was a girl of eighteen’) derives from Kufah. This would imply that al-Ḥākim’s version, which claims a lengthy Hamadhanian and

⁶⁴⁶ See the section on Qatādah, above.

⁶⁴⁷ E.g., Ersilia Francesca, ‘The Concept of *sunna* in the Ibādī School’, in Adis Duderija (ed.), *The Sunna and Its Status in Islamic Law: The Search for a Sound Hadith* (Basingstoke, UK: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015), 109: “The material is almost the same as that reported by Sunnis: most of the traditions transmitted by al-Rabī‘ are reported in Sunnī collections by other Sunnī authorities with the same wording, or with slight differences; the *isnād* of the two first parts is as follows: al-Rabī‘ b. Ḥabīb—Abū ‘Ubaydah—Jābir b. Zayd—a companion—Prophet. The companions are mainly: Ibn ‘Abbās, Abū Hurayra, Abū Sa‘īd al-Khudrī, Anas b. Mālīk, ‘Ā’īsha.”

⁶⁴⁸ See the section on ‘Isrā’īl, above.

Levantine SS (in fact, a Levantine family *ʿisnād*) back to a Basran source, is a false ascription, or in other words: al-Ḥākim’s version looks exactly like a Levantine dive.

In short, we lack credible, independent transmissions unto Jābir b. Zayd, which precludes the attribution of any version of the marital-age hadith to him: he cannot be established as a CL. Moreover, there is reason to suspect that the core of both transmissions derives from the distinctive sub-tradition of ʿIsrāʾīl.

ʿUrwah b. al-Zubayr (d. 93-95/711-714 or 101/719-720)

I was able to collate six reports ascribed to the Madinan Follower ʿUrwah b. al-Zubayr b. al-ʿAwwām, four of which were recorded by his son Hišām (reconstructed),⁶⁴⁹ one of which was recorded by ʿAbd al-Razzāq (reconstructed),⁶⁵⁰ and one of which was recorded by al-Ṭabarānī.⁶⁵¹ Two of these reports need to be discarded immediately, since they have already been shown to be the product of contamination, interpolation, error, or fabrication. Firstly, ʿAbd al-Razzāq’s version is plausibly contaminated or interpolated, and there is reason to think—based on a parallel transmission from Maʿmar—that Maʿmar’s original formulation lacked any reference to ʿUrwah at all.⁶⁵² Secondly, al-Ṭabarānī’s hadith comprises a *matn* that was likely borrowed from Sufyān al-Ṭawrī’s redaction of Hišām’s Version 2 hadith (or al-ʿAḥwaṣ b. Jawwāb’s redaction thereof in particular), and an altered version of the usual Ibn ʿabī al-Zinād *ʿisnād* (in which Hišām has been replaced by ʿAbū al-Zinād).⁶⁵³

This leaves us with only four different ascriptions by Hišām back to his father ʿUrwah, which amounts to four isolated transmissions of four different versions of the marital-age hadith. There is thus no question of ʿUrwah being established as a CL: absent independent corroboration, he cannot even rise to the level of a Juynbollian spider. Moreover, the fact that Hišām claimed the same source (ʿUrwah or ʿUrwah—ʿĀʾiṣah) for four (and possibly more) markedly different versions of the same hadith is highly suspect: whilst it is certainly possible that he simply received and passed on

⁶⁴⁹ See the section on Hišām b. ʿUrwah, above.

⁶⁵⁰ See the section on ʿAbd al-Razzāq, above.

⁶⁵¹ Ṭabarānī (ed. Ṭāriq & Ḥusaynī), *al-Muʿjam al-ʿAwsaṭ*, VII, p. 94, # 6957.

⁶⁵² See the section on Maʿmar, above.

⁶⁵³ See the section on Ibn ʿabī al-Zinād, above.

each of them from his father, such evidence is also consistent with Hišām's having created and/or reworked the hadiths himself in successive retellings, incorporating different elements from a broader pool of material at various points. There is even direct evidence for this in the case of Version 2 of Hišām's hadith, which demonstrably arose through the addition of the 'death' element—taken from some other source—to Version 1.⁶⁵⁴

In short, the hadith of 'Ā'īshah's marital age cannot be traced back to 'Urwah, at least on the basis of an ICMA.

Ḥabīb al-'A'war (d. early 8th C. CE)

I was able to find a single report ascribed to the early Madinan traditionist Ḥabīb al-'A'war, recorded by al-Wāqidī (reconstructed).⁶⁵⁵ This transmission is completely isolated, with only a SS stretching back from al-Wāqidī to Ḥabīb. There can thus be no correlation between a putative CL and a distinctive sub-tradition in such a situation—Ḥabīb is not even a Juynbollian spider. In other words, even the transmission of this hadith from 'Abd al-Wāḥid to al-Wāqidī cannot be confirmed, let alone from Ḥabīb to 'Abd al-Wāḥid. Even if the hadith has some kind of transmission-history before al-Wāqidī, we have no way of knowing how far back any given part of the wording goes, absent corroborating transmissions. Moreover, the ending of the hadith—the short series of statements about the year of 'Ā'īshah's birth, the year of her marriage, her age at marriage, and the relative chronology of 'Ā'īshah and Sawdah's marriages—seems oddly chronologically-detailed for an early figure like Ḥabīb, but fits perfectly with the interests al-Wāqidī, a leading biographer and antiquarian. It is thus plausible that the ending of the hadith is an addendum or interpolation by al-Wāqidī, assuming that the rest of the narrative—which is precisely *narrative*, rather than *chronology*—derives from some earlier source (presumably a Madinan storyteller, who may or may not have been 'Abd al-Wāḥid, or even Ḥabīb).

⁶⁵⁴ See the section on Hišām, above.

⁶⁵⁵ See the section on Muḥammad b. 'Umar al-Wāqidī, above.

al-ʿAswad b. Yazīd (d. 75/694-695)

I was able to collate two reports ascribed to the Kufan Follower al-ʿAswad b. Yazīd al-Naḵaʿī (both on the authority of ʿĀʾiṣḥāh), recorded by al-ʿAʿmaš (reconstructed)⁶⁵⁶ and al-Ṭabarānī.⁶⁵⁷ These two reports embody completely disparate traditions—in fact, they have almost nothing in common, beyond the verb *tazawwaja*: al-ʿAʿmaš’s report has ʿĀʾiṣḥāh being engaged in marriage at nine, where al-Ṭabarānī’s report has it at six; al-ʿAʿmaš’s report is a short set of statements about ʿĀʾiṣḥāh’s marital age and the length of her marriage, whereas al-Ṭabarānī’s report is an elaborate narrative about the *ʾifk*; and al-Ṭabarānī’s report includes elements and details pertaining to ʿĀʾiṣḥāh’s physical maturation, her self-image, the Hijrah, and her being brought to the Prophet at age nine, all of which are absent from al-ʿAʿmaš’s report. In other words, these two reports are amongst the most dissimilar in the entire relevant corpus—they certainly do not embody a common tradition that could be identified as reflecting the distinctive redaction of their putative common source, al-ʿAswad.

Additionally, al-Ṭabarānī’s version is suspect on other grounds: no other version of the famous *ʾifk* narrative contains any mention of ʿĀʾiṣḥāh’s marital age, which immediately suggests that al-Ṭabarānī’s version has been interpolated or contaminated in that regard.⁶⁵⁸ As it happens, one of the transmitters thereof, ʿAbd al-Raḥmān b. Muḥammad, was accused of transmitting objectionable hadiths (*ʾaḥādīṭ manākīr* or *ʾaḥādīṭ munkarah*) from unknown sources (*al-majhūlīn*), and of having been an interpolator of some sort (*kāna yudallisu*)⁶⁵⁹; and another, ʿAbū Saʿd al-Baqqāl, was outright weak (*ḍaʿīf*) or rejected (*matrūk* or *munkar*) in Hadith, according to some authorities.⁶⁶⁰ However, absent a comparison with parallel transmissions, little more can be said thereon.

In short, al-ʿAswad is not a credible CL for the hadith of ʿĀʾiṣḥāh’s marital age; instead, he looks like a spider.

⁶⁵⁶ See the section on al-ʿAʿmaš, above.

⁶⁵⁷ Ṭabarānī (ed. Ṭāriq & Ḥusaynī), *al-Muʿjam al-ʿAwsaṭ*, XXIII, pp. 118-120, # 153.

⁶⁵⁸ Likewise, Schoeler (trans. Vagelpohl), *The Biography of Muḥammad*, 107, who argues that this version was fashioned out of an *ʾifk* tradition from al-Zuhrī (i.e., one that lacked any reference to ʿĀʾiṣḥāh’s marital age).

⁶⁵⁹ Ḍahabī (ed. ʿArnaʾūṭ *et al.*), *Siyar*, IX, pp. 136-138.

⁶⁶⁰ Ibn ʿAdī (ed. Sarsāwī), *Kāmil*, V, pp. 569-576.

‘Abd Allāh b. ‘Abbās (d. 67-68/687-688)

I was able to find a single report ascribed to the Meccan Companion ‘Abd Allāh b. ‘Abbās, recorded by al-Ṭabarī.⁶⁶¹ This transmission is completely isolated, with only a SS stretching back from al-Ṭabarī to Ibn ‘Abbās. There can thus be no correlation between a putative CL and a distinctive sub-tradition in such a situation—Ibn ‘Abbās is not even a Juynbollian spider. In other words, even the transmission of this hadith from al-Ḥārith to al-Ṭabarī cannot be confirmed, let alone from Ibn Sa‘d to al-Ḥārith, let alone from Hišām to Ibn Sa‘d, let alone from Muḥammad to his son Hišām, let alone from ‘Abū Ṣāliḥ to Muḥammad, let alone from Ibn ‘Abbās to ‘Abū Ṣāliḥ. Even if the hadith has some kind of transmission-history before al-Ṭabarī, we have no way of knowing how far back any given part of the wording goes, absent corroborating transmissions.

In addition to being uncorroborated, the *matn* of this hadith is also suspiciously detailed—and, as it happens, the hadith’s *’isnād* depicts it as having been ‘transmitted’ by a sequence of leading biographers and genealogists, including Muḥammad al-Kalbī and his son Hišām. It could simply be the case that those with such interests were drawn to—and thus transmitted—detailed biographical reports, but it may also be the case that such reports are the *product* of the biographers and genealogists. In other words, it is plausible that this report is actually a summary or synthesis of biographical information about ‘Ā’ishah derived from various other reports (or the biographical or prosopographical literature more broadly), which was then retrojected back to Ibn ‘Abbās. In particular, the constitutive elements of (and often the exact wordings in) this report are often found in other reports and statements associated with the biographers Ibn Sa‘d and al-Wāqidī.⁶⁶²

⁶⁶¹ Ṭabarī (ed. de Goeje), *Annales*, IV, pp. 1770-1771. For the *’isnād*, see *ibid.*, p. 1799. For the further, implied *’isnād*, see Ismail K. Poonawala, in Muḥammad b. Jarīr al-Ṭabarī (trans. Ismail K. Poonawala), *The History of al-Tabarī, Volume 9: The Last Years of the Prophet: The Formation of the State A.D. 630-632/A.H. 8-11* (Albany, USA: State University of New York Press, 1990), 126, n. 870.

⁶⁶² The genealogy is present in al-Ḥajjāj b. ‘abī Manī’s redaction (see the relevant section, above), and in numerous other biographical, prosopographical, and genealogical sources; the phrase *qabla al-hijrah bi-ṭalāt* is present in the reports associated with Ibn Ṣihāb al-Zuhrī (see the relevant section, above), and in al-Wāqidī’s biographical summary (see the section on ‘Amrah, above); the exact phrase *wa-hiya ibnat sab’ sinīn* is present in Ibn Sa‘d (ed. Brockelmann), *Biographien*, VIII, p. 41, and Ibn Hišām (ed. Wüstenfeld), *Das Leben Muhammed’s*, p. 1001, amongst other sources; the distinctive verb *jama‘a* (as used in the ‘consummation’ element) is present in Ibn Sa‘d (ed. Brockelmann), *Biographien*, VIII, p.

Either way, Ibn ‘Abbās is not a credible CL for the hadith of ‘Ā’iṣah’s marital age.

‘Ā’iṣah bt. ‘abī Bakr (d. 57-58/677-678)

At first glance, the marital-age hadith appears to have innumerable *’isnāds* reaching all the way back to its subject: ‘Ā’iṣah bt. ‘abī Bakr, who was a famous Companion, an emigrant (*muhājirah*) to Madinah, and one of the Mothers of the Believers (*’ummahāt al-mu’minīn*). However, this veritable forest of *’isnāds* is illusory: through an ICMA and the systematic application of the Criterion of Dissimilarity, most of these ascriptions to ‘Ā’iṣah have proved to be the product of raising (*raf’*). Time and again, the original redactions of numerous PCLs and CLs within the broader tradition have been exposed as *munqaṭi’*, including the following:

- **‘Abd al-Razzāq** (d. 211/827), who originally only cited Hišām and al-Zuhrī, from ‘Urwah, as his source for his redaction of the marital-age hadith.⁶⁶³
- **’Isrā’īl b. Yūnus** (d. 160-162/776-779), who originally only cited ‘Abū ’Iṣḥāq, from ‘Abū ‘Ubaydah (and possibly Muṣ‘ab), as his source for his redaction of the marital-age hadith.⁶⁶⁴
- **Hišām b. ‘Urwah** (d. 146-147/763-765), who originally only cited his father as his source for Versions 1-3 of his marital-age hadith.⁶⁶⁵
- **’Ismā’īl b. ‘abī Kālīd** (d. 146/763-764), who originally only cited ‘Abd al-Raḥmān b. ‘abī al-Ḍaḥḥāk, from ‘Abd al-Raḥmān b. Muḥammad b. Zayd b. Jud‘ān, as his source for his *faḍā’il* hadith.⁶⁶⁶

42; the ‘Hijrah’ element can be found in numerous sources; the inclusion of *fī ṣawwāl* in the ‘consummation’ element is present in Ibn Sa’d (ed. Brockelmann), *Biographien*, VIII, pp. 156-157 (i.e., al-Wāqidī’s redaction of al-Zuhrī’s biographical summary); the *tuwuffiya* version of the ‘Prophet’s death’ element is present in Ibn Sa’d (ed. Brockelmann), *Biographien*, VIII, pp. 42, 156-157, and Balāḍurī (ed. Zakkār & Ziriklī), *Jumal min ’Ansāb al-’Ašraf*, II, p. 39, and various other sources; and, finally, the exact phrase *wa-lam yatazawwaj rasūl allāh bikra^{an} ḡayra-hā* is present in Ibn Hišām (ed. Wüstenfeld), *Das Leben Muhammed’s*, p. 1001.

⁶⁶³ See the section on ‘Abd al-Razzāq, above.

⁶⁶⁴ See the section on ’Isrā’īl, above.

⁶⁶⁵ See the section on Hišām, above.

⁶⁶⁶ See the section on ’Ismā’īl, above.

- **ʿAbū Ḥujayyah al-ʿAjlaḥ** (d. 145/762-763 or later), who originally only cited Ibn ʿabī Mulaykah as his source (and whose original formulation lacked the marital-age elements in any case).⁶⁶⁷

There are nevertheless some hadiths that claim to reach all the way back to ʿĀʾiṣḥah (i.e., hadiths for which no direct evidence of raising survives), but these are beset by other problems. Firstly, there are several that have been exposed as contaminated or interpolated versions of hadiths *that originally lacked the marital-age elements altogether*, such as the following:

- **Muḥammad b. al-Ḥasan al-ʿAsadī** (d. turn of the 9th C. CE)’s hadith, with the *ʾisnād* Sufyān al-Ṭawrī—Saʿd b. ʾIbrāhīm—al-Qāsim b. Muḥammad—ʿĀʾiṣḥah, is an obvious corruption of well-known hadith about Ṣawwāl that is traceable back to the CL Sufyān, whose original formulation thereof lacked any mention of ʿĀʾiṣḥah’s marital age, and was ascribed to ʾIsmāʿīl b. ʾUmayyah—ʿAbd Allāh b. ʿUrwah—ʿUrwah—ʿĀʾiṣḥah.⁶⁶⁸
- **al-ʿIjlī** (d. 261/874-875)’s hadith, with the *ʾisnād* ʾAbū Dāwūd al-Ḥafarī—Sufyān al-Ṭawrī—ʾIsmāʿīl b. ʾUmayyah—ʿAbd Allāh b. ʿUrwah—ʿĀʾiṣḥah, is another obvious corruption of Sufyān’s Ṣawwāl hadith, but only of the *matn*.⁶⁶⁹
- **al-Ṭabarānī** (d. 360/971)’s hadith, with the *ʾisnād* ʿAbdān b. ʾAḥmad—Zayd b. al-Ḥarīš—ʿAbd al-Raḥmān b. Muḥammad al-Muḥāribī—ʾAbū Saʿd al-Baqqāl—ʿAbd al-Raḥmān b. al-ʿAswad—al-ʿAswad, which purports to record ʿĀʾiṣḥah’s retelling of the *ʾifk* narrative to al-ʿAswad, is obviously contaminated or interpolated, since every other version of the *ʾifk* hadith lacks any mention of her marital age.⁶⁷⁰

Moreover, there are several ʿĀʾiṣḥah-ascribed versions of the marital-age hadith that seem to have been constructed out of *other versions of the same hadith*, such as the following:

⁶⁶⁷ See the section on al-ʿAjlaḥ, above.

⁶⁶⁸ See the section on Sufyān al-Ṭawrī, above.

⁶⁶⁹ See the section on Sufyān al-Ṭawrī, above.

⁶⁷⁰ See the section on al-ʿAswad, above.

- **Muḥammad b. ‘Amr** (d. 144-145/761-763)’s hadith, on the authority of ‘Abū Salamah and Yaḥyá, and in which ‘Ā’iṣah is introduced halfway through as a source and narrator, probably borrowed its elaborate marriage narrative from Hišām’s Version 4 hadith.⁶⁷¹
- **‘Abṭar b. al-Qāsim** (d. 178/794-795)’s hadith, with the *’isnād* Muṭarrif—‘Abū ‘Ishāq—‘Abū ‘Ubaydah—‘Ā’iṣah, has a *matn* likely borrowed from the tradition of al-‘A‘maš.⁶⁷²
- **al-Nasā’i** (d. 303/915-916), with the *’isnād* ‘Aḥmad b. Sa‘d—Sa‘īd b. ‘abī Maryam—Yaḥyá b. ‘Ayyūb—‘Umārah b. Ġaziyyah—Muḥammad b. ‘Ibrāhīm—‘Abū Salamah—‘Ā’iṣah, has a *matn* plausibly borrowed from an iteration of Hišām’s Version 1 hadith (especially Wuhayb’s redaction), or possibly ‘Abū Ya‘lá’s dubious transmission from Muḥammad b. ‘Amr.⁶⁷³
- **al-Ṭabarānī** (d. 360/971)’s hadith, with the *’isnād* al-Ḥaḍramī—‘Abū Kurayb—Mu‘āwiyah b. Hišām—Sufyān al-Ṭawrī—‘Abū ‘Ishāq—‘Abū ‘Ubaydah—‘Ā’iṣah, is probably a corruption of either Qabiṣah or al-Firyābī’s redactions of Sufyān’s redaction of Hišām’s Version 2 hadith, in which the early segment of the original *’isnād* (Hišām—‘Urwah) has been replaced by (a raised version of) that of ‘Isrā’il’s hadith (‘Abū ‘Ishāq—‘Abū ‘Ubaydah—‘Ā’iṣah).⁶⁷⁴
- **al-Ṭabarānī** (d. 360/971)’s hadith, with the *’isnād* al-Ḥaḍramī—Yaḥyá al-Ḥimmānī—Šarīk—‘Abū ‘Ishāq—‘Abū ‘Ubaydah—‘Ā’iṣah, has a *matn* likely borrowed from either Jarīr or Ḥammād b. Zayd’s redactions of Hišām’s Version 1 hadith.⁶⁷⁵
- **al-Ṭabarānī** (d. 360/971)’s hadith, with the *’isnād* Muḥammad al-Marwazī—Muḥammad b. ‘Abd al-Karīm—Bakr b. Yūnus—Ibn ‘abī al-Zinād—‘Abū al-Zinād—‘Urwah—‘Ā’iṣah, has a *matn* likely borrowed from Sufyān al-Ṭawrī’s redaction of Hišām’s Version 2 hadith (or al-‘Aḥwaš b. Jawwāb’s redaction thereof in particular), and an altered version of the usual Ibn ‘abī al-Zinād *’isnād* (in which Hišām has been replaced by ‘Abū al-Zinād).⁶⁷⁶

⁶⁷¹ See the sections on both Muḥammad b. ‘Amr and Hišām, above.

⁶⁷² See the sections on al-‘A‘maš and ‘Abū ‘Ishāq, above.

⁶⁷³ See the section on ‘Abū Salamah, above.

⁶⁷⁴ See the sections on Sufyān al-Ṭawrī and ‘Abū ‘Ishāq, above.

⁶⁷⁵ See the sections on Šarīk and ‘Abū ‘Ishāq, above.

⁶⁷⁶ See the section on Ibn ‘abī al-Zinād, above.

All of this leaves only the following hadiths ascribed to ‘Ā’iṣah:

Hišām b. ‘Urwah (d. 146-147/763-765)

Hišām—‘Urwah—‘Ā’iṣah:

Marriage at six; Hijrah; illness, hair; swing; marital preparation; consummation at nine.⁶⁷⁷

Sulaymān al-‘A‘maš (d. 147-148/764-766)

‘Ibrāhīm—al-‘Aswad—‘Ā’iṣah:

Marriage at nine; [[together nine years]/[Prophet died when she was eighteen]].⁶⁷⁸

‘Abū ‘Awānah al-Waḍḍāḥ (d. 176/792)

‘Abd al-Malik b. ‘Umayr—‘Ā’iṣah

Special attributes; marriage at six/seven; angel brought image; consummation at nine; seeing Gabriel; most-beloved; illness; angels.⁶⁷⁹

Ibn Sa‘d (d. 230/845)

Muḥammad b. ‘Umar reported—‘Abd al-Raḥmān b. ‘abī al-Rijāl—‘Abū al-Rijāl—‘Amrah bt. ‘Abd al-Raḥmān—‘Ā’iṣah:

Marriage, during Šawwāl, in the tenth year of the Prophethood, three years before the Hijrah, at age six; Hijrah; wedding feast, during Šawwāl, eight months after the Hijrah, at age nine.⁶⁸⁰

‘Abū Nu‘aym (d. 430/1038)

‘Aḥmad b. ‘Iṣḥāq—‘Ibrāhīm b. Muḥammad al-Fābzānī—Muḥammad b. Ḥumayd—Zayd b. al-Ḥubāb—Ḥusayn b. Wāqid—Ibn Buraydah—Buraydah—‘Ā’iṣah:

Marriage at six; Prophet seeks consummation; ‘Ā’iṣah is fattened up by her parents.⁶⁸¹

⁶⁷⁷ See the section on Hišām, above.

⁶⁷⁸ See the section on al-‘A‘maš, above.

⁶⁷⁹ See the section on ‘Abū ‘Awānah al-Waḍḍāḥ, above.

⁶⁸⁰ Ibn Sa‘d (ed. Brockelmann), *Biographien*, VIII, pp. 39-40.

⁶⁸¹ ‘Abū Nu‘aym (ed. Ḥasan), *Ta’rīk ‘Aṣḥabān*, I, p. 233.

There are numerous problems with this set of reports. Firstly, Hišām's hadith is suspect: his original formulations of Versions 1-3 of his hadith were all *munqaṭi'*, so why would Version 4 be any different? Moreover, Hišām's hadiths are consistent with being the product of Hišām's own elaborations in successive retellings—indeed, there is direct evidence for the creation of Version 2 out of Version 1.⁶⁸² If Version 4 is likewise merely an extremely elaborated version of Version 1 (as indeed seems plausible), it cannot be treated as an independent transmission back to 'Ā'iṣah.

Secondly, al-'A'maš's hadith (the authenticity of which is questionable) is extremely divergent in its core element from all the rest, depicting 'Ā'iṣah as being married (i.e., engaged) at *nine* rather than six or seven.

Thirdly, 'Abū 'Awānah's hadith is much more similar overall to other *faḍā'il* hadiths about 'Ā'iṣah (most of which lack the marital-age elements) than it is to other versions of the marital-age hadiths ascribed to 'Ā'iṣah: this is consistent with his hadith's being yet another iteration of the common stock of *faḍā'il* material that was circulating in Iraq in the 8th Century CE, or with its being a remix or updated version of earlier *faḍā'il* reports that lacked any mention of 'Ā'iṣah's marital age.⁶⁸³

Fourthly, Ibn Sa'd's hadith is much more similar in structure and content to the statements of various biographical authorities—including statements that lack the marital-age elements altogether—than it is to other versions of the marital-age hadith, which is consistent with the hadith's having been fashioned therefrom.⁶⁸⁴

Fifthly, 'Abū Nu'aym's hadith appears to be completely isolated: I have been unable to find a single other transmission thereof in the entire extant Hadith corpus, which means that it reaches from 'Abū Nu'aym (fl. c. 1000 CE) all the way back to 'Ā'iṣah (d. 57-58/677-678) via a SS. Moreover, the content differs markedly from every other version of the marital-age hadith: the only thing they have in common is the 'marriage at six' element, which could easily be the product of an interpolation or contamination that occurred at any point in the three centuries separating hadith's alleged point of origin with its extant preservation. As it happens, one of this hadith's tradents, Muḥammad b. Ḥumayd al-Rāzī (d. 248/862-863), was widely regarded not just as unreliable, but as specifically someone who transmitted unusual hadiths (*ṣāḥib*

⁶⁸² See the section on Hišām, above.

⁶⁸³ See the section on 'Ismā'il b. 'abī Kālid, above.

⁶⁸⁴ See the section on 'Amrah, above.

‘ajā’ib).⁶⁸⁵ As always, however, the judgements of the early Muslim Hadith critics are not necessarily to be relied upon in these matters.

In short, these five ascriptions to ‘Ā’iṣah are not just extremely disparate (which we would actually expect in the case of genuine early provenance), but are in fact respectively more similar to transmissions from other sources and authorities than they are to each other, which is consistent with their being a product of contamination thereby, or borrowing therefrom. As such, these five reports do not constitute a distinctive tradition *vis-à-vis* other iterations of the same material, such that they cannot be said to reflect an underlying redaction attributable to ‘Ā’iṣah herself. In other words, *pace* Juynboll and Brown, the marital-age hadith cannot be traced back to ‘Ā’iṣah: she is not a credible CL, or in other words, she looks like a spider. Whilst it is certainly *possible* that the marital-age hadith originated with ‘Ā’iṣah, this cannot be demonstrated with an ICMA, at least on the basis of the available evidence.

Conclusion

Through the application of a critical, rigorous, and systematic version of the ICMA, the basic principles of textual criticism more broadly, and the Criterion of Dissimilarity (along with occasional instances of source-, form-, and historical-critical analysis, whenever an ICMA proved inapplicable), the following results obtained in regards to the hadith of ‘Ā’iṣah’s marital age:

- The majority of the relevant reports form mutually-similar clusters *vis-à-vis* other reports and thus constitute distinctive traditions and sub-traditions (i.e., possessing particular elemental sequences and wordings in common, *vis-à-vis* most other versions).
- The majority of these clusters/traditions correlate with particular tradents (i.e., commonly-cited sources).
- In such cases, *as a general tendency*, the rate of variation between parallel ascriptions to common sources increases in proportion to the antiquity of the

⁶⁸⁵ Ḍahabī (ed. ‘Arna’ūṭ *et al.*), *Siyar*, XI, p. 503.

source. In other words, there is a correlation, in such cases, between the dates of common sources (i.e., the time-periods in which transmission apparently occurred) and the rate of variation.

- The absolute dating of this apparent transition from a high rate of variation to a low rate of variation (i.e., the relevant time-periods of transmission, based on dates of the relevant tradents) correlates, *broadly speaking*, with our established background knowledge on the general transition from the oral to the written transmission of Hadith.

The best general explanation for these data is that the particular wordings of earlier tradents—the CLs and their PCLs—were (at least broadly) accurately recorded by subsequent tradents, with each successive generation becoming more precise in its transmission (due above all to the ongoing rise of written transmission). Thus, the distinctive redactions of CLs were (to at least some degree) accurately recorded by their PCLs, whilst the distinctive redactions of these PCLs were (to a much greater degree) accurately recorded by their students in turn. Consequently, earlier redactions the marital-age hadith—the distinctive formulations of PCLs and CLs—can be identified and, to varying degrees, reconstructed.

In practice, this reveals that it was the norm for tradents operating in the middle of the 8th Century CE (visible to us as CLs) to substantially reword their reports in successive retellings, and for tradents operating at the turn of the 9th Century CE (visible to us as PCLs, or senior PCLs in particular) to noticeably modify what they received; it was only during the 9th and especially the 10th Century CE that precise transmission obtained. (Conversely, if this pattern is extrapolated backwards, transmission in the 7th Century CE must have been extremely mutagenic and volatile.)

The changes that occurred in the course of transmission often go far beyond mere paraphrasing: tradents will transmit different versions of their hadiths (with differences in details and even elements) at different times; tradents will add details and even elements into what they received from their sources, absent from the transmissions of co-tradents; the distinctive wordings of some tradents will randomly appear in ascriptions to others; the entire redactions of some tradents will reappear with alternative *'isnāds*; the *'isnāds* cited by some tradents from certain sources will differ—in part or even in whole—from the *'isnāds* cited by their co-tradents for the

same redactions from the same sources; and of course, sometimes simple spelling errors occurred in the written transmission of hadiths.

In short, whilst an ICMA of the marital-age hadith reveals a general tendency for successive tradents to accurately record *some data* (at least from the CLs and the PCLs unto the extant sources), it simultaneously reveals a vast amount of accretion, error, contamination, interpolation, borrowing, and false ascription. Moreover, whilst the full-blown creation of new *'isnāds* for *matns* turned out to be relatively uncommon (at least amongst PCLs and later tradents), the alteration of existing *'isnāds* turned out to be fairly common: time and again, we encountered raisings and other such *'isnād*-related improvements.

Still, the overwhelming majority of the putative PCLs and CLs within the marital-age hadith turned out to be genuine sources whose distinctive redactions were identifiable and (to some degree) reconstructable. Such positive results only held as far back as the middle of the 8th Century CE, however: from thereon backwards, the evidence was either insufficient or outright inconsistent with genuine, early transmission. Thus, whilst an ICMA allowed us to attribute various different versions of this hadith to figures as early as Sulaymān al-'A'maš (d. 147-148/764-766) (debatably), Hišām b. 'Urwah (d. 146-147/763-765), and Muḥammad b. 'Amr (d. 144-145/761-763), nothing could be attributed to anyone earlier, including 'Abū 'Ishāq al-Sabī'ī (d. 127-128/744-746), Ibn Šihāb al-Zuhrī (d. 124/741-742), 'Urwah b. al-Zubayr (d. 93-95/711-714 or 101/719-720), and 'Ā'īshah bt. 'abī Bakr (d. 57-58/677-678).

Chapter 3: A Critical Analysis of the Origins of the Hadith of ‘Ā’iṣah’s Marital Age

When and where did the idea of ‘Ā’iṣah’s marriage to the Prophet at a young age originate? Is there any reason to think that the extant reports conveying this idea can be traced all the way back to an actual statement by ‘Ā’iṣah herself; or are there instead indications that such reports reflect a later phase of Islamic history; or can nothing be said thereon, one way or the other?

When I first began to seriously analyse this hadith, it appeared to me to be a product of Zubayrid Madinah: the overwhelming majority of the *’isnāds* therefor converge on the Madinan and Zubayrid traditionist Hiṣām b. ‘Urwah b. al-Zubayr (d. 146-147/763-765), citing the authority of his eminent Follower father (d. 93-101/711-720); three *’isnāds* also converge on the Madinan traditionist Muḥammad b. Muslim b. Šihāb al-Zuhrī (d. 124/741-742), likewise citing the authority of ‘Urwah; one *’isnād* also reaches back to the Madinan traditionist ‘Abd al-Raḥmān b. ‘abī al-Zinād (d. 164/780-781 or 174/790-791), from his Madinan father (d. 130/748), likewise citing the authority of ‘Urwah; eight *’isnāds* also converge on the Madinan traditionist Muḥammad b. ‘Amr (d. 144-145/761-763), on the authority of the Madinan Followers ‘Abū Salamah b. ‘Abd al-Raḥmān (d. 94/712-713, or 104/722-723) and Yaḥyá b. ‘Abd al-Raḥmān b. Ḥāṭib (d. 104/722-723); an Egypto-Madinan SS (cited by al-Nasā’ī) similarly reaches back to ‘Abū Salamah, on the authority of ‘Ā’iṣah herself; two *’isnāds* also converge on the Madinan traditionist Muḥammad b. ‘Umar al-Wāqidī (d. 207/823), citing the authority of the Madinan tradent ‘Abd al-Wāḥid b. Maymūn, who in turn cited the authority of the Madinan tradent Ḥabīb al-‘A‘war; and finally, a Madinan SS (cited by Ibn Sa‘d) reaches back to the Madinan Follower ‘Amrah bt. ‘Abd al-Raḥmān (d. 98/716-717, or 106/724-725), citing the authority of ‘Ā’iṣah herself.

I was not so hasty as Juynboll and Brown to identify ‘Ā’iṣah as the ultimate source for all of these Madinan transmissions,⁶⁸⁶ for two reasons. Firstly, the original formulations of most of the aforementioned traditionists were *munqaṭi‘* or *mursal* (despite the subsequent raisings and improvements of some of their students), being

⁶⁸⁶ Juynboll, *Encyclopedia*, 75, col. 1; Brown, in Rea, ‘Hadith’.

ascribed to the Followers of Madinah (‘Urwah, ‘Abū Salamah, Yaḥyá, and Ḥabīb); only two SSs (via ‘Abū Salamah and ‘Amrah) explicitly claimed to reach all the way back to ‘Ā’ishah herself. This is consistent with the ‘Ā’ishah story’s vaguely circulating in Madinah in the second half of the 1st Islamic Century (i.e., after her death in 57-58/677-678), the origin of which could be any one of the aforementioned Followers.

Secondly, the hadith was suspiciously useful for the Zubayrid political cause: early Muslim political claimants in the first and second *fitnahs* seem to have derived legitimacy from their female familial connections to Muḥammad, and ‘Abd Allāh b. al-Zubayr, nephew of ‘Ā’ishah and leader of the Hijaz-based Zubayrid faction in the second *fitnah* (c. 60-73/680-692), was no exception.⁶⁸⁷ As such, the Zubayrids must have been under pressure to emphasise the importance of ‘Ā’ishah in order to bolster the Zubayrid cause—and, given that they were wont to fabricate or interpolate reports in their favour,⁶⁸⁸ it is only to be expected that they did so in this regard. This would explain the initial appearance of reports about the uniqueness of ‘Ā’ishah and her status as the favourite wife of the Prophet, for example.⁶⁸⁹ Following this, one of the ways that these propagandists could have emphasised the specialness of ‘Ā’ishah was by trumpeting her distinctive status as Muḥammad’s only virgin wife—an emphasis that would have been accentuated by the circulation of reports concerning her young marital age.⁶⁹⁰ It is thus unsurprising that the marital-age hadith is associated overwhelmingly with a locus of Zubayrid-connected Madinan notables: ‘Urwah was himself a Zubayrid, being the brother ‘Abd Allāh; ‘Abū Salamah and ‘Urwah were remembered as having transmitted from each other⁶⁹¹; Yaḥyá was remembered as having transmitted from ‘Abd Allāh b. al-Zubayr and to ‘Urwah⁶⁹²; Ḥabīb was reportedly the *mawlá* of ‘Urwah,⁶⁹³ as was ‘Abd

⁶⁸⁷ Peter Webb, *Imagining the Arabs: Arab Identity and the Rise of Islam* (Edinburgh, UK: Edinburgh University Press, 2016), 197-201. It is also worth noting that ‘Ā’ishah was reportedly known as ‘*Umm ‘Abd Allāh*’ on account of her nephew, whom she reportedly loved more than any other, save the Prophet and her parents. See Spellberg, *Politics, gender, and the Islamic past*, 40-41; Abbott, *Aishah*, 64-65.

⁶⁸⁸ E.g., William M. Watt, *The Formative Period of Islamic Thought* (Oxford, UK: Oneworld Publications, 1998), 69-70; Gerald R. Hawting, “‘A plaything for kings’: ‘Ā’ishah’s *Ḥadīth*, Ibn al-Zubayr, and the Rebuilding of the Ka’ba’, in Majid Daneshgar & Walid A. Saleh (eds.), *Islamic Studies Today: Essays in Honor of Andrew Rippin* (Leiden, the Netherlands: Koninklijke Brill NV, 2017), 20-21; Shaddel, “Abd Allāh ibn al-Zubayr and the Mahdī”. For general notes about pro-Zubayrid propaganda, see *ibid.*, 18-19, in particular.

⁶⁸⁹ See the references in Wensinck, *Handbook*, 13-14.

⁶⁹⁰ For an elaboration on this function, see below.

⁶⁹¹ Ḍahabī (ed. ‘Arna’ūṭ *et al.*), *Siyar*, IV, pp. 287-288.

⁶⁹² Ibn Ḥajar, *Tahḍīb*, XI, p. 249.

⁶⁹³ Buḵārī (ed. Ḳān), *al-Ta’rīk al-Kabīr*, II, p. 312, # 2588.

al-Wāḥid⁶⁹⁴; al-Zuhrī was one of the most prolific students of ‘Urwah; Muḥammad b. ‘Amr transmitted from both ‘Abū Salamah and Yaḥyá⁶⁹⁵; and Hišām was the son of ‘Urwah. Thus, if ‘Urwah (for example) had created the marital-age hadith in order to bolster the Zubayrid cause, it would have been easy for it to spread (at a time when citing sources was not yet a norm) amongst his Madinan contemporaries and students, before ultimately being raised (at least by some later students) all the way back to ‘Ā’iṣah.

In short, the political utility of this hadith for the Zubayrids, in conjunction with its common ascription to a coterie of Zubayrid-connected Madinan Followers and their students, in conjunction with the known tendency of propagandistic fabrication and interpolation amongst supporters of the Zubayrids, along with the fact that the earliest versions of the hadith were evidently not ascribed all the way back to ‘Ā’iṣah herself, all provide grounds for concluding that the marital-age hadith originated in Zubayrid Madinah, rather than with a genuine statement or anecdote from ‘Ā’iṣah herself. Of course, it is possible that the Zubayrids merely exploited an expedient genuine memory for their cause—but such a supposition cannot be justified *vis-à-vis* a fabrication scenario.

And yet, even this scenario proved to be overly optimistic. After a year of preliminary analysis, I was decisively converted to Yasmin Amin’s position on this matter: the marital-age hadith probably originated even later—with Hišām and his contemporaries, in early Abbasid Iraq.⁶⁹⁶

Recapitulation of the *’Isnād-Cum-Matn* Analysis

In the preceding chapter, an ICMA revealed that most versions of the marital-age hadith can be traced back—in one form or another—to the following CLs, whose

⁶⁹⁴ [‘Aḥmad b. Muḥammad al-Burqānī &] ‘Alī b. ‘Umar al-Dāraqūṭnī (ed. ‘Abd al-Raḥīm Muḥammad ‘Aḥmad al-Qaṣṣārī), *Su’ālāt al-Barqāniyy li-l-Dāraqūṭniyy: Riwayāt al-Karajiyy ‘an-hu* (Lahore, Pakistan: Kutub Kānah Jamīliyy, 1404 AH), p. 45, # 308.

⁶⁹⁵ Ḍahabī (ed. ‘Arna’ūt *et al.*), *Siyar*, VI, pp. 136-137.

⁶⁹⁶ I owe thanks to Belal Abu-Alabbas for alerting me to Amin’s position; and Amin herself, for generously taking the time to impart to me her insights on the significance of Hišām’s Iraqi students and the silence of Mālik and Ibn ‘Ishāq, along with her own hunches regarding Hišām’s motives.

redactions could be reconstructed at least in terms of gist, and often in terms of specific wording:

ʿIshāq b. Rāhwayh (d. 238/853) [Khurasanian]

Yahyá b. ʿĀdam [Kufan]—al-Ḥasan b. Ḥayy [Kufan]:

He saw a twenty-one-year-old grandmother; the minimum age of pregnancy is nine; ʿĀʾiṣah's marriage was consummated at nine.⁶⁹⁷

al-Ḥajjāj b. ʿabī Manīʿ (d. post-216/831) [Levantine]

ʿUbayd Allāh b. ʿabī Ziyād [Levantine]—Ibn Šihāb al-Zuhrī [Madino-Levantine]:

Married ʿĀʾiṣah; after Kadijah; shown in a dream; married in Makkah at six; consummation; Hijrah; nine; ʿĀʾiṣah's genealogy; virgin; ʿAbū Bakr's name.⁶⁹⁸

al-Wāqidī (d. 207/823) [Madinan]

ʿAbd al-Wāḥid b. Maymūn [Madinan]—Ḥabīb [Madinan]:

Kadijah's death; ʿĀʾiṣah shown by angel; Prophet's interactions with ʿĀʾiṣah's family; ʿĀʾiṣah's birth; ʿĀʾiṣah's marriage at six; marriage to Sawdah.⁶⁹⁹

Muḥammad b. al-Ḥasan (d. turn of 9th C. CE) [Kufan]

Sufyān al-Ṭawrī [Kufan]—Saʿd b. ʿIbrāhīm [Madinan]—al-Qāsim b. Muḥammad [Madinan]—ʿĀʾiṣah [Madinan]:

Marriage at six; consummation at nine; consummation in Šawwāl; [she was the preferred wife; she preferred women to be consummated in Šawwāl].⁷⁰⁰

ʿAbṭar b. al-Qāsim (d. 178/794-795) [Kufan]

Muṭarrif [Kufan]—ʿAbū ʿIshāq [Kufan]—ʿAbū ʿUbaydah [Kufan]—ʿĀʾiṣah [Madinan]:

Marriage at nine; together nine years.⁷⁰¹

ʿAbū ʿAwānah al-Waḍḍāḥ (d. 176/792) [Wasitian-Basran]

⁶⁹⁷ See the section on ʿIshāq b. Rāhwayh in ch. 2.

⁶⁹⁸ See the section on al-Ḥajjāj b. ʿabī Manīʿ in ch. 2.

⁶⁹⁹ See the section on Muḥammad b. ʿUmar al-Wāqidī in ch. 2.

⁷⁰⁰ See the section on Muḥammad b. al-Ḥasan in ch. 2.

⁷⁰¹ See the section on ʿAbṭar in ch. 2.

