CRITICISM OF THE PROTO-HADITH CANON: AL-DĀRAQUTNĪ’S ADJUSTMENT OF THE ṢAḤĪḤAYN

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Although in modern times the Ṣaḥīḥ Hadith collections of Muḥammad b. Ismāʿīl al-Bukhārī (d. 256/870) and Muslim b. al-Ḥajjāj (d. 261/875) have achieved canonical status in the Islamic world, Muslims studying the Prophetic legacy have a long and elaborate tradition of criticizing these authoritative compilations. The most salient and influential

1 Goldziher concluded that ‘the veneration [of the Ṣaḥīḥs of al-Bukhārī and Muslim] never went so far as to cause free criticism of the sayings and remarks incorporated in these collections to be considered impermissible or unseemly…’; see Ignaz Goldziher, Muslim Studies II, ed. S. M. Stern (Chicago: Aldine Atherton, 1971), 236. Although Goldziher adduces ample proof for his conclusion from the pre-modern period, today only some senior scholars such as Shaykh Fāhūd al-Ulwânī (personal communication) and Salafī clerics such as Ibn ʿUthaymīn (d. 2001) and the controversial Nāṣir al-Dīn al-Albānī (d. 1999), dare to question some of the collections’ contents (for more on this issue see Muhammad Abd al-Rauf, ‘Hadith Literature – I: The Development of the Science of Hadith’, in Cambridge History of Arabic Literature, i: Arabic Literature until the End of the Umayyad Period, eds. A. F. L. Beeston et al., 5 vols. (London: Cambridge University Press, 1983), i. 285; Nāṣir al-Dīn al-Albānī (ed.), Mukhtāṣar ṣaḥīḥ al-imām al-Bukhārī, 6 vols. (Beirut: al-Maktab al-Islāmī, 1399/1978); and Muḥammad b. Ṣāliḥ b ʿUthaymīn, Sharḥ al-bayqūniyya fī muṣṭalāb al-hadīth, ed. Abū ʿAbdallāh al-Julaymī (Cairo: Maktabat al-Sunna, 1415/1995), 24). Shiʿī scholars, of course, are not bound by Sunnī consensus, and scholars like ‘Abd al-Husayn al-Mūsawī have severely criticized the Ṣaḥīḥayn by discounting all of Abū Hurayra’s hadiths as unreliable; see ‘Abd al-Husayn Sharaf al-Dīn al-Mūsawī, Abū Hurayra (Beirut: Dār al-Zahrā’, 1397/1977).

Although in al-Dāraquṭnī’s time the Hadith canon as we now understand it did not yet exist, the works of al-Bukhārī and Muslim had already emerged as leading collections: see Goldziher, 240. We should therefore view al-Dāraquṭnī’s criticisms as part of the canonization process and not a challenge to it. As such, I have selected the term ‘proto-Hadith canon’ for this emerging canonical literature. For more discussion on Hadith canonization, see Mohammad Fadel, ‘Ibn Ḥaḍar’s Ḥady al-Sārī: a Medieval Interpretation of the Structure of al-Bukhārī’s al-Jāmī’ al-Sahīḥ: Introduction and Translation’, Journal of Near Eastern Studies, 54 (1995), 162–3 and Bernard Weiss, The Search for God’s Law (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1992), 259–60.
critique has been the Kitāb al-ilzāmāt wa-l-tatabbu’, ‘The Book of Suggested Additions and Revisions’, of ‘Alī b. ‘Umar al-Dāraquṭnī (d. 385/995). When Muslim scholars first pronounced the formula of the umma’s infallible consensus over the works of al-Bukhārī and Muslim, the material al-Dāraquṭnī objected to was excluded. Even today, this fourth/tenth-century scholar’s criticisms have proven to be the little-known Achilles’ heel of those Muslims who defend these works against the attacks of secularists and Islamic modernists.

Several modern scholars have mentioned al-Dāraquṭnī’s critique of the two Sahih works (the Sahihayn) of al-Bukhārī and Muslim, yet none has explored the author’s objectives or the nature of his criticism. This article investigates the possible methodological and ideological factors that could have driven al-Dāraquṭnī’s critique. Unfortunately, al-Dāraquṭnī proves to be one of Islamic civilization’s more laconic scholars, leaving no introductions or explanatory works setting out his approach to Hadith criticism. By examining his collective output, however, and focusing on the Kitāb al-ilzāmāt wa-l-tatabbu’, we can both identify the scholar’s methods and isolate his motives. This process demonstrates that al-Dāraquṭnī took a profound interest in the Sahihayn and sought to correct any imperfections he found in them. He understood Hadith to be wholly the product of chains of transmission, and his approach thus revolved around questions of a narration’s form to the exclusion of its content. Consequently, his own opinions on legal, ritual, or theological questions played no discernible part in his efforts.