‘Abd al-Malik b. ‘Umayr [Kufan]—‘Ā’iṣah [Madinan]:

Special attributes; marriage at six/seven; angel brought image; consummation at nine; seeing Gabriel; most-beloved; illness; angels.⁷⁰²

‘Isrā’īl b. Yūnus (d. 160-162/776-779) [Kufan]

‘Abū ‘Iṣḥāq [Kufan]—‘Abū ‘Ubaydah [Kufan]:

‘Ā’iṣah was married at six; consummation at nine; Prophet died when she was eighteen.⁷⁰³

Sulaymān al-‘A‘maš (d. 147-148/764-766) [Kufan]

‘Ibrāhīm [Kufan]—al-‘Aswad [Kufan]—‘Ā’iṣah [Madinan]:

Marriage at nine; [[together nine years]/[Prophet died when she was eighteen]].⁷⁰⁴

Hišām b. ‘Urwah (d. 146-147/763-765) [Madinan]

‘Urwah [Madinan]:

‘Ā’iṣah was married at six or seven; consummation at nine.⁷⁰⁵

Hišām b. ‘Urwah (d. 146-147/763-765) [Madinan]

‘Urwah [Madinan]:

‘Ā’iṣah was married at six or seven; consummation at nine.

Anonymous:

The Prophet died when she was eighteen.⁷⁰⁶

Hišām b. ‘Urwah (d. 146-147/763-765) [Madinan]

‘Urwah [Madinan]:

‘Urwah wrote to [al-Walīd b.] ‘Abd al-Malik; [Kadījah’s death]; ‘Ā’iṣah’s marriage, after Kadījah’s death; dream-vision of ‘Ā’iṣah; marriage at six; consummation, after the Hijrah, at nine; [‘Ā’iṣah’s death].⁷⁰⁷

⁷⁰² See the section on ‘Abū ‘Awānah al-Waḍḍāḥ in ch. 2.

⁷⁰³ See the section on ‘Isrā’īl in ch. 2.

⁷⁰⁴ See the section on al-‘A‘maš in ch. 2.

⁷⁰⁵ See the section on Hišām b. ‘Urwah in ch. 2.

⁷⁰⁶ See the section on Hišām b. ‘Urwah in ch. 2.

⁷⁰⁷ See the section on Hišām b. ‘Urwah in ch. 2.

Hišām b. ‘Urwah (d. 146-147/763-765) [Madinan]

‘Urwah [Madinan]—‘Ā’iṣah:

Marriage at six; Hijrah; illness, hair; swing; marital preparation; consummation at nine.⁷⁰⁸

’Ismā’īl b. ’abī Ḳālid (d. 146/763-764) [Kufan]

‘Abd al-Raḥmān b. ’abī al-Ḍaḥḥāk [unknown]—‘Abd al-Raḥmān b. Muḥammad [unknown]:

‘Abd Allāh b. Ṣafwān and someone else came to ‘Ā’iṣah, who mentioned her nine special attributes; angel brought image; marriage at seven; consummation at nine; virgin; revelation in blanket; most-beloved; Quranic revelation and communal destruction; seeing Gabriel; the Prophet’s death and the angel.⁷⁰⁹

Muḥammad b. ‘Amr (d. 144-145/761-763) [Madinan]

Yahyá [Madinan] & ’Abū Salamah [Madinan]:

Ḳawlah convinces the Prophet to propose to ‘Ā’iṣah and Sawdah; Ḳawlah brings word to ’Umm Rūmān and waits for ’Abū Bakr; ’Abū Bakr questions the validity of the proposal, but the Prophet assuages him; ’Umm Rūmān informs Ḳawlah of a prior engagement with al-Muṭ‘im’s son; ’Abū Bakr visits al-Muṭ‘im and his wife, who call off the engagement on religious grounds, to ’Abū Bakr’s relief; ’Abū Bakr sends for the Prophet and engages ‘Ā’iṣah to him; she is age six; Ḳawlah then goes to Sawdah, and passes on the proposal to her venerable father, who approves the match; Sawdah’s father sends for the Prophet and engages her to him; Sawdah’s brother disapproves, but later regrets having done so.

—‘Ā’iṣah [Madinan]:

Hijrah; women; swing; shoulder-length hair; marital preparation; marital consummation; Sa’d brings food; nine.⁷¹⁰

Numerous versions—whether SS ascriptions to isolated figures or transmissions from putative CLs—were also exposed as the clear product of error, contamination,

⁷⁰⁸ See the section on Hišām b. ‘Urwah in ch. 2.

⁷⁰⁹ See the section on ’Ismā’īl b. ’abī Ḳālid in ch. 2.

⁷¹⁰ See the section on Muḥammad b. ‘Amr in ch. 2.

interpolation, and false ascription, including the CL redactions of Muḥammad b. al-Ḥasan, ‘Abṭar b. al-Qāsim, Hišām b. ‘Urwah (in the case of his Version 2 hadith, at least), and Muḥammad b. ‘Amr. Many other versions—especially SS ascriptions to isolated figures—were not as definitive, but still exhibited suspicious signs of secondary construction; thus, out of the SS ascriptions to isolated figures, only the following one was not positively cast into doubt on specific textual or contextual grounds (whilst still being uncorroborated):

‘Abū Nu‘aym (d. 430/1038) [Isfahanian]

‘Aḥmad b. ‘Ishāq [Eastern?]⁷¹¹—‘Ibrāhīm b. Muḥammad [Eastern?]⁷¹¹—Muḥammad b. Ḥumayd [Razian]⁷¹¹—Zayd b. al-Ḥubāb [Mervian/Kufan]⁷¹¹—Ḥusayn b. Wāqid [Mervian]⁷¹¹—Ibn Buraydah [Mervian]⁷¹¹—Buraydah [Madinan]⁷¹¹—‘Ā’iṣah [Madinan]:

Marriage at six; Prophet seeks consummation; ‘Ā’iṣah is fattened up by her parents.⁷¹¹

As we concluded in the previous chapter, no version of the marital-age—including the CL redactions and SS ascriptions just cited—can be traced back to anyone operating before the middle of the 8th Century CE, at least on the basis of an ICMA. However, this raises an important question: is it possible to move beyond an ICMA and evaluate the hadith on other grounds? In other words, can we take the results of our ICMA and subject them to further analysis, in order to gain deeper insights into the transmission and origins of the hadith in question?

Dating by Ascription Type

One consideration is the different levels of ascription exhibited by these various reports: where some of them claim to reach all the way back to a Companion (‘Ā’iṣah), others only claim to reach back to a Follower (Jābir, ‘Abū ‘Ubaydah, and ‘Urwah), or even convey the statements of later figures (Ḥabīb, Ibn Šihāb al-Zuhrī, and al-Ḥasan b. Ḥayy). Based on the Criterion of Dissimilarity, we would generally expect those ascribed to later figures to reflect an earlier stage than those ascribed to earlier figures.

⁷¹¹ ‘Abū Nu‘aym (ed. Ḥasan), *Ta’rīk ‘Aṣḥabān*, I, p. 233.

However, this does not get us very far, at least in this context: even hadiths that have preserved archaic ascriptions could still be interpolated or contaminated in terms of *content*. Moreover, a relative chronology does not help us establish an absolute dating: even if we now have reason to believe that Hišām's (Follower-ascribed) version predates al-'A'maš's (Companion-ascribed) version, for example, we are still left without any specific notion of the time-span and time-periods involved.

Form Criticism

Another potential avenue of analysis is form criticism: the identification and comparison of the narrative components of *matns* (i.e., regardless of their *'isnāds*), with the aim of identifying earlier forms thereof. Such an analysis immediately suggests that all versions of the marital-age hadith—all hadiths containing the 'marriage' and/or 'consummation' elements—must in that respect share a common origin, either as parallel recollections of an actual event, or various offshoots of an *ur-story*. The traditional explanation would of course be that 'Ā'īṣah was actually engaged and consummated in marriage at a young age, and that this event was described and transmitted as a hadith accordingly—thus, a genuine historical memory undergirds the common form of the hadith. However, even putting aside the failure of the preceding ICMA to correlate any particular redaction with 'Ā'īṣah, and putting aside also the fact that most versions of the hadith did not originally claim 'Ā'īṣah as their source in the first place, this is not a satisfactory explanation: the age range given for 'Ā'īṣah's marital engagement (*tazawwuj*, *nikāḥ*) is six, six or seven, seven, nine and (in the case of one extreme outlier) ten, so it cannot simply be the case that an actual event was accurately remembered and reported. Moreover, both the 'marriage' and 'consummation' elements are usually worded in a fairly specific way (i.e., sharing common verbs and *ḥāl* structures), which is suspect: there are many ways that the relevant information could have been expressed in Arabic,⁷¹² yet a common formula prevails in the relevant reports:

⁷¹² There are numerous alternative ways of expressing this information, including alternative verbs, alternative verbal forms, and alternative syntax. Rather than creating a list of hypothetical examples, it

suffices to catalogue the actual examples that exist within the variants of the broader marital-age tradition.

Firstly, in terms of alternative verbs for the ‘marriage’ element: Ṭabarānī (ed. Salafī), *al-Muʿjam al-Kabīr*, XXIII, p. 26, # 62 (cf. the section on al-ʿAjlāh in ch. 2) has *fa-zawwaja-hā rasūl allāh*; al-Baḡawī’s redaction (cf. the section on Hišām b. ʿUrwah in ch. 2) has *wa-kaṭabat ʿalay-hi ʿāʾiṣah* (with Ḳawlah as the subject); Ibn Saʿd (ed. Brockelmann), *Biographien*, VIII, p. 42 (cf. the section on al-Zuhrī in ch. 2) has *malaka rasūl allāh ʿuqdat ʿāʾiṣah*; Ibn Saʿd (ed. Brockelmann), *Biographien*, VIII, p. 42 (cf. the sections on Hišām b. ʿUrwah and al-Zuhrī in ch. 2) has *nakaḥa al-nabiyy ʿāʾiṣah*; ʿAbd al-Razzāq’s redaction (cf. the sections on Maʿmar, Hišām b. ʿUrwah, and al-Zuhrī in ch. 2) has *nakaḥa al-nabiyy ʿāʾiṣah*; Šāfiʿī (ed. ʿAbd al-Muṭṭalib), *ʿUmm*, VI, pp. 45-46, # 2210 (cf. the section on Sufyān b. ʿUyaynah in ch. 2) has *nakaḥa-nī al-nabiyy*; Muḥammad b. Bišr’s redaction (cf. the sections on Muḥammad b. ʿAmr and Hišām b. ʿUrwah in ch. 2) has *fa-zawwaja-hā [[min rasūl allāh]/[ʿiyyā-hu]]*; ʿAbū ʿUsāmah’s first redaction (cf. the section on Hišām b. ʿUrwah in ch. 2) has *[tumma/wa-] nakaḥa ʿāʾiṣah*; ʿAbū ʿAwānah’s redaction (cf. the preceding discussion, and the section on ʿIsmāʿīl b. ʿabī Ḳālid in ch. 2) has *malaka-nī rasūl allāh*; and Hišām’s Version 3 hadith (cf. his section in ch. 2) has *wa-nakaḥa ʿāʾiṣah* and possibly *nakaḥa-hā rasūl allāh*.

Secondly, in terms of alternative verbs for the ‘consummation’ element: Warjlānī (ed. Sālimī), *al-Tartīb fī al-Šaḥīḥ*, p. 238, # 528; *ibid.*, p. 326, # 750 (cf. the section on Jābir b. Zayd in ch. 2) has *wa-ibtanā bi-hā*; Ḥākim, *Mustadrak*, VII, p. 20, # 6881 (cf. the sections on al-Zuhrī and ʿAmrah in ch. 2) has *wa-ʿarrasa bi-hā* and *ibtanā bi-hā*; Ṭabarānī (ed. Salafī), *al-Muʿjam al-Kabīr*, XXIII, p. 19, # 40 (cf. the section on Qatādah in ch. 2) has *tumma ibtanā bi-hā*; Ṭabarī (ed. de Goeje), *Annales*, IV, pp. 1770-1771 (cf. the section on Ibn ʿAbbās in ch. 2) has *wa-jamaʿa ʿilay-hā*; Ṭabarī (ed. de Goeje), *Annales*, IV (series III), p. 2439 (cf. the sections on al-Zuhrī and ʿAmrah in ch. 2) has both *wa-ʿarrasa bi-hā* and *ibtanā bi-hā*; ʿAbd al-Razzāq (ed. ʿAʿzamī), *Muṣannaf*, VI, p. 162, # 10349 (cf. the section on ʿAbd al-Razzāq) has *wa-ʾuhdiyat ʿilay-hi*; Ibn Saʿd (ed. Brockelmann), *Biographien*, VIII, pp. 39-40 (cf. the section on ʿAmrah) has *wa-ʾaʿrasa bī*; Ibn Saʿd (ed. Brockelmann), *Biographien*, VIII, p. 42 (cf. the section on al-Zuhrī in ch. 2) has *wa-jamaʿa-hā*; ʿAbd al-Razzāq’s redaction (cf. the sections on Maʿmar, Hišām b. ʿUrwah, and al-Zuhrī in ch. 2) has *wa-zuffat ʿilay-hi*; Sufyān al-Ṭawrī’s redaction (cf. the section on Hišām b. ʿUrwah in ch. 2) has *wa-ʾudkilat ʿalay-hi*; and ʿIsmāʿīl b. ʿabī Ḳālid’s redaction (cf. his section in ch. 2) has *wa-ʾuhdītu ʿilay-hi*.

Thirdly, in terms of alternative syntax for either element: ʿAbū Nuʿaym (ed. ʿAzzāzī), *Maʿrifat al-Šaḥābah*, I, p. 3208, # 7375 (cf. the section on Hišām b. ʿUrwah in ch. 2) has *li-sitt sinīn*; Ḥākim, *Mustadrak*, VII, p. 19, # 6879 (cf. the section on Jābir b. Zayd in ch. 2) has *wa-la-hā sabʿ sinīn* and *wa-la-hā tisʿ sinīn*; Ḥākim, *Mustadrak*, VII, p. 19, # 6880 (cf. the section on Hišām b. ʿUrwah in ch. 2) has *wa-kānat ʿāʾiṣah yawma nakaḥa-hā rasūl allāh bint sitt sinīn*; Ḥākim, *Mustadrak*, VII, p. 20, # 6881 (cf. the sections on al-Zuhrī and ʿAmrah in ch. 2) has *wa-ʿarrasa bi-hā rasūl allāh fī šawwāl ʿalā raʾs ʿāmāniyat ʾašhur min al-hijrah wa-kānat yawma ibtanā bi-hā bint tisʿ sinīn*; al-Baḡawī’s redaction (cf. the section on Hišām b. ʿUrwah in ch. 2) has *wa-kaṭabat ʿalay-hi ʿāʾiṣah bint/ibnah ʿabī bakr fa-banā bi-sawdah wa-ʿāʾiṣah yawma-ʾid bint sitt sinīn*; Ṭabarī (ed. de Goeje), *Annales*, IV, p. 1770 (cf. the section on Hišām b. ʿUrwah in ch. 2) has *wa-ʿāʾiṣah yawma-ʾid ibnat sitt sinīn*; Ṭabarī (ed. de Goeje), *Annales*, IV (series III), p. 2439 (cf. the sections on al-Zuhrī and ʿAmrah in ch. 2) has *wa-ʿarrasa bi-hā fī šawwāl ʿalā raʾs ʿāmāniyat ʾašhur min al-hijrah wa-kānat yawma ibtanā bi-hā ibnat tisʿ sinīn*; Ibn Saʿd (ed. Brockelmann), *Biographien*, VIII, p. 39 (cf. the sections on Muḥammad b. ʿAmr and Hišām b. ʿUrwah in ch. 2) has *wa-kaṭabat ʿalay-hi ʿāʾiṣah bint ʿabī bakr fa-tazawwaja-humā fa-banā bi-sawdah bi-makkah wa-ʿāʾiṣah yawma-ʾid bint sitt sinīn*; Ibn Saʿd (ed. Brockelmann), *Biographien*, VIII, pp. 39-40 (cf. the section on ʿAmrah) has *wa-ʾaʿrasa bī fī šawwāl ʿalā raʾs ʿāmāniyat ʾašhur min al-muhājar wa-kuntu yawma daḳala bī ibnat tisʿ sinīn*; ʿAbū ʿUsāmah’s second redaction (cf. the section on Hišām b. ʿUrwah in ch. 2) has *li-sitt sinīn*; Ibn Bukayr (ed. Zakkār), *al-Siyar wa-al-Maḡāzī*, p. 255 (cf. the section on Hišām b. ʿUrwah in ch. 2) has *wa-ʿāʾiṣah yawma-ʾid ibnat sitt sinīn*; Jaʿfar b. Sulaymān’s redaction (cf. the section on Hišām b. ʿUrwah in ch. 2) has *li-sabʿ [sinīn]* and *li-tisʿ sinīn*; ʿAbṭar’s redaction (cf. the sections on al-ʿAʿmaš and ʿAbū ʾIṣḥāq in ch. 2) has *li-tisʿ sinīn*; and ʿIsmāʿīl b. ʿabī Ḳālid’s redaction (cf. his section in ch. 2) has *li-sabʿ sinīn* and *li-tisʿ sinīn*.

However, as is indicated in each case (by the “cf.” reference to an ICMA in the preceding chapter), these actual variants are almost always *secondary* rewordings (i.e., the wordings of *offshoots* or *outgrowths* of traditions, such as PCL redactions, or obvious dives with elemental combinations taken from other sources). By contrast, most of the earliest CL redactions (namely, Ibn Rāḥwayh’s ascription to al-Ḥasan; ʾIsrāʾīl’s redaction; al-ʿAʿmaš’s redaction; and Versions 1, 2, and 4 of Hišām’s hadith) adhere to the usual *tazawwaja* verbal sentence and consequent *ḥāl* clause for the ‘marriage’ element, and the usual *banā* or *daḳala* verbal sentence and consequent *ḥāl* clause for the ‘consummation’ element, whenever they have either element. The notable exceptions are the redactions of ʿAbū ʿAwānah al-

Ibn ‘Abd al-Barr—‘Abd Allāh b. Muḥammad:

tazawwaja-hā rasūl allāh wa-hiya ibnat ‘ašr sinīn.

al-Kulaynī—‘Alī—Muḥammad—Yūnus—‘Abū ‘Ayyūb—‘Ismā‘īl:

’inna rasūl allāh daḡala bi-‘ā’iṣah wa-hiya bint ‘ašr sinīn.

Ibn Rāhwayh—Yaḥyá—al-Ḥasan:

daḡala rasūl allāh bi-‘ā’iṣah wa-hiya bint tis‘ sinīn.

al-Ḥajjāj—‘Ubayd Allāh—al-Zuhrī:

nakaḡa-hā rasūl allāh bi-makkah wa-hiya bint/ibnat sitt sinīn tumma ’inna rasūl allāh baná bi-‘ā’iṣah ba‘da-mā qadima al-madīnah wa-‘ā’iṣah yawma baná bi-hā [rasūl allāh] bint tis‘ sunan.

Ibn Hišām:

tazawwaja rasūl allāh ‘ā’iṣah bint ’abī bakr al-ṣiddīq bi-makkah wa-hiya ibnat sab‘ sinīn wa-baná bi-hā bi-al-madīnah wa-hiya bint tis‘ sinīn ’aw ‘ašr.

al-Wāqidī—‘Abd al-Wāḥid—Ḥabīb:

tazawwaja-hā rasūl allāh fī al-sanah al-‘āširah fī šawwāl wa-hiya yawma-’iḡ bint/ibnat sitt sinīn.

Muḥammad b. al-Ḥasan—Sufyān—Sa‘d—al-Qāsim—‘Ā’iṣah:

tazawwaja-nī/bī rasūl allāh wa-’anā ibnat sitt sinīn wa-baná bī wa-’anā bint tis‘ sinīn.

‘Abṭar—Muṭarrif—‘Abū ‘Iṣḡāq—‘Abū ‘Ubaydah—‘Ā’iṣah:

Waḡḡāḡ and ‘Ismā‘īl b. ‘abī Kālid, along with Hišām’s Version 3 hadith, all of which exhibit some non-standard wordings; but as we saw previously, there are reasons to think that ‘Abū ‘Awānah and ‘Ismā‘īl’s redactions are secondary constructions that incorporate the distinctive sequence of Hišām’s Version 1 hadith. This leaves Hišām’s Version 3 hadith, which cites exactly the same source as his other three versions (‘Urwah), and is thus consistent with being secondary as well (*vis-à-vis* the three other formulations ascribed to the same source).

In short, the tendency of the marital-age tradition as a whole—from earlier redactions to later redactions—is from unity to diversity, implying a common ur-story.

tazawwaja-nī rasūl allāh li-tis' sinīn.

'Abū 'Awānah—'Abd al-Malik—'Ā'iṣah:

malaka-nī [rasūl allāh] wa-'anā bint sitt/sab' sinīn [...] wa-banā bī [[wa-'anā bint]/[li-]]tis' sinīn.

'Isrā'il—'Abū 'Iṣḥāq—'Abū 'Ubaydah:

tazawwaja rasūl allāh/al-nabiyy 'ā'iṣah wa-hiya bint/ibnat sitt sinīn wa-daḡala/banā bi-hā wa-hiya bint/ibnat tis' sinīn.

Ma'mar—al-Zuhrī & Hišām:

nakaha al-nabiyy 'ā'iṣah wa-hiya bint/ibnat tis' sanawāt 'aw sab'.

al-'A'maš—'Ibrāhīm—al-'Aswad—'Ā'iṣah:

tazawwaja-hā rasūl allāh wa-hiya bint tis' [sinīn].

Hišām—'Urwah:

tazawwaja rasūl allāh 'ā'iṣah wa-hiya bint/ibnat sitt sinīn 'aw sab' wa-banā bi-hā wa-hiya bint/ibnat tis' [sinīn].

'Ismā'il b. 'abī Kālid—'Abd al-Raḥmān—'Abd al-Raḥmān:

tazawwaja-nī rasūl allāh li-sab' sinīn wa-'uhdītu 'ilay-hi li-tis' sinīn.

Muḥammad b. 'Amr—Yaḥyá & 'Abū Salamah:

[zawwaja/'ankaha/malaka]-hā wa-hiya yawma-'id ibnat sitt sinīn [...] fa-banā bī rasūl allāh [fī bayti-nā] [...] wa-'anā yawma-'id bint/ibnat tis' sinīn.

Even the rare 'ten' variants otherwise conform to the structure and wordings of the more common variants, as do the unusual 'nine' variants. This suggests not merely that they share a common origin, but that they share a common *narrative* origin: all of them likely stem from some kind of ur-story.

What did this ur-story look like, and who formulated it? It could be none other than an authentic statement of 'Ā'iṣah's (despite the limitations of the extant *'isnāds*), but

given that the original clearly described her in the third-person (with all first-person versions being secondary rewordings),⁷¹³ this seems improbable. Instead, the original speaker in this ur-story must be some later figure, even if they were using information that genuinely derived from ‘Ā’iṣah—for example, her nephew ‘Urwah, or his son Hiṣām. Either way, this inferable ur-story or ur-hadith would need to be something with which we could account for the rise of the aforementioned fundamental variants within the marital-age hadith-tradition. As it happens, two viable candidates for such an ur-story (or at least, for being a close reflection thereof) exist amongst the available reports, one of which is an extant report, and the other of which is a reconstructed CL redaction (though also still represented by extant transmissions). The first is the following ascription to both al-Zuhrī and Hiṣām, recorded by Ibn Sa’d:

Muḥammad b. Ḥumayd al-‘Abdī reported to us: “Ma‘mar related to us, from al-Zuhrī and Hiṣām b. ‘Urwah, who [both] said: “The Prophet married ‘Ā’iṣah when she was a girl of nine years or seven (*nakaḥa al-nabiyy ‘ā’iṣah wa-hiya ibnat tis‘ sanawāt ‘aw sab*).””⁷¹⁴

Although this report diverges substantially from the only other parallel transmission from Ma‘mar, from al-Zuhrī and Hiṣām (*viz.*, the redaction of ‘Abd al-Razzāq), it has the best claim out of the two to accurately reflecting Ma‘mar’s original redaction (based on the Criterion of Dissimilarity).⁷¹⁵ In addition to being the putative statement of two virtual Followers-of-the-Followers (thus making it seem extremely archaic), this report is striking due to its vague equivocation over ‘Ā’iṣah’s marital age: nine or seven. If indeed this reflects the ur-story (i.e., if the ur-story happens to survive via this version), it would explain the rise of the most fundamental variants within the marital-age hadith-tradition: the proposition that ‘Ā’iṣah’s marriage (*tazawwuj, nikāḥ*) occurred at age seven and that her marital consummation (*binā’, dukūl*) occurred at age nine; and the proposition that ‘Ā’iṣah’s marriage (*tazawwuj, nikāḥ*) occurred at age nine. In other words, this is consistent with the two rival ages (seven versus nine) for the same event (the marriage) given in the ur-story’s having been split into discrete ages for two separate events in most subsequent iterations of the hadith-tradition (e.g., the redaction of Hiṣām): seven at the time of the marital engagement, and nine at the

⁷¹³ See the previous chapter of the present work.

⁷¹⁴ Ibn Sa’d (ed. Brockelmann), *Biographien*, VIII, p. 42.

⁷¹⁵ See the section on Ma‘mar in ch. 2.

time of the consummation of the marriage. Not all subsequent versions adhered to this common division, however: in some cases (e.g., the redaction of al-'A'maš), the marital age of 'Ā'īṣah continued to be identified as nine.

The main weakness of this report as (an accurate reflection of) the ur-story is that it fails to explain the rise of the most common variant of all: the proposition that 'Ā'īṣah was married at *six* and consummated at nine. By contrast, the second candidate for the ur-story can explain *all* of the relevant variants (six, seven, and nine)—namely, the Version 1 hadith of Hišām b. 'Urwah, on the authority of his father:

The Messenger of God married (*tazawwaja*) 'Ā'īṣah when she was a girl of six or seven years, and consummated the marriage with her (*baná bi-hā*) when she was a girl of nine years.⁷¹⁶

This reconstructed redaction is the putative statement of a Follower, which is again consistent with its being archaic. Moreover, its being the ur-story (or a close reflection thereof) would explain all of the major variants of the marital-age hadith: 'marriage at six' and 'consummation at nine'; 'marriage at six or seven' and 'consummation at nine'; and 'marriage at seven' and 'consummation at nine'.⁷¹⁷ In other words, it is easy to envisage some tradents improving or updating the vague, initial version of the hadith ('six or seven') into more specific versions, choosing specifically either 'six' or 'seven'. Alternatively, it is easy to envisage simple error or poor memory resulting in the loss of either 'six' or 'seven', leaving only the other (specifically 'six' or specifically 'seven') in the transmissions in question. Either way, Hišām's Version 1 hadith easily accounts for most of the fundamental variation in question.

Hišām's Version 1 hadith can also account for the rise of the 'marriage at nine' variant, in at least three ways. Firstly, poor memory or some other form of garbled transmission could easily result in the conflation or merging of the 'marriage' and 'consummation' elements, resulting in a version of the hadith with 'marriage at nine' rather than 'marriage at six/seven' and 'consummation at nine' (as in the redaction of al-'A'maš). Secondly, poor memory or some other form of garbled transmission could easily result in the conflation or merging of the 'marriage' and 'consummation'

⁷¹⁶ See the section on Hišām b. 'Urwah in ch. 2.

⁷¹⁷ Only the super-rare and typically late 'marriage at ten' (Ibn 'Abd al-Barr), 'consummation at ten' (al-Kulaynī) and 'consummation at nine or ten' (Ibn Hišām) variants would remain unexplained.

elements but the retention of the ages ‘seven’ and ‘nine’, resulting in the ‘marriage at nine or seven’ (as in the aforementioned ascription to Ma‘mar). Thirdly, as has been noted already,⁷¹⁸ the Arabic words for ‘seven’ (سبع) and ‘nine’ (تسع) share a similar-looking consonantal skeleton or *rasm* (namely, سسع), which could be confused with each other in the reading or copying of unvowelled and undotted writing. It is thus plausible that a version of Hišām’s Version 1 hadith with ‘seven’ was misread as ‘nine’, and that the ‘marriage’ and ‘consummation’ elements (both being read as occurring at ‘nine’) were again conflated or merged into a single ‘marriage at nine’ element (as in the redaction of al-ʿA‘maš). Additionally, an uncertain *rasm*, in conjunction with some other garbled form of transmission (of the sort outlined above), could produce an uncertain ‘marriage at nine or seven’ variant (as in the aforementioned ascription to Ma‘mar).

In short, Hišām’s Version 1 hadith, out of all extant versions of the marital-age hadith, best answers the classic textual-critical question of *utrum in alterum abiturum erat* (“Which would have been more likely to give rise to the other?”).⁷¹⁹ It is of course still possible that the fundamental variation in question—marital engagement at six and marital consummation at nine; marital engagement six or seven and marital consummation at nine; marital engagement seven and marital consummation at nine; marital engagement at nine; and marital engagement at nine or seven—arose through deliberate alterations or rewordings, either by the original formulator of the ur-story, or by subsequent tradents. For example, we could imagine a scenario in which someone—even ʿĀʾiṣah herself—repeated the same formula (in terms of verbs and syntax) but changed the details in successive retellings. Thus, whilst there would be an ur-story in terms of general outline (i.e., the formula reused in the successive retellings), there would not be an ur-story in terms of an ultimate, direct ancestor of all extant variants.

However, there is no reason to posit hypothetical successive redactions (i.e., *new entities*) to explain the extant variation: the *existing material*—or at least, a redaction that *survives within the extant material*—already suffices. Moreover, in the case of the scenario of a later tradent’s rewording the hadith (e.g., al-ʿA‘maš and his ‘married at

⁷¹⁸ Again, see the section on Hišām b. ʿUrwah in ch. 2.

⁷¹⁹ Peter K. McCarter, *Textual Criticism: Recovering the Text of the Hebrew Bible* (Philadelphia, USA: Fortress Press, 1986), 21.

nine' version), there is no reason to suppose a deliberate alteration (absent a discernible motive), which leaves only accidental or incidental alteration. In such a case, however, we would still need to explain *how* such an accident could occur, which is precisely what the posited ur-story provides: the confusion of 'seven' with 'nine', or the conflation of two elements, are exactly how such an error would occur.

In short, on form- and textual-critical grounds, Hišām's Version 1 hadith is uniquely consistent with being the ur-story behind the marital-age hadith-tradition more broadly, since it could have plausibly—in light of the common pressures and problems of transmission—given rise to nearly all other versions,⁷²⁰ in a way that is not true for any other extant version.

Form Criticism and *'Isnāds*

Form criticism can also be combined with the evidence of *'isnāds* (i.e., beyond the scope of an ICMA, which narrowly focuses on correlating particular redactions with putative PCLs and CLs): as we already saw in the preceding chapter, a form-critical analysis in combination with a geographical analysis of the relevant *'isnāds* revealed that the *faḍā'il* hadiths of 'Abū 'Awānah al-Waḍḍāḥ and 'Ismā'īl b. 'abī Ḳālid are likely just different iterations of a common pool of storyteller and preacher material circulating in 8th-Century Kufah. Moreover, the fact that both share the two elements associated with Hišām's distinctive Version 1 hadith, in conjunction with the survival of closely-related *faḍā'il* reports that lack said elements altogether, suggests that 'Abū 'Awānah and 'Ismā'īl's redactions represent *secondary* iterations of the relevant *faḍā'il* material, under the influence of Hišām's hadith.

Form criticism can also be used to expose the unreliability of specific *'isnāds* at a certain level, as in the case of the redactions of 'Isrā'īl and al-'A'māš: both share the distinctive elemental combination of "Ā'īshah was married when she was a girl of X years' and 'the Prophet died when she was a girl of eighteen', even if they differ on some details (for example, her specific marital age, and whether her marriage was distinct from her marital consummation). As such, both must share a common origin,

⁷²⁰ Again, bar the three rare and late 'ten' variants.

yet each claims an independent *’isnād* back to (i.e., purports to be the words of) a different early figure: *’Abū ‘Ubaydah* and *‘Ā’iṣah*, respectively. This immediately suggests that at least one of the two *’isnāds* in question are false, or at least misleading: they do not disclose their common source, which is consistent with their being dives.

Similar form-critical considerations apply to Hišām’s Version 1 hadith, *’Isrā’īl*’s hadith, and most other versions of the marital-age hadith more broadly: their common form—the distinctive combination of the ‘marriage at six/seven’ and ‘consummation at nine’ elements—implies a common origin (as noted above), yet many of their *’isnāds* claim independent SSs—sometimes in different regions—back to different early figures, such as Qatādah b. Di‘āmah (d. 117-118/735-736) in Basrah, Jābir b. Zayd (d. 93/711-712 or 103/721-722) in Basrah, *’Urwah* b. al-Zubayr (d. 93-95/711-714 or 101/719-720) in Madinah, *’Abū ‘Ubaydah* (d. 81/700-701) in Kufah, *‘Abd Allāh* b. *‘Abbās* (d. 67-68/687-688) in Makkah, and *‘Ā’iṣah* bt. *’abī Bakr* (d. 57-58/677-678) in Madinah. This again immediately suggests—even putting aside all of the specific textual and historical problems outlined in the preceding chapter—that most of the relevant *’isnāds* are false or misleading, which is consistent with their being dives or retrojections of various kinds. Of course, at least one of these surviving ascriptions could be the original—but if so, which one? As noted already, Hišām’s Version 1 hadith has the strongest claim out of any iteration of the marital-age hadith to being the progenitor of the tradition as a whole.

Geography and Arguments from Silence: The Evidence of the *’Isnāds*

Of course, just because Hišām’s Version 1 hadith looks exactly like the ur-story behind the marital-age hadith-tradition as a whole, that does not mean that Hišām himself was responsible for it: it is conceivable that Hišām simply passed on the report from *’Urwah*, and even that *’Urwah* in turn merely passed on what he had heard from *‘Ā’iṣah*. There are strong reasons to doubt this, however. In particular, there are clear indications that this hadith arose in Iraq in the early Abbasid period, rather than earlier in Madinah.

The earliest figures to whom versions of the marital-age hadith can be attributed—the CLs operating between 750 and 800 CE—were all tradents operating in Iraq:

- **Muḥammad b. al-Ḥasan** (d. turn of 9th C. CE), who added marital-age elements into the Ṣawwāl hadith of Sufyān al-Ṭawrī, was Kufan.⁷²¹
- **‘Abṭar b. al-Qāsim** (d. 178/794-795), who combined a sub-tradition from al-‘A‘maš with a Kufan SS back to ‘Ā’iṣah, was Kufan.⁷²²
- **‘Abū ‘Awānah al-Waḍḍāḥ** (d. 176/792), who incorporated marital-age elements into his redaction of the *faḍā’il* of ‘Ā’iṣah and cited a Kufan source (‘Abd al-Malik b. ‘Umayr) therefor, spent time in Wasit and ended up in Basrah.⁷²³
- **‘Isrā’il b. Yūnus** (d. 160-162/776-779) was Kufan,⁷²⁴ and cited a Kufan SS.
- **Sulaymān al-‘A‘maš** (d. 147-148/764-766) was Kufan,⁷²⁵ and also cited a Kufan SS back to ‘Ā’iṣah.
- **‘Ismā’il b. ‘abī Kālid** (d. 146/763-764), who incorporated marital-age elements into his redaction of the *faḍā’il* of ‘Ā’iṣah, was Kufan.⁷²⁶

Even the Madinan CLs **Hišām b. ‘Urwah** (d. 146-147/763-765) and **Muḥammad b. ‘Amr** (d. 144-145/761-763), who at first glance appear to defy this tendency, actually conform thereto. Firstly, every single tradent who (allegedly or actually) directly received a version of the marital-age hadith from Muḥammad b. ‘Amr—including doubtful tradents, alleged tradents, and PCLs whose transmission therefrom can be confirmed—was Iraqi:

- **Yaḥyā b. Zakariyyā’** (d. 183-184/799-800), who allegedly (but improbably) transmitted a short marital-age hadith from Muḥammad b. ‘Amr, was Kufan.⁷²⁷

⁷²¹ Buḵārī (ed. Ḳān), *al-Ta’rīk al-Kabīr*, I, p. 67, # 152.

⁷²² Ḍahabī (ed. ‘Arna’ūṭ *et al.*), *Siyar*, VIII, pp. 227-228.

⁷²³ *Ibid.*, pp. 217-222.

⁷²⁴ *Ibid.*, VII, pp. 355-360.

⁷²⁵ *Ibid.*, VI, pp. 226-249.

⁷²⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 176-178.

⁷²⁷ *Ibid.*, VIII, pp. 337-341.

- **‘Abd Allāh b. al-’Ajlaḥ** (fl. turn of 9th C. CE), who allegedly transmitted a biographical summary about ‘Ā’īṣah from Muḥammad b. ‘Amr, was Kufan.⁷²⁸
- **‘Abdah b. Sulaymān** (d. 187-188/803-804), who transmitted a highly abridged version of Muḥammad b. ‘Amr’s hadith, was Kufan.⁷²⁹
- **‘Abd Allāh b. ‘Idrīs** (d. 192/808), who transmitted a version of Muḥammad b. ‘Amr’s hadith to ‘Aḥmad b. ‘Abd al-Jabbār (a Kufan PCL whose distinctive redaction can be reconstructed), was Kufan.⁷³⁰
- **Yaḥyá b. Sa‘īd** (d. 194/809-810), who transmitted a version of Muḥammad b. ‘Amr’s hadith to his son Sa‘īd b. Yaḥyá (a Baghdadian PCL whose distinctive redaction can be reconstructed), was a Kufan who moved to Baghdad.⁷³¹
- **Mu‘āḍ b. Mu‘āḍ b. Naṣr** (d. 196/811), who transmitted a highly abridged version of Muḥammad b. ‘Amr’s hadith, was Basran.⁷³²
- **Muḥammad b. Bišr** (d. 203/818-819), a PCL whose distinctive redaction can be reconstructed, was Kufan.⁷³³
- **Muḥammad b. ‘Ubayd al-Ṭanāfisi** (d. 203-205/818-821), who ostensibly transmitted an unusual version of Muḥammad b. ‘Amr’s hadith to al-Wāqidī, was a Kufan who spent time in Baghdad.⁷³⁴

This may at first seem puzzling: why was every single (alleged and actual) student who transmitted a version of the marital-age hadith from Muḥammad b. ‘Amr Iraqian, when Muḥammad himself was Madinan? The answer is provided by al-Ḍahabī: “Muḥammad b. ‘Amr died in the year 145 [i.e., 762-763 CE] or 144 [i.e., 761-762 CE]. He transmitted Hadith (*wa-qad ḥaddaṭa*) in Iraq.”⁷³⁵ In other words, Muḥammad b. ‘Amr was known to have spent time in Iraq and transmitted Hadith there—and, given that this datum is given by al-Ḍahabī directly after his specification of Muḥammad’s death-date, it seems implied that this occurred towards the end of his life. Indeed, such is explicitly recorded by al-Kalābādī, citing the statement of a certain Sa‘d b. ‘Āmir: “Muḥammad b. ‘Amr

⁷²⁸ Buḵārī (ed. Ḳān), *al-Ta’rīk al-Kabīr*, V, p. 45, # 88.

⁷²⁹ Ḍahabī (ed. ‘Arna’ūṭ *et al.*), *Siyar*, VIII, p. 511.

⁷³⁰ *Ibid.*, IX, pp. 42-48.

⁷³¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 139-140.

⁷³² *Ibid.*, pp. 54-56.

⁷³³ *Ibid.*, pp. 265-266.

⁷³⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 436-438.

⁷³⁵ *Ibid.*, VI, p. 137.

came to us—meaning, to Basrah—two times: he came in the year 137 [i.e., 754-755 CE], and he came a second time in the year 144 [i.e., 761-762 CE].”⁷³⁶ (That said, nearly all of the transmitters of the marital-age hadith from Muḥammad b. ‘Amr were Kufan, not Basran.) All of this is consistent with Muḥammad b. ‘Amr’s having only transmitted the hadith in Iraq at the end of life, not his hometown of Madinah—otherwise, we would reasonably expect it to be transmitted by at least one early Madinan source or PCL.

However, there are textual-critical grounds for inferring that Muḥammad b. ‘Amr borrowed the marital-age elements in his hadith from a version of Hišām b. ‘Urwah’s Version 4 hadith,⁷³⁷ and Hišām was also Madinan—surely this would suggest that Muḥammad obtained the hadith in Madinah, despite the odd absence of any Madinan transmissions thereof from him? In fact, even Hišām b. ‘Urwah appears to have overwhelmingly transmitted (all four versions of) his hadith in Iraq, as can be seen from the regional provenance of the overwhelmingly majority of his (alleged and actual) relevant students:

- **Sufyān al-Ṭawrī** (d. 161/777-778), a PCL who transmitted a distinctive redaction of the Version 2 hadith from Hišām, was a Kufan who died in Basrah.⁷³⁸
- **Wuhayb b. Kālīd al-Karābīsī** (d. 165/781-782), a PCL who transmitted a distinctive redaction of the Version 2 hadith from Hišām, was Basran.⁷³⁹
- **Ḥammād b. Salamah** (d. 167/784), a PCL who transmitted a distinctive redaction of the Version 4 hadith from Hišām, was Basran.⁷⁴⁰
- **‘Ismā‘īl b. Zakariyyā’ al-Ḳulqānī** (d. 173-174/789-791), who ostensibly transmitted a redaction of the Version 1 hadith from Hišām, was a Kufan who moved to Baghdad.⁷⁴¹

⁷³⁶ ‘Aḥmad b. Muḥammad al-Kalābādī (ed. ‘Abd Allāh al-Layṭī), *Rijāl Ṣaḥīḥ al-Buḵārīyy al-Musammā al-Hidāyah wa-al-‘Iršād fī Ma‘rifat ‘Ahl al-Ṭīqah wa-al-Sadād*, vol. 2 (Beirut, Lebanon: Dār al-Ma‘rifah, 1987), p. 882, # 151.

⁷³⁷ See the sections on Muḥammad b. ‘Amr and Hišām b. ‘Urwah in ch. 2.

⁷³⁸ Ḍahabī (ed. ‘Arna’ūṭ *et al.*), *Siyar*, VII, pp. 229-279; Hans-Peter Raddatz, ‘Sufyān al-Thawrī’, in Clifford E. Bosworth, Emeri J. van Donzel, Wolfhart P. Heinrichs, & Gerard Lecomte (eds.), *The Encyclopaedia of Islam, New Edition, Volume 9: San-Sze* (Leiden, the Netherlands: Koninklijke Brill NV, 1997), 770-772.

⁷³⁹ Ḍahabī (ed. ‘Arna’ūṭ *et al.*), *Siyar*, VIII, pp. 223-226.