4 Goldziher and Muhammad Abd al-Rauf both deal with al-Dāraquṭnī’s criticism of the Sahihayn in their discussion of the development of Hadith literature. Although helpful and highly insightful, these two studies are too general to delve into the specifics of al-Dāraquṭnī’s work; see Goldziher, 236; and Abd al-Rauf, i. 285.
Rather, al-Dāraquṭnī’s objections to items in the Sahih collections stemmed from a methodological sternness and a demand for accuracy that exceeded that of their authors as well as the majority of later Sunnī scholars.5

AL-DĀRAQUṬNĪ’S LIFE AND WORK

Abū Hasan ‘Alī b. ‘Umar b. Ahmad b. Mahdī b. Mas‘ūd al-Dāraquṭnī was born in Baghdad in 306/918. He took his unusual nisba from Dār al-Quṭn, the large quarter of the city in which his family lived. His father appears to have been at least an amateur Hadith scholar. Aside from the narrations that his son dutifully included in his Sunan, he evidently had little impact on the field in which his son would later excel.6 Al-Dāraquṭnī pursued the study of Hadith primarily in Iraq, travelling only to Basra, Kufa, and Wāsit until he reached middle age, at which time he voyaged to Egypt and Syria. He spent most of his life, however, in his native Baghdad. There he remained a prominent attraction to ambitious scholars of traditions passing through the ‘navel of the world’ in their quest for mastery of the Prophetic word. He had several famous students, including al-Ḥākim al-Naysābūrī (d. 404/1014). Although history has left us no works of a specifically legal nature, al-Dāraquṭnī was a committed Shāfī. Al-Subkî devotes several pages to him,

5 For the Sunnī tradition that eventually built the science of Hadith around the canonical collections, sharing al-Dāraquṭnī’s lofty standards was a contradiction in terms. Ibn Hajar furnishes a definitive if ironic summary of this fact in the introduction to his mammoth commentary on Sahih al-Bukhārī. Quoting al-Nawawī, he describes al-Dāraquṭnī’s methods as ‘the deficient principles of some hadith scholars, contrary to the majority (al-jamhūr) of legal scholars and theorists (ahl al-fiqh wa-l-ulūh), so don’t be swayed [by them]!’ See Ibn Hajar, Fath al-bāri’, i. 246. Why does he not mention the majority of adhith scholars? Al-Nawawī and Ibn Hajar have provided the most comprehensive efforts to rebut al-Dāraquṭnī’s criticism of al-Bukhārī and Muslim’s work. Briefly, they defend the two Sahih collections by asserting that (a) al-Dāraquṭnī’s objections do not call into question the provenance of the substantive meaning of any hadith, (b) later Muslim hadith experts concluded that, with only a few exceptions, any shortcomings that al-Dāraquṭnī might have identified in the two books fall well within the pale of acceptable scholarship. For more details, see the edited version of Kitāb al-ilzāmāt wa-l-tatabбу cited in this article, which includes Ibn Hajar and al-Nawawī’s responses to the author’s criticisms as well as the original text of al-Bukhārī and Muslim’s abādith.

mentioning that he studied fiqh at the hands of Abū Sa‘īd al-Iṣṭakhrī. Al-Dāraqūṭnī died in 385/995 at the age of 77, and was buried in the Baghdad cemetery of Bāb al-Dayr. While Western scholars of Islamic intellectual history have paid relatively little attention to al-Dāraqūṭnī, he was known as ‘the imām of his time’ and amīr al-muinīn fi al-hadith.8

The sources for al-Dāraqūṭnī’s life offer no direct indication of his socio-economic position or his relationships with the major institutions of late ‘Abbāsid society. One scholar recalls a young Dāraqūṭnī tailing groups of older Hadith students while eating a loaf of bread covered with pickled vegetables (kāmikhs).9 Otherwise considered improper, al-Dāraqūṭnī’s eating while studying was probably excused because of his youth. Presumably the sons of more humble families would be working for their fathers and would not have been free to attend Hadith study sessions at such a young age. We might then infer that al-Dāraqūṭnī’s childhood was, relatively, one of ease. As an adult, we know that al-Dāraqūṭnī received patronage from the state at least once. He travelled to Egypt partly to help Kāfūr al-Ikhshīdī’s vizier Ja’far b. al-Faḍl compile a musnad, a service for which the latter paid him well.10 Otherwise, al-Dāraqūṭnī probably lived off an inheritance, for none of the anecdotes about his scholarly life indicate any career or consistent government employment.

Al-Dāraqūṭnī lived in interesting times. The ‘Abbāsid caliphs had ended their long struggle for independence from their Turkish praetorian by accepting the de facto dominance of the Shī‘ī Buyid family from the mountains of Iran. Yet there are no indications that al-Dāraqūṭnī ever had any dealings with either the caliph’s Turkish bodyguard or the Buyid family. Though he faced the same orthodox litmus tests as other scholars of his time, such as ranking the Rāshidūn caliphs,11 it seems safe to conclude that he wrote and taught without the kind of pervasive political

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10 J. Robson, EI1. See also S. Wajahat Husain, ‘Kitāb al-Askhiyā’ of ad-Dāraqūṭnī’, Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal, 30 (1934), 56.
11 See n. 20 below.
and social tension that marked the careers of many prominent Muslim scholars in earlier times.

Al-Dāraquṭnī was born only half a century after the deaths of al-Bukhārī and Muslim (the Shaykhayn), and his scholarly ties to them were evident in his writings. The Iraqi traditionist devoted no less than nine works to analysing, adjusting, and commenting on their collections. Such extant works include the following (asterisks indicate published works):

- al-Ilzāmāt ‘alā ṣaḥīḥay al-Bukhārī wa-Muslim*
- Kitāb al-tatābbu*
- Dhikr asmā’ al-tābī’īn wa-man ba’dahum mimman ṣaḥḥat riwāyatuhu min al-thiqāt ‘ind Muḥammad b. Ismā’īl al-Bukhārī*
- Dhikr asmā’ al-tābī’īn wa-man ba’dahum mimman ṣaḥḥat riwāyatuhu ‘ind Muslim*
- Asmā’ al-sāḥāba allātī ittāfāqa fiḥā al-Bukhārī wa-Muslim wa-mā infarada bihi kull minbuma
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In addition to these books, al-Dāraquṭnī also won acclaim for other Hadith works such as:

- al-Sunan*
- Kitāb al-du’afā’ wa-l-matrūkin*
- al-Mukhtalif wa-l-mu’talif fi asmā’ al-rijāl*
- al-‘Ilal al-wārida fi al-ahādith al-nabawiyya*

Both his studies of the Sahīḥayn and his other work clearly demonstrate that al-Dāraquṭnī based his study of traditions on a detailed mastery of Hadith transmitters, or riṭāl, and the chains of transmissions they formed. Although competency in this field has always been essential for any serious Hadith scholar, al-Dāraquṭnī delved deeper into it than most other experts. He either predated or simply chose not to address other subjects of Hadith study such as the criteria for accepting

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13 Al-Dāraquṭnī’s Kitāb al-‘īlal does not represent any comprehensive attempt to identify the flaws in the entire corpus of existing Hadith. Rather, the book was assembled by one of al-Dāraquṭnī’s students from the latter’s examination of the Hadith collection of only one of his teachers, Ibrāhīm b. Hasan b. al-Karaǰī; see ‘Abdallāh b. Muḥammad Damfū, Marwiyyāt al-imām al-Zuhri al-mu’alla fi kitāb al-‘īlal lī-l-Dāraquṭnī, 4 vols. (Riyadh: Maktabat al-Rushd, 1999), i. 110; cf. al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī, Tārīkh Baghdaḏ, 14 vols. (Beirut: Dār al-Kitāb al-‘Arabī, 1966; repr. Cairo: Maktabat al-Khanjī, 1349/1431), vi. 59.
sound traditions (\textit{shurūṭ}),\textsuperscript{14} or the technical terms used in the study of Hadith (\textit{muṣṭalahāt}).\textsuperscript{15} While later scholars such as al-Nawawī (d. 676/1278) would often structure their commentaries on the canonical collections according to Muslim or al-Bukhārī’s methodology (\textit{manbaj}), al-Dāraquṭnī based his studies on the \textit{Shaykhayn} on the transmitters found in their works. And it seems that al-Dāraquṭnī particularly enjoyed the most tedious minutiae of the \textit{rijāl} field: one of his most famous books, \textit{al-Mukhtalif wa-l-mu’talif fī asmā’ al-rijāl},\textsuperscript{8}, consists of a mammoth and assiduous examination of those transmitters whose names appear similar in writing or differ only in the short vowels so rarely indicated in the Arabic script. His \textit{Taṣḥīf al-muḥaddithīn}, which has not survived, probably dealt with scribal errors in copies of Hadith texts.\textsuperscript{16} His \textit{al-Mudabbaj}\textsuperscript{17} (also not extant) probably addressed chains of transmission that included students who studied together in the same circles. Even those works whose titles appear more general, such as \textit{al-Abādīth allātī khulīfa fihā al-imām Mālik},\textsuperscript{8}, often consist merely of lengthy lists of transmitters’ names and the chains of transmission in which they appear.\textsuperscript{18} This paper’s examination of his \textit{Ilzāmāt} and \textit{al-tatabbu} will further testify to the central role that transmission plays in al-Dāraquṭnī’s vision of \textit{ilm al-ḥadīth}.

As a denizen of fourth/tenth-century Baghdad scholarly society, al-Dāraquṭnī sided with the traditionists (\textit{aṣhāb al-ḥadīth}) in the debate raging over God’s attributes and the broader acceptability of

\textsuperscript{14} The most famous works of \textit{shurūṭ} are those of Abū Faḍl al-Maqdīsī (d. 507/1113), \textit{Shurūṭ al-a’īmma al-sittah} and Abū Bakr Muhammad al-Hāzimī’s (d. 585/1189), \textit{Shurūṭ al-a’īmma al-khamsa}. Earlier, al-Dāraquṭnī’s student, al-Ḥākim al-Naysābūrī, had also directly addressed issues of \textit{shurūṭ}. The earliest known works on \textit{muṣṭalahāt} were written by Abū Muhammad al-Rāmahurmuzī (d. c. 360/971) and al-Ḥākim al-Naysābūrī; see Leonard Librande, ‘The Supposed Homogeneity of Technical Terms in Hadith Study’, \textit{Muslim World}, 72 (1983), 34.

\textsuperscript{15} Dr Muhammad b. Sa’d Āl-Su’ūd definitely sees al-Dāraquṭnī as preceding the maturation of Hadith science, stating, ‘al-Dāraquṭnī... defined the notion of \textit{ta’liq}, then came al-Ḥākim [al-Naysābūrī]... , who established the principles of hadith as an independent science and set up the structure that remains [the basis for that science] until the present day’. See Hamd Abū Sulaymān al-Khaṭṭābī, \textit{A’lām al-ḥadīth fī sharh šahih al-Bukhārī}, ed. Muhammad b. Sa’d Āl-Su’ūd, 4 vols. (Makka: Mu’assasat Makka li-l-Tibā’a wa-l-ʾlām, [n.d.]), i. 26. Sezgin prefers the reading \textit{ʾlām}... for this book’s title; see Sezgin, ii. 211.


\textsuperscript{17} See al-Ghassānī, \textit{Kitāb}, 23.