⁷⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, VII, pp. 444-456.

⁷⁴¹ *Ibid.*, VIII, pp. 475-476.

- **Ja'far b. Sulaymān al-Ḍubā'ī** (d. 178/794-795), a PCL who transmitted a distinctive redaction of the Version 1 hadith from Hišām, was Basran.⁷⁴²
- **Ḥammād b. Zayd** (d. 179/795), a PCL who transmitted a distinctive redaction of the Version 1 hadith from Hišām, was Basran.⁷⁴³
- **Yahyá b. Zakariyyā'** (d. 183-184/799-800), who reportedly transmitted an unspecified version of the marital-age from Hišām, was Kufan.⁷⁴⁴
- **'Abān b. Yazīd al-ʿAṭṭār** (fl. turn of 9th C. CE), who transmitted a redaction of the Version 3 hadith from Hišām, was Basran.⁷⁴⁵
- **'Abd Allāh b. Mu'āwiyah** (fl. turn of 9th C. CE), who transmitted a redaction of the Version 3 hadith from Hišām, was Basran.⁷⁴⁶
- **'Abdah b. Sulaymān al-Kilābī** (d. 187-188/803-804), a PCL who transmitted a distinctive redaction of the Version 1 hadith from Hišām, was Kufan.⁷⁴⁷
- **Jarīr b. 'Abd al-Ḥamīd al-Ḍabbī** (d. 188/804), a PCL who ostensibly transmitted a redaction of the Version 1 hadith from Hišām, was a Kufan of Eastern origin.⁷⁴⁸
- **'Alī b. Mushir** (d. 189/804-805), a PCL who transmitted a distinctive redaction of the Version 4 hadith from Hišām, was a Kufan who became the *qāḍī* of Mosul.⁷⁴⁹
- **'Abū Mu'āwiyah Muḥammad b. Kāzīm al-Ḍarīr** (d. 194-195/809-811), who ostensibly transmitted a redaction of the Version 1 hadith from Hišām, was Kufan.⁷⁵⁰
- **Wakī' b. al-Jarrāḥ** (d. 196-197/812), who ostensibly transmitted a redaction of the Version 1 hadith from Hišām, was Kufan.⁷⁵¹
- **Sufyān b. 'Uyaynah** (d. 198/814), a PCL who ostensibly transmitted a redaction of the Version 1 hadith from Hišām, was a Kufan who spent time in

⁷⁴² *Ibid.*, pp. 197-200.

⁷⁴³ *Ibid.*, VII, pp. 456-466.

⁷⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, VIII, pp. 337-341.

⁷⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, VII, pp. 431-433.

⁷⁴⁶ Bukārī (ed. Kan), *al-Ta'rīk al-Kabīr*, V, p. 209, # 663.

⁷⁴⁷ Ḍahabī (ed. 'Arna'ūṭ *et al.*), *Siyar*, VIII, p. 511.

⁷⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, IX, pp. 9-18.

⁷⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, VIII, pp. 484-487.

⁷⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, IX, pp. 73-78.

⁷⁵¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 140-168; Raif G. Khoury, 'Wakī'', in Peri J. Bearman, Thierry Bianquis, Clifford E. Bosworth, Emeri J. van Donzel, & Wolfhart P. Heinrichs (eds.), *The Encyclopaedia of Islam, New Edition, Volume 11: V-Z* (Leiden, the Netherlands: Koninklijke Brill NV, 2002), 101.

Makkah (from 122/739-740 to 126/743-744), then returned to his hometown of Kufah, then travelled to Yemen twice (in 150/767 and 152/769), and finally settled in Makkah (from 163/779-780 until his death).⁷⁵²

- **Yūnus b. Bukayr b. Wāṣil** (d. 199/814-815), who ostensibly transmitted an altered version of Hišām's (Version 1 or 2) hadith, was Kufan.⁷⁵³
- **'Abū 'Usāmah Ḥammād b. 'Usāmah** (d. 201/817), a PCL who transmitted two distinctive redactions—of Version 1 and Version 4, respectively—of the marital-age hadith from Hišām, was Kufan.⁷⁵⁴
- **al-Hayṭam b. 'Adī al-Ṭā'ī** (d. 207/822-823), who ostensibly transmitted a discussion between himself and Hišām in which the latter related information about 'Ā'īshah's marriage on the authority of 'Urwah, was Kufan.⁷⁵⁵
- **Yahyā b. Hāšim al-Ġassānī** (d. 225/839-840), who ostensibly transmitted a redaction of the Version 1 hadith from Hišām, was Kufan.⁷⁵⁶

Time and again, the relevant *'isnāds* give the impression that Hišām transmitted the marital-age hadith in Iraq (above all, in Kufah), not his hometown of Madinah. Once again, the Islamic biographical sources provide an answer for this oddity: Hišām reportedly moved from Madinah to Iraq towards the end of his life, where he joined the court of the Abbasid caliph al-Manṣūr (r. 754-775 CE). It is reported that he first moved to Kufah (perhaps meaning the temporary Abbasid capital of al-Hāšimiyyah, which was close to Kufah), before moving with the Abbasids into their new capital of Baghdad, where he died in 146/763-764 or 147/764-765.⁷⁵⁷ Thus, in the last few years of his life (perhaps for a whole decade), Hišām appears to have mass-disseminated four different versions of the marital-age hadith to a plethora of Iraqi students, especially Kufans.

⁷⁵² Ḍahabī (ed. 'Arna'ūṭ *et al.*), *Siyar*, VIII, pp. 454-474; Susan A. Spector, 'Sufyān b. 'Uyayna', in Clifford E. Bosworth, Emeri J. van Donzel, Wolfhart P. Heinrichs, & Gerard Lecomte (eds.), *The Encyclopaedia of Islam, New Edition, Volume 9: San-Sze* (Leiden, the Netherlands: Koninklijke Brill NV, 1997), 772; Feryal Salem, *The Emergence of Early Sufi Piety and Sunnī Scholasticism: 'Abdallāh b. al-Mubārak and the Formation of Sunnī Identity in the Second Islamic Century* (Leiden, the Netherlands: Koninklijke Brill NV, 2016), 57-58.

⁷⁵³ Ḍahabī (ed. 'Arna'ūṭ *et al.*), *Siyar*, IX, pp. 245-246.

⁷⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 277-279.

⁷⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, X, pp. 103-104.

⁷⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 160-162.

⁷⁵⁷ Amikam Elad, *The Rebellion of Muḥammad al-Nafs al-Zakiyya in 145/762: Ṭālibīs and Early 'Abbāsīs in Conflict* (Leiden, the Netherlands: Koninklijke Brill NV, 2015), 369.

There are only four putative instances of Madinan students—or students in Madinah—having transmitted the marital-age hadith from Hišām, or in other words, four apparent exceptions to the overwhelming Iraqi tendency observed above:

- **Ma‘mar b. Rāšid** (d. 152-154/769-771), a PCL who transmitted a distinctive and strange redaction of the marital-age hadith from Hišām, was a Basran who moved to the Levant to study with Ibn Šihāb al-Zuhrī during the Marwanid period (during the early-to-mid 8th Century CE), then to the Hijaz for a time (during the middle of the 8th Century CE), before finally settling in Yemen for the last twenty years of his life (c. 750-771 CE).⁷⁵⁸
- **‘Abd al-Raḥmān b. ‘abī al-Zinād** (d. 164/780-781 or 174/790-791), a PCL who transmitted a distinctive redaction—in fact, an interpolated or contaminated version—of (Version 1 of) the marital-age hadith from Hišām, was a Madinan who still resided in his hometown around 762-764 CE (when he was punished by the local *qāḍī*) and soon afterwards (when he was appointed the head of the local tax bureau), and eventually moved to Baghdad (where he died).⁷⁵⁹
- **Sa‘īd b. ‘Abd al-Raḥmān** (d. 172/788-789 or 194-196/809-812), who allegedly transmitted a version of the marital-age hadith from Hišām, was a Madinan who moved to Baghdad, where he was appointed as a local *qāḍī* by an Abbasid caliph.⁷⁶⁰
- **‘Abd Allāh b. Muḥammad b. Yaḥyá b. ‘Urwah** (fl. turn of 9th C. CE), who allegedly transmitted an unusual version of (Version 1 of) the marital-age hadith from Hišām, was Madinan.⁷⁶¹

The last two cases can be dismissed without much consideration. In the first case, Sa‘īd is cited alongside Ibn ‘abī al-Zinād in only a single report, rendering his alleged transmission of the marital-age hadith from Hišām completely uncorroborated; and in

⁷⁵⁸ Harald Motzki, “Abd al-Razzāq al-Šan‘ānī”, in Kate Fleet, Gudrun Krämer, Denis Matringe, John Nawas, & Everett Rowson (eds.), *Encyclopaedia of Islam, THREE* (Leiden, the Netherlands: Koninklijke Brill NV, 2018), online edition.

⁷⁵⁹ Christopher Melchert, ‘Ibn Abī l-Zinād’, in Kate Fleet, Gudrun Krämer, Denis Matringe, John Nawas, & Everett Rowson (eds.), *Encyclopaedia of Islam, THREE* (Leiden, the Netherlands: Koninklijke Brill NV, 2018), online edition.

⁷⁶⁰ Wakī‘, *‘Aḳbār al-Quḍāh*, III, pp. 264-265; Ibn Hajar, *Tahḍīb*, IV, pp. 55-56.

⁷⁶¹ Ibn al-Jawzī (ed. ‘Abd Allāh), *Ḍu‘afā’*, II, p. 141, # 2116.

any case, he was reportedly born (157/773-774) after Hišām died (146-147/763-765).⁷⁶² In the second case, ‘Abd Allāh b. Muḥammad is cited as a transmitter from Hišām only via a SS, and the version ascribed to him diverges markedly from every other transmission of the marital-age hadith from Hišām, such that the *’isnād* and *matn* alike are completely uncorroborated and suspect; this is consistent with the ascription to ‘Abd Allāh’s being a dive (in particular, an instance of an updated or improved version of the *matn*’s being retrojected back to a common source via a new path).⁷⁶³

The case of Ma‘mar is a bit more complicated. On the one hand, the relevant chronological and geographical entailments are clear: if Ma‘mar heard his version of the marital-age hadith directly from Hišām, then this transmission must have occurred during the former’s stint in Madinah during the middle of the 8th Century CE (i.e., around 750 CE), when the latter still resided there. In other words, by the time that Hišām moved to Iraq, Ma‘mar was long gone, having passed through both Syria and Madinah enroute to Yemen; thus, Ma‘mar can only have obtained his hadith directly from Hišām in Madinah.⁷⁶⁴ On the other hand, the version of the marital-age hadith that can be positively attributed to Ma‘mar is extremely divergent on a fundamental level from every other transmission from Hišām,⁷⁶⁵ which is consistent with his having obtained it *indirectly* from Hišām. In other words, the *unusually* garbled state of Ma‘mar’s version precisely gives us a reason to doubt that he obtained it directly from Hišām, in contrast to every other PCL and confirmed student thereof (who are all corroborated in at least the core elements of their versions). This is not to say that alternative explanations cannot be proposed for Ma‘mar’s garbled version (e.g., simple poor memory in his part), but the point is this: the evidence is *consistent* with some kind of sloppy, *indirect* transmission (e.g., from distant Iraq), which casts doubt over Ma‘mar’s transmission. (That said, if Ma‘mar periodically returned to his hometown of Basrah, as some have suggested,⁷⁶⁶ then it is plausible that he picked up his version of the hadith directly therefrom, at some point after Hišām’s death.) Consequently, the

⁷⁶² For all of this, see the section on Ibn ‘abī al-Zinād in ch. 2.

⁷⁶³ For all of this, see the section on Hišām b. ‘Urwah in ch. 2; for varieties of dives in particular, see Juynboll, *Encyclopedia*, xxii ff., esp. xxvii.

⁷⁶⁴ Such is the view of Sean Anthony, expressed via personal correspondence. I owe thanks to Anthony for pointing out this chronological problem to me.

⁷⁶⁵ See the section on Hišām b. ‘Urwah in ch. 2.

⁷⁶⁶ Motzki (trans. Paoli & Reid), ‘The Jurisprudence of Ibn Shihāb al-Zuhri’, in Motzki, *Analysing Muslim Traditions*, 10; Gregor Schoeler, ‘The relationship of literacy and memory in the second/eighth century’, *Archaeopress: Proceedings of the Seminar for Arabian Studies*, Volume 40 (2010), 124.

chronological and geographical limitations of Ma‘mar and Hišām’s relationship are not binding in regards to this hadith: if it cannot be established that Ma‘mar directly received his hadith from Hišām, then the fact that Ma‘mar only ever directly received Hadith from Hišām during his stint in Madinah (enroute to Yemen) is irrelevant.⁷⁶⁷

The strongest counter-example to the Iraqi tendency of the evidence is the case of Ibn ‘abī al-Zinād, a PCL to whom a distinctive redaction of Hišām’s hadith can be attributed. Although Ibn ‘abī al-Zinād certainly appears to have altered (i.e., interpolated or contaminated) his version with a ‘dolls’ element and perhaps also a clause referencing Ẓadījah’s death, the core elements therein are corroborated by many other transmissions from Hišām,⁷⁶⁸ in a way that is not true for Ma‘mar’s version. The evidence is thus less equivocal: if all else were equal, we might simply assume that Ibn ‘abī al-Zinād received this hadith from Hišām in Madinah.

That said, Ibn ‘abī al-Zinād was a Madinan who moved to Baghdad, so at first glance, there would seem to be no problem: the evidence would still be consistent with Hišām’s mass-dissemination of his hadith in Iraq (and specifically, with Ibn ‘abī al-Zinād’s having received it in Baghdad), not Madinah. However, there are chronological considerations that militate against such an interpretation: the relevant *‘isnāds* depict Ibn ‘abī al-Zinād transmitting to the Madinan tradent al-Wāqidī,⁷⁶⁹ which immediately suggests that Ibn ‘abī al-Zinād transmitted his version of the marital-age hadith in Madinah (i.e., before he moved to Baghdad), which would in turn imply that Hišām transmitted his hadith in Madinah (i.e., before he moved to Iraq). As it happens, al-Wāqidī—like both Ibn ‘abī al-Zinād and Hišām—was a Madinan who moved to Baghdad, which would again render the evidence equivocal: it would seem to be plausible that Hišām transmitted his hadith to Ibn ‘abī al-Zinād after both of them had moved to Baghdad, and that Ibn ‘abī al-Zinād in turn transmitted his version of the hadith to al-Wāqidī when he too moved to Baghdad. However, Ibn ‘abī al-Zinād

⁷⁶⁷ Of course, all of this assumes that a redaction can be attributed to Ma‘mar in the first place, which is actually not beyond question: cf. the highly divergent character of the only two ascriptions to him, in his section in ch. 2.

⁷⁶⁸ See the sections on both Ibn ‘abī al-Zinād and Hišām in ch. 2.

⁷⁶⁹ Ibn ‘abī al-Zinād is also depicted as having transmitted versions of his hadith to Sa‘īd b. ‘abī Maryam and Ibn Wahb, both of whom were Egyptian—but this evidence is equivocal, since both could have obtained their versions from Ibn ‘abī al-Zinād in either Madinah or Baghdad. E.g., Juynboll, *Muslim tradition*, 44: “When we scrutinize, for example, Ibn Wahb’s *Jāmi‘*, it appears that a large percentage of the *‘isnāds* is Iraqi judging by the provenance of the transmitters at the Successors’ level or the one following that.”

reportedly died in Baghdad in either 164/780-781 (according to al-Dāraqūṭnī)⁷⁷⁰ or 174/790-791 (according to every other authority),⁷⁷¹ whilst al-Wāqidī only moved there in 180/796-797.⁷⁷² Thus, if al-Wāqidī received his version of the hadith directly from Ibn ‘abī al-Zinād, then this must have occurred when Ibn ‘abī al-Zinād was still in Madinah; and if Ibn ‘abī al-Zinād in turn received his version of the hadith directly from Hišām, and Ibn ‘abī al-Zinād already possessed the hadith before he moved from Madinah to Baghdad, then it would follow that Hišām in turn must have transmitted it to Ibn ‘abī al-Zinād before he moved from Madinah to Baghdad. In short, the fact that Ibn ‘abī al-Zinād was a genuine PCL of Hišām’s, in conjunction with the fact that al-Wāqidī genuinely transmitted a version of Ibn ‘abī al-Zinād’s hadith, in conjunction with the chronology of al-Wāqidī’s life reported in the Islamic biographical sources, reasonably leads to the conclusion that Hišām was already disseminating the marital-age hadith before he moved from Madinah to Iraq.

However, matters are not as straightforward as they might seem. To begin with, the ICMA technically does not guarantee *direct* transmission, only *ultimate* transmission: it can establish that several tradents all accurately preserved (at least in part) the distinctive redaction of a common source, without necessarily ruling out the occurrence of borrowing, interpolation, error, and so forth in the course of the transmission of said redaction from said common source to said tradents.⁷⁷³ Thus, whilst al-Wāqidī certainly transmitted a version of the marital-age hadith to his secretary Ibn Sa’d, and whilst this hadith certainly originated—in one form or another—with Ibn ‘abī al-Zinād, it is not at all assured that al-Wāqidī received this hadith directly from his cited source. Of course, ordinarily, we would have no grounds to suspect any problems like this, such that it would not be unreasonable to presume—in the case of a student transmitting the distinctive redaction of a PCL who was known to be one of their masters—direct transmission. In the case of al-Wāqidī in particular, however, there are reasons to doubt. Firstly, al-Wāqidī was infamous even amongst

⁷⁷⁰ Dāraqūṭnī (ed. ‘Arabī), *Ta’līqāt*, p. 158, # 191.

⁷⁷¹ Dahabī (ed. ‘Arna’ūt *et al.*), *Siyar*, VIII, p. 170. The same date is also recorded in the *Ṭabaqāt* of Ibn Sa’d, the *Ṭabaqāt* of ʿAlī b. ʿAyyāṭ, the *Majrūḥīn* of Ibn Ḥibbān, and the *Ta’rīk Baḡdād* of al-Ḳaṭīb al-Baḡdādī.

⁷⁷² Stefan Leder, ‘al-Wāqidī’, in Peri J. Bearman, Thierry Bianquis, Clifford E. Bosworth, Emeri J. van Donzel, & Wolfhart P. Heinrichs (eds.), *The Encyclopaedia of Islam, New Edition, Volume 11: V-Z* (Leiden, the Netherlands: Koninklijke Brill NV, 2002), 102-103.

⁷⁷³ For example, consider all the instances of raisings documented in ch. 2: sources would often accurately record the CL and much of their distinctive *matn*, whilst also interpolating the *‘isnād*.

traditionists for being an interpolator, a fabricator, or otherwise extremely unreliable: al-Nasā'ī declared that "he was unreliable" (*laysa bi-ṭiqah*); Ibn Ma'in declared that "al-Wāqidī is nothing" (*laysa al-wāqidiyy bi-ṣay*); Ibn al-Madīnī reported that "al-Wāqidī had twenty-thousand hadiths that I never heard [from anyone else]", leading him to declare that "he is not to be transmitted from" (*lā yurwā 'an-hu*); al-Bukārī reported that both Ibn Ḥanbal and Ibn Numayr "rejected him" (*taraka-hu*) in Hadith; 'Abū Zur'ah reported that the bulk of the traditionists "rejected" his Hadith (*taraka al-nās ḥadīṭ al-wāqidiyy*); Muslim declared that he was "rejected in Hadith" (*matrūk al-ḥadīṭ*); al-Šāfi'ī declared that "the writings of al-Wāqidī are fabrications" (*kutub al-wāqidiyy kaḍib*); Ibn Ḥanbal declared that he was a "liar" (*kaḍḍāb*); 'Ishāq declared that "he was amongst those who would fabricate Hadith" (*mimman yaḍa'u al-ḥadīṭ*); and finally, al-Nasā'ī listed al-Wāqidī amongst "those famous for the fabrication of Hadith" (*al-ma'rūfūn bi-waḍ' al-ḥadīṭ*).⁷⁷⁴

Of course, the judgements of Mediaeval Hadith critics should not be accepted uncritically,⁷⁷⁵ but in this particular instance, their judgements can be corroborated. In the preceding ICMA, we discovered that none other than al-Wāqidī seems to have contaminated, interpolated, or falsely-ascribed *every single other version the marital-age hadith that he transmitted*.⁷⁷⁶ In other words, the conclusion that Ibn 'abī al-Zinād disseminated the marital-age hadith in Madinah, and therefore that Hišām likewise disseminated the hadith in Madinah, rests upon the testimony of a tradent who not only was known amongst his contemporaries and successors to be a liar in Hadith, but whom we have repeatedly implicated in the interpolation and false ascription of versions of the marital-age hadith specifically. The basis for Ibn 'abī al-Zinād and thus Hišām's Madinan transmission of the marital-age hadith would thus appear to be extremely tenuous indeed.

Even putting al-Wāqidī aside, however, there is still a chronological factor in favour of Ibn 'abī al-Zinād's having received the hadith from Hišām in Madinah: Ibn 'abī al-

⁷⁷⁴ For all of these judgements (as well as a smattering of positive appraisals), see Ḍahabī (ed. 'Arna'ūṭ *et al.*), *Siyar*, X, pp. 457-469.

⁷⁷⁵ Cf. Goldziher (trans. Barber & Stern), *Muslim Studies*, II, *passim*; Juynboll, *Muslim tradition*, *passim*; *id.*, *Encyclopedia*, xxiii-xxiv; Melchert, 'The Life and Works of al-Nasā'ī'; etc.

⁷⁷⁶ See the sections on 'Isrā'īl, al-Zuhrī, Habib, and 'Amrah in ch. 2. Other modern studies have also repeatedly exposed al-Wāqidī as a fabricator, interpolator, and borrower of hadiths; see Schoeler (trans. Vagelpohl), *The Biography of Muḥammad*, 12-13, 18; *id.*, 'Méthodes et Débats', 365-366; Görke, 'The relationship between *maghāzī* and *ḥadīth*', 179-180; Motzki, *Reconstruction*, 14.

Zinād was reportedly punished by a certain *qāḍī*, and the *qāḍī* in question was appointed in 760-761 CE and reappointed in 761-762 CE. This entails that Ibn 'abī al-Zinād was still in Madinah in 760-762 CE—and, given that he was subsequently appointed as the head of the local tax bureau,⁷⁷⁷ he must have remained in Madinah for at least another year. In the best-case scenario, this leaves an extremely small window of time for Ibn 'abī al-Zinād to have moved to Baghdad and heard from Hišām before the latter's death (763-765 CE); ordinarily, we would simply assume that Ibn 'abī al-Zinād received hadiths from Hišām in Madinah, before latter's departure therefrom.

Still, the fact that Ibn 'abī al-Zinād is the *only* credible Madinan transmitter of Hišām's hadith (amidst a sea of Iraqi transmitters), despite Hišām's lifetime of teaching and transmission in Madinah, is extremely suspect. This suspicion is compounded by the fact that Ibn 'abī al-Zinād moved to Iraq, or in other words: the only credible Madinan transmitter of Hišām's hadith *just so happens to have moved to the very region where every single other credible transmitter of the same hadith was operating*. All of this seems extremely improbable on the view that Hišām was already disseminating his hadith in Madinah, and highly probable on the view that Hišām only began to disseminate his hadith in Iraq. We thus have strong grounds for suspecting that Ibn 'abī al-Zinād did not hear the marital-age hadith directly from Hišām (i.e., in Madinah), but instead, obtained it when he moved to Iraq (i.e., soon after Hišām's death), just like every single other credible transmitter and PCL thereof. In other words, it is plausible—in light of the specific historical and geographical context of this hadith and its transmission—that we have here an instance of the spread of *'isnāds* (in this case, *tadlīs*): since Ibn 'abī al-Zinād heard other hadiths from Hišām, and since it went “against the grain to transmit from a mere contemporary”,⁷⁷⁸ it is plausible that Ibn 'abī al-Zinād heard the hadith from an Iraqi student of Hišām's when he moved to Baghdad and simply passed it off—whether explicitly or implicitly—as a direct transmission from Hišām. In other words, just as suspicion surrounds al-Wāqidī's claim to have received the hadith directly from Ibn 'abī al-Zinād, so too does suspicion surround Ibn 'abī al-Zinād's claim to have received the hadith directly from Hišām: in

⁷⁷⁷ Melchert, 'Ibn Abī l-Zinād', in Fleet *et al.* (eds.), *EP*.

⁷⁷⁸ Cook, *Early Muslim Dogma*, 109.

both cases, we have Madinans who moved to Iraq purportedly receiving an overwhelmingly Iraq-associated hadith in Madinah.

The parallel with al-Wāqidī holds in another regard: Ibn ‘abī al-Zinād was likewise remembered as being unreliable by fellow traditionists, though certainly not to the same degree as al-Wāqidī. Thus, on the one hand: al-‘Ijlī declared that Ibn ‘abī al-Zinād was “reliable” (*ṭiqah*)⁷⁷⁹; Ibn al-Jawzī reported that Mālik “declared him to be reliable” (*watṭaqa-hu*)⁷⁸⁰; Ibn al-Madīnī declared that the hadiths “that ‘Abd al-Raḥmān b. ‘abī al-Zinād transmitted in Madinah are authentic (*ṣaḥīḥ*),” even if “that which he transmitted in Baghdad was corrupted (*‘afsada-hu*) by the Baghhdadians”⁷⁸¹; and Ibn Ma‘īn declared that “‘Abd al-Raḥmān b. ‘abī al-Zinād was the most reliable person (*‘atbat al-nās*) regarding Hišām b. ‘Urwah”.⁷⁸² On the other hand: Ibn Ḥanbal declared that “‘Abd al-Raḥmān b. ‘abī al-Zinād was such and such (*kaḍā wa-kaḍā*)”⁷⁸³ (i.e., mediocre), and that he was “muddled [in his transmission] of Hadith” (*muḍṭarib al-ḥadīṭ*)⁷⁸⁴; Ṣāliḥ Jazarah declared that “he transmitted things from his father that were transmitted by no one else”⁷⁸⁵ (i.e., suspiciously); Ibn ‘Adī declared (regarding a specific hadith), “I am not aware of [anyone who] transmitted this hadith from Hišām, other than Ibn ‘abī al-Zinād”⁷⁸⁶ (again, suspiciously); and Ibn Ḥibbān declared:

He was amongst those who would transmit mixed-up hadiths in isolation from reliable tradents (*kāna mimman yanfaridu bi-al-maqlūbāt ‘an al-‘atbat*), due to the poor state of his memorisation (*wa-kāna ḍālika min sū’ ḥifẓi-hi*) and the frequency of his erring (*wa-kaṭrat kaṭa’i-hi*). Argumentation cannot rest upon a report of his (*fa-lā yajūzu al-iḥtijāj bi-ḵabari-hi*), when he transmits a hadith in isolation (*‘idā infarada*); but as for that which is corroborated by [other] reliable tradents (*fa-‘ammā fī-mā wāfaqa al-ṭiqāt*), he is [in such cases] trustworthy in transmission [and can be] relied upon in argumentation (*fa-huwa ṣādiq fī al-riwāyāt yaḥtajju bi-hi*).⁷⁸⁷

⁷⁷⁹ ‘Ijlī (ed. Qal‘ajī), *Ṭiqāt*, p. 292, # 952.

⁷⁸⁰ Ibn al-Jawzī (ed. ‘Abd Allāh), *Ḍu‘afā’*, II, p. 94, # 1869.

⁷⁸¹ Kaṭīb (ed. Ma‘rūf), *Ta’rīk Madīnat al-Salām*, XI, p. 496, # 5312.

⁷⁸² *Ibid.*, p. 495, # 5312.

⁷⁸³ Ibn ‘Adī (ed. Sarsāwī), *Kāmil*, VII, p. 139, # 10532.

⁷⁸⁴ Ibn al-Jawzī (ed. ‘Abd Allāh), *Ḍu‘afā’*, II, p. 94, # 1869.

⁷⁸⁵ Kaṭīb (ed. Ma‘rūf), *Ta’rīk Madīnat al-Salām*, XI, pp. 497, # 5312.

⁷⁸⁶ Ibn ‘Adī (ed. Sarsāwī), *Kāmil*, VII, p. 140, # 10538.

⁷⁸⁷ Ibn Ḥibbān (ed. Zāyid), *Majrūḥīn*, II, p. 56, # 595.

Others went further: Ibn Maʿīn declared that “he is nothing” (*laysa bi-ṣay*)⁷⁸⁸; Ibn Mahdī,⁷⁸⁹ Ibn Maʿīn,⁷⁹⁰ and al-Nasāʾī⁷⁹¹ all declared that he was “weak” (*ḍaʿīf*); ʿAlī b. al-Madīnī reported that “our companions deem him to be weak” (*kāna ʿinda ʿaṣḥābi-nā ḍaʿīfan*)⁷⁹²; al-Rāzī declared that “he cannot be relied upon in argumentation” (*lā yaḥtajju bi-hi*)⁷⁹³; Ibn Maʿīn similarly declared that “his hadith are not to be relied upon in argumentation” (*lā yaḥtajju bi-ḥadīṭi-hi*)⁷⁹⁴; al-Fallās reported that “ʿAbd al-Raḥmān [b. Mahdī] would not transmit Hadith from (*lā yuḥaddīṭu ʿan*) ʿAbd al-Raḥmān b. ʿabī al-Zinād”⁷⁹⁵; and Ibn Mahdī declared, “I am astounded (*ʿinnī la-ʿajabu*) by those who count Fulayḥ and Ibn ʿabī al-Zinād amongst the traditionists (*fī al-muḥaddīṭīn*)”.⁷⁹⁶ Finally, and perhaps most importantly of all, Ibn al-Madīnī declared that “his Hadith in Madinah were close [to being reliable] (*muqārib*), whereas those that he transmitted in Iraq were muddled (*muḍṭarib*).”⁷⁹⁷ Similarly, both al-Fallās and al-Sājī declared that “there is weakness in him” (*fī-hi ḍaʿf*): that which he transmitted in Madinah is more authentic (*ʿaṣaḥḥ*) than that which he transmitted in Baghdad”.⁷⁹⁸

Once again, the judgements of Mediaeval Hadith critics should not be accepted uncritically—but once again, the suspicious historical and geographical patterns of the evidence happen to be congruent with the observations of some Hadith critics: that Ibn ʿabī al-Zinād was sometimes unreliable, or even generally unreliable. More importantly, he is said to have become unreliable *specifically when he moved to Baghdad*, so if indeed he obtained his version of the marital-age hadith when he moved thereto (as the overwhelming Iraqi tendency of the evidence would suggest, along with the suspicious absence of any other credible Madinan sources, not to mention the amazing coincidence that Ibn ʿabī al-Zinād just so happens to have moved to Iraq), his suppression or omission of an Iraqi intermediary source would be congruent with such reports.

⁷⁸⁸ Ibn ʿAdī (ed. Sarsāwī), *Kāmil*, VII, p. 138, ## 10528-10529.

⁷⁸⁹ Ḍahabī (ed. ʿArnaʿūṭ *et al.*), *Siyar*, VIII, p. 168.

⁷⁹⁰ Ibn ʿAdī (ed. Sarsāwī), *Kāmil*, VII, p. 138, ## 10526-10527.

⁷⁹¹ Kaṭīb (ed. Maʿrūf), *Taʾrīk Madīnat al-Salām*, XI, pp. 497-498, # 5312.

⁷⁹² *Ibid.*, pp. 496, # 5312.

⁷⁹³ Ibn al-Jawzī (ed. ʿAbd Allāh), *Duʿafāʾ*, II, p. 94, # 1869.

⁷⁹⁴ Ibn ʿAdī (ed. Sarsāwī), *Kāmil*, VII, p. 138, # 10530.

⁷⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, # 10531.

⁷⁹⁶ Ḍahabī (ed. ʿArnaʿūṭ *et al.*), *Siyar*, VIII, p. 169.

⁷⁹⁷ Kaṭīb (ed. Maʿrūf), *Taʾrīk Madīnat al-Salām*, XI, p. 496, # 5312.

⁷⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 497-498, # 5312.

That said, none of the transmissions from Ibn 'abī al-Zinād actually claim that he explicitly or directly received the hadith from Hišām in the first place—in every instance, a student is reported as saying something to the effect of, “‘Abd al-Raḥmān b. 'abī al-Zinād reported to us, from (‘an) Hišām...”⁷⁹⁹ The generic “from” is famously ambiguous in Hadith transmission, being consistent with either direct or indirect transmission. Thus, even the *prima facie* evidence of the *’isnāds* turns out to be equivocal on the issue of Ibn 'abī al-Zinād’s transmission from Hišām.

In sum, Hišām—in some cases plausibly, in most cases probably—variously transmitted four different versions of the marital-age hadith to thirteen Kufan tradents and six Basran tradents. This evidently occurred when he moved to Kufah (or close to Kufah) and then to Baghdad, in the last decade of his life, between 754 and 765 CE. By contrast, the evidence that Hišām already possessed and was disseminating this hadith in Madinah is extremely dubious: (1) a single attestation of the Madino-Baghdadian tradent Sa‘īd b. ‘Abd al-Raḥmān (appearing in an isolated variant within the transmissions of another tradent), who was reportedly born after Hišām died; (2) a SS ascription of a markedly divergent—unusually-detailed and secondary-looking—*matn* to the Madinan tradent ‘Abd Allāh b. Muḥammad; (3) a fundamentally divergent and uncorroborated transmission from the itinerant Basran tradent Ma‘mar b. Rāšid (who met Hišām in Madinah but may have returned home several times), which is consistent with being a garbled, indirect transmission from Hišām; and (4) the transmission of the Madino-Baghdadian PCL ‘Abd al-Raḥmān b. 'abī al-Zinād, who just so happens to have moved to Baghdad. This is exactly what it would look like if Hišām only disseminated the marital-age hadith in Iraq, and if the—inevitable or predictable—secondary process of *tadlīs* and spreading *’isnāds* generated a few stray instances of pseudo-Madinan ascription (i.e., the superficial appearance of Madinan transmission). Put differently, what are the odds that the only two remotely-plausible instances of Madinan transmission (i.e., Ma‘mar and Ibn 'abī al-Zinād) would just so happen to be (1) the uncorroborated, highly-garbled transmission of an itinerant tradent (which is consistent with indirect transmission) and (2) the transmission of a Madinan who moved to Iraq (which is consistent with his having obtained the hadith there)? The paucity of credible Madinan transmitters from Hišām, and the complete

⁷⁹⁹ See the citations given in the section on Ibn 'abī al-Zinād in ch. 2.

absence of any credible *unambiguously-Madinan* transmitters from Hišām, is simply unexpected on the view that Hišām already possessed and was disseminating this hadith in Madinah, but completely in line with the view that he only disseminated this hadith in Iraq. In short, the evidence of the *’isnāds*—when viewed altogether—is best explained by positing that Hišām only began to transmit the marital-age hadith in Kufah (or in al-Hāšimiyyah, close to Kufah).

Geography and Arguments from Silence: The Evidence of the Earliest Madinan Collections

Perhaps the strongest corroborating evidence for the Iraqi provenance of the marital-age hadith is its absence from the earliest Madinan legal collections and biographies of the Prophet, despite the prominence and abundance of Ibn ’abī al-Zinād, Hišām, Muḥammad b. ’Amr, Ibn Šihāb al-Zuhrī, ’Urwah, ’Abū Salamah, ’Ā’ishah, and others as alleged Madinan authorities therein. Crone famously warned against arguments from silence regarding Hadith before the time of al-Šāfi’ī, given that “the literature is too scanty and above all too local in character for silences to count.”⁸⁰⁰ However, this is a warning against early inter-regional comparisons, whereas our given example is *intra*-regional: we would reasonably expect the local collections to contain local hadiths from local authorities. Thus, as Crone herself put it: “Mālik’s work can perhaps be used to show that certain Medinese traditions still did not exist in Medina.”⁸⁰¹

To begin with, it is striking that the early Mālikī school of Islamic jurisprudence—an outgrowth of the 8th-Century Madinan legal tradition—never cited the marital-age hadith, even when it would have been expedient in the justification of their doctrines on child marriage. As Baugh observes:

Early Mālikī jurisprudential writings do not reference the story of ’Ā’ishah’s marriage to the Prophet during discussions of prepubescent marriage.

⁸⁰⁰ Crone, *Roman, provincial and Islamic law*, 30.

⁸⁰¹ *Ibid.*

Rather, there is consistent reliance on both Medinan practice and the *ayyim/bikr* report related from Mālik.⁸⁰²

Consider for example the absence of any version of this hadith in the premiere extant collection(s) of early Madinan legal material: the extant recensions of the *Kitāb al-Muwaṭṭaʾ* of Mālik b. ʿAnas (d. 179/795).⁸⁰³ Although Mālik did not necessarily reflect the totality of the Madinan milieu,⁸⁰⁴ (1) he devoted an entire chapter of his *Muwaṭṭaʾ* to marriage and at least two entire sections therein to the (contested and debated issue of) the marriage of virgins and young girls, (2) was perfectly happy to adduce Prophetical reports that he himself rejected (in the context of the marriage of virgins, no less),⁸⁰⁵ and (3) was also a prolific student of Hišām, al-Zuhrī, and other notable Madinan transmitters of ʿĀʾiṣah's reports.⁸⁰⁶ As such, the failure of Mālik to cite this hadith suggests not merely that Mālik rejected it, but that it was not circulating in Madinah at that time.⁸⁰⁷ This is especially so given that the marital-age hadith has important *and expedient* legal ramifications, and thus would surely have demanded inclusion into a dedicated Madinan collection of Madinan legal Hadith.

⁸⁰² Baugh, *Minor Marriage*, 104. By contrast, “all of the future schools of law” from al-Šāfiʿī onward utilised this hadith (*ibid.*, 168).

⁸⁰³ Thus, a search of the chapters on marriage (especially the sections pertaining virgins) in the recensions of al-Šaybānī, Yaḥyá, ʿAbū Muṣʿab, Suwayd, Ibn al-Qāsim, and Ibn Bukayr yielded nothing.

⁸⁰⁴ Cf. Patricia Crone, ‘Jāhili and Jewish law: the *qasāma*’, *Jerusalem Studies in Arabic and Islam*, Volume 4 (1984), 196-197, and Najam I. Haider, ‘The Geography of the *Isnād*: Possibilities for the Reconstruction of Local Ritual Practice in the 2nd/8th Century’, *Der Islam*, Volume 90, Issue 2 (2013), 310.

⁸⁰⁵ E.g., Ali, *Marriage and Slavery*, 34. This is at least the case in the following recensions: Yaḥyá b. Yaḥyá al-Layṭī (ed. Aisha A. Bewley), *Al-Muwaṭṭaʾ of Imām Mālik ibn Anas: Arabic & English*, revised ed. (Norwich, UK: Diwan Press, 2014), 527-528; ʿAbū Muṣʿab b. ʿabī Bakr al-Zuhrī (ed. Baššār ʿAwwād Maʿrūf & Maḥmūd Muḥammad Ḳalīl), *al-Muwaṭṭaʾ*, vol. 1 (Beirut, Lebanon: Muʾassasat al-Risālah, 1991), pp. 569-570; Suwayd b. Saʿīd al-Ḥadaṭānī (ed. ʿAbd al-Majīd Turkī), *al-Muwaṭṭaʾ* (Beirut, Lebanon: Dār al-Ḡarb al-ʿIslāmiyy, 1994), pp. 255-256; and Yaḥyá b. ʿAbd Allāh b. Bukayr, redacted by Muḥammad b. ʿAbd Allāh b. Tūmart (ed. Ignáz Goldziher), *Muwaṭṭaʾ al-ʿImām al-Mahdī* (Algiers, Algeria: Gouvernement Général de l’Algérie, 1905), pp. 424-425. In the recension of Muḥammad b. al-Ḥasan al-Šaybānī (ed. Yahya Batha, Zubair Ismail Bayat, Uthman Ibrahim-Morisson, Sulaiman Gani, Muhammad Ansa, Abdassamad Clarke, & Safira Batha), *The Muwatta of Imam Muhammad* (London, UK: Turath Publishing, 2010), p. 235, however, the citation of the opposing Madinan ʿamr and Mālik’s commitment thereto is absent, although the relevant conflicting Prophetical report (Mālik—ʿAbd Allāh b. al-Faḍl—Nāfiʿ b. Jubayr b. Muṭʿim—ʿAbd Allāh b. ʿAbbās) remains, along with an approving comment by al-Šaybānī.

⁸⁰⁶ By my count (using the Sunnah.com digital database), Hišām is cited 108 times in Yaḥyá’s recension of Mālik’s *Muwaṭṭaʾ*, whilst Motzki (trans. Paoli & Reid), ‘The Jurisprudence of Ibn Shihāb al-Zuhrī’, in Motzki, *Analysing Muslim Tradition*, 18, estimated that al-Zuhrī constitutes 21% of Mālik’s citations (which is more than any other source).

⁸⁰⁷ Shanavas, ‘The Myth of a Proverbial Age’, 21, makes a similar point.

Mālik's non-citation of the marital-age hadith, on the view that the hadith arose in Iraq, is consistent with the following report from the Baghdadian Hadith critic 'Abd al-Raḥmān b. Kīrāš (d. 283/896):

It reached me that Mālik was angry (*naqama*) at Hišām b. 'Urwah [due to] the Hadith [that he transmitted] to the people of Iraq, which he would not accept (*wa-kāna lā yarḍā-hu*).⁸⁰⁸

In another report, Mālik's alleged hostility towards Hišām—due to his departure from Madinah to Iraq—is framed in an anecdote about a dream:

'Alī b. al-Madīnī said: "Yaḥyá b. Sa'īd [al-Qaṭṭān] said: "I saw Mālik b. 'Anas during [my] sleep, so I asked him about Hišām b. 'Urwah, whereupon he said: "As for that which he related when he was in our proximity [i.e., Madinah], he—i.e., it was as though he—declared it to be sound (*yuṣaḥḥihū-hu*), and that which he related after he departed from our proximity [i.e., to Iraq], it was as though he declared it to be weak (*yuwahhinu-hu*).""⁸⁰⁹

All of this is consistent with Mālik's having only transmitted from Hišām hadiths that Hišām transmitted in Madinah, as opposed to hadiths that he only began to disseminate after he moved to Iraq—including the marital-age hadith. In other words, if Mālik only transmitted Hišām's Madinan hadiths, and Mālik did not transmit Hišām's marital-age hadith, this is evidence that Hišām's marital-age hadith was not one of his Madinan hadiths. As Baugh again observes: "The report of 'Ā'isha, like other reports of Hishām ibn 'Urwa from the Kufan period of his old age, was not included by Mālik in the *Muwaṭṭa'*."⁸¹⁰

The marital-age hadith is also absent from the *Mudawwanah* of the proto-Mālikī Qayrawanian jurist Saḥnūn b. Sa'īd al-Tanūkī (d. 240/854), a compilation of Madinan legal transmissions and opinions not just from Mālik (e.g., from Hišām, from 'Urwah, from 'Ā'īshah), but also from early Madinan authorities more broadly, including Ibn 'abī al-Zinād, Ibn Šihāb al-Zuhrī, 'Urwah, and others. Even in the sections pertaining to marriage and especially child marriage, no version of the marital-age hadith—whether

⁸⁰⁸ Ḍahabī (ed. 'Arna'ūṭ *et al.*), *Siyar*, VI, p. 35.

⁸⁰⁹ Ibn Ḥajar, *Tahḍīb al-Tahḍīb*, XI, p. 50.

⁸¹⁰ Baugh, *Minor Marriage*, 122.

from Hišām or from any of the other Madinan authorities to which it is ascribed—can be found.⁸¹¹

To my knowledge,⁸¹² the earliest Mālikī work to cite any version of the marital-age hadith is *al-Maʿūnah ʿalā Maḏhab ʿĀlim al-Madīnah*, which was composed by the Baghdadian Mālikī jurist ʿAbd al-Wahhāb b. ʿAlī al-Qāḏī (d. 422/1031), nearly three centuries after the hadith’s initial mass-dissemination in Iraq. Thus, in his chapter on marriage (*kitāb al-nikāḥ wa-ʿabwābi-hi wa-al-ṭalāq wa-mā yataʿallaqu bi-hi*), in the section pertaining to child marriage (*fī tazwīj al-ʿab ibnata-hu al-bikr al-ṣaḡīrah*), ʿAbd al-Wahhāb wrote the following:

And [it is permissible] for the father to marry off his prepubescent virgin daughter (*wa-li-l-ʿab ʿinkāḥ ibnata-hu al-bikr al-ṣaḡīrah*), without [there being any scholarly] disagreement [on the matter] (*min ḡayr kilāf*). And the basis thereof (*wa-al-ʿaṣl fī-hi*) is His (the Sublime’s) statement, “and marry the unmarried females amongst you” [Q. 24:32], and His (the Sublime’s) statement, “verily, I want to marry you to one of my two daughters, [one of] these two” [Q. 28:27], and His statement, “and [as for] those amongst your women who have despaired of menstruation: if you doubt, then their [post-marital] waiting period is three months; and [likewise for] those who have not [i.e., never] menstruated” [Q. 65:4]. Thus, He established for the female who has not attained puberty (*allatī lam tabluḡ*) a [post-marital] waiting period, and the [post-marital] waiting period is not necessary except [in the instance of] the separation of a valid [i.e., consummated] marriage (*nikāḥ ṣaḡīh*). And [it is also permissible] because the Messenger of God married (*tazawwaja*) ʿĀʾiṣah when she was a girl of six and consummated the marriage with her (*wa-banā bi-hā*) when she was a girl of nine, and [also because] it was transmitted that he married off (*zawwaja*) his two daughters to ʿUṭmān without consulting them (*wa-lam yastaṣir-humā*). There is no disagreement on this matter (*wa-lā kilāf^a fī-hi*).⁸¹³

It is fitting that the first Mālikī jurist to use the marital-age hadith happens to have been an Iraqi, but regardless, the key point is this: the absence of this hadith from the early Mālikī legal tradition—exemplified by its belated entry therein, around the turn of the 11th Century CE—is straightforwardly inconsistent with the notion that the hadith was being transmitted in Madinah already during the 8th Century CE. If leading legal

⁸¹¹ E.g., cf. Saḥnūn b. Saʿīd al-Tanūkī, *al-Mudawwanah al-Kubrā*, vol. 4 (Riyad, KSA: Wizārat al-Šuʿūn al-ʾIslāmiyy wa-al-ʾAwqāf wa-al-Daʿwah wa-al-ʾIršād, n. d.), pp. 5-9, comprising the following sections within the *kitāb al-nikāḥ al-ʾawwal*: § *fī ʿinkāḥ al-ʿab ibnata-hu bi-ḡayr riḏā-hā*; § *fī ʿinkāḥ al-ʿab ibnata-hu al-bikr wa-al-ṭayyib*; § *bāb fī iḥtilām al-ḡulām*; and § *fī riḏā al-bikr wa-al-ṭayyib*.

⁸¹² Based upon my search of the Shamela database.

⁸¹³ ʿAbd al-Wahhāb b. ʿAlī al-Baḡdādī (ed. Ḥamīš ʿAbd al-Ḥaqq), *al-Maʿūnah ʿalā Maḏhab ʿĀlim al-Madīnah* (Makkah, KSA: al-Maktabah al-Tijāriyyah, n. d.), p. 718.

authorities and transmitters of legal hadiths in Madinah—including Ibn ‘abī al-Zinād, Hišām, Muḥammad b. ‘Amr, Ibn Šihāb al-Zuhrī, ‘Abū Salamah, Yaḥyá b. ‘Abd al-Raḥmān, ‘Urwah, and ‘Ā’iṣah—were truly disseminating versions of the marital-age hadith during the 7th and 8th Centuries CE (as most of the relevant *’isnāds* would have us believe), we would reasonably expect at least some versions thereof to appear in the Madinan legal collections—and Mālikī collections of Madinan legal material—of the 8th, 9th, and 10th Centuries CE. This is especially so given the legal utility of the marital-age hadith for specific, early Madinan and Mālikī doctrines regarding child marriage—yet the Madinans and the Mālikīs failed to cite the hadith for centuries. The absence of any version of the marital-age hadith in the earliest compendia of Madinan legal Hadith is thus strong evidence against the notion that the hadith in question was circulating in Madinah already in the 7th and 8th Centuries CE, which corroborates the hypothesis of Iraqi origin. If the Madinans and early Mālikīs knew of the marital-age hadith at all (as they surely must have by at least the middle of the 9th Century CE, when it was spreading all across the Abbasid Caliphate), they presumably experienced it as a foreign import (from Iraq or elsewhere), not a local resource that they had possessed all along—thus, its continued absence from the Madino-Mālikī legal tradition until the turn of the 11th Century CE, when a Mālikī from Iraq finally recruited it to support the Madinan position that a father can arrange the marriage of his virgin daughter without her permission or consent. Thereafter, the marital-age hadith became a standard proof for this doctrine within the classical Mālikī tradition.⁸¹⁴

The silence of the earliest collections of Madinan legal Hadith is matched by the silence of the earliest Madinan collection of biographical Hadith—namely, the famous *Kitāb al-Maḡāzī* of the influential Madinan traditionist and biographer Muḥammad b. ‘Ishāq b. Yasār (d. 150-153/767-770). The original version of this biography lacked any mention of ‘Ā’iṣah’s young marital age, despite the fact that Ibn ‘Ishāq otherwise transmitted from Hišām b. ‘Urwah, various other sons of ‘Urwah, other Zubayrids,

⁸¹⁴ E.g., Muḥammad b. ‘Abd Allāh b. Yūnus al-Šiqillī (prepared by ‘Abd Allāh Muḥammad ‘Aḥmad al-Anṣārī), *al-Jāmi‘ li-Masā’il al-Mudawwanah*, vol. 9 (Beirut, Lebanon: Dār al-Fikr, 2013), pp. 21-22; Yūsuf b. ‘Abd Allāh b. ‘Abd al-Barr (ed. ‘Abd al-Mu‘ṭī ‘Amin Qal‘ajī), *al-Istiḍkār*, vol. 16 (Damascus & Beirut: Dār Qutaybah; and Aleppo & Cairo: Dār al-Wa‘y; 1993), pp. 49-54. There is however a slight difference in use here: whereas ‘Abd al-Waḥhāb cited the marital-age hadith to justify forced *prepubescent* virgin marriage in particular, al-Šiqillī and Ibn ‘Abd al-Barr cited it to justify forced virgin marriage in general, without qualification.

Zubayrid clients, students of ‘Urwah, and ultimately ‘Ā’iṣah herself.⁸¹⁵ Ibn ‘Iṣhāq’s failure to acquire this hadith from Hiṣām after they had both migrated to Baghdad is understandable (given the enmity that arose between the two in Madinah, prior to their respective departures),⁸¹⁶ but his failure to acquire it beforehand from Hiṣām and a multitude of other Madinan and Zubayrid authorities is hard to explain if the hadith was actually circulating in Madinah. This is especially so given that the hadith is of great biographical importance (being the marriage of the Prophet to his favourite wife, no less), and thus would surely have demanded inclusion into a dedicated Madinan collection of Prophetical biography. Ibn ‘Iṣhāq’s *Kitāb al-Maḡāzī* is thus another early Madinan collection that *should* have cited this hadith but did not, and the later editors and transmitters had to add this hadith therein themselves as a supplement in their recensions of his work: the Basro-Egyptian redactor ‘Abd al-Malik b. Hiṣām (d. 213/828-829 or 218/833)—who received a version of the *Kitāb al-Maḡāzī* from Ibn ‘Iṣhāq’s Kufan student Ziyād al-Bakkā’ī (d. 183/799-800)—referred to the hadith in his own biographical summary of ‘Ā’iṣah’s marriage (i.e., amongst his explicit addenda),⁸¹⁷ whilst Ibn ‘Iṣhāq’s Kufan student and redactor Yūnus b. Bukayr (d. 199/814-815) cited

⁸¹⁵ E.g., ‘Abd al-Malik b. Hiṣām & Muḥammad b. ‘Iṣhāq (ed. & trans. Alfred Guillaume), *The Life of Muḥammad: A Translation of Ishāq’s Sīrat Rasūl Allāh* (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 1998 [originally published in 1955]), 99 (Hiṣām—‘Urwah—‘Asmā’), 105 (al-Zuhrī—‘Urwah—‘Ā’iṣah), 111 (Hiṣām—‘Urwah—‘Abd Allāh b. Ja’far), 112 (Ṣāliḥ b. Kaysān—‘Urwah—‘Ā’iṣah), 130 (Yahyā b. ‘Urwah—‘Urwah—‘Abd Allāh b. ‘Amr), 144 (Hiṣām—‘Urwah), 153 (al-Zuhrī—‘Urwah—‘Ā’iṣah), 154 (Yazīd b. Rūmān—‘Urwah—‘Ā’iṣah), 171 (al-Zuhrī—‘Urwah—‘Ā’iṣah), 187 (Yazīd b. Rūmān—‘Urwah), 191 (‘Umar b. ‘Abd Allāh b. ‘Urwah—‘Abd Allāh b. ‘Urwah), 191 (Hiṣām—‘Urwah), 212 (‘Urwah), 223 (*fulān*—‘Urwah—‘Ā’iṣah), 227 (Muḥammad b. Ja’far b. al-Zubayr—‘Urwah—‘Abd al-Raḥmān b. ‘Uwaymir), 236 (Muḥammad b. Ja’far b. al-Zubayr—‘Urwah—*fulānah*), 279 (al-Zuhrī—‘Urwah—‘Usāmah b. Zayd), 289 (al-Zuhrī & ‘Āsim b. ‘Umar b. Qatādah & ‘Abd Allāh b. ‘abī Bakr & Yazīd b. Rūmān—‘Urwah & others—Ibn ‘Abbās), 290 (Yazīd b. Rūmān—‘Urwah), 292 (Yazīd b. Rūmān—‘Urwah), 305 (Yazīd b. Rūmān—‘Urwah—‘Ā’iṣah), 318 (Muḥammad b. Ja’far b. al-Zubayr—‘Urwah), 435 (Hiṣām—‘Urwah—‘Āmir b. al-Ṭufayl), 445 (Muḥammad b. Ja’far b. al-Zubayr & Muḥammad b. ‘Abd al-Raḥmān—‘Urwah—‘Abū Hurayrah), 464 (Muḥammad b. Ja’far b. al-Zubayr—‘Urwah—‘Ā’iṣah), 493 (Muḥammad b. Ja’far b. al-Zubayr—‘Urwah—‘Ā’iṣah), 493 (*fulān*—al-Zuhrī—‘Urwah—‘Ā’iṣah), 494 (al-Zuhrī—‘Alqamah b. Waqqāṣ & Sa’īd b. Jubayr & ‘Urwah & ‘Ubayd Allāh b. ‘Abd Allāh b. ‘Utbah), 500 (al-Zuhrī—‘Urwah—Miswar & Marwān), 509 (al-Zuhrī—‘Urwah), 513-514 (Hiṣām), 527 (Muḥammad b. Ja’far b. al-Zubayr—‘Urwah), 532 (Muḥammad b. Ja’far b. al-Zubayr—‘Urwah), 536 (Muḥammad b. Ja’far b. al-Zubayr—‘Urwah), 540 (al-Zuhrī—‘Urwah—Miswar & Marwān), 545 (Muḥammad b. Ja’far b. al-Zubayr—‘Urwah & others), 555 (Muḥammad b. Ja’far b. al-Zubayr—‘Urwah), 670 (Muḥammad b. Ja’far b. al-Zubayr—Ziyād b. Ḍumayrah b. Sa’d al-Sulamī—‘Urwah—al-Zubayr—al-‘Aswad), 679 (al-Zuhrī—‘Ayyūb b. Baṣīr), 680 (Muḥammad b. Ja’far b. al-Zubayr—‘Urwah—‘Ā’iṣah), 682 (Ya’qūb b. ‘Utbah—al-Zuhrī—‘Urwah—‘Ā’iṣah), 686 (al-Zuhrī—‘Urwah); etc.

⁸¹⁶ John M. B. Jones, ‘Ibn Ishāq’, in Bernard Lewis, Victor L. Ménage, Charles Pellat, & Joseph F. Schacht (eds.), *The Encyclopaedia of Islam, New Edition, Volume 3: H-Iram* (Leiden, the Netherlands: Koninklijke Brill NV, 1971), 810-811; Guillaume, *The Life of Muḥammad*, xiii-xiv.

⁸¹⁷ Ibn Hiṣām (ed. & trans. Guillaume), *The Life of Muḥammad*, 792. He even cites Ibn ‘Iṣhāq (i.e., Ibn Hiṣām—al-Bakkā’ī—Ibn ‘Iṣhāq—Muḥammad b. Ja’far b. al-Zubayr—‘Urwah—‘Ā’iṣah) for his data on other wives (e.g., *ibid.*, 793), but not for ‘Ā’iṣah.

the hadith on the authority of Hišām b. ‘Urwah (again, as an explicit addendum).⁸¹⁸ In other words: not only was the marital-age hadith absent from the original *Kitāb al-Maḡāzī* of Ibn ‘Ishāq, it was explicitly added to this collection of Madinan material by Iraqians.⁸¹⁹

The marital-age hadith is also absent from the *Kitāb al-Maḡāzī* of al-Wāqidī (another collection of Madinan material), which may at first seem odd: we have already established that al-Wāqidī transmitted several different versions of the marital-age hadith to his secretary Ibn Sa‘d in Baghdad, so it would not have been surprising if he had inserted at least one such version into his own *Kitāb al-Maḡāzī* as well. It could be posited that the material constituting the *Kitāb al-Maḡāzī* was already relatively fixed or closed by the time that al-Wāqidī moved to Baghdad, in which case, its silence would be meaningful: if the *Kitāb al-Maḡāzī* is a dedicated Madinan collection of material, and the marital-age hadith is absent therefrom, then this would be further evidence that the hadith was not circulating in Madinah during the 8th Century CE, not to mention that al-Wāqidī in particular only obtained the hadith after he moved to Baghdad. That said, the silence of this work may not be meaningful: unlike Ibn ‘Ishāq’s work, al-Wāqidī’s (or at least the extant redaction thereof) truly lives up to its name, being much more focused on the raids and battles of the Prophet. It is thus less surprising—and less interesting—that al-Wāqidī (in contrast to Ibn ‘Ishāq) failed to cite the marital-age hadith: it was less germane to his interests, at least as far as his extant *Kitāb al-Maḡāzī* was concerned.⁸²⁰

Finally, it is worth noting that another Madinan collection of biographical Hadith has just been rediscovered and published (as of October, 2021): the *Kitāb al-Maḡāzī* of the influential Madinan biographer and traditionist Mūsā b. ‘Uqbah (d. 141-142/758-760), a client of the Zubayrids’ who was remembered as having transmitted from such Madinan notables as Ibn Šihāb al-Zuhrī, ‘Abū Salamah, and ‘Urwah.⁸²¹ Given the biographical importance of the marital-age hadith and given Mūsā’s teachers, it is reasonable to expect that he should have cited the hadith, if indeed it was circulating

⁸¹⁸ Ibn Bukayr (ed. Zakkār), *Siyar*, p. 255.

⁸¹⁹ I owe thanks to Yasmin Amin for pointing out the example of Ibn Bukayr.

⁸²⁰ The marital-age hadith is likewise absent from Sulaymān b. Ṭarḡān al-Taymī (ed. Riḍwān al-Ḥaṣrī), *Sīrat Rasūl Allāh* (Riyadh, KSA: Markaz al-Malik Fayṣal li-al-Buḥūṭ wa-al-Dirāsāt al-‘Islāmiyyah, 1443 AH), a Basran work that is exclusively focused on the Prophet’s raids. I owe thanks to Pavel Pavlovitch for this reference.

⁸²¹ Ḍahabī (ed. ‘Arna’ūṭ *et al.*), *Siyar*, VI, pp. 114-118.

in Madinah during the 7th and 8th Centuries CE: as above with Ibn 'Ishāq, so too with Mūsá.

Unfortunately, I do not yet have access this work, but its importance cannot be overstated: it is rare indeed that a historian is presented with an opportunity to test the novel predictions (or in the case of past occurrences, retrodictions) generated by their hypotheses. If Mūsá's biography cites the marital-age hadith but exhibits no further signs of tampering or later redaction, then the hypothesis outlined thus far will be seriously weakened: if Mūsá possessed a version of the marital-age hadith on a Madinan authority, spent most of his life in Madinah, and died before Hišām, then it would reasonably follow that he obtained his version in Madinah, and that the hadith was already circulating in Madinah in the middle of the 8th Century CE (i.e., independently of Hišām's activities in Iraq). The silence of all other Madinan sources and the absence of unambiguously-Madinan CLs and PCLs would still need to be explained, but at that point, the hypothesis of Madinan origins and the hypothesis of Iraqi origins would be on a much more equal footing: both would be supported by strong pieces of evidence, whilst simultaneously conflicting with other strong points of evidence. Both hypotheses would thus have to explain away some of the evidence, for which purpose *ad hoc* auxiliary hypotheses would need to be devised: this would leave both hypotheses in the awkward position of having to make additional, unevidenced assumptions (unless or until independent confirmation could be furnished for a given auxiliary hypothesis).

Conversely, if Mūsá's biography follows every other early Madinan source in failing to cite the marital-age hadith, this would make their collective silence all the more deafening—strengthening the evidence that the marital-age hadith was not circulating in Madinah during the 7th and 8th Centuries CE. In short, my hypothesis predicts (all else being equal) that the marital-age hadith should be absent from Mūsá's *Kitāb al-Mağāzī*—a prediction that should be verifiable by the time that you read this.

In sum, the absence of the marital-age hadith from *all early Madinan sources and early dedicated collections of Madinan material*—despite (1) its claiming to derive from the great masters of Madinah, whose transmissions were copiously recorded in these sources; (2) its specifically embodying their legal stances on topics they explicitly addressed (in the case of the legal sources) and biographical details of the sort they liked to adduce (in the case of the biographical sources); and (3) its ubiquitous citation

in these same contexts and for these same interests in later sources—is extremely unexpected, which is to say, highly unlikely on the hypothesis of a genuine Madinan origin. This collective silence is thus strong evidence for the absence of the marital-age hadith in Madinah during the 8th Century CE.

Geography and Arguments from Silence: The Evidence of the Earliest Kufan Collections

Although most versions of the marital-age hadith—including those from Iraqi CLs—claim to derive via Madinan SSs and/or from Madinan sources, three of the earliest CLs cited Kufan SSs:

- The Kufan CL **‘Abṭar b. al-Qāsim** (d. 178/794-795) also cited the Kufan traditionist Muṭarrif b. Ṭarīf (d. 133/750-751 or 141-143/758-761), from ‘Abū ‘Ishāq, from ‘Abū ‘Ubaydah, from ‘Ā’īshah.
- The Wasitian-Basran CL **‘Abū ‘Awānah al-Waḍḍāḥ** (d. 176/792) cited the Kufan Follower and *qāḍī* ‘Abd al-Malik b. ‘Umayr (d. 136/754), from ‘Ā’īshah.
- The Kufan CL **‘Isrā’īl b. Yūnus** (d. 160-162/776-779) cited the Kufan traditionist ‘Abū ‘Ishāq ‘Amr b. ‘Abd Allāh al-Sabī’ī (d. 127-128/744-746), from the Kufan Follower ‘Abū ‘Ubaydah ‘Āmir b. ‘Abd Allāh (d. 81/700-701).
- The Kufan CL **Sulaymān b. Mihrān al-‘A’maš** (d. 147-148/764-766) cited the Kufan Follower ‘Ibrāhīm b. Yazīd al-Naḡā’ī (d. 96/714), from the Kufan Follower al-‘Aswad b. Yazīd (d. 75/694-695), from ‘Ā’īshah.

Thus, even if the Madinan origin of the marital-age hadith is in doubt, the possibility remains that it can be traced back to the early 8th Century CE in Kufah, if not earlier.

There are several reasons to doubt that the marital-age hadith goes back any earlier than the middle of the 8th Century CE even in Kufah, however. Firstly, as we have already seen, ‘Abṭar’s hadith was likely borrowed from the tradition of al-‘A’maš, and can be set aside accordingly. Secondly, as we have already seen, ‘Abū ‘Awānah’s *faḍā’il* hadith plausibly reflects a secondary reworking of the relevant *faḍā’il* material, from

which the marital-age elements were initially absent. Thirdly, in terms of ascription, al-ʿAʿmaš’s hadith (which explicitly and continuously reaches all the way back to ʿĀʾiṣah) is superior to Hišām’s (which originally only reached back to ʿUrwah), making it seem secondary. Fourthly, all of these Kufan ascriptions—like every other version of the hadith more broadly—are consistent with being outgrowths of Hišām’s version (via the ordinary mechanisms of erroneous or sloppy transmission, in conjunction with the common occurrence of secondary false ascription).

To all of the above can be added the following consideration: as with the Mālikīs, the Kufan versions of the marital-age hadith are never cited by the early Ḥanafī school of Islamic jurisprudence, despite its being an outgrowth of the 8th-Century Kufan legal tradition, and despite the hadith’s potential utility as a justification for Ḥanafī doctrines relating to child marriage. Thus, the hadith is absent from all of the extant writings of and transmissions from the leading Kufan jurists ʿAbū Ḥanīfah al-Nuʿmān b. Ṭābit (d. 150/767), ʿAbū Yūsuf Yaʿqūb b. ʿIbrāhīm (d. 182/798), and Muḥammad b. al-Ḥasan al-Šaybānī (d. 189/804-805), not to mention all of their early followers. Thus, as Baugh again observes: “It cannot be overlooked that al-Ṭaḥāwī does not mention the hadith of ʿĀʾiṣah here or in the *Ikhtilāf*.”⁸²² Likewise: “Much of al-Jaṣṣāṣ’s argument is built on the arguments of al-Ṭaḥāwī, and al-Shaybānī before him; none of these relies on the hadith of ʿĀʾiṣah.”⁸²³ In short, “the Ḥanafī position definitely allowed prepubescent marriage but it was never justified by this hadith.”⁸²⁴

An alleged exception to this overwhelming Kufan legal silence is the extant *Kitāb al-ʿAṣl* ascribed to al-Šaybānī, who allegedly cited the marital-age hadith therein—in the chapter on marriage (*kitāb al-nikāḥ*), in the section pertaining to child marriage (*bāb nikāḥ al-ṣaḡīr wa-al-ṣaḡīrah*)—as follows:

It reached us (*balaḡa-nā*) from the Messenger of God that he married (*tazawwaja*) ʿĀʾiṣah when she was a prepubescent girl (*ṣaḡīrah*), a girl of six years, and consummated the marriage with her (*wa-banā bi-hā*) when she was a girl of nine years; she was with him nine [years].⁸²⁵

⁸²² Baugh, *Minor Marriage*, 189.

⁸²³ *Ibid.*, 192.

⁸²⁴ *Ibid.*, 179, n. 56.

⁸²⁵ Muḥammad b. al-Ḥasan al-Šaybānī (ed. Mehmet Boynukalın), *al-ʿAṣl*, vol. 10 (Doha, Qatar: Wizārat al-ʿAwqāf, 2012), p. 186.

If indeed al-Šaybānī—one of the founders of the Ḥanafī school—had cited the marital-age hadith in his jurisprudence, it would be reasonable to expect that the subsequent Ḥanafī tradition, in which earlier works were continuously cannibalised and elaborated in later works, would have mentioned this fact. Instead, the Ḥanafī tradition failed to cite this hadith for centuries, which immediately suggests that the citation in the extant *’Aṣl* is a later interpolation, or that the extant *’Aṣl* as a whole is actually a text that was reworked centuries after al-Šaybānī. This hypothesis has been corroborated by Hocine Benkheira, who argues that the *’Aṣl* was reworked and revised (“remanié et révisé”) long after (“longtemps après”) the time of al-Šaybānī, on the basis of the appearance therein of a hadith that is otherwise mysteriously absent in the works of Mālik and especially al-Šāfi‘ī—a hadith that otherwise only appeared late (“tardive”) in the Ḥanafī tradition.⁸²⁶

The Transoxanian Ḥanafī jurist Muḥammad b. ’Aḥmad al-Saraḡsī (d. 483/1090) also attributed the use of the marital-age hadith to the earlier Ḥanafī jurist Muḥammad b. Muqātil al-Rāzī (d. 248/862-863), in the following passage of his famous *al-Mabṣūt*:

Our masters (*mašāyiku-nā*) disagreed regarding the minimum age (*’adnā al-muddah*) by which the determining of the puberty of the prepubescent girl is permissible (*yajūzu al-ḥukm fī-hā bi-bulūḡ al-šaḡīrah*). Thus, Muḥammad b. Muqātil al-Rāzī used to set it at nine years, because the Prophet consummated his marriage (*banā*) with ’Ā’iṣah when she was a girl of nine years, and [it is] obvious (*al-zāhir*) that he consummated the marriage with her after [she had attained] puberty (*ba’da al-bulūḡ*). Moreover, ’Abū Muṭī’ al-Balḡī had a daughter who became a grandmother when she was a girl of nineteen years, such that he said: “This girl has put us to shame!” And amongst our masters are those who set it at seven years because of his [i.e., the Prophet’s] saying: “Command them to [uphold] the prayer, when they reach [the age of] seven.”⁸²⁷

Given that Ibn Muqātil’s use is unattested in the Ḥanafī tradition prior to al-Saraḡsī (i.e., in the approximately two centuries separating the two), the ascription is dubious; moreover, al-Saraḡsī does not actually quote Ibn Muqātil’s own words in this regard, which is consistent with his description of Ibn Muqātil’s use of the marital-age hadith’s being the product of al-Saraḡsī’s own inferences or speculation.

⁸²⁶ Hocine Benkheira, ‘Un acte manqué peut-il invalider le jeûne? À propos de l’oubli et de cas semblables’, *Mélanges de l’Institut dominicain d’études orientales*, Number 34 (2019), 30.

⁸²⁷ Muḥammad b. ’Aḥmad al-Saraḡsī, *al-Mabṣūt*, vol. 3 (Beirut, Lebanon: Dār al-Ma’rifah, 1989), p. 149.

As far as I am aware,⁸²⁸ the earliest definite use of the marital-age hadith within the Ḥanafī tradition occurred in *al-Nutaf fī al-Fatāwá*, which was composed by the Transoxanian Ḥanafī jurist ‘Alī b. al-Ḥusayn b. Muḥammad al-Suḡdī (d. 461/1068-1069), nearly three centuries after the hadith’s initial mass-dissemination in Iraq. Thus, in a discussion on the age at which Islamic rituals become obligatory, al-Suḡdī wrote the following:

And as for prayer, [children] are commanded to [uphold] it at seven years, and they are beaten [into doing] it at ten.

And as for fasting, [children] are commanded to [uphold] it at ten, and they are beaten [into doing] it at twelve.

And as for [being] alone in sleep, [children] are separated into boys and girls [on the one hand], and fathers and mothers [are separated] from them [as well], at six; and that is because the Messenger of God married (*tazawwaja*) ‘Ā’iṣah when she was a girl of six years and consummated the marriage with her (*baná bi-hā*) at nine.

And, at fifteen, pens are upon them [i.e., they are subject to the rulings of jurists].⁸²⁹

Following al-Suḡdī (in fact, beginning with his student al-Sarakṣī), the marital-age hadith became a standard proof within the classical Ḥanafī tradition for various marriage-related doctrines—in particular, that fathers can arrange the marriages of their prepubescent children; that girls can be consummated in marriage when they attain physical maturity; and that nine is the minimum age at which puberty can occur in girls.⁸³⁰

Of course, the Ḥanafīs must have been aware of the marital-age hadith for centuries before they finally started to use it—indeed, their early Kufan forebears could not have failed to notice its proliferation amongst the traditionists and Hadith-oriented jurists of their hometown at the end of the 8th Century CE. Thus, as with the Mālikīs, a distinction can be made between the initial non-use of the hadith on the one hand, and its prolonged non-use on the other. The latter can be easily explained by the former, as

⁸²⁸ Again, based upon my search of the Shamela database.

⁸²⁹ ‘Alī b. al-Ḥusayn b. Muḥammad al-Suḡdī (ed. Ṣalāh al-Dīn al-Nāhī), *al-Nutaf fī al-Fatāwá* (Amman, Jordan: Dār al-Furqān, 1984), p. 113.

⁸³⁰ E.g., Sarakṣī, *Mabṣūt*, III, p. 149; *ibid.*, IV, pp. 212-213; Burhān al-Dīn Maḥmūd b. ‘Aḥmad al-Buḵārī (ed. Na‘īm ‘Aḥmad), *al-Muḥīṭ al-Burhāniyy fī al-Fiqh al-Nu‘māniyy*, vol. 1 (Riyad, KSA: Maktabat al-Ruṣd, 2004), p. 395, # 833; ‘Abū Bakr b. Mas‘ūd al-Kāsānī (ed. ‘Alī Muḥammad Mu‘awwaḍ & ‘Ādil ‘Aḥmad ‘Abd al-Mawjūd), *Badā’i‘ al-Ṣanā’i‘ fī Tartīb al-Ṣarā’i‘*, vol. 3 (Beirut, Lebanon: Dār al-Kutub al-‘Ilmiyyah, 2003), p. 355; Badr al-Dīn Muḥammad b. ‘Aḥmad al-‘Aynī (ed. ‘Ayman Ṣāliḥ Ṣā‘bān), *al-Bināyah Ṣarḥ al-Hidāyah*, vol. 5 (Beirut, Lebanon: Dār al-Kutub al-‘Ilmiyyah, 2000), p. 90; *ibid.*, XI, p. 111.

a consequence of inertia or a kind of legal traditionalism or conservatism: the founders of the legal school did not use the hadith in their authoritative works, so their early followers simply followed suit. By contrast, the former is much harder to explain on the view that the Kufan versions of the marital-age hadith genuinely derive from their alleged sources—in particular, 'Ibrāhīm al-Naḵa'ī (d. 96/714), 'Abū 'Ubaydah 'Āmir (d. 81/700-701), and al-'Aswad b. Yazīd (d. 75/694-695). The early Kufan legal tradition venerated the local Companion 'Abd Allāh b. Mas'ūd and his students ('aṣḥāb) above all others as sources of legal doctrine⁸³¹ and, as it happens, al-'Aswad was the student of Ibn Mas'ūd and 'Abū 'Ubaydah was the son of Ibn Mas'ūd. Moreover, amongst the Followers, the early Kufan legal tradition venerated none other than 'Ibrāhīm al-Naḵa'ī above all others as a source of legal doctrine,⁸³² such that his opinions and transmissions comprise the bulk of the reports cited in both the *Kitāb al-Āṭār* of 'Abū Yūsuf and the *Kitāb al-Āṭār* of al-Šaybānī.⁸³³ Thus, if these leading authorities amongst the Followers of Kufah had truly transmitted versions of the marital-age hadith to their local students, such that the marital-age hadith was already circulating in Kufah during the early 8th Century CE, we would reasonably expect that the Kufan jurists and jurist-collectors of the mid-to-late 8th Century CE would have cited or mentioned it in their various legal writings and compendia, especially given the utility of the hadith for some of their marriage-related legal doctrines. Consequently, the absence of the marital-age hadith (which had utility as a justification for certain Kufan legal doctrines) from the early Kufan legal tradition (which venerated the Kufan Followers who allegedly transmitted the hadith) is unexpected on the view that the ascriptions of the Kufan CLs 'Isrā'īl and al-'A'maš to the Followers of Kufah are genuine. The absence of any version of the marital-age hadith from the early Kufan legal tradition is consistent with the hadith's being a mid-8th-Century innovation amongst the *traditionists* of Iraq in particular, such that it only took off amongst subsequent Hadith-oriented jurists (such as al-Šāfi'ī), rather than the indigenous, mainstream, rationalist-inclined jurists of Kufah (such as 'Abū Ḥanīfah, 'Abū Yūsuf, and al-Šaybānī), who never possessed the hadith to begin with.

⁸³¹ Schacht, *Origins*, 31, 231 ff.

⁸³² *Ibid.*, 32-33, 86-87, 105, 233 ff.

⁸³³ *Ibid.*, 86.

The only hint at an early Kufan legal use of the marital-age hadith (i.e., beyond the Hadith-oriented jurists) is the following ascription of the Khurasanian CL Ibn Rāhwayh (d. 238/853), via the Kufan tradent Yaḥyá b. ʿĀdam (d. 203/818), to the Zaydī Kufan theologian and traditionist al-Ḥasan b. Ḥayy (d. 169/785-786):

Yaḥyá b. ʿĀdam reported to us, from al-Ḥasan [b. Ḥayy], who said: “I saw a grandmother [who was] a girl of twenty-one years.”

He said: “And the minimum of the ages [at which] the pregnancy of a woman [can occur] is nine years (*wa-ʿaqall ʿawqāt [al-]ḥaml [al-marʿah] tisʿ sinīn*), which is the earliest time [at which there can be] sexual intercourse (*wa-huwa ʿawwal waqt/ʿawqāt al-waṭʾ*). The Messenger of God consummated his marriage (*daḳala*) with ʿĀʾiṣah when she was a girl of nine.”⁸³⁴

Ibn Rāhwayh’s ascription to al-Ḥasan is uncorroborated, but even if it is authentic, it does not change the unexpected silence of the dominant proto-Ḥanafī faction of Kufah, which was obsessed with ʿIbrāhīm and the students of Ibn Masʿūd: if ʿIbrāhīm and the students of Ibn Masʿūd had truly disseminated versions of the marital-age hadith in Kufah, it would be reasonable to expect that these specific versions would have been cited by proto-Ḥanafī jurists and collectors.

In short, (1) the absence of the marital-age elements from most versions of the 8th-Century Kufan *faḍāʾil* material on ʿĀʾiṣah, (2) the perfect *ʾisnād* cited by al-ʿAʿmaš, (3) the consistency of all Kufan versions with being outgrowths of Hišām’s version, and above all (4) the absence of the marital-age hadith from the early Kufan—or specifically, the proto-Ḥanafī—legal tradition all cast serious doubt on the Kufan versions of the marital-age hadith, which claim derive from or via the Followers of Kufah. On the contrary, this evidence is consistent with the marital-age hadith’s being a recent (mid-8th-Century) innovation amongst the traditionists of Kufah, or in other words: even in Kufah, the marital-age hadith cannot be traced back to—indeed, is positively unlikely to derive from—the early 8th Century CE.

⁸³⁴ See the section on Ibn Rāhwayh in ch. 2.

Interim Summary and Entailments: Hišām as the Originator of the Marital-Age Hadith

All of the evidence surveyed thus far points to mid-8th-Century Kufah as the starting point of the marital-age hadith: several versions can be traced back to a series of Kufan CLs operating in the mid-to-late 8th Century CE, but there are strong reasons to doubt the ascriptions of these CLs back to their respective sources, including Kufan sources (in the case of 'Abū 'Awānah, 'Isrā'īl, and al-'A'maš), Madinan sources (in the case of Hišām and Muḥammad b. 'Amr), and others (in the case of 'Ismā'īl b. 'abī Kālid). (This also applies to every SS ascription and spider within the hadith-tradition, all of which are either probably or at least plausibly dives.) Where then did the marital-age hadith come from, and why did it suddenly explode in Kufah in the mid-to-late 8th Century CE?

We have already seen that Muḥammad b. 'Amr probably borrowed his version from Hišām's Version 4 hadith, that al-'A'maš's ascription looks secondary compared with Hišām's, and that Hišām's Version 1 hadith is consistent with being the ur-story behind virtually all other versions of the marital-age hadith more broadly—and, as it happens, Hišām's versions of the hadith far and away the most widely-disseminated and influential out of all the CL redactions. All of this is consistent with (i.e., is actually explained by) the hadith's having originated with Hišām when he moved to Kufah, or in other words: Hišām falsely ascribed a report about 'Ā'išah to his father, and elaborated the report in successive retellings; Hišām's hadith rapidly proliferated amongst the traditionists of Iraq; and some of his Kufan contemporaries borrowed—and in some cases altered or garbled—his hadith and reattributed it to other early authorities. In practice, this would mean that every extant CL, including al-Ḥajjāj b. 'abī Manī' (d. post-216/831), al-Wāqidī (d. 207/823), Muḥammad b. al-Ḥasan (d. turn of 9th C. CE), 'Abtar (d. 178/794-795), 'Abū 'Awānah (d. 176/792), 'Isrā'īl (d. 160-162/776-779), al-'A'maš (d. 147-148/764-766), 'Ismā'īl (d. 146/763-764), and Muḥammad b. 'Amr (d. 144-145/761-763), directly or indirectly acquired their hadiths—or the marital-age elements therein—from Hišām (d. 146-147/763-765). In addition to variously explaining or being consistent with all of the evidence surveyed thus far, this is completely feasible in terms of chronology and geography: all of the

earliest CLs (i.e., al-ʿAʿmaš, ʾIsmāʿīl, and Muḥammad b. ʿAmr) were operating at the same time (c. 754-765 CE) and in the same place (i.e., Iraq) as Hišām; and every later CL (e.g., al-Ḥajjāj b. ʾabī Manīʿ) operated at times (e.g., the early 9th Century CE) and in places (e.g., the Levant) where transmissions from the earlier CLs were spreading.

If indeed Hišām (after his move to Kufah) was the ultimate source of all extant versions of the marital-age hadith, an obvious question arises: did Hišām create the ur-story (i.e., the Version 1 hadith) out of thin air (*ex nihilo*), or did he obtain the key information therein (without acknowledgement) from some other source (*ex materia*)? If the latter scenario occurred, Hišām must have picked up the material from an obscure source in Kufah, based on similar *e silentio* considerations to those outlined above: if Hišām’s (hypothetical) suppressed informant had been influential, then it seems reasonable to expect that they would constitute a CL in their own right, whose redaction could fulfill the textual-critical criterion of *utrum in alterum abiturum erat*. Since no other extant CL redaction fulfills this requirement, we are left with two plausible options: either Hišām was the first *influential* traditionist to pick up, formulate, and disseminate some obscure information that already existed in Kufah at the beginning of the Abbasid period, or he himself was the creator of that information. Given that the latter scenario is simpler (since it does not require the supposition of additional tradents), it seems preferable to the former, which is to say: the more probable scenario is that Hišām created the hadith whole-cloth when he moved to Kufah.

A Historical-Critical Analysis of the Marital-Age Hadith’s Context

If indeed Hišām created the marital-age hadith when he moved to Kufah, an obvious follow-up question arises: why? Was this the result of some kind of error, or was it an instance of deliberate false creation—and if the latter be the case, what was Hišām’s motive? Of course, our ability to answer this secondary question of Hišām’s psychology has no bearing at all upon the preceding argumentation regarding the hadith’s origin—even if no explanation for Hišām’s act or motive was forthcoming, the evidence for the hadith’s belated creation would remain. That said, several factors can be—and have been—adduced explain Hišām’s creation of this hadith.

To begin with, even Mediaeval Hadith critics recognised that Hišām became unreliable—or at least *much less reliable*—when he moved to Iraq. In addition to the ascriptions to Mālik cited already (from Ibn Kīrāš and Yaḥyá b. Saʿīd), the following is reported from Ibn Kīrāš:

He [i.e., Hišām] came to Kufah three times.

During [the first] visit, he would say therein, “My father related to me, saying: “I heard ‘Ā’iṣah...””

[He came] a second time, then he would say, “My father reported to me, from ‘Ā’iṣah...”

He came a third time, then he would say, “[from] my father, from ‘Ā’iṣah...”, meaning that he had omitted intermediary tradents in his transmission (*yursilu*) from his father.⁸³⁵

Similarly, the following is reported from the Basran Hadith critic Yaʿqūb b. Šaybah (d. 262/875):

Hišām was reliable (*ṭabt*). There was nothing objectionable about him (*lam yunkar ‘alay-hi*) until after he went to Iraq, whereupon he transmitted widely (*inbaṣaṭa fī al-riwāyah*) and [in the process] omitted intermediary tradents in his transmission (*‘arsala*) of things from his father. [He did this with Hadith] that he had heard from [people] other than his father (*mimmā kāna sami‘a-hu min ḡayr ‘abī-hi*) [and ascribed them directly] to his father (*‘an ‘abī-hi*).⁸³⁶

The later Hadith scholar and prosopographer al-Ḍahabī tried to downplay the problems that arose in Hišām’s transmission towards the end of his life, chalking them up to mere bad memory:

Hišām b. ‘Urwah: one of the luminaries (*‘aḥad al-‘a’lām*); a proof (*ḥujjah*); a leading scholar (*‘imām*). However, in old age (*lākin fī al-kibar*), his memory diminished (*tanāqaṣa ḥifzu-hu*), although he was never confused (*lam yaḵtaliṭ ‘abad^{an}*), and it deserves no attention that ‘Abū al-Ḥasan b. al-Qaṭṭān said of him that he and Suhayl b. ‘abī Šāliḥ became confused (*iktalaṭā*) and changed (*taḡayyarā*). Yes, the man changed a little (*taḡayyara qalīl^{an}*), and his memory was not the same as it was during [his] youth (*lam yabqa ḥifzu-hu ka-huwa fī ḥāl al-šabībah*), so he forgot some of that which he had memorised (*nasiya ba‘ḍ maḥfūẓi-hi*), or erred

⁸³⁵ Ḍahabī (ed. ‘Arna’ūṭ *et al.*), *Siyar*, VI, p. 35.