\textsuperscript{18} I believe this work has been published under the title \textit{Abādīth al-muwaṭṭa’ wa-ittifāq al-ruwāt ‘an Mālik wa-ikhtilāfubum fīhā ziyādatan wa-muqṣān}, ed. Muhammad Zāhid b. al-Ḥasan al-Kawthārī (Cairo: Dār al-Hidāya, [1985]).
dialectical theology in Islam. Shams al-Dīn al-Dhahabī (d. 748/1348) records that al-Dāraquṭnī hated kalām and espoused the abl al-sunna position on the comparative virtues of the first four caliphs. Like Ibn Hanbal (d. 241/855), he limited his response to theological questions to a literal reliance on the text of the Qur’an and Hadith. He wrote several works that presented ahādīth affirming God’s attributes and addressing His place and movement. Of these, Kitāb al-sifāt (ahādīth on God’s attributes), Ahādīth al-muzūl (ahādīth dealing with God descending into the lowest heavens), and Kitāb al-ru’ya (ahādīth on seeing God on the Day of Judgement) have been published. Al-Dāraquṭnī even rebutted the Mu’tazilite Amr b. Ubayd (d. 144/761) on the subject of anthropomorphism.

TERMINOLOGICAL QUESTIONS

Understanding the scope and implications of al-Dāraquṭnī’s critique of the Sahīhayn requires a conceptual review of the manner in which Muslims transmitted and recorded Prophetic traditions. The transmission of ahādīth involved a series of individuals hearing a certain statement and then passing it on through multiple chains of narrators, each chain subject to different interpolations or discrepancies, until scholars recorded these transmissions in the written collections we have today. The original, essential Prophetic statement—undocumented in its own time (or at least we have no documentary evidence of it) and only manifested decades or even centuries later in written sources—is what the fully matured science of Hadith would refer to asasl al-ḥadīth (the core of the report). This paper will refer to this essential statement as the Prophetic tradition. In the language of textual criticism, the tradition is the intangible urtext, reflected in variant witness texts. This

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21 These two books are published as one under the title Kitāb al-muzūl, ed. ‘Alī b. Muhammad al-Faqīh (Makka: Silsilat al-Salaf, 1403/1983).
paper will refer to each of the witness reports embodying the tradition as a *narration* (*riwāya*). One might therefore encounter ten narrations (some with variant wording, contextual information or *isnāds*) of the tradition ‘all intoxicants are prohibited’ (*kullu muskir*īn ḥarām).²⁴

This article also requires an introduction to the complicated and layered notion of *ziyāda*, or addition. There are two kinds of addition: the addition of a narrator in the *isnād* (*isnād addition*) and the addition/shift of words or phrases in the *matn* (*matn addition*). *Isnād* addition is relatively simple, appearing when two otherwise identical chains of transmission differ only in the addition of one or more narrators. Figure 1.0 portrays two narrations (dotted and solid), the dotted one constituting an instance of *isnād* addition.

*Mmatn* addition, however, can manifest itself in the form of both literal and normative increase. Figure 1.1 demonstrates a case of literal *matn* addition, as the text of one of the narrations adds the qualifier ‘Muslim’ onto the other. Figure 1.2 shows normative *matn* addition, where one

Fig. 1.1. Literal addition in the *matn*

Fig. 1.2. Normative addition in the *matn*
narration increases the normative value of the matn above the text of its counterpart. In the B–C–D narration the hadith carries all the legal and religious weight of the Prophet’s own authority, while the X–Y version rests only on the shoulders of the Companion ‘A’. As the Muslim study of ahādith matured in the first three centuries of Islamic history, narrations from the Prophet became more legally and morally compelling than similar reports from Companions.

This rigid distinction between literal and normative matn addition represents the reaction of a Western student of Islamic intellectual history, whereas the representatives of that tradition, such as Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ (d. 643/1245), rarely distinguished between these two species. For Muslim scholars, reproducing the text of a hadith was fundamentally an act of attributing words to the Prophet. In many cases, they found that some narrations of a tradition originated from the mouth of a Companion while others cited the Prophet himself as the source of the archetypal statement.

In such cases, the muhaddithūn would consider the narration attributed to the Prophet to be an addition to the first version because it elevates the hadith to the Prophet, increasing its normative and probative value. In the mind of a Muslim traditionist, this normative increase is effectively no different from a narration that simply adds words to a less lengthy version. Whether a whole hadith or just a phrase, both are considered ‘raised up’ (rufi‘a) to the Prophet. Moreover, when Hadith scholars were dealing with reliable and trustworthy transmitters, they precluded the possibility that one had brazenly forged part of the narration. An addition, like the phrase ‘for all Muslims,’ was thus often viewed as the commentary of one of the transmitters that had been mistakenly elevated and attributed to the Prophet. The concept of ziyyāda in the matn is thus inextricably tied to the notion of idrāj (insertion, attribution), or instances where the words of a Companion or any other person in the chain of transmission are accidentally heralded as the Prophet’s own speech. For al-Dāraquṭnī and other traditionists of the classical period, the distinction between idrāj and literal matn addition was highly subjective. As with the distinction between literal and

\[25\] Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ addresses both topics indistinctively; see Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ, Muqaddima, 250–6.

\[26\] Hadith no. 98 in the Kitāb al-tatabbu’ demonstrates this vagueness, as al-Dāraquṭnī considers the entire last portion of one of Muslim’s narrations to be the addition of the famous muhaddith al-Sha‘bī (d. 104/722–3). The scholar exposes the extent of his colleagues’ disagreement on this point, however, in his Kitāb al-ilāl. There he explains that Yahyā b. Abī Zā‘ida (d. 183/799) and other Kufan traditionists attribute (adrajahu) the section in question to the Companion Ibn Mas‘ūd; see ‘Alī b. ‘Umar al-Dāraquṭnī, Kitāb al-ilzāmāt wa-l-tatabbu’,
normative *matn* addition, any strict separation between *idrāj* and *ziyāda* represents an attempt to analyse the conceptual implications inherent in ‘*ilm al-hadīth* and not a recreation of the authentic mindset of Muslim traditionists.