⁸³⁶ *Ibid.* Also see *ibid.*, p. 46.

(*wahima*)—so what? Is he immune from forgetfulness (*‘a-huwa ma‘šūm min al-nisyān*)?!⁸³⁷

Al-Ḍahabī may even have blamed Hišām’s Iraqi students for the problems in the Hadith that he transmitted in Iraq, as in the following:

In the Hadith of the Iraqians from Hišām b. ‘Urwah, there are errors (*‘awhām*) that have been transmitted, just as there are errors (*‘awhām*) in their Hadith from Ma‘mar.⁸³⁸

Other Hadith scholars were less apologetical, however—thus, Ibn Ḥajar al-‘Asqalānī, one of the greatest Hadith scholars within the Sunnī tradition, candidly described Hišām’s omission of tradents in transmission (*‘irsāl*) as a lesser form of Hadith-related deception (*tadlīs*):

Hišām b. ‘Urwah b. al-Zubayr b. al-‘Awwām; a famous junior Follower. ‘Abū al-Ḥasan b. al-Qaṭṭān mentioned him in that regard [i.e., in the context of inaccurate transmission], which al-Ḍahabī denounced. Verily, the famous account about him [i.e., Hišām] is that he came to Iraq three times. During the first [visit], he related from his father then clarified [that it was] heard directly from him. During the second [visit], he related numerous [hadiths from his father], yet never clarified the transmission (*lam yuṣarriḥ al-qīṣṣah*), which necessitates that he related from him with that which he had not heard from him (*wa-hiya taqtaḍī ‘anna-hu ḥaddaṭa ‘an-hu bi-mā lam yasma‘-hu min-hu*). This is [a form of] deception (*al-tadlīs*).⁸³⁹

Regardless of whether it was intentional or the product of declining memory in old age, the relevant reports all agree: Hišām began to falsely ascribe reports directly to his father when he moved to Iraq. Thus, the Islamic biographical sources are at least broadly consistent with all the evidence that Hišām created the marital-age hadith—and falsely ascribed it to his father—when he moved to Kufah: this was not an isolated incident.⁸⁴⁰ Indeed, there is even a specific indication that the marital-age was

⁸³⁷ Ḍahabī (ed. Bijāwī), *Mizān*, IV, p. 301.

⁸³⁸ Ḍahabī (ed. ‘Arna’ūṭ *et al.*), *Siyar*, VI, p. 46.

⁸³⁹ ‘Aḥmad b. ‘Alī b. Ḥajar al-‘Asqalānī, *Kitāb Ṭabaqāt al-Mudallisīn* (Cairo, Egypt: al-Maṭba‘ah al-Ḥusayniyyah al-Miṣriyyah, 1904), p. 7.

⁸⁴⁰ Of course, *‘irsāl* and *tadlīs* are neither *waqf* nor *kaḍīb*, and it is the former that Hišām is accused of in the relevant reports, whereas I am effectively accusing him of something closer to the latter. Thus, I am not saying that the Islamic biographical sources explicitly recall that Hišām *fabricated* hadiths when he moved to Iraq—I would not expect someone of his venerated and pivotal status to be accused of such in the first place, regardless of his *actual* reliability. Rather, I am saying that the Islamic biographical

regarded by some traditionists as belonging to Hišām's dubious (i.e., Iraqi) transmissions, in the form of a defensive comment that appears in the version of the marital-age hadith recorded in (Bišr b. Mūsá's recension of) the *Musnad* of al-Ḥumaydī:

Al-Ḥumaydī related to us—he said: “Sufyān [b. ‘Uyaynah] related to us—he said: “Hišām b. ‘Urwah related to us—and [this] was from among the reliable of [those hadiths] that he transmits (*wa-kāna min jayyid mā yarwī*)—from his father, from ‘Ā’iṣah, who said: “The Messenger of God married me when I was a girl of six years or seven years and consummated the marriage with me when I was a girl of nine.”””⁸⁴¹

Whether the comment was made by Bišr, al-Ḥumaydī, or Sufyān, it is quite revealing: the marital-age hadith was clearly in question (presumably given the notoriety of Hišām's Iraqi Hadith), prompting a transmitter thereof to defensively assert that this particular hadith was actually one of the good ones. In light of all of the evidence surveyed thus far, however, we can see that the transmitter in question was wrong: Hišām likely created the marital-age hadith when he moved to Kufah, which is consistent with the doubts cast upon his Iraqi transmissions more broadly. If al-Ḍahabī in particular is to be trusted, then we might simply conclude that this occurred by accident: Hišām began to falsely ascribe hadiths to his father when he moved to Iraq simply because he was old.⁸⁴²

There is reason to doubt all of these reports, however: “conditional appraisals” by Hadith critics (‘X was reliable until Y occurred’) were often retrospective attempts to rationalise perceived disparities in the quality of a given tradent's transmissions, rather than accurate historical memories of changes in life circumstance.⁸⁴³ Mālik's hostility to Hišām's emigration seems plausible enough (given the common regional rivalries of the day, and Mālik's Madinan chauvinism in particular), but Hišām's poor memory in old age, and even the distinction between his Madinan and Iraqi transmissions, is in doubt.

That said, conditional appraisals were attempts to rationalise obvious disparities in the material transmitted by a given tradent, so even if the specific rationalisation is

sources convey the impression that Hišām's transmissions became *dubious* or *suspect* when he moved to Iraq, and that this general impression of *dubiousness* or *suspiciousness* is consistent with Hišām's having created and falsely ascribed some hadiths.

⁸⁴¹ Ḥumaydī (ed. Dārānī), *Musnad*, I, p. 273, # 233.

⁸⁴² This point is also made in Shanavas, ‘The Myth of a Proverbial Age’, 21-22.

⁸⁴³ Dickinson, *Development*, 99.

suspect (e.g., poor memory in old age, or a change that occurred in Iraq), the underlying observation that prompted such a rationalisation in the first place remains valid: Hišām noticeably falsely ascribed some hadiths to his father. Moreover, even if Hišām had falsely ascribed Hadith to his father all of his life (i.e., in Madinah), it is plausible that such activities only became salient when he moved to Iraq and began to transmit Hadith that he had never transmitted before (i.e., that his Madinan students had never heard of).

Still, even if Hišām's creation of the marital-age hadith in Kufah is corroborated by a general memory of his dissemination of false ascriptions in Iraq, we are still left without a specific reason or motive therefor. In order to answer this deeper question, it is helpful to first answer a secondary question: what was the marital-age hadith *used for*? If the marital-age hadith had utility for a specific cause or interest soon after Hišām, it is not unreasonable to suppose that Hišām himself would have recognised the same utility—which could explain why he created the hadith in the first place.

One of the earliest uses of the marital-age hadith was in Islamic jurisprudence, in a way that we have encountered already: the hadith was widely understood to justify the right of a father to arrange the marriage of his (in some cases prepubescent, in other cases virgin) daughter without her consent. Other than possibly al-Ḥasan b. Ḥayy (who reportedly cited the marital-age hadith to justify nine as the minimum age of marital consummation), the earliest legal use of the hadith occurred with the early Hijazo-Egyptian jurist—and supporter of the Hadith partisans (*ʿaṣḥāb al-ḥadīth*)—Muḥammad b. ʿIdrīs al-Šāfiʿī (d. 204/820), whose famous *Kitāb al-ʿUmm* survives via the recension of his Egyptian student al-Rabīʿ b. Sulaymān al-Murādī (d. 270/884). (In conformity with the thesis outlined already, al-Šāfiʿī received his version of the marital-age hadith from Sufyan b. ʿUyaynah in Makkah, who received it in turn from Hišām in Kufah.) Al-Šāfiʿī cited this hadith to justify two similar legal doctrines: the right of a father to marry off his prepubescent daughter without her consent, and the right of a father to marry off his virgin daughter (i.e., including pubescent or post-pubescent girls) without her consent.⁸⁴⁴ In the first case, al-Šāfiʿī wrote the following:

⁸⁴⁴ For a more detailed analysis of al-Šāfiʿī's use of this hadith, see Ali, *Marriage and Slavery*, 35-36, and Baugh, *Minor Marriage*, ch. 5.

If someone says, “Why do you claim that fathers can marry off minors (*al-’âbâ’ yuzawwijûna al-ṣiġâr*),” it is said [in response to them]: ‘Abū Bakr married off (*zawwaja*) ‘Ā’iṣah to the Messenger of God when she was a girl of six or seven, and the Prophet consummated the marriage with her (*banā bi-hā*) when she was a girl of nine. Thus, the two conditions (*al-ḥālān*), which are that there was marital engagement (*al-nikāḥ*) and marital consummation (*al-duḳūl*) with the two of them, were [in effect] when ‘Ā’iṣah was [still] a minor (*ṣaġīrah*) from amongst those who have no authority over themselves (*mimman lā ’amr^a la-hā fī nafsi-hā*). More than one Companion of the Messenger of God married off (*zawwaja*) his daughter as a minor (*ṣaġīrah*).⁸⁴⁵

For al-Šāfi‘ī, the marital-age hadith justified the right of fathers to arrange marriages for their prepubescent daughters (i.e., without their consent); in this respect, al-Šāfi‘ī’s position was uncontroversial within early Islamic jurisprudence, since even the jurists of Kufah and their Ḥanafī descendants agreed thereon (even though they initially did so on different bases than the marital-age hadith).⁸⁴⁶ However, al-Šāfi‘ī (in contrast to the Kufans and Ḥanafīs) also extended this paternal right to *pubescent* or *post-pubescent* daughters, as long as they are still virgins:

Al-Šāfi‘ī said: “Sufyān b. ‘Uyaynah reported to us, from Hišām b. ‘Urwah, from his father, from ‘Ā’iṣah, who said: “The Prophet married me when I was a girl of six or seven and consummated the marriage with me when I was a girl of nine.””

[There is] doubt from aš-Šāfi‘ī [on ‘Ā’iṣah’s exact age of marital engagement].

Al-Šāfi‘ī said: “Although it was part of the *sunnah* of the Messenger of God that *jihād* is [incumbent] upon the boy of fifteen years; and Muslims adopted that in the *ḥudūd*; and God judged that concerning orphans and said, “...until they reach marriage, then if you observe in them mental maturity...”; and [a child] does not have authority over himself (*lam yakun la-hu al-’amr fī nafsi-hi*), except for the boy of fifteen years and the girl of fifteen years, unless he attains puberty (*’an yabluġa al-ḥulum*) or [she becomes a] menstruating girl (*al-jāriyah al-maḥīḍ*) before that, [at which point] they have authority over themselves (*yakūnu la-humā ’amr fī ’anfusi-himā*); [nevertheless, despite all of this,] ‘Abū Bakr’s marrying off (*’inkāḥ*) of ‘Ā’iṣah to the Messenger of God as a girl of six years and his [i.e., Muḥammad’s] consummation of the marriage (*banā’u-hu*) with her as a girl of nine proved (*dalla*) that the father has more right over the virgin than herself (*al-’ab ’aḥaqq bi-al-bikr min nafsi-hā*). And, were [it the case that] when she attains puberty as a virgin (*’idā balaġat bikr^{an}*) she has more right over herself than he (*kānat ’aḥaqq bi-nafsi-hā min-hu*), then it would be [the

⁸⁴⁵ Šāfi‘ī (ed. ‘Abd al-Muṭṭalib), *’Umm*, VIII, p. 365, # 3224.

⁸⁴⁶ Baugh, *Minor Marriage*, 79, 96-97, 100, 102, 163-164, 184, 190-191.

case] that it is not permissible (*'allā yajūza*) for him [to force such decisions] upon her until she reaches puberty (*ḥattā tabluḡa*) and it would [also be the case] that [such decisions can occur] with her permission (*bi-ʾidni-hā*).⁸⁴⁷

In other words, al-Šāfiʿī acknowledged that there is evidence from the *sunnah* that boys and girls gain authority over themselves or attain legal majority at age fifteen or puberty (if puberty occurs earlier than age fifteen), but nevertheless insisted that a father has legal power over his virgin daughter and can marry her off regardless (i.e., without her consent), on the basis of the marital-age hadith. Al-Šāfiʿī then incredulously pointed out that, if being a pubescent virgin conferred full legal majority, that would entail that her father would not be able to marry her off without her permission—a conclusion that al-Šāfiʿī evidently rejected. Thus, in a later passage, al-Šāfiʿī reiterated:

Her father [i.e., ʾAbū Bakr] married her off to him (*zawwaja-hu ʾiyyā-hā*), so that proved (*dalla*) that the father of the virgin has more right to her marriage than herself (*ʾabā al-bikr ʾaḥaqq bi-ʾinkāḥi-hā min nafsi-hā*), because a girl of seven years and [likewise one of] nine has no authority over herself (*lā ʾamr la-hā fī nafsi-hā*). No one other than fathers can marry off a virgin until she attains puberty (*laysa li-ʾaḥad ḡayr al-ʾābāʾ ʾan yuzawwijū bikr^{an} ḥattā tabluḡa*) and attains authority over herself (*yakūnu la-hā ʾamr fī nafsi-hā*).⁸⁴⁸

Once again, al-Šāfiʿī interpreted the marital-age hadith as proof that a father can marry off his virgin daughter without her permission, affirming that the rights of the father trump those of his virgin daughter in this regard.

Al-Šāfiʿī's use of the marital-age hadith (to justify the right of fathers to arrange marriages for their daughters under certain conditions) was widely adopted by other Hadith-partisan jurists (such as Ibn Ḥanbal), and was thereafter inherited by the legal traditions that evolved out of the Hadith partisans—namely, the Šāfiʿī and Ḥanbalī schools. Eventually, even the Mālikīs (who evolved out of the early Madinan legal tradition) and the Ḥanafīs (who evolved out of the early Kufan legal tradition) adopted the marital-age hadith to justify the same or similar legal doctrines.⁸⁴⁹ All of this provides a potential clue as to Hišām's motive for the creation of this hadith: if jurists

⁸⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, VI, p. 46, # 2210.

⁸⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 429, # 2462.

⁸⁴⁹ See Baugh, *Minor Marriage*, *passim*.

from al-Šāfiʿi onward commonly saw a justification for the rights of fathers to arrange marriages for their daughters in the marital-age hadith, then it is conceivable that Hišām himself saw the same potential therein and created the hadith for that exact purpose in the first place.

However, an even earlier use of the marital-age hadith can be identified: ʿĀʾiṣah's being married at a young age was cited in propagandistic lists of her distinguishing qualities or virtues (*faḍā'il*). We have encountered this use of the marital-age elements already—for example, in the *faḍā'il* hadith of the Wasitian-Basran CL ʿAbū ʿAwānah al-Waḍḍāḥ (d. 176/792) (who spent a lot of time in Kufah and mostly transmitted from Kufan authorities⁸⁵⁰), on the authority of the Kufan *qāḍī* ʿAbd al-Malik b. ʿUmayr (d. 136/754):

...from ʿAbd al-Malik b. ʿUmayr, from ʿĀʾiṣah [that] she said: “I was given characteristics that no other woman was given: [the Messenger of God] married me when I was a girl of six/seven years; the angel brought him my image in his hand, then he gazed upon it; he consummated the marriage with me at/when I was a girl of at nine years; I saw Gabriel, and no woman saw him except for me; I was the most-beloved of his wives to him; my father was the most-beloved of his companions to him; the Messenger of God fell ill [in my house and I nursed him; then he died] when no one was present except for me and the angels.”⁸⁵¹

Likewise, consider the *faḍā'il* hadith of the Kufan CL ʿIsmāʿil b. ʿabī Kālid (d. 146/763-764), on the authority of a sequence of two unknown or ambiguous tradents named ʿAbd al-Raḥmān:

...from ʿAbd al-Raḥmān b. ʿabī al-Ḍaḥḥāk, from ʿAbd al-Raḥmān b. Muḥammad b. Zayd b. Judʿān, [who said] [that] ʿAbd Allāh b. Ṣafwān and another with him came to ʿĀʾiṣah, and ʿĀʾiṣah said: “O so-and-so, have you heard the talk of Ḥaḥṣah?” He said [to her]: “Yes, O Mother of the Believers.”

⁸⁵⁰ E.g., ʿAbū Dāwūd Sulaymān b. al-ʿAṣʿaṭ al-Sijistānī (ed. Ṭāriq b. ʿIwāḍ Allāh b. Muḥammad), *Masāʾil al-ʿImām ʿAḥmad Riwayāt ʿAbī Dāwūd Sulaymān bn al-ʿAṣʿaṭ al-Sijistāniyy* (Cairo, Egypt: Maktabat Ibn Taymiyyah, 1999), p. 383, # 1850: “ʿAbū ʿAwānah heard from him—meaning, from ʿAṭāʾ [b. al-Sāʾib]—in both Kufah and Basrah.” Meanwhile, in Ḍahabī (ed. ʿArnaʿuṭ *et al.*), *Siyar*, VIII, p. 217, the majority (seventeen) of ʿAbū ʿAwānah's cited masters and sources are Kufan, namely: al-Ḥakam b. ʿUṭaybah, Ziyād b. ʿIlāqah, Simāk b. Ḥarb, al-ʿAswad b. Qays, ʿIsmāʿil al-Suddī, ʿĀṣim b. Kulayb, Ḥuṣayn b. ʿAbd al-Raḥmān, Maṣṣūr b. al-Muʿtamir, ʿAbū ʿIṣḥāq al-Sabʿī, Muḡīrah b. Miqsam, ʿAbū Mālik al-ʿAṣjaʿī, ʿIbrāhīm b. Muḥājir, Saʿīd b. Masrūq al-Ṭawrī, Yazīd b. ʿabī Ziyād, ʿAbd al-Malik b. ʿUmayr, and Dāwūd al-ʿAwdī. By contrast, only three Wasitians—or people who settled in Wasit—are cited (Yaʿlā b. ʿAṭāʾ, Maṣṣūr b. Zādān, and ʿUmar b. ʿabī Salamah b. ʿAbd al-Raḥmān); two Basrans (Qatādah and Jaʿfar b. ʿIyās); two Meccans (ʿAmr b. Dīnār and ʿAbū al-Zubayr); and one Madinan (Saʿd b. ʿIbrāhīm al-Zuhrī).

⁸⁵¹ See the section ʿAbū ʿAwānah al-Waḍḍāḥ in ch. 2.

‘Abd Allāh b. Ṣafwān said to her: “And what is that?” She said: “There are nine attributes in me that are not in any other woman, except for that which God bestowed upon Maryam bt. ‘Imrān. But by God, I am not saying this [pridefully] [to exalt myself] over any of my companions!” He said to her: “And what are they?” She said: “[1] The angel descended with my image; [2] the Messenger of God married me at seven years; [3] I was led to him as a bride at nine years; [4] he married me as a virgin, without any other man sharing me with him; [5] the revelation used to come to him when he and I were in a single blanket; [6] I was amongst the most-beloved of people to him; [7] a passage from the Quran concerning me was sent down when the community almost perished; [8] I saw Gabriel, and none of his wives saw him except me; and [9] he died in my house when no one was with him except the angel and I.”

The very fact that the marital-age hadith was incorporated into such *faḍā’il* reports as early as the middle of the 8th Century CE automatically proves that ‘Ā’iṣah’s marriage at a young age was regarded as some kind of *faḍīlah* at that time, even if this early use was rapidly eclipsed by the hadith’s subsequent legal use.⁸⁵² The likely reason therefor has already been identified by Denise Spellberg: ‘Ā’iṣah’s marriage at a young age reinforced her status as a virgin at marriage, which in turn constituted one of her major distinctive attributes (in early Islamic society) *vis-à-vis* her fellow wives, which in turn served as a justification for the claim that ‘Ā’iṣah was the Prophet’s favourite wife. As Spellberg notes, ‘Ā’iṣah became—certainly, by the middle of the 8th Century CE—a popular exemplar and symbol for proto-Sunnīs (as both the daughter of ‘Abū Bakr and a wife of the Prophet’s),⁸⁵³ and conversely, a popular villain among proto-Šī‘īs (due to her political opposition towards ‘Alī during the first *fitnah*).⁸⁵⁴ Consequently, retrospective depictions of ‘Ā’iṣah reflected “emerging Sunni and Shi’i concerns about political succession and communal identity,”⁸⁵⁵ and thus served as a vehicle for sectarian polemics: proto-Sunnīs asserted that ‘Ā’iṣah was the Prophet’s favourite woman and ‘Abū Bakr his favourite man, whilst proto-Šī‘īs made analogous assertions about Fāṭimah and ‘Alī.⁸⁵⁶ In this context, ‘Ā’iṣah’s alleged virginity was polemically

⁸⁵² Indeed, so rapidly was this proto-Sunnī association eclipsed that the hadith was transmitted even by some proto-Šī‘ī or “soft Šī‘ī” (*mutaṣayyi’*) tradents early on, such as Sulaymān b. Mihrān al-‘A‘maš (d. 147-148/764-766) [although his transmission is not beyond question], Ja‘far b. Sulaymān (d. 178/794-795), ‘Abd al-Razzāq b. Hammām (d. 211/827), and al-Faḍl b. Dukayn (d. 218-219/833-834). Still, its initial proto-Sunnī use is clearly evidenced and cannot be denied.

⁸⁵³ Spellberg, *Politics, gender, and the Islamic past*, 4-5, 8, 28, 32 ff.

⁸⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 5-6.

⁸⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 28.

⁸⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 32-37. Also see Abbott, *Aishah*, 48-49.

useful as a “special attribute” distinguishing her from the Prophet’s other wives and, to that end, the emphasis on her young marital age served to “reinforce ‘A’isha’s pre-menarcheal status and, implicitly, her virginity.”⁸⁵⁷ This explains the incorporation of the marital-age hadith into proto-Sunnī *faḍā’il* reports about ‘Ā’iṣah, the promulgation of which “reflect a posthumous attempt to present the Prophet’s wife as more than just another wife”.⁸⁵⁸ Moreover, the fact that the relevant pool of *faḍā’il* material is associated above all with Kufah is surely no coincidence: Kufah was the centre of Shi’ism during 7th and 8th Centuries CE,⁸⁵⁹ and thus the region in which proto-Sunnīs had the greatest need to defend ‘Ā’iṣah.⁸⁶⁰

All of this yields a much more plausible motive for Hiṣām’s creation of the marital-age hadith: to bolster the proto-Sunnī defence of ‘Ā’iṣah. This coheres well with Hiṣām’s specific background: as the grand-nephew of ‘Ā’iṣah, Hiṣām was strongly incentivised—not to mentioned well-placed, as an established tradent of ‘Urwah’s stories about ‘Ā’iṣah in general—to create expedient hadiths to augment the proto-Sunnī effort and defend a kinswoman. It also explains why he only created the hadith when he moved to Kufah: Hiṣām was reacting to the polemical pressures of his new environment, the centre of early Shi’ism.

Interestingly, the marital-age hadith is not the only one of Hiṣām’s hadiths that could bolster ‘Ā’iṣah’s status as a virgin at marriage, or that could serve as ammunition for her status as the Prophet’s favourite wife more broadly: Hiṣām is also the ostensible CL for a hadith about ‘Ā’iṣah’s playing with dolls after her marriage (thus reinforcing her youthfulness),⁸⁶¹ and another hadith in which ‘Ā’iṣah’s virginity is directly implied

⁸⁵⁷ Spellberg, *Politics, gender, and the Islamic past*, 39-40. Also see Ali, *Sexual Ethics*, rev. ed., 191: “When the early biographical sources talk about Aishah, they do so in the context of her role in early Muslim history. She was a contentious figure in factional struggles for power, prestige, and legitimacy; stories told about her might denigrate or, as in the hadith sources Sunnis rely on, celebrate her merits, including her purity. The sources link youth, virginity, and purity; it is certainly possible that her youth was exaggerated to strengthen her claims to purity and, therefore, to merit.”

⁸⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 47.

⁸⁵⁹ Shi’ism emerged in Kufah, which was the location of ‘Alī’s *de facto* capital during the first *fitnah*, al-Muktār’s rebellion during the second *fitnah*, Zayd b. ‘Alī’s rebellion during the Marwanid period, ‘Abd Allāh b. Mu‘āwiyah’s rebellion during the third *fitnah*, etc. E.g., see Crone, *Medieval Islamic Political Thought*, 20, 24, 70-71, 99.

⁸⁶⁰ 8th-Century Kufah was also home to a group who accepted only the first two caliphs as legitimate, described in Christopher Melchert, “The Rightly Guided Caliphs: The Range of Views Preserved in Ḥadīth”, in Saud al-Sarhan (ed.), *Political Quietism in Islam: Sunni and Shi’i Practice and Thought* (London, UK: I.B. Tauris, 2019), 64-65. As Melchert pointed out to me, it is plausible that such a group would also have been receptive to upgrading ‘Ā’iṣah’s status.

⁸⁶¹ Juynboll, *Encyclopedia*, 196.

to be a positive distinguishing quality *vis-à-vis* the Prophet's other wives.⁸⁶² The hadith about dolls could also be one of Hišām's Kufan creations,⁸⁶³ but the more overt hadith about 'Ā'īshah's virginity was only transmitted from Hišām by Syrians and Madinans,⁸⁶⁴ which suggests that Hišām was already disseminating this hadith in Madinah. Consequently, Hišām's creation of the marital-age hadith should be understood as an attempt to *bolster* or *reinforce* a claim already expressed in one of his hadiths—this other perhaps ultimately reflecting Zubayrid-era polemics.⁸⁶⁵

In short, a historical-critical analysis of the emergence of the marital-age hadith—an appraisal of the historical and polemical context and early use thereof—reveals that the most plausible reason for its creation is the following: Hišām created the hadith in Kufah in response to proto-Šī'ī polemics against his great-aunt. The hadith served to augment 'Ā'īshah's status as a virgin at marriage, which in turn constituted one of her unique attributes (from the point of view of early Islamic society), which in turn served as a basis for her status as the Prophet's favourite wife. Consequently, as early as Hišām's Kufan contemporary 'Ismā'īl b. 'abī Kālīd, the marital-age hadith was incorporated into proto-Sunnī *faḍā'il* hadiths about 'Ā'īshah, evidently serving as ammunition in the sectarian disputes of 8th-Century Kufah.⁸⁶⁶ This early polemical use of the marital-age hadith was rapidly overshadowed by its legal use, however, and from the turn of the 9th Century CE onward, it became a standard proof in Islamic jurisprudence—at first just in the Šāfi'ī and Ḥanbalī schools, and later in the Mālikī and Ḥanafī schools as well—for the right of fathers to arrange marriages for their virgin and/or prepubescent daughters.

⁸⁶² Buḵārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, II, p. 1064, # 5132; Ibn 'Adī (ed. Sarsāwī), *Kāmil*, VII, p. 576, # 11616; 'Abū Nu'aym (ed. 'Azāzī), *Ma'rafat al-Ṣaḥābah*, part 6, p. 3210, # 7383; Bayhaqī (ed. Turkī), *al-Sunan al-Kubrā*, XIV, pp. 8-9, # 13601.

⁸⁶³ The overwhelming majority of the transmitters from Hišām are Kufan or (to a lesser extent) Basran, but there are one or two transmitters who appear to be unambiguously-Madinan—namely: 'Abd al-Raḥmān b. 'Abd Allāh; 'Abd al-'Azīz b. Muḥammad; and 'Anas b. 'Iyād. The precise way in which this hadith fits into the picture with the marital-age hadith will have to await future research.

⁸⁶⁴ Namely, by Sulaymān b. Bilāl and a string of Madinan tradents, on the one hand, and 'Imrān b. 'abī al-Faḍl and a string of Syrian tradents, on the other.

⁸⁶⁵ See the discussion and references given at the beginning of the present chapter.

⁸⁶⁶ Interestingly, according to Henri Lammens, 'Fāṭima', in Martijn T. Houtsma, Arent J. Wensinck, Thomas W. Arnold, Willi Heffening, & Évariste Lévi-Provençal (eds.), *The Encyclopaedia of Islām: A Dictionary of the Geography, Ethnography and Biography of the Muhammadan Peoples, Volume II: E—K* (Leiden, the Netherlands: E. J. Brill Ltd., 1927), 85, col. 1, the spread of the marital-age hadith prompted some Šī'īs to assert that Fāṭimah had been married at age nine as well, although this could be an independent development; see below.

A Historical-Critical Analysis of the Origins of the Marital-Age Hadith's Specific Content

All of this leaves us with a final question: why did Hišām choose the ages of “six or seven” for ‘Ā’iṣah’s marital engagement and “nine” for her marital consummation? After all, any early age would have sufficed for his purposes (to highlight her virginal status at marriage): why those ages in particular; why a distinction between the marital engagement and consummation; and why the vagueness over the former in particular? Part of the answer seems to lie in an aspect of the chronology of the Prophet’s life that was already established as early as al-Zuhrī, to whom the following report can be plausibly traced:

The Messenger of God married ‘Ā’iṣah bt. ‘abī Bakr during Šawwāl, in the tenth year of the Prophethood, three years before the Hijrah; and he arranged her wedding feast [in Madinah], during Šawwāl, at the beginning of eight⁸⁶⁷ months after [his] emigration [to Madinah].⁸⁶⁸

In other words, in the biographical material that was circulating in Madinah during the early-to-mid 8th Century CE, it was already believed that there was an approximately three-year delay between ‘Ā’iṣah’s marital engagement and consummation. Thus, if any given age was stipulated or inputted for either event, this pre-established *relative chronology* would automatically generate a corresponding age—an *absolute chronology*—for the other event as well. However, given the slight vagueness in this relative chronology (i.e., the lack of precise dates or an exact number of months overall), the automatically-generated age would necessarily be approximate. We thus have a straightforward explanation for both the distinction between ‘Ā’iṣah’s marital engagement and consummation and the vagueness of the age given for the former within Hišām’s original hadith: the hadith’s starting point was the stipulation that ‘Ā’iṣah’s marital consummation occurred at age nine, which automatically entailed the vague “six or seven” for her marital engagement. In short, by stipulating that ‘Ā’iṣah’s

⁸⁶⁷ Or possibly “eighteen”, per a transmission from al-Zubayr b. Bakkār; however, given that most other (albeit unsourced) iterations of this material have “eight”, this seems preferable.

⁸⁶⁸ See the sections on al-Zuhrī and ‘Amrah in Chapter 2 of the present work.

marital consummation occurred at nine and by taking into account a relative chronology that was already established amongst the biographical authorities of his Madinan hometown, Hišām created the marital-age hadith.

This leaves a final question: why did Hišām choose “nine” for ‘Ā’iṣah’s age at her marital consummation? We will probably never know for sure, and to a certain extent, it was arbitrary: twelve-to-fourteen was the usual minimum age of marriage in ancient societies,⁸⁶⁹ so any age up to that point would have sufficed to assure a listener or reader that ‘Ā’iṣah’s marriage was indeed consummated when she was still a virgin (i.e., that she had never been consummated in any marriage previously). That said, there are several interesting potential sources of inspiration that can be adduced for Hišām’s choosing of “nine” in particular. To begin with, there is some evidence that girls in the Hijaz would reach menarche at the age of nine during the first few Islamic centuries, and thus, that they could—and would—be married at that age. Thus, al-Bayhaqī recorded the following from al-Šāfi‘ī, who grew up in the Hijaz during the mid-to-late 8th Century CE:

Amongst that which ‘Abū ‘Abd Allāh al-Ḥāfiẓ [al-Ḥākim al-Naysābūrī] authorised me to transmit from him [is the following]: from him, from ‘Abū al-‘Abbās al-‘Ašamm, from al-Rabī‘, from al-Šāfi‘ī, who said: “The earliest women to menstruate of whom I have heard (*‘a’jal man sami‘tu bi-hi min al-nisā’ yaḥiḍna*) are the women of Tihāmah [i.e., coastal Hijaz]. They menstruate at nine years.”⁸⁷⁰

To this can be added the following legal maxim disseminated by the Syrian CL Sulaymān b. ‘Abd al-Raḥmān al-Dimašqī (fl. 9th C. CE), citing a Syro-Basran SS back to the Prophet:

‘Abd al-Malik b. Mihrān [al-Dimašqī] related to us: “Sahl b. ‘Aslam al-‘Adawī [al-Baṣrī] related to us: “Mu‘āwiyah b. Qurrah [al-Baṣrī] related to us—he said: “I heard Ibn ‘Umar say: “The Messenger of God said: “When a girl reaches nine years of age (*‘idā ‘atā ‘alā al-jāriyah tis‘ sinīn*), she is a woman (*fa-hiya imra’ah*).””””⁸⁷¹

⁸⁶⁹ See Chapter 6 of the present work.

⁸⁷⁰ Bayhaqī (ed. Turkī), *al-Sunan al-Kubrā*, II, p. 432, # 1547.

⁸⁷¹ Synthesised from ‘Abū Nu‘aym (ed. Ḥasan), *Ta’rīk ‘Aṣbahān*, II, p. 243, and Ibn ‘Asākir (ed. ‘Amrawī), *Ta’rīk Madīnat Dimašq*, XXXVII, p. 174.

This very same maxim is also attributed to none other than ‘Ā’iṣah, usually without an *’isnād*,⁸⁷² but with an *’isnād*—a Kufo-Mesopotamian SS—in at least one instance, recorded in the *Masā’il* of Ḥarb b. ’Ismā’īl al-Kirmānī:

’Iṣḥāq [b. Rāhwayh] related to us—he said: “Zakariyyā’ b. ‘Adī [al-Kūfī] informed us, from ’Abū al-Malīḥ [al-Raqqī], from Ḥabīb b. ’abī Marzūq [al-Raqqī], from ‘Ā’iṣah, who said: “When a girl reaches nine (*’idā balaġat al-jāriyah tis’an*), she is a woman (*fa-hiya imra’ah*).””⁸⁷³

Although this legal maxim is less direct than the statement from al-Šāfi’ī, the plausible intended meaning is spelled out by al-Bayhaqī: “She means (and God knows best): She has menstruated (*fa-ḥāḍat*), so she is a woman (*fa-hiya imra’ah*).”⁸⁷⁴ Taken together, all of this could be interpreted as evidence—directly and indirectly—that Hijazian girls would usually reach menarche at age nine during the 7th and 8th Centuries CE, which could have served in turn as the inspiration for the marital-age hadith. In other words, it is possible that Hišām simply drew upon the traditional minimum age of marital consummation in his native Hijaz in the construction of his hadith.

There are several problems with such a historical reconstruction, however. Firstly, the ascriptions unto the Prophet and ‘Ā’iṣah are isolated SS transmissions, which cannot be positively traced back to their alleged sources, which means that they cannot be established as early. Secondly, the Prophetical version of the legal maxim is plausibly a secondary raising thereof, in comparison to the version ascribed to ‘Ā’iṣah. Thirdly, the direction of causation could easily be reversed here, with the legal maxim and al-Šāfi’ī’s statement about Hijazian girls both actually deriving from (i.e., having been extrapolated from) the marital-age hadith (of which al-Šāfi’ī was a transmitter). Fourthly, nine as the average age of menarche in the early Hijaz seems rather low in comparison to the global historical average (twelve-to-fourteen) and is thus questionable,⁸⁷⁵ raising the possibility that these particular reports reflect later *legal*

⁸⁷² E.g., Muḥammad b. ‘Īsā al-Tirmidī (ed. ’Ibrāhīm ‘Aṭwah ‘Iwaḍ), *al-Jāmi‘ al-Ṣaḥīḥ*, vol. 3 (Cairo, Egypt: Maṭba‘at Muṣṭafā al-Bābī al-Ḥalabī, 1975), p. 409, # 1109, and Bayhaqī (ed. Turkī), *al-Sunan al-Kubrā*, II, p. 433.

⁸⁷³ Ḥarb b. ’Ismā’īl al-Kirmānī (ed. Muḥammad b. ‘Abd Allāh al-Surayyī), *Masā’il* (Beirut, Lebanon: Mu’assasat al-Rayyān, 2013), p. 587, # 1289.

⁸⁷⁴ Bayhaqī (ed. Turkī), *al-Sunan al-Kubrā*, II, p. 433.

⁸⁷⁵ This lower age is especially suspect given the relatively harsher conditions of pre-Islamic Hijaz, which would predictably *delay* the onset of menarche and puberty more broadly. See Chapter 6 of the present work.

ideals rather than historical realities. Fifthly, these reports are somewhat in tension with another series of reports from various early sources that seem to embody surprise at the occurrence of menarche and marital consummation at age nine:

- According to a transmission from al-Šāfi‘ī (d. 204/820), he reported: “In Ṣan‘ā’, I saw a grandmother [who was] a girl of twenty-one years: she menstruated as a girl of nine and gave birth as a girl of ten, and [her] daughter [likewise] menstruated as a girl of nine and gave birth as a girl of ten.”⁸⁷⁶
- According to a transmission from the Kufan jurist al-Ḥasan b. Ḥayy (d. 169/785-786), he reported: “I know of a neighbour of ours who became a grandmother as a girl of twenty-one years.”⁸⁷⁷
- According to al-Sarakṣī, the Khurasanian proto-Ḥanafī jurist ‘Abū Muṭī‘ al-Ḥakam b. ‘Abd Allāh al-Balkī (d. 199/815) “had a daughter who became a grandmother when she was a girl of nineteen years, such that he said: “This girl has put us to shame!”⁸⁷⁸
- According to a transmission from the Basran traditionist ‘Abbād b. ‘Abbād al-Muhallabī (d. 181/797), he reported: “I encountered amongst us—meaning, the Mahālibah—a woman who became a grandmother when she was a girl of eighteen years: she gave birth to a girl at nine years, and then her daughter [in turn] gave birth at nine years. Thus, she became a grandmother when she was a girl of eighteen years.”⁸⁷⁹

Of course, the veracity of these various ascriptions could also be questioned (especially given that most are isolated transmissions), but the key point is this: the very fact that various figures—whether those cited in the reports or later tradents—deemed such occurrences worth remarking upon indicates that they were remarkable in the first place, which is in turn consistent with their being rare occurrences. In other words, these reports read as expressions of surprise or amazement, which undermines the notion that such occurrences were common in the early Hijaz. If girls in the Islamic

⁸⁷⁶ Bayhaqī (ed. Turkī), *al-Sunan al-Kubrā*, II, pp. 432-433, # 1548.

⁸⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 433.

⁸⁷⁸ Sarakṣī, *Mabṣūt*, III, p. 149.

⁸⁷⁹ ‘Alī b. ‘Umar al-Dāraqutnī (ed. ‘Ādil ‘Aḥmad ‘Abd al-Mawjūd & ‘Alī Muḥammad Mu‘awwad) *Sunan*, vol. 3 (Beirut, Lebanon: Dār al-Ma‘rifah, 2001), p. 252, # 382/286.

heartland of Hijaz ordinarily reached menarche—and thus frequently consummated marriage—at age nine, why would there be so many reports expressing surprise or amazement at instances—even successive instances—of marital consummations and consequent births at or around age nine? If the previously-cited reports (from al-Šāfi‘ī, ‘Ā’iṣah, and Prophet) were accurate, this sort of thing should have been a familiar occurrence to early Muslims.⁸⁸⁰ All of this undermines the notion that girls in the early Hijaz would usually reach menarche at age nine, which militates against its having inspired the marital-age hadith.

A second potential source of inspiration for the specific content of the marital-age hadith is the legal and religious traditions of the Sasanid Persian Empire, in which “nine” appears as an ideal age for marriage.⁸⁸¹ Thus, according to Touraj Daryaee (summarising marriage-related material in “Zoroastrian Middle Persian texts”):

Once a girl reached the age of nine it was believed that she had to be married, and a boy when he was fifteen. This was the ideal age for humans, and at the end of the world they would dwell in heaven at the same age.⁸⁸²

Meanwhile, according to Baugh:

Although investigation into Sasanian-era (224–651 CE) child marriage practices unearths scant information, the age of twelve is again important for girls. According to the Avesta, the age of majority was clearly set at fifteen for boys as well as girls; **Middle Persian civil law allowed marriage at age nine**, provided that consummation wait until age twelve. In the case of physical maturity, **one juristic opinion suggests the marriage can be consummated at the age of nine years for the girl**. Under this system, if she reached the age of fifteen and refused marriage, “she had committed a capital sin,” while if her father or guardian failed to arrange a marriage for her at that age, he too had sinned.⁸⁸³

Moreover, as it happens, the Sasanid Empire encompassed Iraq, even locating its capital at Ctesiphon, extremely close to Kufah. Thus, in the very region where Hišām seems to have created and disseminated a hadith depicting ‘Ā’iṣah as having been

⁸⁸⁰ I owe thanks to Jonathan A. C. Brown for this interpretation of such reports.

⁸⁸¹ This connection has already been made by Amin, as noted in the Introduction to the present work.

⁸⁸² Daryaee, *Sasanian Persia*, 60. Emphasis mine.

⁸⁸³ Baugh, *Minor Marriage*, 28–29. Emphasis mine.

consummated in marriage at age nine, there recently predominated an empire in which the dominant religious and legal traditions contained ideals or prescriptions for marriage or marital consummation at age nine (even if this was a minority position therein). It is thus entirely possible that Hišām was influenced by some kind of lingering Zoroastrian or Persian tradition in Iraq in his choice of nine for the marital-age hadith. However, the *means* or *mechanism* of cultural transmission that would be required here are not ideal for this hypothesis: Hišām did not have recent Persian heritage and did not grow up in a directly post-Sasanid environment, so the most obvious transmission channels would appear to be absent. Still, it is easy enough to imagine Hišām encountering this marital ideal amongst the Muslims of Iraq (many of whom married Persians or were themselves *mawālī*) and incorporating it in a hadith that he sought to disseminate amongst them.

A third potential source of inspiration was none other than the community to whom Hišām was responding: the proto-Šīʿīs of Kufah. The extant Twelver Hadith collections and legal works are replete with transmissions—almost always via Kufan tradents—from their imams on the subject of marriage or sex with girls at age nine, and although these sources are certainly much later, a preliminary ICMA would suggest that at least some redactions of this material can be traced back to figures operating in the middle of the 8th Century CE. Thus, the following can be tentatively traced all the way back—via a network of Kufan tradents—to the proto-Šīʿī imam Muḥammad b. ʿAlī al-Bāqir (d. 114/732-733 or 117/735):

[A man should] not cohabit with a girl until she has reached nine years or ten years [of age] (*lā yadḡulu bi-al-jāriyah ḥattā yaʿtiya la-hā tisʿ sinīn ʿaw ʿašr sinīn*).⁸⁸⁴

One version (again, transmitted by Kufans) even ascribes this position—albeit narrowing the age range down to ten—all the way back to ʿAlī b. ʿabī Ṭālib (d. 40/661), although this is certainly secondary (i.e., interpolated, elaborated, and raised) vis-à-vis the other versions:

⁸⁸⁴ Muḥammad b. Yaʿqūb al-Kulaynī, *Furūʿ al-Kāfī*, vol. 5 (Beirut, Lebanon: Manšūrāt al-Fajr, 2007), p. 240; *ibid.*, VII, p. 45; Muḥammad b. al-Ḥasan al-Ṭūsī (ed. ʿAlī ʿAkbar al-Ġaffārī), *Tahḏīb al-ʾAḥkām fī Šarḥ al-Muqniʿah*, vol. 7 (Tehran, Iran: Dār al-Kutub al-ʾIslāmiyyah, 1386 Š.), p. 473; Muḥammad b. ʿAlī b. Bābawayh al-Šadūq (ed. ʿAlī ʿAkbar al-Ġaffārī), *Kitāb al-Ḳiṣāl*, vol. 2 (1983), p. 420; Muḥammad Bāqir al-Majlisī, *Biḥār al-ʾAnwār*, vol. 100 (Beirut, Lebanon: Muʾassasat al-Wafāʾ, 1983), p. 328.

[It was transmitted] from him [i.e., Muḥammad b. 'abī Kālid], from Muḥammad b. Yaḥyá [a Kufan], from Ġiyāt b. 'Ibrāhīm [a Kufan], from Ja'far [al-Šādiq], from his father [al-Bāqir], from 'Alī [b. 'abī Ṭālib], who said: "A girl [should] not be sexually penetrated [by a man] at less than ten years [of age] (*lā tūṭa'u jāriyah li-'aqall min 'ašr sinīn*). If he does that and she is damaged [thereby], he will be liable [therefor] (*fa-'in fa'ala fa-'ibat fa-qad ḍamina*)."⁸⁸⁵

By contrast, in a similarly-raised version (again, unto 'Alī), the age range has instead been narrowed down to nine:

[It was transmitted] from him [i.e., Muḥammad b. 'abī Kālid], from Muḥammad b. Yaḥyá [a Kufan], from Ṭalḥah b. Zayd, from Ja'far [al-Šādiq], from his father [al-Bāqir], from 'Alī [b. 'abī Ṭālib], who said: "Whoever marries a virgin and then consummates the marriage with her [when her age is] less than nine years (*man tazawwaja bikran fa-daḡala bi-hā fi 'aqall min tis' sinīn*), [in such a way that] she is damaged [thereby] (*fa-'ibat*), is liable [therefor] (*ḍamina*)."⁸⁸⁶

Likewise, a series of (again, mostly Kufan) transmissions from the proto-Šī'ī imam Ja'far b. Muḥammad al-Šādiq (Madinan, d. 148/765) narrow this age range down to nine, as in the following:

- "Whoever has sex with his wife before [she has reached the age of] nine years (*man waṭi'a imra'ata-hu qabla tis' sinīn*) [in such a way that] she is damaged [thereby] (*fa-'ašāba-hā 'ayb*) is liable [therefor] (*fa-huwa ḍāmin*)."⁸⁸⁷
- "If a man marries a girl when she is prepubescent (*'idā tazawwaja al-rajul al-jāriyah wa-hiya ṣaḡīrah*), he [should] not consummate the marriage with her until she reaches nine years [of age] (*fa-lā yadḡulu bi-hā ḡattá ya'tiya la-hā tis' sinīn*)."⁸⁸⁸
- "If a man proposes marriage to a girl (*'idā kaṭaba al-rajul al-mar'ah*) and then consummates the marriage with her before she has reached nine years [of age] (*fa-daḡala bi-hā qabla 'an tabluḡa tis' sinīn*), they are to be separated (*furriqa*)

⁸⁸⁵ Ṭūsī (ed. Ġaffārī), *Tahḏīb al-'Aḥkām*, VII, p. 473.

⁸⁸⁶ *Ibid.*

⁸⁸⁷ *Ibid.*; Ṣadūq (ed. Ġaffārī), *Kiṣāl*, II, pp. 420-421.

⁸⁸⁸ Kulaynī, *Furū' al-Kāfi*, V, p. 240.

bayna-humā), and she will never be lawful for him ever again (*wa-lam taḥilla la-hu 'abad^{an}*).”⁸⁸⁹

Finally, in another clear instance of secondary reworking, a version of one of these reports was even raised all the way back to the Prophet:

[It was transmitted] from him [i.e., Ḥumayd b. Ziyād, a Kufan], from Zakariyyā' al-Mu'min—or, possibly, there was a tradent between him [i.e., Ḥumayd] and between him [i.e., Zakariyyā']; I only know what he [i.e., Ḥumayd] related to me—from 'Ammār al-Sijistānī, who said: “I heard 'Abū 'Abd Allāh [Ja'far al-Ṣādiq] say to a *mawlā* of his: “Go and tell the *qāḍī*: “The Messenger of God said: “The [earliest] point [at which] a woman [can be] consummated in marriage by her husband is as a girl of nine years (*ḥadd al-mar'ah 'an yadḡula bi-hā 'alā zawji-hā ibnat tis' sinīn*).”””⁸⁹⁰

Of course, all of this is traced back to figures—the proto-Šī'ī imams—who primarily lived in Madinah; but, as has been noted already, practically all of these reports and ideas were disseminated and transmitted amongst the proto-Šī'īs of Kufah during the 8th Century CE. In other words, the very community to whom Hišām was plausibly responding with his hadith about 'Ā'īshah's marital consummation at age nine appear to have already been adhering to or promulgating legal traditions and ideals about “nine” (or in some cases, “nine or ten”) as the minimum age of marital consummation for girls, seemingly independently of any 'Ā'īshah precedent. Once again, we have a clear potential source of inspiration for Hišām's hadith: he was simply using the doctrines or ideals of the proto-Šī'īs of Kufah against them.⁸⁹¹

A fourth potential source of inspiration comes from the biography of Hišām himself. According to a report recorded by al-'Uqaylī, Hišām married his wife, Fāṭimah bt. al-Munḡir, when she was a girl of nine years:

Al-Faḡl b. Ja'far related to me: “‘Abd al-Malik b. Muḡammad related to us: “Sulaymān b. Dāwūd related to me: “Yaḡyā b. Sa'īd al-Qaṭṭān said to me: “I testify that Muḡammad b. 'Ishāq is a liar.”” He [i.e., Sulaymān] said: “I said:

⁸⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 258

⁸⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 240.

⁸⁹¹ Of course, if the marital-age hadith were genuine, it would be reasonable to suppose that this proto-Šī'ī doctrine ultimately originated with the historical precedent it records; on such a view, it would further be plausible to suppose that the imams omitted mention of this precedent simply due to their animosity towards 'Ā'īshah. However, since we have strong reasons to doubt the historicity and even early provenance of the marital-age hadith, the direction of influence can actually be reversed.

“And how do you know that?” He said: “Wuhayb b. Ḳālīd said [it] to me.” So, I said to Wuhayb: “How do you know that?” He said: “Mālīk b. ‘Anas said [it] to me.” So, I said to Mālīk b. ‘Anas: “How do you know that?” He said: “Hišām b. ‘Urwah said [it] to me.”” He [i.e., Sulaymān] said: “I said to Hišām b. ‘Urwah: “And how do you know that?” He said: “He [purportedly] related [hadiths] from my wife, Fāṭimah bt. al-Munḍir. [However,] we consummated our marriage when she was a girl of nine years (*daḳalat ‘alayya wa-hiya bint tis‘ sinīn*), and he has never seen her [since that time, nor will he ever see her] until she meets God.”””⁸⁹²

If this report is true, it is entirely plausible that Hišām modelled the marital-age hadith upon his own direct experience: since his own marriage was consummated with a bride who was nine, he simply drew upon this when creating a statement emphasising ‘Ā’iṣah’s young age at the time of her marriage to the Prophet.⁸⁹³ That said, the veracity of this report—including the specific claim of Fāṭimah’s age at the time of her marital consummation—has been contested, as in the following from al-Ḳaṭīb al-Baḡdādī:

This is a false story (*ḥikāyah bāṭilah*). Sulaymān al-Šāḍakūnī was not reliable (*laysa bi-ṭiqah*). Fāṭimah was only taken to Hišām [as a bride] when she was a girl of twenty and some years. Indeed, she was older than him by about nine years.⁸⁹⁴

Still, the possibility remains that the first report—about Hišām’s consummating his marriage with Fāṭimah when she was nine—is genuine, and further, that Hišām drew upon this personal experience in his creation of the marital-age hadith. That said, it is equally possible that the direction of influence is the reverse, and that this story of Hišām’s marriage was instead modelled upon the hadith in question.

In short, there are at least four possible sources of inspiration for Hišām’s choice of nine as ‘Ā’iṣah’s age of marital consummation: he may have drawn upon the traditional minimum age of marriage in his native Hijaz (although this is highly questionable); he may have drawn upon an old Sasanid tradition or ideal about marital consummation at age nine, lingering amongst his interlocutors or audience in Iraq; he may have polemically drawn upon the common doctrine of his proto-Šī‘ī foes in Kufah

⁸⁹² ‘Uqaylī (ed. Sarsāwī), *Ḍu‘afā’*, V, pp. 193-194.

⁸⁹³ Again, if the marital-age hadith were genuine, it would be reasonable to suppose that Hišām’s marriage to his own wife was influenced thereby; but again, given all that we have covered, the direction of influence can be reversed.

⁸⁹⁴ Ḳaṭīb (ed. Ma‘rūf), *Ta’rīḳ Madīnat al-Salām*, IV, p. 193.

concerning nine as the minimum age of marital consummation, using it against them in his depiction of ‘Ā’iṣah’s young age at marriage; and he may simply have drawn upon his own experience of marrying a girl nine years of age (although this biographical datum is heavily contested). And, of course, these four possibilities are not mutually exclusive—several or even all could have been at play simultaneously. We thus have ample explanations for Hiṣām’s choice of nine as ‘Ā’iṣah’s age of marital consummation, which, in conjunction with an established relative chronology of ‘Ā’iṣah’s marriage, can further explain the origins of all of the specific content of Hiṣām’s hadith.

Conclusion

The preceding chapter’s ICMA allowed us to narrow down the marital-age hadith-tradition to a series of CLs ranging from the middle of the 8th Century CE to the middle of the 9th Century CE, whilst eliminating virtually every other version as a probable or definite dive. The present chapter took these results as its starting point and applied thereto a number of further analyses:

- **Dating by Ascription Type:** a comparison of the levels of ascription of the reconstructed CL redactions revealed that some only claim to derive from Followers, whilst others claim to reach all the way back to Companions. Based on the Criterion of Dissimilarity (in conjunction with established background knowledge on early Hadith culture), the Follower ascriptions are likely more archaic than the Companion ascriptions, which makes the latter versions of the marital-age hadith seem like secondary developments in general.
- **Form Criticism:** a comparison of the CL redactions and other versions of the marital-age hadith revealed a common form, which implies that the tradition as a whole derives from a single ur-story. The most viable candidate for (an accurate reflection of) such an ur-story turned out to be the redaction of Hiṣām b. ‘Urwah, since his particular wording can explain the rise the variants in the cores of virtually all extant versions of the marital-age hadith.

- **Form Criticism and *'Isnāds*:** the common form's entailment of a common source also contradicts many of the relevant *'isnāds*, which depict said common form as the utterance of various different early figures, even in completely different regions. This contradiction holds true not just for particular elemental combinations within the marital-age hadith-tradition, but for the fundamental elemental combination as well. This implies that most of the relevant *'isnāds* are false or at least misleading, since they fail to disclose their common sources. This is consistent with most of the relevant versions of the marital-age hadith's being dives.
- **Geography and Arguments from Silence: The Evidence of the *'Isnāds*:** a geographical analysis of the relevant tradents reveals that all of the earliest CLs were Iraqi (especially Kufan), except for two Madinans who just so happened to have moved to Iraq. Moreover, all of the credible transmitters from these two Madinans were Iraqi (especially Kufan), except for a Madinan who just so happens to have moved to Iraq, who in turn transmitted to another Madinan who just so happens to have moved to Iraq. All of this is consistent with the marital-age hadith's having originated in Iraq (in particular, in Kufah), and unexpected on the view that it derives from early, major figures in Madinah.
- **Geography and Arguments from Silence: The Evidence of the Earliest Madinan Collections:** the marital-age hadith is completely absent from all of the earliest Madinan legal collections and biographies of the Prophet, despite the prominence and abundance of the alleged Madinan sources of the hadith in such works, and despite the hadith's utility for the composers thereof. This is consistent with the marital-age hadith's having originated in Iraq, and unexpected on the view that it derives from early, major figures in Madinah.
- **Geography and Arguments from Silence: The Evidence of the Earliest Kufan Collections:** certain versions of the marital-age hadith are absent from the earliest Kufan legal collections, despite the prominence and abundance of the alleged Kufan sources of the relevant hadiths in such works, and despite the hadith's utility for the composers thereof. This is consistent with the marital-age hadith's having originated amongst the traditionists and Hadith-oriented jurists of mid-8th-Century Iraq in particular (as distinct from the mainstream,

rationalist-inclined jurists of Kufah), and unexpected on the view that it derives from early, major figures in Kufah.

- **Interim Summary and Entailments: Hišām as the Originator of the Marital-Age Hadith:** most of the evidence points to Kufah in the middle of the 8th Century CE, and Hišām in particular, as the starting point of the marital-age hadith. Although it is possible that Hišām borrowed the content of the hadith from an obscure Iraqi contemporary, it is simpler to suppose that he formulated it *ex nihilo*.
- **A Historical-Critical Analysis of the Marital-Age Hadith's Context:** Hišām was remembered as having falsely or misleadingly ascribed reports to his father when he moved to Iraq, which is at least broadly consistent with his having created the marital-age hadith in Kufah. Based on the relevant historical and polemical context and the earliest discernible use of the marital-age hadith, it was most likely created by Hišām to bolster ‘Ā’iṣah’s unique status as a virgin at marriage (which in turn bolstered her claim to being the Prophet’s favourite wife), in response to the hostile, Šī‘ī-dominated environment of Kufah in the middle of the 8th Century CE.
- **A Historical-Critical Analysis of the Origins of the Marital-Age Hadith's Specific Content:** in creating his hadith, Hišām was likely influenced by an established relative chronology of the Prophet’s marriage to ‘Ā’iṣah, and may also have drawn upon the traditional minimum age of marriage in his native Hijaz, a lingering Sasanid tradition or ideal in Iraq, the legal doctrine of the proto-Šī‘īs of Kufah, and/or his own personal marital experience.

In short, the best explanation for the evidence overall—the hypothesis that explains or is consistent with *all of the evidence together*—is that Hišām b. ‘Urwah created the marital-age hadith when he moved to Kufah in the early Abbasid period (specifically, between 754 and 765 CE), as a response to his new polemical environment. The hadith rapidly spread and diversified amongst Hišām’s contemporaries and students in Iraq and thereby acquired several independent *’isnāds*, whilst also gaining currency amongst both proto-Sunnī propagandists and Hadith-oriented jurists. In time, the hadith even gained local dives in other provinces, although the original source thereof remained clearly visible: even within the extant forest of *’isnāds* supporting the

marital-age hadith as a whole, Hišām—the most frequently or densely cited source thereof—towers over the rest as a veritable super-CL.

Chapter 4: The Spread and Diversification of the Hadith of ‘Ā’iṣah’s Marital Age

Having thus argued that the hadith of ‘Ā’iṣah’s marital age originated with Hišām b. ‘Urwah in Kufah at the beginning of the Abbasid period, we are now in a position to provide an overarching summary of its spread and diversification therefrom. This is in effect a restatement of the conclusions reached in the preceding two chapters of the present work, but presented in a more straightforward chronological and geographical order, with some implications spelled out more clearly, in such a way as to account, directly or indirectly, for all of the extant manifestations of the marital-age hadith.

Origin and Growth in Iraq

When the prominent Madinan traditionist Hišām b. ‘Urwah (d. 146-147/763-765) moved to Kufah (or to al-Hāšimiyyah, the nearby provisional capital of the Abbasids) during the reign of the Abbasid caliph al-Manṣūr (754-775 CE), he became known for certain forms of false ascription or omission in citing sources (*’irsāl* and *tadlīs*). Thereafter, probably in response to proto-Šī‘ī polemics against ‘Ā’iṣah in particular, he began to disseminate a short report about ‘Ā’iṣah’s marriage to the Prophet at a young age: the marriage was contracted when she was six or seven and consummated when she was nine. He initially only ascribed this report to his father, but over the course of successive retellings, he also explicitly ascribed it all the way back to ‘Ā’iṣah herself. He also updated the content of the report, at times adding a statement about how long ‘Ā’iṣah and the Prophet lived together, and at other times developing an elaborate narrative, from ‘Ā’iṣah’s own perspective, about her circumstances on the day of her marital consummation. Much of this content also made its way into a letter he transmitted from—or ascribed to—his father. Hišām disseminated all of these different iterations of his hadith to numerous Kufan and Basran students, many of whom went on to become the leading traditionists of Iraq in the late 8th Century CE. Most of these traditionists at least reworded what they had received, and some—such

as 'Abū 'Usāmah, Ibn 'abī al-Zinād, Ḥammād b. Salamah, and 'Alī b. Mushir—incorporated additional elements into their versions, often derived from Hišām's other hadiths. Such insertions or additions also sometimes occurred amongst the students of Hišām's students, many of whom also raised their versions (transforming an ascription to 'Urwah into an ascription via 'Urwah to 'Ā'īṣah).

Three of Hišām's Iraqi contemporaries borrowed or incorporated his hadith into their own formulations. To begin with, the Kufan proto-Sunnī propagandist 'Ismā'īl b. 'abī Kālid (d. 146/763-764) incorporated the simple version of Hišām's hadith into his iteration of a common pool of *faḍā'il* material about 'Ā'īṣah that was circulating in Kufah in the 8th Century CE, which he ascribed via 'Abd al-Raḥmān b. 'abī al-Ḍaḥḥāk (a definite *majhūl*) to 'Abd al-Raḥmān b. Muḥammad b. Zayd b. Jud'ān (a near-*majhūl*). 'Ismā'īl disseminated this hadith to multiple Kufan and Wasitian students and, in the process, his original ascription was variously altered and improved, usually being raised back to 'Ā'īṣah herself in one way or another.

At the same time, Muḥammad b. 'Amr (d. 144-145/761-763), a fellow Madinan emigrant to Iraq, incorporated the elaborate version of Hišām's hadith practically wholesale into a longer, synthetic narrative about 'Ā'īṣah and Sawdah's marriages to the Prophet, combining it with several other relevant narratives that seem to have been circulating in Madinah already. Muḥammad ascribed this synthetic narrative to his Madinan masters Yaḥyá and 'Abū Salamah and disseminated it to various Iraqi students, mostly Kufans.

Meanwhile, Sulaymān al-'A'maš (d. 147-148/764-766), one of the leading traditionists of Kufah in the middle of the 8th Century CE, but also a "deceiver" (*mudallis*) who was accused of corrupting ('*afsada*) the Hadith of Kufah,⁸⁹⁵ borrowed a version of the hadith, which he (or some now-suppressed intermediary) altered in a fundamental way: instead of 'Ā'īṣah's marriage being contracted at six or seven and consummated at nine, 'Ā'īṣah's marriage is simply stated as occurring at age nine, thereby conflating or compressing Hišām's original. To this, al-'A'maš added a statement about how long 'Ā'īṣah and the Prophet lived together, or her age at the time of his death. Al-'A'maš ascribed this hadith via the leading Kufan Followers 'Ibrāhīm al-Naḳa'ī and al-'Aswad b. Yazīd back to 'Ā'īṣah and transmitted it to several Kufan

⁸⁹⁵ Ibn Ḥibbān (ed. Šākir), *Ṣaḥīḥ*, I, p. 116; 'Abū al-Qāsim (ed. Ḥusaynī), *Qabūl al-'Aḳbār*, I, pp. 275-276, 249-250; *ibid.*, II, p. 402.

students, the most prolific of whom was 'Abū Mu'āwiyah al-Ḍarīr (d. 194-195/809-811).

A generation later, 'Isrā'īl b. Yūnus (d. 160-162/776-779), a notable Kufan traditionist who was nevertheless regarded by some as “not strong” (*laysa bi-al-qawīyy*) and even “weak” (*ḍa'īf*),⁸⁹⁶ seems to have combined the simple version of Hišām's hadith and half of al-'A'maš's version. 'Isrā'īl ascribed this synthetic hadith via his grandfather, the eminent Kufan traditionist 'Abū 'Ishāq al-Sabī'ī, to the notable Kufan Follower 'Abū 'Ubaydah, and possibly also the Madīno-Kufan Follower Muṣ'ab b. Sa'd. 'Isrā'īl transmitted this hadith to multiple Iraqi students, some of whom variously raised it back to 'Abd Allāh b. Mas'ūd (i.e., 'Abū 'Ubaydah's father) and 'Ā'īshah, and one of whom (probably al-Wāqidī, an infamous “fabricator” or *kaḍḍāb*) replaced the original 'Abū 'Ishāq—'Abū 'Ubaydah *isnād* with al-'A'maš—Ibrāhīm—al-'Aswad—'Ā'īshah.

The marital-age hadith may also have been cited in a legal opinion by the Kufan Zaydī theologian and traditionist al-Ḥasan b. Ḥayy (d. 169/785-786), although this cannot be confirmed.

Meanwhile, the Basran traditionist 'Abū 'Awānah al-Waḍḍāḥ (d. 176/792) ascribed another iteration of the aforementioned Kufan *faḍā'il* material via the Kufan *qāḍī* 'Abd al-Malik b. 'Umayr back to 'Ā'īshah, which he transmitted to his students in Basrah.

At around the same time, the Kufan traditionist 'Abṭar b. al-Qāsim (d. 178/794-795) borrowed al-'A'maš's distinctive version of the marital-age hadith and ascribed it, via his Kufan master Muṭarrif b. Ṭarīf, to the same sources cited by 'Isrā'īl and his students: 'Abū 'Ishāq—'Abū 'Ubaydah—'Ā'īshah. 'Abṭar may thus have combined al-'A'maš's *matn* with 'Isrā'īl's *isnād*, although it is equally possible that 'Isrā'īl and 'Abṭar simply created their ascriptions independently, given that the “'Abū 'Ishāq—'Abū 'Ubaydah—'Ā'īshah” relationship was already established and respected in Kufan circles.

It was plausibly also in Kufah that the marital-age hadith was incorporated into a version of the famous *ifk* narrative and falsely ascribed via a Kufan SS back to 'Ā'īshah, possibly at the hands of 'Abd al-Raḥmān b. Muḥammad al-Muḥāribī (d. 195/810-811), who was remembered as a “deceiver” (*mudallis*) and a transmitter of dubious hadiths (*'aḥādīṭ manākīr* or *'aḥādīṭ munkarah*).⁸⁹⁷

⁸⁹⁶ Ḍahabī (ed. 'Arna'ūṭ *et al.*), *Siyar*, VII, pp. 357-358.

⁸⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, IX, p. 137.

Meanwhile, the Kufan traditionist 'Abū Dāwūd al-Ḥafarī (d. 203/818 or 206/821-822) interpolated a well-known hadith disseminated by Sufyān al-Ṭawrī, from 'Ismā'īl b. 'Umayyah, from 'Abd Allāh b. 'Urwah, from 'Ā'īṣah, about her preferred day for marriages, merging it with the *matn* of the simple version of Hišām's hadith. At the same time, Muḥammad b. al-Ḥasan (d. turn of 9th C. CE), a Kufan traditionist regarded by some as "nothing" (*laysa bi-ṣay*) and "excessive in error" (*fāḥiṣ al-kaṭa*),⁸⁹⁸ went further by not just merging Sufyān's hadith with Hišām's, but also replacing Sufyān's original *'isnād* ('Ismā'īl b. 'Umayyah—'Abd Allāh b. 'Urwah—'Ā'īṣah) with another (Sa'd b. 'Ibrāhīm—al-Qāsim b. Muḥammad—'Ā'īṣah). Meanwhile, two other Kufan traditionists (plausibly including Wakī' b. al-Jarrāḥ) also altered Sufyān's actual marital-age hadith by replacing the original *'isnād* (Hišām—'Urwah) with another ('Abū 'Ishāq—'Abū 'Ubaydah), in one case also involving some kind of borrowing or contamination (from al-'Aḥwaṣ's particular transmission of Sufyān's original marital-age hadith).

Meanwhile, some Kufans—plausibly Yaḥyá b. 'Ādam (d. 203/818) and Yaḥyá al-Ḥimmānī (d. 225/839-840 or 228/842-843), the latter of whom was regarded by some as "unreliable" (*laysa bi-ṭiqah*) and "weak" (*da'īf*)⁸⁹⁹—ascribed two different versions of the marital-age hadith (one derived from 'Isrā'īl's version and the other from either Jarīr or Ḥammād b. Zayd's redactions of Hišām's version) back to the notable Kufan traditionist Šarīk, from 'Abū 'Ishāq, from 'Abū 'Ubaydah—one all the way back to 'Ā'īṣah, and the other all the way back to Ibn Mas'ūd.

At the same time, an Iraqi—plausibly the Kufan biographer, genealogist, and antiquarian Hišām b. Muḥammad al-Kalbī (d. 204-206/819-822), who was condemned as "unreliable" (*laysa bi-ṭiqah*) and "abandoned in Hadith" (*matrūk al-ḥadīṭ*)⁹⁰⁰—ascribed a biographical summary of 'Ā'īṣah via his Kufan father and a Basran Follower back to Ibn 'Abbās, seemingly assembled from the miscellaneous reports and statements of biographical and prosopographical authorities like Ibn Sa'd and al-Wāqidī. Meanwhile, al-Wāqidī himself (d. 207/823), a notorious "fabricator" (*kaddāb*), interpolated or fabricated several different versions of the marital-age hadith: he likely replaced the *'isnād* of 'Isrā'īl's hadith with that of al-'A'māš's (noted already); he

⁸⁹⁸ Ibn Ḥibbān (ed. Zāyid), *Majrūḥīn*, II, p. 277.

⁸⁹⁹ Dahabī (ed. 'Arna'ūṭ *et al.*), *Siyar*, X, p. 534.

⁹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 101-102.

probably interpolated a narrative from the Madinans ‘Abd al-Wāḥid b. Maymūn and Ḥabīb; he likely interpolated a biographical summary from Ibn Šihāb al-Zuhrī in two different ways, one of which he reattributed—via a Madinan SS—to ‘Ā’iṣah; and he plausibly omitted an intermediary source between himself and Ibn ‘abī al-Zinād.

A generation later, someone in Basrah—possibly ‘Aḥmad b. al-Miqdām (d. 251-253/865-867) or his master Zuhayr b. al-‘Alā’ (fl. turn of the 9th C. CE)—assembled a relatively detailed biographical summary of ‘Ā’iṣah from various iterations of the marital-age hadith and related reports that were circulating in Basrah—and Iraq more broadly—at the beginning of the 9th Century CE, which they ascribed via Sa‘īd b. ‘abī ‘Arūbah to Qatādah (both of whom were leading Basran traditionists and authorities of the early-to-mid 8th Century CE).

Finally, around the turn of the 9th Century CE, two Kufan transmitters of a hadith about ‘Ā’iṣah’s marital engagement—disseminated by the Kufan traditionist ‘Abū Ḥujayyah al-‘Ajlaḥ (d. 145/762-763 or later), on the authority of the Meccan Follower Ibn ‘abī Mulaykah—interpolated their respective versions thereof with elements taken from Hišām’s marital-age hadith. However, given that this occurred independently, each Kufan interpolator drew upon a different version of Hišām’s hadith (resulting in differences in wording), and one of them went further by explicitly raising his version all the way back to ‘Ā’iṣah.

Spread to Yemen

The marital-age hadith ostensibly spread to Yemen via the peripatetic Basran traditionist Ma‘mar b. Rāšid (d. 152-154/769-771), who claimed to have received it from both Ibn Šihāb al-Zuhrī (implausibly) and Hišām (plausibly). This could have occurred in the Hijaz, when Ma‘mar (who would eventually end up in Yemen) and Hišām (who would eventually end up in Iraq) seemingly coincided in time and place. However, given that the only version of the hadith that can be positively assigned to Ma‘mar via the ICMA differs markedly from every other transmission from Hišām, it is plausible that Ma‘mar did not receive it directly from Hišām, but instead via indirect means (e.g., from someone else’s notes or summary)—thus, its garbled state. Consequently, the exact place and time of Ma‘mar’s acquisition of his version of the

hadith remains uncertain. In fact, Ma‘mar’s version of this hadith was seemingly not even a ‘hadith’ at all, being instead a statement ascribed to Hišām. To compound matters, Ma‘mar falsely ascribed this statement to al-Zuhrī as well. As it happens, Ma‘mar was deemed by some to have “erred” (*ḡaliṭa*) in some of his transmissions from al-Zuhrī; to be “muddled” (*muḍṭarib*) and “full of errors” (*kaṭīr al-’awhām*) in his transmissions from Hišām; and to be a *mudallis* in general.⁹⁰¹

Thereafter, the Yemenite traditionist ‘Abd al-Razzāq b. Hammām (d. 211/827), who was accused by some of being “not strong” (*laysa bi-al-qawīyy*) and even a “fabricator” (*kadḍāb*),⁹⁰² interpolated the version of this hadith that he received from Ma‘mar, adding therein elements taken from other transmissions from Hišām, ‘Abū Mu‘āwiyah, and/or Wakī‘ b. al-Jarrāḥ. ‘Abd al-Razzāq also raised this composite hadith in successive retellings, changing it from an ascription to ‘Urwah to an ascription via ‘Urwah to ‘Ā’iṣah.

Spread to Makkah

A version of the Kufan traditionist ‘Ismā‘īl b. ‘abī Ḳālid’s *faḍā’il* hadith may have been brought to Makkah by his student Marwān b. Mu‘āwiyah (d. 193/808-809), a Kufan who died in Makkah. More definitely, Sufyān b. ‘Uyaynah, a Kufan who received a version of the marital-age hadith from Hišām in Kufah, brought it with him when he settled in Makkah in 163/779-780, where he disseminated it to several Meccan students (including Ibn ‘abī ‘Umar, al-Ḥumaydī, and al-Šāfi‘ī). Other transmissions from Hišām also came to Makkah from Iraq: with the Khurasanian traditionist Sa‘īd b. Manṣūr (d. 226-229/840-844), from the Kufo-Baghdadian traditionist ‘Ismā‘īl b. Zakariyyā’ (d. 173-174/789-791); with the Baghdadian traditionist Muḥammad b. ‘Ismā‘īl al-Šā’iḡ (d. 276/889); and with the Khurasanian traditionist ‘Alī b. ‘Abd al-‘Azīz (d. 286-287/899-900), from his Basran teachers al-Ḥajjāj b. al-Minhāl (d. 216-217/831-832) and ‘Ārim b. al-Faḍl (d. 224/838-839). ‘Alī b. ‘Abd al-‘Azīz also brought

⁹⁰¹ Ḍahabī (ed. ‘Arna’uṭ *et al.*), *Siyar*, VII, p. 11; Ibn ‘Asākir (ed. ‘Amrawī), *Ta’rīk Dimašq*, LIX, p. 392; Suyūṭī (ed. Naṣṣār), *‘Asmā’ al-Mudallisīn*, p. 94.

⁹⁰² Ibn ‘Adī (ed. Sarsāwī), *Kāmil*, VIII, p. 448, # 12967; Ḍahabī (ed. ‘Arna’uṭ *et al.*), *Siyar*, IX, pp. 571, 574.

a version of 'Isrā'īl's hadith with him to Makkah, from the Basran traditionist 'Abd Allāh b. Rajā' (d. 219-220/834-835). A version of Muḥammad b. al-Ḥasan's hadith also presumably spread to Makkah with his Kufan student al-Ḥasan b. 'Alī (d. 242/857). Likewise, a version of 'Abd al-Razzāq's hadith presumably spread to Makkah with the Basran traditionist 'Aḥmad b. Muḥammad b. Ziyād (d. 340/952).

It was plausibly also in Makkah that the Madinan traditionist Ya'qūb b. Ḥumayd b. Kāsib (d. 240-241/854-856), who was variously condemned as "nothing" (*laysa bi-ṣay*), "unreliable" (*laysa bi-ṭiqah*), and "weak in Hadith" (*ḍa'īf al-ḥadīth*),⁹⁰³ created a noticeably more detailed version of Hišām's simple hadith, which he projected back to Hišām via their Madinan intermediary 'Abd Allāh b. Muḥammad b. Yaḥyá b. 'Urwah.

Spread to Northern Mesopotamia

The marital-age hadith spread to Northern Mesopotamia—here meaning the region of al-Jazīrah and the cities of Anbar, Mosul, Raqqah, and Harran, along with the Anatolian city of Mopsuestia—numerous times, virtually always from nearby Iraq. To begin with, Hišām's Kufan student 'Alī b. Mushir (d. 189/804-805) was appointed the *qāḍī* of Mosul, where he transmitted his redaction of Hišām's elaborate version of the hadith to Suwayd b. Sa'īd al-'Anbārī (d. 240/855). Over the subsequent decades, other versions of the hadith also travelled north from Iraq: Mu'ammal b. al-Faḍl al-Ḥarrānī (d. 229/843-844) seemingly transmitted a version of 'Ismā'īl's hadith; Muḥammad b. 'Ādam al-Maṣṣīṣī (d. 250/864-865) received a version of Hišām's hadith from the latter's Kufan student 'Abdah b. Sulaymān; both 'Aḥmad b. Ḥarb al-Mawṣilī (d. 263/876-877) and 'Alī b. Ḥarb al-Mawṣilī (d. 265/879) transmitted versions of 'Abū Mu'āwiyah's redaction of al-'A'maš's hadith (in the second case, plausibly involving interpolations in the *matn*); al-Ḥusayn b. Muḥammad al-Ḥarrānī (d. 318/930) transmitted versions of 'Abū 'Usāmah and Muḥammad b. Yūsuf al-Firyābī's redactions of Hišām's hadith; and 'Abū Ya'lá 'Aḥmad b. 'Alī al-Mawṣilī (d. 307/919-920) collected several Iraqi transmissions from Muḥammad b. 'Amr and Hišām in his *Musnad*.

⁹⁰³ See the section on Hišām b. 'Urwah in ch. 2.

The spread of the marital-age hadith from Iraq to Northern Mesopotamia thus mostly occurred in a fairly straightforward and transparent fashion, without major interpolations or fabrications, except for two instances. In the first instance, Kaṭīr b. Hišām al-Raqqī (d. 207-208/822-824), or possibly his cited source Jaʿfar b. Burqān al-Raqqī (d. 154/770-771), seems to have falsely reattributed the hadith of ʿIsrāʾīl—plausibly also incorporating an element from ʿAbū Muʿāwiyah’s version—back to Ibn Šihāb al-Zuhrī. (As it happens, Jaʿfar was widely regarded as unreliable *specifically in his transmissions from al-Zuhrī*,⁹⁰⁴ and even Kaṭīr was reportedly error-prone.⁹⁰⁵) In the second instance, Ḥaṣṣ b. ʿUmar al-Raqqī (d. 280/893-894) seems to have combined a hadith he received from Qabiṣah (from Sufyān, from Hišām, from ʿUrwah) with the *matn* of ʿAbū Muʿāwiyah’s version and the *ʾisnād* associated with ʿIsrāʾīl’s version and certain other false ascriptions to Sufyān (i.e., Sufyān—ʿAbū ʾIshāq—ʿAbū ʿUbaydah). (As it happens, Ḥaṣṣ was deemed by al-Ḍahabī to be “imprecise” (*laysa bi-mutqin*).⁹⁰⁶)

Spread to Egypt

The marital-age hadith came to Egypt with the students of the Madino-Baghdadian traditionist Ibn ʿabī al-Zinād (d. 174/790-791), who disseminated his version thereof in Baghdad⁹⁰⁷ after he acquired it from Hišām (probably in Baghdad, and probably indirectly, which is consistent with the reports that he became unreliable *specifically when he moved to Iraq*). Ibn ʿabī al-Zinād transmitted his redaction of the hadith to two Egyptian students, ʿAbd Allāh b. Wahb (d. 197/813) and Saʿīd b. ʿabī Maryam (d. 224/838-389), each of whom passed it on to his own Egyptian students in turn. In the process, however, Ibn Wahb (a known *mudallis*⁹⁰⁸) or possibly his student Muḥammad b. ʿAbd Allāh b. ʿAbd al-Ḥakam (d. 268/882) added the Madino-Baghdadian traditionist Saʿīd b. ʿAbd al-Raḥmān into the *ʾisnād* as a co-transmitter with Ibn ʿabī al-Zinād from Hišām.

⁹⁰⁴ Ibn ʿabī Ḥātim, *Jarḥ*, II, pp. 474-475.

⁹⁰⁵ Ibn Ḥibbān (ed. Ḳān), *Tiqāt*, IX, p. 26: “he errs and contradicts [the transmissions of others] (*yukṭiʿu wa-yukālifu*).”

⁹⁰⁶ Ḍahabī (ed. ʾArnaʿūṭ *et al.*), *Siyar*, XIII, p. 406. However, al-Ḍahabī (*ibid.*) preceded this with the claim that “he was in essence sincere (*huwa ṣadūq fī nafsi-hi*).”

⁹⁰⁷ For example, to the Basran traditionist Sulaymān b. Dāwūd al-Ṭayālīsī.

⁹⁰⁸ Ibn Saʿd (ed. Sachau), *Biographien*, VII, part 2, p. 205.

At around the same time, the prominent Hadith-partisan jurist Muḥammad b. ʿIdrīs al-Šāfiʿī (d. 204/820) also brought Hišām’s hadith with him when he came to Egypt from Makkah, where he had received it from Sufyān b. ʿUyaynah. Al-Šāfiʿī transmitted his version to his Egyptian student al-Rabīʿ b. Sulaymān al-Murādī (d. 270/884), but in the process, some core details were altered: al-Rabīʿ recorded it from al-Šāfiʿī once with “six or seven” and twice with “seven”. Moreover, al-Rabīʿ recorded one version from al-Šāfiʿī with an additional ‘dolls’ element, with wordings suspiciously similar to Ibn Wahb’s transmission from Ibn ʿabī al-Zinād: evidently, some contamination occurred between these Egyptian contemporaries.

An unusual version of the marital-age hadith (“nine or ten”)—in the form of a biographical summary about ʿĀʾiṣah without an *ʾisnād*—was also recorded by the Basran biographer ʿAbd al-Malik b. Hišām (d. 213/828-829 or 218/833) in his *Kitāb al-Sīrah al-Nabawiyyah*, which he brought with him when he settled in Egypt. Ibn Hišām’s *Sīrah* was a recension of the *Kitāb al-Maḡāzī* of Muḥammad b. ʾIshāq (d. 150-153/767-770), but Ibn Hišām did not cite Ibn ʾIshāq as his source for this biographical summary, nor any other source; presumably, it was Ibn Hišām’s own assemblage of information—perhaps from multiple sources—that he acquired in Basrah.

The obscure Egyptian traditionist ʿAbd Allāh b. Muḥammad b. Saʿīd b. ʿabī Maryam (fl. 9th C. CE) also received a version of the marital-age hadith from the Khurasanian and Levantine traditionist Muḥammad b. Yūsuf al-Firyābī, from his Kufan master Sufyān al-Ṭawrī, from Hišām.

An unusual version of the hadith (ascribed to Qatādah—see above) was also transmitted by the obscure Baghdadian traditionist Muḥammad b. Jaʿfar b. Muḥammad b. ʾAʿyan (d. 293/905-906), who received it from Basran sources and presumably took it with him when he settled in Egypt.

Finally, there was a single, notable fabrication in Egypt: ʾAḥmad b. Saʿd b. al-Ḥakam b. ʿabī Maryam (d. 253/867), or possibly his uncle and cited source Ibn ʿabī Maryam, borrowed the *matn* of the simple version of Hišām’s hadith (probably Wuhayb’s redaction) and falsely ascribed it via an Egypto-Madinan SS back to ʿĀʾiṣah.

Spread to the Levant

The marital-age hadith came to the Levant with the Khurasanian traditionist Muḥammad b. Yūsuf al-Firyābī (d. 212/827), who received a version of Hišām's hadith from the latter's Kufan student Sufyān al-Ṭawrī and settled thereafter in the Palestinian city of Caesarea, where he disseminated it to some local traditionists. Not long afterwards, the notable Damascene traditionist Hišām b. 'Ammār (d. 245/859) recorded a version of Muḥammad b. 'Amr's hadith in his own collection, which he obtained from the Baghdadian Sa'īd b. Yaḥyá al-'Umaywī (who in turn received it from his Kufan father, one of Muḥammad's students). Sometime after that, the Baghdadian traditionist 'Abū 'Umayyah Muḥammad b. 'Ibrāhīm (d. 273/886) may also have brought 'Alī b. Mushir's redaction of Hišām's elaborate version of the marital-age hadith—which he received from 'Alī's Kufan student 'Ismā'īl b. al-Ḳalīl—with him when he settled in Tarsus. At around the same time, 'Abū Mu'āwiyah's hadith also spread to the Levant via his Kufan student Muḥammad b. 'Abd Allāh b. Numayr, who in turn transmitted it to the prominent Damascene chronicler 'Abū Zur'ah 'Abd al-Raḥmān b. 'Amr (d. 280-281/893-895), who recorded it in his *Ta'rik*. Finally, several centuries later, an unusual version of Hišām's hadith (framed as a conversation between him and his Kufan student al-Hayṭam b. 'Adī al-Ṭā'ī) spread via a succession of Baghdadian and Eastern tradents to the famous Damascene chronicler 'Alī b. al-Ḥasan b. 'Asākir (d. 519/1125), who recorded it in his *Ta'rik Madīnat Dimašq*.

Meanwhile, at some point in the early-to-mid 9th Century CE, the Aleppine traditionist al-Ḥajjāj b. 'abī Manī' (d. post-216/831) updated or elaborated a relatively detailed biographical summary of 'Ā'iṣah that he may have received from his local uncle 'Ubayd Allāh b. 'abī Ziyād al-Ruṣāfī, perhaps ultimately deriving from Ibn Šihāb al-Zuhrī—adding therein the elements of the simple version of Hišām's hadith. (Of course, it is also possible that al-Ḥajjāj assembled the summary himself from the biographical material that was flowing into the Levant from Iraq and completely falsely ascribed it via his uncle to al-Zuhrī.)

Finally, it was plausibly also in the Levant, possibly with the Damascene traditionist 'Abū Mushir 'Abd al-'A'lā b. Mushir (d. 218/833), that a version of 'Isrā'īl's hadith was elaborated and reattributed via a local Levantine familial *'isnād* back to the Basran Follower Jābir b. Zayd.