**ORGANIZATION AND COMPOSITION OF KITĀB AL-ILZĀMĀT WA-L-TATABBU‘**

*Kitāb al-ilzāmāt* and *Kitāb al-tatabbu‘* represent al-Dāraquṭnī’s comprehensive addendum to the *Ṣaḥīḥayn*. The former consists of 109 narrations whose *isnāds* the scholar believes should have earned them a place in one or both of the canonical collections. These include *isnāds* that the Shaykhayn used in some cases but not others, or unused chains that al-Dāraquṭnī deems to be of equivalent value. The *Kitāb al-ilzāmāt* possesses no discernable organization.

The *Kitāb al-tatabbu‘* criticizes 217 narrations found in either al-Bukhārī, Muslim, or both. Of these, ten are either additions or simply references to criticisms made earlier in the *Tatabbu‘*. Seven actually belong to the *ilzāmāt* genre, as the author chastises one of the Shaykhayn for not including a narration presented by the other in his *Ṣaḥīḥ*. Although the two books are sometimes mentioned separately (see Sezgin), the student who transmitted the manuscript used by the editor who published them tells his reader that the two books form one unit. They therefore share one very brief introduction by the author, in which al-Dāraquṭnī states that he will ‘show the flaws (*ilal*) [of the narrations found in the *Ṣaḥīḥayn*] and correct them’. The extremely diverse subject matter of the *ḥadīth* included in these two books defies any pattern, ranging from eschatological predictions to the proper way to perform ablutions.

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ed. Muqbil b. Hādi b. Muqbil (Madina: al-Maktaba al-Salafiyya, 1398/1978), 301 (henceforth KIT). Al-Dāraquṭnī’s wording in *Kitāb al-tatabbu‘* is ambiguous, and my understanding follows al-Nawawi’s interpretation. The information taken from *Kitāb al-*’ilal is cited from Muqbil’s comments. The *Ma’rifat ‘ilm al-hadīth* of al-Dāraquṭnī’s student al-Ḥākim underscores the ambiguity between addition (*ziyāda*) and *idrāj*. In fact al-Ḥākim uses the same terminology for both subjects, with the only element distinguishing *idrāj* from *ziyāda* being the scholar’s ability to identify exactly which narrator inserted the comment; see al-Ḥākim al-Naysābūrī, *Ma’rifat ‘ilm al-hadīth*, ed. Muʿazzam Ḥusayn (Hyderabad: Dā’irat al-Maʿārif, 1385/1966), 50–1, 162.

KIT, 575.

Ibid. 73.
Unlike the topically organized works of al-Bukhārī and Muslim, Kitāb al-tatabbu' is organized according to chains of transmission (isnāds). The book contains thirteen isnād sections, beginning with the musnad of Abū Hurayra, which includes the largest number of narrations (twenty-seven). Other large sections include that of ‘Ā’ishah (seventeen narrations altogether), Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb (fifteen), Ibn ‘Abbās (thirteen), Anas b. Mālik (eight), and ‘Uthmān (six). This musnad format is only approximate, however, for many narrations appear randomly between the sections. Sometimes the author places different aḥādīth from the same Companion in two different places. The work is certainly not alphabetical, so it appears that al-Dāraquṭnī proceeded through the Sahihayn extracting problematic narrations, roughly organizing them according to Companions and making errors in the process. Shifting between the muṣannaf (topical) format of these two books and the isnād-based layout of the Tatabbu' probably accounts for the inexact organization of the work.

THE CENTRALITY OF THE RIWĀYA IN AL-DĀRAQUṬNĪ’S HADITH VISION

It has been correctly posited that early Hadith criticism revolved almost entirely around the examination of isnāds.30 Al-Dāraquṭnī certainly proves no exception to this rule, for both the scope of his writings and the nature of his work underscore the critical notion that his evaluation of Prophetic traditions centres first and foremost on their chains of transmission. He bases his analysis of Hadith on the collection and comparison of different narrations from which he selects the most solid and reliable versions. Like other traditionists in the third/ninth and fourth/tenth centuries, al-Dāraquṭnī envisaged the universe of Hadith scholarship as a community that ultimately corroborated truth and isolated error. If one of al-Zuhri’s (d. 124/742) students relayed a report with which his comrades disagreed then its authenticity was suspect.31 For al-Dāraquṭnī, identifying correct narrations was thus a process of weighing scholarly corroboration (mutāba‘a) and disagreement (khilāf), a procedure that the science of Hadith terms tarjīh al-riwāya.

31 Eerik Dickinson proves that this process also served as the mainstay of earlier pillars of Hadith criticism such as Muslim and Ibn Abī Hātim (d. 327/939); see his The Development of Early Sunnite Hadith Criticism (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 2001), 105.
The following description of al-Dāraquṭnī’s appraisal of a narration is typical of Hadith criticism in the third/ninth and fourth/tenth centuries: ‘The hadīth of A’āmash narrated from Abū Wā’il from ‘Abdallāh b. Mas’ūd is the hadīth of such and such a person. So and so as well as so and so corroborate his narration, while so and so differs with him’.32

In light of this method, the distinction between narration and tradition becomes indispensable. Many students of Islamic history conceive of Prophetic ahādīth as messages conveying specific legal, ritual, or eschatological maxims. While students recognize that a maxim’s authority depends on a chain of transmission, this isnād simply provides them a means of authentication and is not an integral part of the hadīth’s message. In short, the hadīth is a maxim supported by an isnād. Yet for early critics the isnād and matn were bound together inseparably as the organic product of the transmission process. As the above example shows, narrations were associated with specific transmitters, whose version of that Prophetic tradition could then be contrasted with other transmitters’ narrations.

Although tarjih al-riwāya formed an important tool in any muḥaddith’s arsenal, al-Dāraquṭnī made much greater use of it than many other traditionists. His contemporary and fellow resident of Baghdad, Abū Sulaymān al-Khaṭṭābī (d. 386–8/996–8), also wrote a commentary on al-Bukhārī’s collection and addressed some of the same issues as al-Dāraquṭnī. In a group of narrations in which the Prophet adjudicates the case of a feuding couple who had mutually renounced each other (talā‘anā/mutilā‘inān), both scholars note that one of al-Bukhārī’s narrations describes the Prophet himself separating the couple while in the rest of the narrations they divorce each other before coming to him. While al-Dāraquṭnī faults al-Bukhārī for including a narration in which Sufyān b. Uyayna (d. 196–8/811–14) diverges from the majority of al-Zuhri’s trustworthy students by transmitting this inconsistency, al-Khaṭṭābī uses juridical gymnastics to negate any error. He explains that the couple had indeed already split, and any mention of the Prophet separating them only signifies his ex post facto recognition of the event. Thus, where al-Dāraquṭnī sees a blatant case of contrasting riwāyas, al-Khaṭṭābī sees a legal explanation.33

32 Al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī, Tārikh Baghdād, xii. 37.
33 KIT, 252 and al-Khaṭṭābī, A‘lām, iii. 1884. The narration that al-Dāraquṭnī criticizes is through al-Zuhri and Sufyān via Sahīl b. Sa‘d (see al-Bukhārī’s Sahīh, no. 6631 according to the ‘Ālamiyya numbering system or, according to the kitāb/bab system used in A. J. Wensinck’s Concordance et indices de la tradition musulmane, Kitāb al-ḥākāmīn ṣaqā ḡa-lā‘āna fi al-masjid) versus the majority through al-Zuhri’s other companions (‘Ālamiyya nos. 4376, 4379,
For al-Dāraquṭnī, in fact, two almost identical matns share no relation if they were narrated through radically different chains of transmission. For example, both al-Bukhārī and Muslim include several narrations of a tradition in which the Prophet tells of Heaven and Hell coming before God and complaining about the dramatically different quality of people whom they host. God then explains that they are the instrument of His wrath and mercy, respectively. Al-Bukhārī features two narrations of this hadith, as shown in Figure 2.0. A contemporary of al-Dāraquṭnī, Abū Hasan al-Qābisī (d. 403/1012), and later scholars such as Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyya (d. 751/1350) and Ibn ʿUthaymīn (d. 2001 CE), criticize ʿUbaydallāh b. Saʿd’s (solid) narration of this tradition in al-Bukhārī’s book. They assert that this narration inverted the wording of the tradition, stating that God created people ‘destined for Hellfire’ instead of ‘for Heaven’, the correct order that occurs in all the other versions of this tradition. Al-Qābisī states that ʿUbaydallāh’s narration is the only known

Fig. 2.0. Differences in sections of the matns

4855, 4896, 4897, and 6760, all found in either Kitāb tafsīr sūrat al-nūr, Kitāb al-ṭalāq/min ijāzat al-ṭalāq al-thalāth-l al-līʾān wa-man ẓallaqa..., or Kitāb al-iʿtiṣām bi-l-kitāb wa-l-summāmā yuḳrāhu min al-taʾammuq...). Al-Khaṭṭābī refers to a narration (no. 4379, or Kitāb tafsīr sūrat al-nūr) via Ibn ʿUmar (as opposed to the others nos. 4377, 4855, 4891, 4897, see above mentioned kitābī bābīs). For my reference to al-Khaṭṭābī, I am indebted to Vardit Tokatly’s article ‘The Aʾlām al-ḥadīth of al-Khaṭṭābī: A commentary on al-Bukhārī’s Šaḥīḥ or a polemical treatise?’ Studia Islamica, 92 (2001), 53–91.

Ibn Ḥajār, Fath al-bāri’, vii. 595 for hadīth no. 4850 and xiii. 434 for no. 7449 according to the Fath numbering system.

Ibn ʿUthaymīn, 24.
version to contain the wording ‘creates for Hellfire (yunshī’u li-l-nār)’, while the other versions feature the phrase ‘creates for Heaven’. Ibn al-Qayyim alludes to al-Bukhārī’s other narration as evidence as well.36

Unlike these scholars, who saw the two versions as narrations of the same tradition, al-Dāraqṭūnī seems to have considered them two separate traditions. While al-Dāraqṭūnī criticizes a host of al-Bukhārī’s narrations for literal matn addition or incorrect wording in the matn, he never mentions any form of this tradition in his Kitāb al-tatābbu. He was without a doubt very aware of all its extant variations, for he includes thirteen narrations of it in his Kitāb al-Bīf.37 He does not, however, include ‘Ubaydallāh’s version. His silence in the Kitāb al-tatābbu probably stems from the sizeable differences between the two chains of transmission. They originate with the same Companion, Abū Hurayra, but diverge after him. Clearly, al-Qābīsī and Ibn al-Qayyim assumed that both al-Bukhārī’s narrations were versions of the same hadīth because their matns were so similar. Al-Dāraqṭūnī’s close focus on the isnād, however, seems to have led him to distinguish between the two. Since to him they were two separate instances of Prophetic speech, a difference in their wording presented no problem.