Spread to Persia

Easterners came to dominate Hadith scholarship in the 9th Century CE to such an extent that, alongside Baghdadians, they predominate in the later segments of most *ʿisnāds* of the marital-age hadith, or else as the compilers of the collections in which versions of the hadith are extant. As part of this process of domination, the marital-age hadith spread to Persia—meaning above all the regions of al-Jibāl and Fārs—by many routes. One of the earliest instances thereof occurred with Ḥasan b. Mūsá (d. 209/824-825), who received a redaction of the elaborate version of Hišām’s hadith from Ḥammād b. Salamah in Basrah and presumably took it with him to Rayy, where he died. Likewise, the Baghdadian traditionist al-Ḥusayn b. al-Faraj (fl. 9th C. CE) brought al-Wāqidī’s ascription to Ḥabīb (along with his *al-Mubtada’ wa-al-Maḡāzī* more broadly) with him from Baghdad when he settled in Isfahan, where he transmitted it to a local student. Soon afterward, several Persians (and a Basran who settled in Persia) recorded multiple versions of the marital-age hadith in their extant Hadith collections: Muḥammad b. Mājah al-Qazwīnī (d. 273/887), who received one version from a Mesopotamian and another from a Wasitian, both recorded in his *Sunan*; Yūnus b. Ḥabīb al-ʿAṣbahānī (d. 267/880-881), who transmitted a version as part of his recension of the *Musnad* of his Basran master ʿAbū Dāwūd al-Ṭayālīsī; Yaʿqūb b. Sufyān al-Fasawī (d. 277/890-891 or 280-281/893-895), who received several versions from Kufan, Basran, and Aleppine sources, all of which he recorded in his *Taʾrīk*; and ʿAḥmad b. ʿabī ʿĀṣim (d. 287/900), a Basran traditionist who was appointed the *qāḍī* of Isfahan and who received several versions from Iraqi sources, all of which he recorded in his *al-ʾĀḥād wa-al-Maṭānī*. Many versions of the hadith, including from some of these earlier collectors, were also recorded by later mega-compilers like ʿAbū Nuʿaym ʿAḥmad b. ʿAbd Allāh al-ʾIṣfahānī (d. 430/1038).

Finally, it was plausibly in Rayy that Muḥammad b. Ḥumayd (d. 248/862-863), a local traditionist who was variously condemned as “unreliable” (*laysa bi-ṭiqah* and *ḡayr ṭiqah*), “rejected in Hadith” (*munkar al-ḥadīth*), and “possessing strange hadiths” (*ṣāḥib ʿajāʾib*),⁹⁰⁹ created a strange version of the marital-age hadith (recounting how

⁹⁰⁹ Ḍahabī (ed. ʿArnaʿūt *et al.*), *Siyar*, XI, p. 503-506.

‘Ā’iṣah was fattened up by her parents for her marital consummation), which was projected back to ‘Ā’iṣah via a Mervian familial *’isnād*.

Spread to Khurasan

The Eastern domination of Hadith scholarship also brought the marital-age hadith into Khurasan, via numerous routes. One of the earliest instances thereof seems to have occurred with Yaḥyá b. Yaḥyá al-Naysābūrī (d. 226/840-841), who travelled from Naysabur to Kufah and obtained a version from ‘Abū Mu‘āwiyah, which he brought with him when he returned home and disseminated to his local students. In the process, however, Yaḥyá altered or contaminated ‘Abū Mu‘āwiyah’s hadith, combining it with elements taken from the simple version of Hišām’s hadith. The latter also arrived in Khurasan around the same time with Muḥammad b. al-Naḍr al-Marwazī (d. 239/853-854), who obtained it from Ja‘far b. Sulaymān when he visited Basrah. ‘Abd al-Razzāq’s version of the hadith also came to Khurasan over the ensuing decades, as various Khurasanian traditionists travelled to Yemen, obtained the hadith from ‘Abd al-Razzāq, and took it back home with them: Muḥammad b. Rāfi‘ al-Naysābūrī (d. 245/860), Muḥammad b. ‘Ishāq al-Ṣaḡānī (d. 270/883), and Fayyāḍ b. Zuhayr al-Nasā’ī (d. post-250/864-865). A version of ‘Ismā‘īl’s hadith also made its way there via ‘Aḥmad b. Yūnus al-Naysābūrī (d. 263-264/876-878), who seems to have received it in Kufah (or possibly al-Madā’in) from ‘Abū Ṣihāb ‘Abd Rabbi-hi and brought it home with him.

Numerous versions of the marital-age hadith were also preserved in the extant Hadith collections of various leading Khurasanian traditionists: the *Musnad* of ‘Ishāq b. Rāhwayh al-Marwazī (d. 238/853), from various Kufan sources; the *Ṣaḥīḥ* of Muslim b. al-Ḥajjāj al-Naysābūrī (d. 261/875), from various Eastern and Iraqi sources (involving some notable instances of contamination or interpolation); the *Ta’rīk* of ‘Aḥmad b. ‘abī Kayṭamah Zuhayr al-Naysābūrī (d. 279/892), from a Basran source; the *Musnad* of ‘Abū ‘Awānah Ya‘qūb b. ‘Ishāq al-‘Isfarāyīnī (d. 316/929), from various Egyptian, Levantine, Iraqi, and Eastern sources; and the *Mustadrak* of Muḥammad b. ‘Abd Allāh al-Ḥākim al-Naysābūrī (d. 405/1014), from various Eastern sources. Many

versions of the hadith, including from some of these earlier collectors, were also recorded by later mega-compilers like 'Aḥmad b. al-Ḥusayn al-Bayhaqī (d. 458/1066).

Spread to Transoxania

The marital-age hadith also spread to Transoxania, in at least four notable instances: firstly, with 'Abd b. Ḥumayd al-Kaššī (d. 249/863-864), who obtained a version from 'Abd al-Razzāq when he visited Yemen; secondly, with 'Abd Allāh b. 'Abd al-Raḥmān al-Dārimī al-Samarqandī (d. 250/864-865 or 255/869), who obtained 'Alī b. Mushir's redaction of Hišām's elaborate version of the marital-age hadith from 'Ismā'īl b. Ḳalīl when he visited Kufah, which he recorded in his *Musnad* or *Sunan*; thirdly, with Muḥammad b. 'Ismā'īl al-Buḳārī (d. 256/870), who obtained several different redactions of Hišām's hadiths from various Kufan, Basran, and Perso-Palestinian sources (all recorded in his *Ṣaḥīḥ*), and several different versions of 'Ismā'īl's hadith from various Iraqi sources (all recorded in his *al-Ta'rīk al-Kabīr*); and fourthly, with Muḥammad b. Ḥibbān al-Bustī (d. 354/965), a Sijistanian traditionist who was appointed the *qāḍī* of Samarqand and who obtained two versions of Hišām's hadith from a Khurasanian source and a Mesopotamian source respectively, both tracing back to Hišām's Kufan students, which Ibn Ḥibbān recorded in his *Ṣaḥīḥ*.

Spread to the West

Eventually, several versions of the marital-age hadith also made it to West, here meaning North Africa (including 'Ifriqiyyah and al-Maḡrib) and the Iberian Peninsula (i.e., al-'Andalus). It is striking that, despite the heavy dependence of West—the stronghold of Mālikism—upon the legal tradition and Hadith of Madinah, Westerners seem to have virtually always obtained their versions of the marital-age hadith, directly or indirectly, from Iraqi sources. For example, the Hadith critic 'Aḥmad b. 'Abd Allāh al-'Ijlī (d. 261/874-875), who settled in Tripoli and preserved a version of the hadith in his *Ta'rīk al-Ṭiqāt*, came from Kufah and received his version from a Kufan

source: 'Abū Dāwūd al-Ḥafarī, whose interpolation of a well-known hadith from Sufyān al-Tawrī has been discussed already. Likewise, the Andalusian jurist and Hadith scholar Yūsuf b. 'Abd Allāh b. 'Abd al-Barr al-Qurṭubī (d. 463/1071) recorded several versions of the hadith in his *Kitāb al-Istī'āb* and his *Tamhīd*, all ultimately tracing back to Hišām's Basran and Kufan students and to the Kufan 'Abū Mu'āwiyah.⁹¹⁰ That said, Ibn 'Abd al-Barr also ascribed an unusual statement ("The Messenger of God married her when she was a girl of ten years") to the junior Madinan Follower 'Abd Allāh b. Muḥammad b. 'Uqayl/'Aqīl (d. post-140/757-758), but did so without citing any sources (Madinan or otherwise)—in fact, this statement appears to be uncorroborated in all other Islamic literature, including legal works and Hadith collections.

A century later, the Ibadite Hadith scholar Yūsuf b. 'Ibrāhīm al-Warjlānī (d. 570/1174-1175), as part of his general project of systematically creating an Ibadite Hadith corpus, cobbled together a relatively detailed biographical summary of 'Ā'īshah from earlier prosopographical sources and/or hadiths, which he ascribed via a suitable sequence of Ibadite imams back to the Basran Follower Jābir b. Zayd. (In this respect, al-Warjlānī may have drawn upon the previous Levantine ascription to Jābir, discussed above.)

Conclusion

The hadith of 'Ā'īshah's marital age rapidly proliferated after its genesis in early Abbasid Iraq, spreading north to the rest of Mesopotamia, west to the Levant, Egypt, and beyond, south to Makkah and Yemen, and east to Persia, Khurasan, and Transoxania, all within the space of a century and a half. The hadith underwent considerable mutations and reworkings during the first few decades of its existence in Iraq, receiving multiple (usually local or familial) *'isnāds* in the process. This might be taken to imply a considerable amount of mendacity on the part of Iraqi traditionists, but it should be reiterated that most of this occurred during the mid-to-late 8th Century CE, before the predomination of the Hadith critics (*nuqqād al-ḥadīth*) and their literalist, historicist attitude towards Hadith. Thereafter (above all, in the 9th and 10th Centuries

⁹¹⁰ Yūsuf b. 'Abd Allāh b. 'Abd al-Barr (ed. 'Alī Muḥammad Bijāwī), *Kitāb al-Istī'āb fī Ma'rifat al-'Aṣḥāb*, part 4 (Beirut, Lebanon: Dār al-Jīl, 1992), pp. 1881-1882, # 4029; *id.* (ed. 'A'rāb), *Tamhīd*, vol. 19, p. 108.

CE), it mostly spread transparently, with only minor rewordings and interpolations—but not always: in several regions and cities (specifically, the Levant, Raqqa, Rayy, and Ouargla), local traditionists (often with bad reputations already) combined the marital-age hadith with their own local reports or created their own versions of the hadith with local and familial *ʾisnāds*.

Once again, the general absence of Madinah from this picture is striking: in the 9th and 10th Centuries CE (i.e., the era of stable and transparent Hadith transmission), Madinans are completely absent. Madinans only appear in the earliest segments of various retrojections and dives, which is to say, as tradents and authorities in the segments of *ʾisnāds* covering the 7th and 8th Centuries CE (i.e., the era of false ascription, legendary transmission, mutation, and instability). Certainly, no early Madinan legal work or Hadith collection recorded any version of the marital-age hadith, from Madinan sources or otherwise. Once again, it seems clear that the true birthplace of the hadith was Iraq, not Madinah.

Chapter 5: The Canonisation and Criticism of the Hadith of ‘Ā’iṣah’s Marital Age in Sunnism

The hadith of ‘Ā’iṣah’s marital age was put into circulation by several of the leading traditionists of Iraq in the mid-to-late 8th Century CE and transmitted by many of their illustrious students, making the acceptance of this hadith by the proto-Sunnī Hadith critics (*nuqqād al-ḥadīth*) of the 9th Century CE practically inevitable. In fact, it is probably more accurate to say that the Hadith critics simply *inherited* the hadith, being the main students (e.g., al-Bukārī) of the main students (e.g., al-Firyābī) of the main students (e.g., Sufyān al-Ṭawrī) of the creators thereof (e.g., Hišām). The Hadith critics explicitly saw themselves as the scholarly successors to the likes of Hišām, so unless they were confronted by flagrant contradictions between his hadiths and those of their other great forebears, or else by a recurring lack of corroboration for his ascriptions, they would accept Hišām’s material by default. Of course, even when Hišām’s transmissions were contradicted or suspiciously uncorroborated, this was downplayed or rationalised as a relatively minor foible—*tadlīs* and *’irsāl*, or even mere *wahm*, as opposed to *waḍ’* and *kaḍīb*. He always remained *al-’imām al-ṭīqah šayk al-’islām* in the Sunnī Hadith tradition.⁹¹¹

As it happens, there are some notable contradictions both within and between Hišām’s version of the marital-age hadith and those ascribed to his equally-venerated contemporaries Ibn Šihāb al-Zuhrī, Muḥammad b. ‘Amr, ‘Abū ‘Iṣḥāq, and al-’A‘maš, in which ‘Ā’iṣah’s age at her marital engagement (*nikāḥ*, *tazwīj*, *tazawwuj*) is variously given as six, six or seven, seven, and nine. However, these contradictions were almost never addressed by the Hadith critics, who seem to have accepted most of these versions—above all, those of Hišām, al-’A‘maš, ‘Isrā’īl (from ‘Abū ‘Iṣḥāq), and ‘Abd al-Razzāq (from al-Zuhrī)—as ‘sound’ (*ṣaḥīḥ*). Evidently, these contradictions were usually not regarded as flagrant, and rarely warranted comment or explanation.

Still, some contradictions and discrepancies (especially in the *’isnāds*) were felt to require explanation and adjudication, and not all versions of the hadith derived from

⁹¹¹ For more on the methods of the Hadith critics, see the section on Motzki’s criticisms of Cook in ch. 1, and the references given therein. For more on the excuses and rationalisations surrounding Hišām, see the historical-critical analysis in ch. 3 of the present work and the references given therein.

predecessors as esteemed as Hišām—thus, there were some instances in which the Hadith critics criticised or rejected specific transmissions of the marital-age hadith.

What follows is a summary of notable instances of proto-Sunnī and classical Sunnī scholars authenticating and/or criticising various versions of the marital-age hadith.

al-Buḵārī (d. 256/870)

The leading Transoxanian Hadith critic Muḥammad b. ʿIsmāʿīl al-Buḵārī (d. 256/870) recorded the following versions of the hadith in his *al-Jāmiʿ al-Ṣaḥīḥ*:

Farwah—ʿAlī b. Mushir—Hišām—ʿUrwah—ʿĀʾiṣah:

Marriage at six; Hijrah; illness, shoulder-length hair; swing; marital preparation; consummation at nine.

ʿUbayd—ʿAbū ʿUsāmah—Hišām—ʿUrwah:

Kadijah's death; ʿĀʾiṣah married at six; consummation at nine.

al-Firyābī—Sufyān al-Ṭawrī—Hišām—ʿUrwah—ʿĀʾiṣah:

Marriage at six; consummation at nine; together nine years.

Muʿallā—Wuhayb—Hišām—ʿUrwah—ʿĀʾiṣah:

Marriage at six; consummation at nine; together nine years.

Farwah—ʿAlī b. Mushir—Hišām—ʿUrwah—ʿĀʾiṣah:

Marriage; marital preparation.

Qabīṣah—Sufyān al-Ṭawrī—Hišām—ʿUrwah:

ʿĀʾiṣah was married at six; consummation at nine; together nine years.

Farwah—ʿAlī b. Mushir—Hišām—ʿUrwah—ʿĀʾiṣah:

Marriage; marital preparation.

Although al-Buḵārī never explicitly expressed a judgement on any of these hadiths, their inclusion in his *al-Jāmi‘ al-Ṣaḥīḥ* strongly implies that he regarded them to be *ṣaḥīḥ*, even though two of them are technically *mursal* or *munqaṭi‘*.

By contrast, an explicit judgement has been recorded from al-Buḵārī regarding a defect (*‘illah*) in some versions of the hadith, as recorded by his student—and fellow Hadith critic—Muḥammad b. ‘Īsā al-Tirmidī (d. 279/892):

Yahyá b. ‘Aḵṭam related to us: “Yahyá b. ‘Ādam related to us: “‘Isrā’īl related to us: “‘Abū ‘Ishāq related to us, from ‘Abū ‘Ubaydah, from ‘Abd Allāh [b. Mas‘ūd], who said: “The Messenger of God married ‘Ā’iṣah when she was a girl of six years, consummated the marriage with her when she was a girl of nine years, and died when she was a girl of eighteen.””””

I asked Muḥammad [al-Buḵārī] about this hadith, and he said: “This [version] is erroneous (*kaṭa‘*); on the contrary, it [should be] (*inna-mā huwa*): “‘Abū ‘Ishāq, from ‘Abū ‘Ubaydah, that the Prophet married ‘Ā’iṣah....” Thusly they related, from ‘Isrā’īl, from ‘Abū ‘Ishāq. And they said, “...from ‘Abū ‘Ubaydah, from ‘Ā’iṣah...” also.”⁹¹²

In other words, al-Buḵārī deemed to be erroneous those versions of ‘Isrā’īl’s hadith that had been raised all the way back to ‘Abd Allāh b. Mas‘ūd, rejecting them in favour of the unraised versions ascribed only to ‘Abū ‘Ubaydah and also those that were raised all the way back to ‘Ā’iṣah.

Muslim (d. 261/875)

The leading Khurasanian Hadith critic Muslim b. al-Ḥajjāj al-Naysābūrī (d. 261/875) recorded the following versions of the hadith in his *al-Jāmi‘ al-Ṣaḥīḥ*:

‘Abū Kurayb—‘Abū ‘Usāmah—Hiṣām—‘Urwah—‘Ā’iṣah:

Ibn ‘abī Ṣaybah—‘Abū ‘Usāmah—Hiṣām—‘Urwah—‘Ā’iṣah:

Marriage at six; consummation at nine; Hijrah; illness, shoulder-length hair; swing; marital preparation.

⁹¹² Tirmidī (ed. Sāmarrā’ī *et al.*), *Ilal*, pp. 169-170.

Yahyá b. Yahyá—'Abū Mu'āwiyah—al-'A'maš—'Ibrāhīm—al-'Aswad—'Ā'ishah:

Ibn Numayr—'Abdah—Hišām—'Urwah—'Ā'ishah:

Marriage at six; consummation at nine.

'Abd b. Ḥumayd—'Abd al-Razzāq—Ma'mar—al-Zuhrī—'Urwah—'Ā'ishah:

Marriage at seven; consummation at nine; her dolls were with her; Prophet died when she was eighteen.

Yahyá b. Yahyá & Ibn Rāhwayh & Ibn 'abī Šaybah & 'Abū Kurayb—'Abū Mu'āwiyah—al-'A'maš—'Ibrāhīm—al-'Aswad—'Ā'ishah:

Marriage at six; consummation at nine; Prophet died when she was eighteen.

Although Muslim never explicitly expressed a judgement on any of these hadiths, their inclusion in his *al-Jāmi' al-Šaḥīḥ* strongly implies that he regarded them to be *ṣaḥīḥ*, even though one of them (“seven”) contradicts the others (“six”). That said, it is plausible that Muslim regarded some of these hadiths to be sounder than others, and that he arranged them in descending order of soundness.⁹¹³

Ibn 'abī Kayṭamah (d. 279/892-893)

In his *al-Ta'rīk al-Kabīr*, the Baghdadian Hadith critic 'Aḥmad b. 'abī Kayṭamah Zuhayr (d. 279/892-893) adjudicated between a version of the hadith and another, in a broader discussion on the chronology of Ẓadījah's death, 'Ā'ishah's marriage, and the Hijrah:

Someone other than Ibn 'Ishāq said: “Ẓadījah died five years before the emigration of the Messenger of God.”

And it is [also] said: “four [years] before the marital engagement (*tazwīj*) of 'Ā'ishah.” Al-'Atram reported that to us, from 'Abū 'Ubaydah.

And Qatādah said: “Ẓadījah died three years before the Hijrah.” 'Aḥmad b. al-Miqdām related that to us, from Zuhayr b. al-'Alā', from Sa'īd, from Qatādah: “Then the Messenger of God married (*tazawwaja*) 'Ā'ishah around the time of the death of Ẓadījah.”

⁹¹³ Juynboll, '(Re)Appraisal', 316.

Mūsá b. 'Ismā'īl related to us—he said: “Ḥammād b. Salamah related to us—he said: “Hišām related to us, from 'Urwah, from 'Ā'išah—she said: “The Messenger of God married me after the death of Ḳadījah, two or three years before his escape to Madinah, when I was a girl of six years or seven.”””

That which was said by 'Abū 'Ubaydah is the correct [version] (*al-ṣawāb*), because she [i.e., 'Ā'išah] said: “he consummated the marriage with me when I was a girl of nine.”⁹¹⁴

In regards to the chronology around Ḳadījah's death, Ibn 'abī Ḳayṭamah seemed to prefer a hadith ascribed to 'Abū 'Ubaydah over the relevant versions of Hišām's marital-age hadith.

al-Nasā'ī (d. 303/915-916)

In his *al-Sunan al-Kubrā*, the Khurasanian Hadith critic 'Aḥmad b. 'Alī al-Nasā'ī (d. 303/915-916) recorded and adjudicated between conflicting ascriptions to 'Abū 'Ishāq, as follows:

Qutaybah b. Sa'īd reported to us—he said: “'Abṭar related to us, from Muṭarrif (who is Ibn Ṭarīf al-Kūfī), from 'Abū 'Ishāq, from 'Abū 'Ubaydah, who said: “'Ā'išah said: “The Messenger of God married me at nine years and I was in his company for nine.”””

'Isrā'īl differed with him (*kālaḥu*) regarding his *'isnād* and his *matn*:

'Ishāq b. 'Ibrāhīm b. Rāhwayh reported to us—he said: “Yahyá b. 'Ādam reported to us—he said: “'Isrā'īl related to us, from 'Abū 'Ishāq, from 'Abū 'Ubaydah, from his father, who said: “The Messenger of God married 'Ā'išah when she was a girl of six years and consummated the marriage with her when she was a girl of nine.”””

'Abū 'Abd al-Raḥmān [al-Nasā'ī] said to us: “Muṭarrif b. Ṭarīf al-Kūfī is more reliable (*'aṭbat*) than 'Isrā'īl, and his hadith is more likely to be correct (*'aṣbah bi-al-ṣawāb*). God knows best.”⁹¹⁵

In short, al-Nasā'ī judged the *mursal* or *munqaṭi'* version ascribed via Muṭarrif to 'Abū 'Ishāq to be more reliable than the *muttaṣil* version ascribed via 'Isrā'īl to 'Abū 'Ishāq.

⁹¹⁴ Ibn 'abī Ḳayṭamah (ed. Halal), *al-Ta'rīk al-Kabīr*, I, p. 170.

⁹¹⁵ Nasā'ī (ed. Šalabī), *al-Sunan al-Kubrā*, V, pp. 170-171, ## 5349-5350.

'Abū 'Awānah (d. 316/929)

The Khurasanian Hadith critic 'Abū 'Awānah Ya'qūb b. 'Ishāq al-'Isfarāyīnī (d. 316/929) recorded the following versions of the hadith in his *al-Musnad al-Ṣaḥīḥ al-Mukarrar* 'alā Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim:

al-Rabī'—al-Šāfi'—Sufyān b. 'Uyaynah—Hišām—'Urwah—'Ā'iṣah:

'Abū 'Umayyah—'Ismā'īl—'Alī b. Mushir—Hišām—'Urwah—'Ā'iṣah:

Marriage at six; Hijrah; illness, shoulder-length hair; swing; marital preparation; consummation at nine.

al-Ḥusayn b. Bahān—Sahl b. 'Uṭmān—Yaḥyá b. Zakariyyā—Hišām—'Urwah—'Ā'iṣah:
"[Something] close to the hadith of 'Alī b. Mushir."

Ibn 'abī al-Ḥunayn—Šihāb b. 'Abbād—Ḥammād b. Zayd—Hišām—'Urwah—'Ā'iṣah:

Marriage at seven; consummation at nine; women came to her; she was on a swing; fever and hair; prepared for marriage by women; hair; she still played dolls with her shy friends.

'Abū al-'Abbās al-Ġazzī—al-Firyābī—Sufyān al-Ṭawrī—Hišām—'Urwah—'Ā'iṣah:

Marriage at six; consummation at nine; together nine years.

al-Ṣaḡānī—Muslim b. 'Ibrāhīm—Ja'far b. Sulaymān—Hišām—'Urwah—'Ā'iṣah:

Marriage at seven; consummation at nine.

'Abū 'Umayyah—Manṣūr b. Ṣuqayr—'Abū 'Awānah—al-'A'maš—'Ibrāhīm—al-'Aswad—'Ā'iṣah:

Marriage at seven; together nine years.

'Alī b. Ḥarb—'Abū Mu'āwiyah—al-'A'maš—'Ibrāhīm—al-'Aswad—'Ā'iṣah:

al-Ṣaḡānī—Sa'īd b. Sulaymān—'Abū Mu'āwiyah—al-'A'maš—'Ibrāhīm—al-'Aswad—'Ā'iṣah:

Marriage at seven; Prophet died when she was eighteen.

Ibn 'abī al-Dunyā—'Abū Ḳayṭamah—Jarīr—al-'A'maš—'Ibrāhīm—al-'Aswad—'Ā'īṣah:
Marriage at six or seven; consummation at nine; she still played dolls with her shy friends.

al-Ṣaḡānī—'Abd al-Razzāq—Ma'mar—al-Zuhrī—'Urwah—'Ā'īṣah:
Marriage at six or seven; consummation at nine; her dolls were with her; Prophet died when she was eighteen.

Muḥammad b. 'Ismā'īl al-Ṣā'iḡ—'Affān b. Muslim—Ḥammād b. Salamah—Hišām—'Urwah—'Ā'īṣah—Prophet:
Girl in silk, Ḳadījah's death, the girl was 'Ā'īṣah; marriage, Ḳadījah's death, six or seven; consummation at nine; swing; shoulder-length hair; marital preparation.

Although 'Abū 'Awānah never explicitly expressed a judgement on any of these hadiths, their inclusion in his *al-Musnad al-Ṣaḥīḥ*—intended as a collection of independent transmissions of the hadiths recorded in the *Ṣaḥīḥ* of Muslim—strongly implies that he regarded them to be *ṣaḥīḥ*, even though they conflict on certain details (e.g., “six” vs. “seven” vs. “nine”).

Ibn al-Mundir (d. 318/930)

The Khurasanian jurist Muḥammad b. 'Ibrāhīm b. al-Mundir (d. 318/930), an early follower of al-Šāfi'ī, recorded the following in his *al-'Iṣrāf 'alā Maḍāhib al-'Ulamā'*:

It is established (*tabata*) that the Messenger of God married 'Ā'īṣah when she was a girl of seven years and consummated the marriage with her when she was a girl of nine years.⁹¹⁶

⁹¹⁶ Muḥammad b. 'Ibrāhīm b. al-Mundir (ed. Ṣaḡīr 'Aḥmad al-'Anṣārī), *al-'Iṣrāf 'alā Maḍāhib al-'Ulamā'*, vol. 5 (Ra's al-Ḳaymah, UAE: Maktabat Makkah al-Ṭaqāfiyyah, 2005), p. 177.

In other words, Ibn al-Mundir implies that the marital-age hadith (evidently here referring to a version from Hišām) was widely accepted as sound by his contemporaries.

al-‘Uqaylī (d. 322/933-934)

The Meccan Hadith critic Muḥammad b. ‘Amr al-‘Uqaylī (d. 322/933-934) recorded the following in an entry in his *Kitāb al-Ḍu‘afā’*:

Mālik b. Sulaymān al-Harawī.

[There is] some doubt regarding his Hadith (*fī ḥadīṭi-hi naẓar*).

Muḥammad b. Mūsā al-Balkī related to us—he said: “Mālik b. Sulaymān al-Harawī related to us—he said: “‘Isrā’īl related to us, from ‘Abū ‘Ishāq, from ‘Abū ‘Ubaydah, from Ibn Mas‘ūd, who said: “The Prophet married ‘Ā’ishah when she was a girl of nine and died when she was a girl of eighteen.”””

[‘Alī b.] ‘Abd al-‘Azīz related this to us—he said: “‘Abd Allāh b. Rajā’ related to us—he said: “‘Isrā’īl related to us, from ‘Abū ‘Ishāq, from ‘Abū ‘Ubaydah, who said: “The Prophet married ‘Ā’ishah when she was a girl of six years and consummated the marriage with her when she was a girl of nine years. The Prophet died when she was a girl of eighteen.”””

And the hadith of ‘Abd Allāh b. Rajā’ is better (*‘awlā*).⁹¹⁷

In other words, according to al-‘Uqaylī, ‘Abd Allāh b. Rajā’*s* (*mursal* or *munqaṭi*) ascription via ‘Isrā’īl is more reliable than Mālik b. Sulaymān’s (*muttaṣil*) ascription thereby.

Ibn Ḥibbān (d. 354/965)

The Sijistanian Hadith critic Muḥammad b. Ḥibbān al-Bustī (d. 354/965) recorded the following versions of the hadith in his *Ṣaḥīḥ*:

al-Ḥasan b. Sufyān—‘Ibrāhīm b. Sa‘īd—‘Abū ‘Usāmah—Hišām—‘Urwah—‘Ā’ishah:

⁹¹⁷ ‘Uqaylī (ed. Sarsāwī), *Ḍu‘afā’*, V, pp. 473-474, # 1755.

Marriage at six; consummation at nine; Hijrah; illness, shoulder-length hair; swing; marital preparation.

ʿAbū ʿArūbah al-Ḥarrānī—Zakariyyāʾ—al-Firyābī—Sufyān—Hišām—ʿUrwah—ʿĀʾiṣah:

Marriage at six; consummation at nine; together nine years.

Although Ibn Ḥibbān never explicitly expressed a judgement on any of these hadiths, their inclusion in his *Ṣaḥīḥ* strongly implies that he regarded them to be *ṣaḥīḥ*.

al-Ṭabarānī (d. 360/971)

The Palestinian Hadith critic Sulaymān b. ʿAḥmad al-Ṭabarānī (d. 360/971) commented on two versions of the marital-age hadith, the first of which was the following:

ʿAḥmad b. Zuhayr related to us—he said: “ʿUbayd Allāh b. Saʿd al-Zuhri related to us—he said: “ʿAbū al-Jawwāb related to us—he said: “Sufyān al-Ṭawrī related to us, from Hišām b. ʿUrwah, from his father, from ʿĀʾiṣah, who said: “The Messenger of God married me when I was a girl of six and I was taken to him when I was a girl of nine, and I lived with him nine [years].”””””

No one transmitted (*lam yarwī*) this hadith from Sufyān except for ʿAbū al-Jawwāb.⁹¹⁸

In other words, ʿAbū al-Jawwāb was isolated or uncorroborated in his transmission of this hadith from an eminent authority, making him suspect. However, given the survival of parallel transmissions of this hadith—with the same elements and often very similar wordings—from Sufyān’s other students (Qabīṣah and al-Firyābī), recorded in several notable collections already before the time of al-Ṭabarānī (including the works of al-Buḵārī, ʿAbū ʿAwānah, and Ibn Ḥibbān), it is unclear what al-Ṭabarānī meant in this instance.

Al-Ṭabarānī also recorded the following:

⁹¹⁸ Ṭabarānī (ed. Ṭāriq & Ḥusaynī), *al-Muʿjam al-ʿAwsaṭ*, II, p. 301, # 2042.

Mūsá b. Hārūn related to us: “‘Ishāq b. Rāhwayh related to us: “Yaḥyá b. ‘Ādam reported to us: “‘Abū Bakr b. ‘Ayyāš related to us, from al-‘Ajlaḥ, from ‘Abd Allāh b. ‘abī Mulaykah, from ‘Ā’iṣah, that the Prophet married her when she was a girl of six years and consummated the marriage with her when she was a girl of nine years.”””

No one transmitted (*lam yarwī*) this hadith from al-‘Ajlaḥ except for ‘Abū Bakr b. ‘Ayyāš, nor [did anyone transmit it] from ‘Abū Bakr except for Yaḥyá b. ‘Ādam. ‘Ishāq b. Rāhwayh transmitted it in isolation (*tafarrada bi-hi*).⁹¹⁹

Unlike al-Ṭabarānī’s previous comment, this one makes perfect sense: the transmission of *this version* of this hadith from al-‘Ajlaḥ to Ibn Rāhwayh is uncorroborated; both of the other two extant transmissions from al-‘Ajlaḥ mention that ‘Ā’iṣah was initially engaged to Jubayr b. Muṭ‘im, and both are also unraised (i.e., do not explicitly reach all the way back to ‘Ā’iṣah herself). Thus, it would seem that al-Ṭabarānī regarded Ibn Rāhwayh’s transmission from al-‘Ajlaḥ with suspicion (and rightly so).⁹²⁰

al-Dāraqūṭnī (d. 385/995)

In the *‘Ilal* of ‘Aḥmad b. Muḥammad al-Barqānī (d. 425/1033-1034), a collection of questions posed to and answers given by his master, the Baghdadian Hadith critic ‘Alī b. ‘Umar al-Dāraqūṭnī (d. 385/995), the following is recorded:

He [i.e., al-Dāraqūṭnī] was asked about the hadith of ‘Abū ‘Ubaydah, from ‘Abd Allāh [b. Mas‘ūd]: “The Prophet married ‘Ā’iṣah when she was a girl of six years and consummated the marriage with her when she was a girl of nine years.” Then he [i.e., al-Dāraqūṭnī] said: “‘Isrā’īl and Yūnus b. ‘abī ‘Ishāq [both] transmit it, from ‘Abū ‘Ishāq, from ‘Abū ‘Ubaydah, from ‘Abd Allāh [b. Mas‘ūd], as a *marfū‘*. Others transmitted it, from ‘Abū ‘Ishāq, from ‘Abū ‘Ubaydah, as a *mursal*. The *mursal* [version] is more likely (*‘aṣḥab*).”⁹²¹

In other words, al-Dāraqūṭnī declared the unraised version of the hadith ascribed to ‘Abū ‘Ishāq, from ‘Abū ‘Ubaydah, to be more reliable—or, more specifically, better

⁹¹⁹ *Ibid.*, VIII, p. 108, # 8116.

⁹²⁰ See the section on al-‘Ajlaḥ in ch. 2.

⁹²¹ Dāraqūṭnī (ed. Salafī), *al-‘Ilal al-Wāridah*, V, p. 305, # 901.

preserved or more likely to reflect the original—than the raised version, which reaches all the way back to Ibn Mas‘ūd.

Al-Barqānī also recorded the following judgement from al-Dāraquṭnī, after a discussion of various *faḍā’il* hadiths about ‘Ā’iṣah:

’Ismā‘īl b. ’abī Kālid transmitted this hadith, from ‘Abd al-Raḥmān b. ’abī al-Ḍaḥḥāk, from ‘Abd al-Raḥmān b. Muḥammad b. Zayd b. Jud‘ān, from ‘Ā’iṣah, but there is nothing sound about it (*wa-laysa fī-hā šay’ ṣaḥīḥ*).⁹²²

Clearly, al-Dāraquṭnī rejected ’Ismā‘īl’s version of the marital-age hadith as weak or fabricated.

al-Ḥākim al-Naysābūrī (d. 405/1014)

The Khurasanian Hadith critic Muḥammad b. ‘Abd Allāh al-Ḥākim al-Naysābūrī (d. 405/1014) recorded the following versions of the hadith in his *al-Mustadrak ‘alā al-Ṣaḥīḥayn*:

Maḳlad b. Ja‘far—Muḥammad b. Ḥarb—Sa‘īd b. Yaḥyá—Yaḥyá b. Sa‘īd—Muḥammad b. ‘Amr—Yaḥyá—‘Ā’iṣah:

Kawlah convinces the Prophet to propose to ‘Ā’iṣah and Sawdah; Kawlah goes to ‘Abū Bakr; ‘Abū Bakr sends for the Prophet and engages ‘Ā’iṣah to him; ‘Ā’iṣah is seven.

Muḥammad b. Ya‘qūb—’Aḥmad b. ‘Abd al-Jabbār—‘Abd Allāh b. ’Idrīs—Muḥammad b. ‘Amr—Yaḥyá—‘Ā’iṣah:

Kawlah convinces the Prophet to propose to ‘Ā’iṣah and Sawdah.

’Aḥmad b. ‘Ubayd—Ibn Dīzīl—’Abū Mushir—‘Abd Allāh b. ‘Abd al-Raḥmān—Yazīd b. Jābir—Jābir:

‘Ā’iṣah was married at seven; consummation at nine; Prophet died when she was eighteen; she died under Mu‘āwiyah, in the year 57.

⁹²² *Ibid.*, XV, p. 166.

Ibn Bālawayh—ʾIbrāhīm b. ʾIshāq—Muṣʿab b. ʿAbd Allāh—ʿAbd Allāh b. Muʿāwiyah—Hišām:

ʿUrwah wrote to al-Walīd; marriage, after ʿAdījah’s death; dream-vision of ʿĀʾiṣah; marriage at six; consummation, after the Hijrah, at nine; ʿĀʾiṣah’s death.

Ibn Baṭṭah—al-Ḥasan b. al-Jahm—al-Ḥusayn b. al-Faraj—al-Wāqidī:

ʿĀʾiṣah’s genealogy; marriage, during Šawwāl, in the tenth year of the Prophethood, three years before the Hijrah; wedding, during Šawwāl, eight months after the Hijrah; consummation at age nine.

Ibn Baṭṭah—al-Ḥasan b. al-Jahm—al-Ḥusayn b. al-Faraj—al-Wāqidī—ʿAbd al-Wāḥid b. Maymūn—Ḥabīb:

ʿAdījah’s death; ʿĀʾiṣah shown by angel; Prophet’s interactions with ʿĀʾiṣah’s family; ʿĀʾiṣah’s birth; ʿĀʾiṣah’s marriage at six; marriage to Sawdah.

Ibn Bālawayh—Mūsá b. Hārūn—Ziyād b. Yaḥyá—Mālik b. Suʿayr—ʾIsmāʿīl—ʿAbd al-Raḥmān b. al-Ḍaḥḥāk:

ʿAbd Allāh b. Šafwān and someone else came to ʿĀʾiṣah, who mentioned her nine special attributes; angel brought image; marriage at seven; consummation at nine; virgin; revelation in blanket; most-beloved; Quranic revelation and communal destruction; seeing Gabriel; the Prophet’s death and the angel.

Although al-Ḥākim did not explicitly express judgements on most of these hadiths, their inclusion in his *Mustadrak*, which was supposed to supplement the *Šaḥīḥayn* of al-Buḳārī and Muslim, strongly implies that he regarded them to be *šaḥīḥ*, despite the fact that some versions contradict each other (e.g., “six” vs. “seven”).

In some instances, however, al-Ḥākim explicitly offered judgements on the hadiths that he cited. For example, regarding the version of Muḥammad b. ʿAmr’s hadith that he received from Maḳlad b. Jaʿfar, al-Ḥākim commented: “This is a sound (*šaḥīḥ*) hadith according to the criterion (*šarṭ*) of Muslim, although neither of them [i.e., al-Buḳārī and

Muslim] cited it (*lam yukrijā-hu*).⁹²³ In other words, even though neither al-Buḵārī or Muslim included this particular version in their collections, it was still deemed by al-Ḥākim to fulfil the soundness-criteria of Muslim.

Similarly, after citing a version of ʿIsmāʿīl's *faḍā'il* hadith about ʿĀ'ishah that he received from Ibn Bālawayh, al-Ḥākim commented: "This is a hadith [that is] sound (*ṣaḥīḥ*) [in terms of] the *ʿisnād*, although neither of them [i.e., al-Buḵārī and Muslim] cited it (*lam yukrijā-hu*)."⁹²⁴ In contrast to al-Dāraquṭnī, it seems like al-Ḥākim accepted ʿIsmāʿīl's hadith.

ʿAbū Nuʿaym (d. 430/1038)

The Persian Hadith critic ʿAbū Nuʿaym ʿAḥmad b. ʿAbd Allāh al-ʿIṣfahānī (d. 430/1038) recorded the following versions of the hadith in his *al-Musnad al-Mustakraj ʿalā Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*:

Muḥammad b. ʿIbrāhīm—al-Ḥusayn b. Muḥammad—Muḥammad b. ʿUṭmān—ʿAbū ʿUsāmah—Hišām—ʿUrwah—ʿĀ'ishah:

ʿAbū Bakr al-Ṭaḥṭī—ʿUbayd b. Ḡannām—Ibn ʿabī Ṣaybah—ʿAbū ʿUsāmah—Hišām—ʿUrwah—ʿĀ'ishah:

Marriage at six; consummation at nine; Hijrah; illness, shoulder-length hair; swing; marital preparation.

ʿAbū al-ʿAbbās al-Ṣarṣarī—Yūsuf al-Qāḍī—Muḥammad b. ʿUbayd—Ḥammād b. Zayd—Hišām—ʿUrwah—ʿĀ'ishah:

ʿAbd Allāh b. Muḥammad—ʿAbū Yaḥyá al-Rāzī—Hannād—ʿAbū Muʿāwiyah—Hišām—ʿUrwah—ʿĀ'ishah:

Ibn Ḥayyān—ʿAbd al-Raḥmān b. al-Ḥasan—Hārūn b. ʿIshāq—ʿAbdah—Hišām—ʿUrwah—ʿĀ'ishah:

Marriage at six; consummation at nine; she still played dolls with her shy friends.

⁹²³ Ḥākim, *Mustadrak*, III, p. 443.

⁹²⁴ *Ibid.*, VII, p. 30.

ʿAbū ʿAmr b. Ḥamdān—al-Ḥasan b. Sufyān—Fayyād b. Zuhayr—ʿAbd al-Razzāq—Maʿmar—al-Zuhrī—ʿUrwah—ʿĀʾiṣah:

Marriage at seven; consummation at nine; her dolls were with her; Prophet died when she was eighteen.

Although ʿAbū Nuʿaym never explicitly expressed a judgement on any of these hadiths, their inclusion in his *al-Musnad al-Mustakraj*—intended as a collection of independent transmissions of the hadiths recorded in the *Ṣaḥīḥ* of Muslim—implies that he regarded them to be *ṣaḥīḥ*, even though they conflict on a core detail (i.e., “six” vs. “seven”).