When al-Dāraqṭūnī does condemn entire Prophetic traditions, he does so only after considering all the relevant narrations. For example, he denies the authenticity of a tradition about the virtues of a munificent man (sakbhī) only after explaining that none of its versions is reliable (lā yathbuttu fihī hadīthinī bi-wajhin).38 We must not assume, however, that such a rejection entails some disagreement with the content of the tradition; he objects only to those who transmit it. For example, al-Dāraqṭūnī states that any narration conveying the specific tradition ‘a woman should not be executed for apostasy’ is similarly baseless.39

36 Ibn Hajar, Fath al-bārī, xiii. 437.
37 Al-Dāraqṭūnī, al-Nuzūl, 27–33.
38 Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyya, Naqd al-manqūl, ed. Hasan al-Sammāh Suwaydān (Beirut: Dār al-Ma’ārif, 1411/1990), 115. As a devout traditionist who despised speculative thinking, al-Dāraqṭūnī dismissed an entire book of Hadith lauding human reason (‘aql). He criticizes this book, however, not based on its contents but because he traces the abādīth’s isnāds to one transmitter who, he believes, forged them and another who attached them to a set of legitimate isnāds. For him, objectionable content ‘necessarily’ indicates spurious isnāds; see ibid. 61.
He subsequently provides, however, other traditions (nine narrations in all) with both analogous and dissimilar wordings that order Muslims to do just that.\textsuperscript{40}

Conversely, other Hadith scholars, specifically later critics such as Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyya, often disparage entire traditions expressly owing to their content. For example, Ibn al-Qayyim condemns Prophetic traditions chauvinistically praising certain cities or disparaging blacks. Even when criticizing a hadith found in \textit{Sahih Muslim} for eschatological implications, he takes issue with its content \textit{per se} and not its chain of transmission.\textsuperscript{41}

\section*{THE MOTIVATIONS FOR AL-D\textsuperscript{AR}AQU\textsuperscript{N}I\textsuperscript{I}’S ADJUSTMENT}

As was mentioned above, the brief treatments that al-D\textsuperscript{AR}AQU\textsuperscript{N}I\textsuperscript{I}’s work has received acknowledge its critical nature but do not investigate its purpose or its author’s motives. In order to understand why al-D\textsuperscript{AR}AQU\textsuperscript{N}I undertook an adjustment of the two most revered works in the entire corpus of Islamic religious thought, one must first determine both his Hadith methodology and his ideological leanings. We must then place the scholar in the context of the changing science of hadith evaluation and its religious and legal environment. As both a master traditionist and a Sh\textsuperscript{AF}I jurist espousing literalist theological views, al-D\textsuperscript{AR}AQU\textsuperscript{N}I could have objected to two aspects of the \textit{Sahihayn}: their content and the methodologies that their authors used to compile them. By comparing the material that the scholar criticized with his own legal and hadith output, we can identify any possible ideological objections he might have had with al-Bukh\textsuperscript{ARI} and Muslim’s work. By constructing a typology of the characteristics that al-D\textsuperscript{AR}AQU\textsuperscript{N}I found problematic in his \textit{Kit\textsuperscript{AB} al-tatabbu’}, and then finding his place in the development of ‘ilm al-hadith, we can determine any methodological motivations.

\textsuperscript{40} SD, iv. 118–119. Such narrations include the wording ‘\textit{al-murtadda ‘an al-isl\textsuperscript{AM} tu\textsuperscript{I}basu wa-l\textsuperscript{A} tu\textsuperscript{J}t\textsuperscript{A}t}, ‘\ldots fi al-mar\textsuperscript{A} tartaddu\ldots tu\textsuperscript{I}baru wa-l\textsuperscript{A} tu\textsuperscript{J}t\textsuperscript{A}t}’.

\textsuperscript{41} Ibn al-Qayyim, \textit{Naqd}, 78. The tradition he criticizes in Muslim’s book has only one \textit{isn\textsuperscript{AD}}. Ibn al-Qayyim, however, objects to it because of its contents; see \textit{Sahih Muslim}, Kit\textsuperscript{AB} \textit{‘I}t\textsuperscript{A}f al-Mun\textsuperscript{AF}aqin} / 27, or hadith no. 4996 according to the ‘\textit{Alamiyya} numbering system. This hadith is also found in Ahmad b. Hanbal’s \textit{Musnad} (Wensinck: 1: 233, 306 et seq.) and in the \textit{Sunan} of Ab\textsuperscript{U} D\textsuperscript{AW}UD (Wensinck: \textit{Sawm}: 9, 51, 52).
I. Ideology

*Form: The Tone of the Kitāb al-tatabbu‘ and its Relation to the Šahīḥayn*

In their studies, neither Goldziher nor Muhammad Abd al-Rauf delves deeply enough into al-Dāraquṭnī’s work to address the critical distinction between Prophetic traditions and their disparate narrations, nor do they discuss the scope or tone of al-Dāraquṭnī’s critique. Yet such nuance is indispensable in this case. Unlike that in later critical works, al-Dāraquṭnī’s tone in the *Kitāb al-tatabbu‘* is overwhelmingly constructive, and he does not aim at challenging the overall authenticity (*siḥba*) of the traditions collected in the Šahīḥayn. As will be demonstrated, the *Kitāb al-tatabbu‘* comprises a formal adjustment of narrations rather than a polemical criticism of any traditions that its author deemed problematic in the Šahīḥayn. This explains the favourable light in which the Sunnī tradition came to view al-Dāraquṭnī’s work. Although al-Nawawī devotes a huge amount of energy to rebutting the scholar’s criticisms of Muslim’s narrations, he nonetheless places the *Kitāb al-tatabbu‘* in the acceptable genre of *mustadrak* works.