Ibn ʿAbd al-Barr (d. 463/1071)

The Andalusian jurist and leading Mālikī Hadith scholar Yūsuf b. ʿAbd Allāh b. ʿAbd al-Barr al-Qurṭubī (d. 463/1071) recorded the following in his *Kitāb al-Istīʿāb*:

She [i.e., ʿĀʾiṣah] was a girl of six years, [although] it is [also] said: “...girl of seven...” And he consummated the marriage with her in Madinah, when she was a girl of nine: I do not know of them [i.e., the scholars] having disagreed thereon (*lā ʿaʿlamu-hum iḵtalafū fī dālika*).⁹²⁵

In other words, whilst the scholars—presumably meaning Sunnī scholars—disagree on whether ʿĀʾiṣah’s marital engagement occurred at six or seven, the part about her marital consummation at nine is universally accepted. This implies that the marital-age hadith in general—above all, the version of Hiṣām—was widely regarded as sound.

al-Baḡawī (d. 516/1122)

The Khurasanian Hadith scholar al-Ḥusayn b. Masʿūd al-Baḡawī (d. 516/1122) recorded many versions of the marital-age hadith in his *Šarḥ al-Sunnah*, some of which

⁹²⁵ Ibn ʿAbd al-Barr (ed. Bijāwī), *Istīʿāb*, part 4, p. 1881, # 4029.

he commented upon. For example, after citing a version deriving from al-Šāfi‘ī, from Sufyān b. ‘Uyaynah, from Hišām, from ‘Urwah, from ‘Ā’iṣah, which included the ‘dolls’ element, al-Baḡawī commented:

This is a hadith whose soundness is agreed-upon (*muttafaq ‘alā ṣiḥḥati-hi*). Muḥammad [al-Buḵārī] cited it (*‘aḵraja-hu*) from Muḥammad b. Yūsuf [al-Firyābī], from Sufyān [al-Ṭawrī], and both of them [i.e., al-Buḵārī and Muslim] cited it (*‘aḵrajā-hu*) via [other] paths of transmission (*ṭuruq*) from Hišām.⁹²⁶

Already with al-Baḡawī, the phrase “agreed-upon” (*muttafaq ‘alay-hi*) had clearly acquired its classical Hadith-scholarly technical meaning: that the hadith in question had been cited by both al-Buḵārī and Muslim in their *Ṣaḥīḥayn*.

After citing ‘Abd al-Razzāq’s version of the marital-age hadith, al-Baḡawī also commented: “This is a sound (*ṣaḥīḥ*) hadith, and with this *’isnād*.”⁹²⁷

Finally, after citing ‘Alī b. Mushir’s redaction of Hišām’s hadith, al-Baḡawī also commented: “This is a sound (*ṣaḥīḥ*) hadith.”⁹²⁸

Ibn Qudāmah (d. 620/1223)

The Levantine jurist and leading Ḥanbalī scholar ‘Abd Allāh b. ‘Aḥmad b. Muḥammad b. Qudāmah (d. 620/1223) recorded the following in his *al-Muḡnī*:

‘Ā’iṣah said: “The Prophet married me when I was a girl of six and consummated the marriage with me when I was a girl of nine.” [This hadith is] agreed upon (*muttafaq ‘alay-hi*).⁹²⁹

Once again, the authority of the *Ṣaḥīḥayn* was appealed to in order to establish the soundness of the marital-age hadith (in this case, evidently Hišām’s simple version).

⁹²⁶ Baḡawī (ed. ‘Arna’ūt), *Ṣarḥ al-Sunnah*, IX, p. 35.

⁹²⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 36.

⁹²⁸ *Ibid.*, XII, p. 136.

⁹²⁹ ‘Abd Allāh b. ‘Aḥmad b. Muḥammad b. Qudāmah (ed. ‘Abd Allāh b. ‘Abd al-Muḥsin al-Turkī & ‘Abd al-Fattāḥ Muḥammad al-Ḥulw), *al-Muḡnī*, vol. 9, 3rd ed. (Cairo, Egypt: Dār ‘Ālam al-Kutub, 1997), p. 398, # 1118.

Ibn Kaṭīr (d. 774/1373)

The famous Levantine Hadith scholar, exegete, and biographer ʿIsmāʿīl b. ʿUmar b. Kaṭīr (d. 774/1373) recorded the following in his *al-Sīrah al-Nabawiyyah*, after citing a transmission from Hišām, from his father ʿUrwah:

This which was said by ʿUrwah is [a hadith with an *ʿisnād* that is] discontinuous (*mursal*) in appearance [in this] context, as we established earlier, but it is as good as [a hadith with an *ʿisnād* that is] continuous (*muttaṣil*) in reality. His statement [that] “he married her when she was a girl of six years and consummated the marriage with her when she was a girl of nine” is that concerning which there is no difference of opinion between the people [of knowledge] (*lā kīlāf fī-hi bayna al-nās*); it has been firmly established (*qad ṭabata*) in the sound [sources] (*al-ṣiḥāḥ*) and others.⁹³⁰

Clearly, Ibn Kaṭīr regarded even the *mursal* or *munqaṭiʿ* versions of Hišām’s hadith to be *ṣaḥīḥ*. More broadly, the soundness of Hišām’s hadith was clearly seen as a matter of consensus between Sunnī scholars.

Badr al-Dīn al-ʿAynī (d. 855/1451)

The Syro-Egyptian jurist Badr al-Dīn Muḥammad b. ʿAḥmad al-ʿAynī (d. 855/1451), a leading Ḥanafī scholar, recorded the following in his *al-Bināyah Ṣarḥ al-Hidāyah*:

The hadith of ʿĀʾiṣah is famous (*mašhūr*) and close to being universally-transmitted (*qarīb ʾilā al-tawātur*); verily he [i.e., the Prophet] married her [i.e., ʿĀʾiṣah] when she was a girl of six years and consummated the marriage with her when she was a girl of nine years, and she was with him nine years.⁹³¹

In this instance, *mašhūr* may be meant in the technical sense of classical Hadith scholarship: that the given hadith is widely-transmitted, but not to the level of

⁹³⁰ Ibn Kaṭīr (ed. ʿAbd al-Wāḥid), *al-Sīrah al-Nabawiyyah*, II, p. 141.

⁹³¹ Badr al-Dīn al-ʿAynī (ed. Šaʿbān), *Bināyah*, V, p. 90.

mutawātir. That this is so is indicated by al-‘Aynī’s subsequent, explicit statement that the marital-age hadith (here clearly meaning the versions of Hišām and/or ‘Isrā’īl) is nearly *mutawātir*. Either way, al-‘Aynī clearly regarded the hadith to be *ṣaḥīḥ*.

Conclusion

After its origins and proliferation in Iraq and consequent spread across the Abbasid Caliphate, the hadith of ‘Ā’iṣah’s marital age was subjected to the evaluations of the emerging Hadith critics (*nuqqād al-ḥadīth*) within the broader proto-Sunnī Hadith-partisan movement (*‘aṣḥāb al-ḥadīth*). Given that most of the leading Hadith critics were the students of—or in scholarly and identitarian continuity with—the early major transmitters (and creators) of the marital-age hadith, it is not surprising that the hadith in general ended up being unanimously accepted as ‘sound’ (*ṣaḥīḥ*). Not all versions of the hadith were rubberstamped as such, however: the proto-Sunnī Hadith critics and later Sunnī Hadith scholars alike were confronted with a profusion of different—sometimes conflicting—transmissions and iterations thereof, forcing them to adjudicate therebetween. Thus, whilst the hadiths of Hišām, al-‘A‘maš, ‘Isrā’īl (from ‘Abū ‘Ishāq), and ‘Abd al-Razzāq (from al-Zuhrī) were generally accepted as *ṣaḥīḥ*, some specific transmissions from ‘Isrā’īl and ‘Abū ‘Ishāq more broadly—specifically, those ascribed all the way back to Ibn Mas‘ūd—were identified as ‘raised’ (i.e., having been subject to *raf‘*), and there was disagreement as to whether or not ‘Ismā‘īl’s *faḍā’il* hadith was *ṣaḥīḥ*. Overall, there seems to be little consistency or systematicity in the evaluations of the Hadith critics: instances of *raf‘*, *idrāj*, *sariqah*, and *kaḍīb* in numerous other versions of the hadith either went unnoticed or were positively accepted, even when they should have been obvious (i.e., by simply comparing the versions).⁹³² All of this is consistent with Melchert’s observation that early Hadith critics relied upon “intuition” and “a case-by-case, seat-of-the-pants approach to determining what was

⁹³² In particular, the various raisings of Hišām, his students, and their students, including ‘Abd al-Razzāq, unto ‘Ā’iṣah; the raisings of ‘Isrā’īl’s version, and other ascriptions via ‘Abū ‘Ishāq, unto ‘Ā’iṣah; the insertion of extraneous elements into various transmissions from Hišām; the interpolations of ‘Abū Mu‘āwiyah’s hadith, including the “seven” versions and Yaḥyá b. Yaḥyá’s false ascription; ‘Abtar’s borrowing from ‘Abū Mu‘āwiyah and false ascription via ‘Abū ‘Ishāq; etc. For all of these, see Chapter 2 of the present work.

sound and what was not.”⁹³³ Alternatively (or perhaps additionally), the Hadith critics were deeply committed to the general reliability of their traditionist forebears, resulting in widespread—though probably *synchronous* or *independent*—motivated reasoning in their evaluations. To put it simply, the Hadith critics were collectively motivated to accept the dubious transmissions of the likes of Hišām, resulting in an uneven or inconsistent application of their method.⁹³⁴ Either way, most of the fabrication, interpolation, and distortion in the marital-age hadith went unregistered or was simply ignored.

⁹³³ Melchert, *Ahmad*, 56.

⁹³⁴ For some similar ideas (i.e., a general tendency to downplay the problems with tradents), see Juynboll, *Muslim tradition*, ch. 5.

Chapter 6: Broader Implications for Hadith and Hadith Studies

Having thus intervened in the methodological debates of Hadith Studies, pinpointed the probable origins of the hadith of ‘Ā’īṣah’s marital age, reconstructed its growth and spread across the Abbasid Caliphate in minute detail, and tracked its reception by the early Hadith critics, we are now in a position to reflect on the broader implications of all of this for Hadith and Hadith Studies. In other words: what is the significance of this research? Why should we care?

Implications for Modern Methods and Debates

To begin with, I have shown that some iterations of the ICMA are vacuous, arbitrary, or otherwise unsound, especially when it comes to establishing the independence of texts. To solve this problem, I proposed or identified a more rigorous and defensible version of the method, appealing to the distinctiveness of PCL and CL traditions and our established background knowledge on the rise of writing and rigour in the transmission of Hadith. The present study has thus contributed to refining a key methodology within the field of Hadith Studies, in addition to a large set of relevant, corroborating data: time and again, my analysis of PCL and CL traditions within the marital-age material or corpus revealed recurring correlations, with particular wordings usually lining up with particular traditions. (I found this to be the case even with hadiths with short *matns*, thereby confirming Motzki’s suggestion that the ICMA can also be applied to such material, not just hadiths with lengthy *matns*.⁹³⁵) I have also shown that the results of ICMA should always be subjected to further form-critical and geographical analyses, lest the ultimate character and provenance of hadiths be overlooked: false *’isnāds* may be exposed thereby, and insights about the common origins or ur-forms of hadiths can be revealed even in the absence of *’isnāds*.

⁹³⁵ Motzki, ‘The Origins of Muslim Exegesis’, in Motzki, *Analysing Muslim Traditions*, 237.

My findings are also relevant to the general theories and models of specific scholars. For example, the results of my ICMA—in particular, the tendency for variation to decrease over time in Hadith transmission—are broadly consistent with the theses of both Schoeler and Yanagihashi regarding the general development of Hadith culture and transmission: in the first case, that major reworkings (in the middle of the 8th Century CE) gave way to lesser reworkings (at the turn of the 9th Century CE), which gave way to mere paraphrasing (in the 9th Century CE) and finally verbatim transmission (above all in the 10th Century CE)⁹³⁶; and, in the second case, that the alteration even of fundamental aspects of hadiths was common and therefore probably accepted amongst earlier traditionists (during the 8th Century CE), but not later traditionists (during the 9th and 10th Centuries CE).⁹³⁷

The results of my form-critical, geographical, and historical-critical analyses also have a bearing on debates about the role of CLs: in the case of the marital-age hadith at least, the earliest CLs (operating from the mid-to-late 8th Century CE) appear to have mostly created their respective versions from their own minds and/or by borrowing and reworking the material of their contemporaries, rather than accurately—or even inaccurately—transmitting material from their cited sources or predecessors. In this respect, my findings corroborate Schacht and Juynboll more than Motzki *et al.*⁹³⁸

The results of all of these analyses also have a bearing on debates about the general authenticity of Hadith and the presumption of skepticism. For example, according to Najam Haider, the last few decades of ICMA have shown that “most traditions are reliably dateable to the early 2nd/8th century”⁹³⁹ and that “traditions were being recorded without wholesale fabrication in the early 2nd/8th century Muslim world”,⁹⁴⁰ such that “the burden of proof with respect to these texts falls on those who claim fabrication.”⁹⁴¹ On the basis of my findings at least, and even on a careful reading of past ICMA, this assessment needs to be seriously modified: whilst it is true that most hadiths can be presumed to derive from sources operating in the middle of the 8th Century CE (i.e., the early 2nd Century AH), many can be shown to be later borrowings or dives, and almost all can be shown to have undergone reworking or

⁹³⁶ Schoeler (trans. Vagelpohl), *The Biography of Muḥammad*, *passim*.

⁹³⁷ Yanagihashi, *Studies*, *passim*.

⁹³⁸ For this debate, see Chapter 1 of the present work.

⁹³⁹ Haider, ‘The Geography of the *Isnād*’, 313.

⁹⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 315.

⁹⁴¹ *Ibid.*, n. 31.

alteration in the course of transmission, at least from the middle of the 8th Century CE to the middle the 9th. In other words, whilst there is a general tendency for post-CL tradents to accurately record *some data* from their cited sources, and whilst the full-blown creation of new *ʿisnāds* for *matns* is relatively uncommon after the middle of the 8th Century CE, accretions, errors, contaminations, interpolations, raisings, and other alterations were all extremely common until at least the 9th Century CE, which means that the *extant form* of any given hadith cannot be assumed to accurately represent the original formulation of a CL or 8th-Century source in any given instance. Thus, whilst most hadiths can be presumed to derive from sources operating in the middle of the 8th Century CE, their extant forms should also be presumed to be *reworked* or *altered*.

My survey of the reception of the marital-age hadith by the proto-Sunnī Hadith critics also exposes a general lack of systematicity or consistency in their evaluations of variants and transmissions, which is in turn consistent with Melchert’s suggestion that they approached Hadith in an *ad hoc* and intuitive fashion.

My general findings are also relevant to the more specific conclusions of some scholars—most notably, past assessments regarding the authenticity of the marital-age hadith: not only can the hadith not be attributed all the way back to ‘Ā’ishah, there are strong reasons to suspect that it was created later, *contra* al-ʿAlbānī, Juynboll, al-Munajjid, and Brown. Conversely, my findings—above all, the indications of an Iraqi provenance—corroborate the conclusions of a string of researchers and scholars from the last few decades, including Shanavas, Abdul-Raof, and Amin.⁹⁴² My findings also confirm Schoeler’s specific conclusion that a certain version of the *ʿifk* hadith is interpolated, and conflict with Anthony’s specific conclusion that the ‘letter’ version of Hišām’s marital-age can traced back to ‘Urwah, not to mention that such letters can be trusted in general.⁹⁴³

Implications for Hadith and History

My general findings also have at least three consequences for the history of Hadith and early Islam more broadly. Firstly, if my critical analysis of the origins of the marital-age

⁹⁴² For the views of all of these figures, see the Intro. of the present work.

⁹⁴³ For both of these, see Chapter 2 of the present work.

hadith and reconstruction of its development are correct, I have shown, in fairly minute detail, how a false hadith could arise, spread, diversify, and attain universal acceptance within early Sunnī Hadith scholarship. In other words, even a near-*mutawātir* hadith can be, and can be shown to be, inauthentic, in very concrete and specific ways, accounting for all extant versions, variants, and transmissions.⁹⁴⁴

Secondly, in the course of my ICMA, as I concurrently consulted Sunnī biographical dictionaries and other tradent-related prosopographies every step of the way,⁹⁴⁵ I found very little correlation between traditional Sunnī gradings of specific tradents, on the one hand, and the observable or demonstrable quality or state of their transmissions, on the other: alleged *ṭiqāt* sometimes transmitted accurately and sometimes not; alleged *ṣāliḥūn* sometimes transmitted accurately and sometimes not; alleged *ḍuʿafāʾ* sometimes transmitted accurately and sometimes not; and so forth. Of course, this is not to say that there was *no* correlation at all: for example, al-Wāqidī was generally regarded as a *kaḍḍāb* by later Hadith critics and, as it happens, all of his versions of the marital-age hadith are fabricated, interpolated, or otherwise highly suspect. In general, however, a tradent's being judged *ṭiqah* or *ṭabt* did not actually predict that their transmissions would be accurate—more often than not, their transmissions were interpolated, contaminated, or otherwise distorted, ranging from changes to the *ʾisnād* to changes to the details and even the constitutive elements of the *matn*.

Thirdly and finally, my general findings have an obvious implication for the historical Muḥammad: there is no longer any reason to think that Muḥammad married ʿĀʾiṣah—and consummated the marriage with her—when she was a young girl. In this respect, my research is actually superfluous: even if the marital-age hadith can be traced back to ʿĀʾiṣah (i.e., actually reflects her own words), there are strong reasons to doubt its authenticity (i.e., that ʿĀʾiṣah was accurately self-reporting on the matter). This is not because of conflicting chronologies or any of the other considerations commonly adduced in this regard, but much more simply, because it is extremely unlikely that ʿĀʾiṣah would have known—or even *could have known*—her own age. This

⁹⁴⁴ For some notable earlier attempts of this kind, see Juynboll, *Muslim tradition*, ch. 3; *id.*, '(Re)Appraisal', 322 ff.

⁹⁴⁵ This data was originally included in ch. 2 of the present work, but had to be omitted due to limitations of space. However, my findings can be easily reproduced, by comparing the results of my ICMA regarding any specific tradent to the Hadith-critical judgements thereof in the *rijāl* works.

is because ‘Ā’īshah, in her formative years, grew up in a society that was still stateless (or only just beginning to acquire a state, through the efforts of Muḥammad)⁹⁴⁶ and certainly lacked a bureaucracy and bureaucratic culture,⁹⁴⁷ not to mention a scholarly or literary tradition.⁹⁴⁸ Such societies usually pay little heed to dates of birth and age (since they serve no real function) and lack the means to record such data in any case (i.e., birth certificates, government records, personal diaries, etc.). This has been found time and again in rural, tribal, and nomadic societies around the world, including: certain Native American societies in the United States at the beginning of the 19th Century⁹⁴⁹; the Ababda of Egypt at the beginning of the 19th Century⁹⁵⁰; the Samoyeds of Siberia at the beginning of the 20th Century⁹⁵¹; the bedouins of the Negev in the early 20th Century⁹⁵²; the Amhara of Ethiopia as of 1995⁹⁵³; the rural population of Papua New Guinea as of 2002⁹⁵⁴; the Tarahumara of Mexico as of 2015⁹⁵⁵; the general

⁹⁴⁶ For the stateless condition of the Hijaz at the time, see, for example, Crone, *Meccan Trade*, 145-147, 236.

⁹⁴⁷ For the belated rise of the Islamic state and its bureaucracy, see Chase F. Robinson, *‘Abd al-Malik* (Oxford, UK: Oneworld Publications, 2005), ch. 4, and Robert G. Hoyland, ‘New documentary texts and the early Islamic state’, *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies*, Volume 69, Issue 3 (2006), 395-416.

⁹⁴⁸ For the belated rise of such a tradition (i.e., over the subsequent two centuries), see Jonathan E. Brockopp, *Muhammad’s Heirs: The Rise of Muslim Scholarly Communities, 622–950* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2017).

⁹⁴⁹ Henry R. Schoolcraft, *Information Respecting the History, Condition and Prospects of the Indian Tribes of the United States: Collected and prepared under the direction of the Bureau of Indian Affairs, Part III* (Philadelphia, USA: Lippincott, Grambo & Company, 1853), 238: “As the Indians do not know their age, we cannot tell the exact time or age of bearing children”.

⁹⁵⁰ Frédéric Cailliaud, ‘Travels in the Oasis of Thebes and El Dakel’, in *New Voyages and Travels*, Volume 7 (London, UK: Richard Phillips & Co.), 47: “They never know their own age: when questioned, their answer is, “I was born some years before or after such a pacha, such a catastrophe,” &c.”

⁹⁵¹ Elena A. Volzhanina, ‘The Interpretation of Nenets Demography in the First Third of the Twentieth Century’, in David G. Anderson (ed.), *The 1926/27 Soviet Polar Census Expeditions* (New York, USA: Berghahn Books, 2011), 83-84, citing a 1926-1927 report: Nenets “cannot tell the age of a child” and “do not know their age”, and Samoyeds “do not know their age”.

⁹⁵² Helmut V. Muhsam, *Beduin of the Negev: Eight Demographic Studies* (Jerusalem, Israel: Jerusalem Academic Press, 1966), 37: “the beduin themselves do not know their age.”

⁹⁵³ Reidulf K. Molvaer, *Socialization and social control in Ethiopia* (Wiesbaden, Germany: Harrassowitz Verlag, 1995), 89: “Few Amhara children know their date of birth.”

⁹⁵⁴ Deborah Carlyon, *Mama Kuma: One Woman, Two Cultures* (St. Lucia, Australia: University of Queensland Press, 2002), 160, n. 2: “Most village-born New Guineans do not know their date of birth.”

⁹⁵⁵ Alfonso Paredes & Fructuoso Irigoyen Rascón, *Tarahumara Medicine: Ethnobotany and Healing Among the Rarámuri of Mexico* (Norman, USA: University of Oklahoma Press, 2015), 96: “few persons know their date of birth unless they were born during a holiday. After a couple of years have passed, parents seem to have forgotten the birth dates of their offspring.”

population of the Solomon Islands as of 2016⁹⁵⁶; the Khasi of Bangladesh as of 2018⁹⁵⁷; the general population of northern Benin as of 2018⁹⁵⁸; the rural population of Somalia as of 2018⁹⁵⁹; and many others.⁹⁶⁰ If even modern pre-bureaucratic and pre-literary societies do not—or indeed cannot—keep track of dates of birth and ages, this is all the more reason to think that ‘Ā’īshah and her contemporaries in early 7th-Century Hijaz did not or could not as well. That this was so is strengthened by the belated rise of dating—and any interest in dating—in early Muslim society, which can be demonstrated in at least three ways. Firstly, it was only after the Great Conquests that a consistent (Hijrah-based) calendar and chronology was adopted amongst the Arabs and Muslims—and even then, it was adopted gradually and sporadically.⁹⁶¹ Secondly, early authorities on the life of Muḥammad and Islamic history more broadly made little-to-no effort to date their reports or arrange them in chronological order—it was only from middle of the 8th Century CE onward that such efforts were made, at least with any kind of consistency.⁹⁶² Thirdly, the birth-dates and even death-dates of early traditionists (operating in the 7th and even the 8th Century CE) had to be inferred by later Hadith-oriented prosopographers based on positions in *’isnāds*, given that such data was simply often not known or not recorded in earlier times.⁹⁶³ Once again, an *a fortiori* argument applies: if the post-Conquest Arabs and Muslims, the early

⁹⁵⁶ Jennifer Corrin, ‘The Rights of the Child in Solomon Islands’ Plural Legal System’, in Olga C. Jančić (ed.), *The Rights of the Child in a Changing World: 25 Years After the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child* (Cham, Switzerland: Springer, 2016), 269: “some people do not know their date of birth. It is not unusual for people to assess their approximate age, and that of family members, by reference to an important event”.

⁹⁵⁷ Rekha Pande & Theo van der Weide, *Handbook of Research on Multicultural Perspectives on Gender and Aging* (Hershey, USA: IGI Global, 2018), 144: “Most of the participants did not know their date of birth and therefore did not know their age.”

⁹⁵⁸ Erdmute Alber, *Transfers of Belonging: Child Fostering in West Africa in the 20th Century* (Leiden, the Netherlands: Koninklijke Brill NV, 2018), 213, n. 34: “Many older people in northern Benin do not know their date of birth and therefore cannot say exactly how old they are.”

⁹⁵⁹ Carol Bohmer & Amy Shuman, *Political Asylum Deceptions: The Culture of Suspicion* (Cham, Switzerland: Palgrave Macmillan, 2018), 43: “In Somalia and other African countries, people born or married in rural areas are unlikely to have birth certificates; many of them do not even know their date of birth.”

⁹⁶⁰ Carl Haub, ‘World Population History’, in George Modelski & Robert A. Denemark (eds.), *World System History: Encyclopedia of Life Support Systems* (Oxford, UK: Eolss Publishers Co. Ltd., 2009), 97: “Many in developing countries do not know their age”.

⁹⁶¹ Noth & Conrad (trans. Bonner), *The Early Arabic Historical Tradition*, 40-42; Pourshariati, *Decline and Fall*, 167-168.

⁹⁶² Donner, *Narratives*, ch. 10; Görke, ‘Prospects and Limits’, in Boekhoff-van der Voort *et al.* (eds.), *Transmission and Dynamics*, 149.

⁹⁶³ Dickinson, *Development*, 116; Melchert, *Ahmad*, 52-53; *id.*, ‘Bukhārī and Early Hadith Criticism’, 12; *id.*, ‘*Encyclopedia of Canonical Ḥadīth*’, 409; *id.*, ‘Theory and Practice of Hadith Criticism’, in Sijpesteijn & Adang (eds.), *Islam at 250*, 75-76.

authorities on Islamic history, and even early traditionists generally had no interest in dates, dating, and chronology, this is all the more reason to think that the earliest Muslims likewise lacked such interests. It is thus extremely unlikely that ‘Ā’ishah and her contemporaries would have known her age: it was not the sort of thing that people in such conditions usually cared about, nor was it something that they had any realistic means of recording. Even if ‘Ā’ishah in general possessed an extraordinary memory (as is sometimes claimed), this would be of no avail for data that she likely never memorised in the first place. The hadith of ‘Ā’ishah’s marital age—including the assertion that her marriage was consummated when she was nine—is thus necessarily the product of speculation or guesswork, whether by ‘Ā’ishah or someone later.⁹⁶⁴

If indeed ‘Ā’ishah was married to Muḥammad as a virgin, it is more likely that she was twelve-to-fourteen years old at the time of her marital consummation, at least on the basis of general historical prior probability.⁹⁶⁵ This was reportedly the average age-range for menarche and, consequently, the average and/or minimum age of marriage for girls in Ancient and Mediaeval societies around the world, including Egypt,⁹⁶⁶ the Near East,⁹⁶⁷ Crete,⁹⁶⁸ Greece,⁹⁶⁹ the Roman Empire,⁹⁷⁰ Roman-era Jewish

⁹⁶⁴ The notion that the hadith authentically goes back to ‘Ā’ishah but is still erroneous was also expressed by al-’Idlibī, albeit on different grounds; see the Intro. of the present work.

⁹⁶⁵ By contrast, we have no reliable data on early 7th-Century Arabian marital trends, given all of the source problems outlined in Chapter 1 of the present work. See also the discussion in Chapter 3 of the present work concerning a relevant report. Cf. Anthony, *Muhammad*, 115: “Based on the available data, it appears that ‘Ā’ishah’s age at her first marriage was not an extreme outlier in the seventh-century Ḥijāz.” Anthony’s “data” (*ibid.*, n. 39) in fact comprises a single questionable datum: an unsubstantiated report about Ḥaḥṣah bt. ‘Umar’s first marriage.

⁹⁶⁶ Charles Freeman, *Egypt, Greece and Rome: Civilizations of the Ancient Mediterranean*, 2nd ed. (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2004), 88: “Marriage took place for women at the onset of puberty, between 12 and 14”.

⁹⁶⁷ Milton Eng, *The Days of Our Years: A Lexical Semantic Study of the Life Cycle in Biblical Israel* (New York, USA: T & T Clark International, 2011), 55: “Puberty is marked by the onset of menstruation, usually in the girl’s twelfth year. At age 16 or even less, the typical woman is married and begins bearing children.”

⁹⁶⁸ Ronald F. Willetts, *The Law Code of Gortyn* (Berlin, Germany: Walter de Gruyter & Co., 1967), 10: “The age of puberty in females may have generally been considered to be twelve in the light of that passage of the Code which gives the marriageable age of an heiress as twelve.”

⁹⁶⁹ Aristotle (trans. D’Arcy W. Thompson), *The Works of Aristotle: Works translated into English under the editorship of W. D. Ross, Volume 4: Historia Animalium* (Oxford, UK: Clarendon Press, 1910), vii-viii: “When twice seven years old, in the most of cases, the male begins to engender seed; and at the same time hair appears upon the pubes, in like manner, so Alcmaeon of Croton remarks, as plants first blossom and then seed. [...] At the same age in the female, the breasts swell and the so-called catamenia commence to flow; and this fluid resembles fresh blood.” Don P. M. Weerakkody, ‘Demography’, in Nigel Wilson (eds.), *Encyclopedia of Ancient Greece* (New York, USA: Taylor & Francis, 2006), 214, col. 1: “early marriage for women” occurred in their “mid- to late teens”.

⁹⁷⁰ Heather M. Prescott, ‘VI.8 ~ Adolescent Nutrition and Fertility’, in Kenneth F. Kiple & Kriemhild C. Ornelas (eds.), *The Cambridge World History of Food, Volume 2* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 1454, col. 1: “Reviews of Greek and Roman textbooks, for example, indicate that the

communities,⁹⁷¹ the Byzantine Empire,⁹⁷² Sasanid Persia,⁹⁷³ Tang China,⁹⁷⁴ Mediaeval Europe,⁹⁷⁵ and Ancient and Mediaeval India (albeit with notable fluctuations and exceptions).⁹⁷⁶ (Even now, the global average age of menarche ranges from 12.5 to 13.5.⁹⁷⁷) In fact, given that “the onset of menstruation is highly dependent on biological living standards and physiological stress”, and given that historical records are almost always “biased towards an elite public and reference group” (i.e., girls with easy

average age of menarche in the ancient world was about 13.5 years”. *Ibid.*, 1454, col. 2: “Roman law linked the age of marriage with the age of puberty, which was believed to be 14 for boys and 12 for girls”. Christopher Kelly, *The Roman Empire: A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2006), 107: in Roman Egypt, “women married early; on average at just under 20 years”. *Ibid.*: in the Western provinces, there was “an average age at first marriage in the late teens or early 20s”. Saskia Hin, *The Demography of Roman Italy: Population Dynamics in an Ancient Conquest Society 201 BCE–14 CE* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 151: “Ancient [Greek and Roman] authors suggest that average age at menarche was around 14.” *Ibid.*, 175: the average age of marriage for women was “mid-teens”.

⁹⁷¹ Gordon P. Hugenberger, *Marriage as a Covenant: Biblical Law and Ethics as Developed from Malachi* (Eugene, USA: Wipf & Stock Publishers, 1994), 315: “the Talmud recommends that girls marry at puberty, that is, at twelve or twelve and a half (*b. Yebam. 62d*)”. James S. Jeffers, ‘Jewish and Christian Families in First-Century Rome’, in Karl P. Donfried & Peter Richardson (eds.), *Judaism and Christianity in First-Century Rome* (Grand Rapids, USA: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1998), 134-135: “The age of first marriage for Jewish girls probably was also between twelve and eighteen. Epigraphical and papyrological evidence suggests an average age of fifteen, while rabbinical sources generally assume an age of twelve, with betrothals earlier.”

⁹⁷² Baugh, *Minor Marriage*, 28: “Byzantine law required that a girl attain the age of thirteen before contracting a marriage.”

⁹⁷³ *Ibid.*, 28-29: “Although investigation into Sasanian-era (224–651 CE) child marriage practices unearths scant information, the age of twelve is again important for girls. According to the Avesta, the age of majority was clearly set at fifteen for boys as well as girls; Middle Persian civil law allowed marriage at age nine, provided that consummation wait until age twelve.” For a notable minority or alternative Sasanid tradition about marital consummation at age nine, see Chapter 3 of the present work.

⁹⁷⁴ Ps.-Huang Ti (trans. Ilza Veith), *Huang Ti Nei Ching Su Wên: The Yellow Emperor’s Classic of Internal Medicine* (Berkeley, USA: University of California Press, 2002), 98-99: “When she reaches her fourteenth year she begins to menstruate”. Given that this lines up with data from around the world, it should not be rejected as a mere trope of “numerical concordances” and “parallelism” (*pace* Veith, in *ibid.*, 20).

⁹⁷⁵ Prescott, ‘VI.8 ~ Adolescent Nutrition and Fertility’, in Kiple & Ornelas (eds.), *The Cambridge World History of Food*, II, 1454, col. 1: “evidence from medieval [European] textbooks indicates that the age of menarche varied from 13 to 15 years”. Hin, *The Demography of Roman Italy*, 178: “Most women married between age 16.6 and 22.8” in Mediaeval Tuscany.

⁹⁷⁶ B. Datta & D. Gupta, ‘The age at menarche in ancient India as compared to the data from classical Greece and Rome’, *Pediatric Research*, Volume 15, Number 1 (1981), 83: “Almost all of the legislators in their writings pointed out that the age of menarche was at 12 although full completion of puberty took place at age 16.” Krishna C. Sagar, *Foreign Influence on Ancient India* (New Delhi, India: Northern Book Centre, 1992), 290: “during the Mauryan period... girls were being married at the age of 14 or 15.” Abraham Eraly, *The First Spring: The Golden Age of India* (New Delhi, India: Penguin Books India Pvt. Ltd., 2011), 335: “The Arab scholar Al-Biruni in the tenth century noted that the normal age of a brahmin bride was around twelve. In South India, boys were considered marriageable at age sixteen, and girls at twelve”. For the recurrence of female child marriage (i.e., *prepubescent* marriage) at various points in Indian history, see Sagar, *Foreign Influence on Ancient India*, 289-290, and Eraly, *The First Spring*, 334-335.

⁹⁷⁷ David F. Bjorklund & Carlos H. Blasi, *Child and Adolescent Development: An Integrated Approach* (Belmont, USA: Wadsworth, Cengage Learning, 2011), 154.

lifestyles and access to better diets), “the average age at which the majority of the female population entered their fertile phase could have been substantially higher.”⁹⁷⁸ *Mutatis mutandis*, ‘Ā’īshah, a girl growing up under the stresses of the Hijrah, the conflict with Makkah, and the general impoverished conditions and resources of early 7th-Century Hijaz, probably also reached menarche at or after age fourteen. Thus, if the Arab society of the Hijaz followed the general global pattern of marrying off girls following menarche, it is probable that that ‘Ā’īshah was at least fourteen years old—and plausibly even older—at the time of her marital consummation with Muḥammad.

Of course, all of this is extremely probabilistic and tentative, but as is so often the case with modern attempts to reconstruct the earliest phase of Islamic history, such uncertainty cannot be avoided. In other words, there is nothing exceptional about this particular case: in light of the profound problems of the Islamic literary sources and the limitations of the available methods of analysis, our understanding of the life and times of Muḥammad and his followers necessarily remains extremely provisional.

⁹⁷⁸ Hin, *The Demography of Roman Italy*, 151. Hin focuses on the Roman and Greek world, but her points apply in every other case as well. For the factors that delay menarche and puberty more generally, see also Prescott, ‘VI.8 ~ Adolescent Nutrition and Fertility’, in Kiple & Ornelas (eds.), *The Cambridge World History of Food*, II, 1453, col. 2, and Marloes Schoonheim, ‘Demography: Comparative History’, in Bonnie G. Smith (ed.), *The Oxford Encyclopedia of Women in World History, Volume 2: Dance–Judith* (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2008), 37, col. 1.

Conclusion

The hadith-tradition of ‘Ā’iṣah bt. ‘abī Bakr’s marital age is a widely-transmitted family of some 200+ reports that can be found all across the Islamic—in particular, the Sunnī—literary corpus, above all in Hadith, historical, and legal collections. Most versions of the hadith state that ‘Ā’iṣah (d. 57-58/677-678) was betrothed to the Prophet Muḥammad (d. 11/632) at the age of six or seven and that her marriage was consummated at the age of nine, although some versions instead state that she was betrothed at nine. The majority have *’isnāds* that reach all the way back to ‘Ā’iṣah herself, almost always via a string of Madinan or Kufan intermediaries; a few reach instead back to her Hijazo-Kufan contemporary, ‘Abd Allāh b. Mas‘ūd (d. 32-33/652-654), always via a string of Kufan intermediaries; quite a few only reach as far back as ‘Ā’iṣah’s students amongst the Followers (*tābi‘ūn*), above all, her Madinan nephew ‘Urwah b. al-Zubayr (d. 93-101/711-720) and her Kufan student ‘Abū ‘Ubaydah ‘Āmir b. ‘Abd Allāh (d. 81/700-701), respectively via Madinan and Kufan intermediaries; and a small handful claim different regional genealogies or sources altogether.

On the basis of a critical, consistent, and falsifiable version of the *’isnād-cum-matn* analysis (ICMA), applied to all of these extant versions, several underlying redactions of the hadith can be reconstructed and traced back to a series of common links (CLs) operating from the middle of the 8th Century CE to the middle of the 9th, one of the earliest—and certainly the most prolific—being the Madino-Iraqian traditionist Hiṣām b. ‘Urwah b. al-Zubayr (d. 146-147/763-765). By contrast, the hadith cannot be credibly traced all the way back to ‘Ā’iṣah herself, nor even to her students and immediate successors—at least not on the basis of an ICMA.

In fact, the notion that the hadith derives from any major figure in 7th- or 8th-Century Madinah, or that it predates the middle of the 8th Century CE even in Iraq, is flatly contradicted by the available evidence, on several points. Firstly, all of the earliest Madinan legal and biographical works—which are generally overflowing with transmissions from ‘Ā’iṣah, ‘Urwah, Hiṣām, and all of the other early alleged Madinan sources for the marital-age hadith, and for which the marital-age hadith would have been expedient—uniformly fail to cite it, which is straightforwardly inconsistent with its early circulation in Madinah at the hands of ‘Ā’iṣah *et al.* Secondly, all of the earliest

CLs for this hadith are Iraqi or moved to Iraq (including Hišām), and in general, Iraqians overwhelmingly predominate in its early transmission and dissemination. Thirdly, the earliest Kufan legal collections—which are generally overflowing with transmissions from the alleged early Kufan transmitters of the marital-age hadith, and for which the marital-age hadith would have been expedient—likewise uniformly omit all mention of the hadith, which is straightforwardly inconsistent with its earlier circulation amongst the Companions and Followers of Kufah. All of this strongly suggests that the hadith originated amongst the traditionists of Iraq during the middle of the 8th Century CE, lacking earlier roots in Iraq and Madinah alike, or in other words: Hišām and the other early CLs in Iraq falsely ascribed their respective redactions of the hadith back to their Madinan and Kufan predecessors. In Hišām’s case, this occurred after he moved from Madinah (where he left no credible trace of the hadith) to Kufah and then Baghdad (where he transmitted the hadith to a vast array of students), during the early Abbasid period.

Hišām’s status as a veritable super-CL in the transmission of the hadith—far overshadowing even his fellow CLs—immediately marks him out as a plausible candidate for the hadith’s ultimate originator, which is consistent with the more archaic-seeming character of his original, simple redaction (being an ascription to a Follower rather than a Companion). This is corroborated by the striking way in which Hišām’s simple version is the strongest candidate for reflecting or being the ur-hadith that inferably lies behind all extant iterations of the hadith-tradition as a whole: his version alone can explain the rise of (i.e., *could plausibly give rise to*) virtually every other variant. To all of this can be added the fact that Hišām had the strongest motive of all of the CLs to create such a hadith, since it served as ammunition not just for the proto-Sunnī cause, but for the defence of his family in particular, against proto-Šī‘ī attacks on ‘Ā’iṣah: her young age at marriage served to highlight or emphasise her virginity, which in turn served as her most striking unique characteristic *vis-à-vis* the Prophet’s other wives, which in turn justified the proto-Sunnī claim that she was the Prophet’s favourite wife. All of this perfectly matches the abovementioned circumstances of Hišām’s creation of the hadith: it occurred after he moved from Madinah to Kufah, which was then the centre of Shi’ism. In short, on the basis of a combined form-critical, geographical, and historical-critical analysis, it seems likely

that the marital-age hadith emerged in the polemical and sectarian milieu of early Abbasid Iraq.

As the hadith diversified in Iraq and spread to the other provinces of the Abbasid Caliphate, it acquired a number of false, secondary, diving *'isnāds*, as some traditionists across the empire concocted, inferred, or perhaps even accidentally created alternative—usually *local* and/or *familial*—paths of transmission for their own versions. Despite this, most regions of the empire openly received their versions of the hadith from Iraqians or those who explicitly received it from Iraqians, or in other words: Iraqians were the chief agents of the hadith's transmission in the *historical* or *verifiable* era of the late 8th and early 9th Centuries CE, whilst Madinans are only present in the *legendary* or *ascribed-to* era of the 7th and early 8th Centuries CE, in terms of where they appear in the relevant *'isnāds*.

Because the marital-age hadith was disseminated by the leading Iraqi traditionists of the mid-to-late 8th Century CE, its acceptance by the subsequent proto-Sunnī Hadith critics of the 9th Century CE was practically inevitable: the latter venerated the former and saw themselves as a continuation of the same scholarly and communal tradition, and simply inherited their transmissions. Thus, although some versions of the marital-age hadith—above all, those with conflicting contents and/or those transmitted by less famous or less respected sources—were subject to scrutiny and criticism, many versions were judged to be 'sound' (*ṣaḥīḥ*), usually without any explanation and always without any kind of real argumentation.

Some of these findings have broader implications for both the modern methods and debates of Hadith Studies, on the one hand, and the history of Hadith and early Islam, on the other. In the first case, the present work has variously: refined and defended the ICMA; demonstrated the necessity of subjecting the results of any ICMA to a further geographical and form-critical analysis; contributed a large body of evidence for the hypothesis that Hadith transmission evolved from earlier imprecision to later precision; contributed a large body of evidence for the hypothesis that the alteration and interpolation of hadiths was common until at least the early 9th Century CE; and contributed further evidence for the hypothesis that the proto-Sunnī Hadith critics were unsystematic or inconsistent in their evaluations of Hadith, plausibly relying on intuition and/or a general veneration for their hallowed forebears. In the second case, the present work has variously: demonstrated how even a near-*mutawātir* hadith

could have arisen and spread during the 8th Century CE; demonstrated—albeit implicitly—that the reliable reputations of at least 8th- and 9th-Century tradents do not reliably predict actual reliability in transmission; and finally (and most obviously), demonstrated that the hadith of ‘Ā’iṣah’s marriage to Muḥammad as a child is likely an 8th-Century polemical creation. Even if the hadith truly derived from ‘Ā’iṣah herself, however, it would probably still be false: given the conditions of Hijazian society at the time, it is highly unlikely that ‘Ā’iṣah or anyone else would have—or even could have—known her age at the time of her marriage, especially decades after the event. On the basis of general historical probability, it is more likely that ‘Ā’iṣah’s marriage was consummated when she was twelve-to-fourteen years old, if not older, although, as with so many other aspects of early Islamic history, there is currently no way to know for sure.

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