The nature of al-Dāraquṭnī’s work does not stem from any inherent reverence for the Shaykhayn. Rather, it results primarily from the salient characteristic of his approach to Hadith: he addresses narrations and not traditions. He therefore does not criticize al-Bukhārī and Muslim’s individual *ahādīth*, but rather specific narrations of some traditions included in their two books. It would thus be wrong to state that al-Dāraquṭnī criticized Muslim’s *hadīth* in which the Prophet states ‘If I were to take someone from my community as a bosom companion

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42 Goldziher, 236 and Abd al-Rauf, i. 285. Both scholars simply state that al-Dāraquṭnī reveals the weakness in a number of al-Bukhārī and Muslim’s *ahādīth*.

43 In his *Kitāb al-mawḍū‘āt* (Book of Forgeries), Ibn al-Jawzī (d. 597/1200) often resorts to a condescending tone, frequently lambasting Hadith scholars who fell short of his expectations. Ironically, Ibn al-Jawzī finds al-Dāraquṭnī himself guilty of incompetence. He states, ‘And indeed I am astounded by those scholars who are aware of forged Hadith and yet narrate them without clarifying [the defects], knowing full-well that the Prophet of God, may the peace and blessings of God be upon him, said, “He who narrates a *hadīth* that he knows is a lie is among the liars”’. See Abū Faraj ‘Abd al-Rahmān b. al-Jawzī, *Kitāb al-mawḍū‘āt*, ed. ‘Abd al-Rahmān Muḥammad ‘Uthmān, 3 vols. (Madina: al-Maktaba al-Salafiyya, 1386/1966), iii. 91.

(khalīlān), I would choose Abū Bakr; he criticizes just one narration of that hadith, making no statement about the overall authenticity of that Prophetic tradition. In fact Muslim includes five other narrations of this tradition with a completely different isnād. This is the case for the vast majority of the traditions that al-Dāraquṭnī mentions in his Kitāb al-tatabbu’. Both al-Bukhārī and Muslim habitually included multiple narrations for a Prophetic tradition, and al-Dāraquṭnī rarely has occasion to critique a lone narration.

In addition, al-Dāraquṭnī draws over forty of the narrations appearing in Kitāb al-tatabbu’ from auxiliary narrations (called mutābi‘, ‘follow-up,’ or shāhid, ‘testimonial’ ahādith) that the Shaykhayn included after the principal narrations in question. Auxiliary narrations served to bolster the authenticity of the Prophetic tradition, but neither al-Bukhārī nor Muslim felt obliged to meet their usual rigorous standards for authenticity when dealing with them.

In fact, al-Dāraquṭnī never overtly questions the overall authenticity of any traditions found in the Sabihayn. He certainly dismisses many narrations, but he often underscores the general soundness of a Prophetic tradition. In hadith number 105 of Kitāb al-tatabbu’, for example, he details prominent Hadith scholars’ differing opinions on the narration but stresses that their doubts do not affect the ‘soundness’ (ṣibḥa) of the hadith. After criticizing one of Muslim’s narrations of a hadith

45 The narration that al-Dāraquṭnī criticizes is through the Companion Jundub, while the others are through Ibn Mas‘ūd; see Sabih Muslim, Kitāb al-Masājid / 28, Kitāb Fadā‘il al-Ṣaḥāba / 6, 7, or ‘Ālamiyya nos. 4391–5.

46 One instance in which al-Dāraquṭnī does criticize the only isnād included by Muslim is hadith no. 78 in the Tatammu (see Sabih Muslim, ‘Ālamiyya no. 266, or Kitāb al-Imān / Bāb Ilbābat Ru‘yāt al-Mu‘minin). This tradition deals with God’s rewarding the believers by granting them the beatific vision on the Day of Judgement; for details see n. 73 below.

47 Ibn al-Salāḥ explains that mutābi‘a reports are usually abbreviated or auxiliary versions of the same narration, while shāhid reports tend to be narrated through different isnāds but share the same meaning, or may be a similar tradition; see Ibn al-Salāḥ, Muqaddima, 247–8.

48 In his introduction to his Sabih, Muslim makes explicit his policy towards auxiliary narrations. He includes them if they provide some indispensable additional material or in order to support a defective isnād; see G. H. A. Juynboll, ‘Muslim’s Introduction to his Sahih’, Jerusalem Studies in Arabic and Islam, 5 (1984), 267. He thus acknowledges that his Sabih contains some lacklustre narrations, and he pledges to indicate and explain any defects that appear; see Juynboll, ‘Muslim’s Introduction’, 270. There is some indication, however, that Muslim died before he could address all these weak isnāds (see KIT, 246). Had he completed his work to his satisfaction, it is possible that al-Dāraquṭnī would not have wasted his time pointing out their flaws.

49 Ibid. 313–14.
(number 187), al-Dāraquṭnī reminds the reader that Muslim also includes the correct isnād in his book.\(^{50}\) Here it is important to note that the soundness of a tradition is an inter-textual question: al-Dāraquṭnī may find fault with the only narration that Muslim provides for a tradition, but he is well aware that al-Bukhārī or Ahmād b. Hanbal offers numerous reliable versions.\(^{51}\)

Al-Dāraquṭnī’s constructive tone throughout the Kitāb al-tatabbu’ also expresses itself in his presentation of alternatives to problematic narrations. For example, in a tradition in which the Prophet lists a number of hygienic duties that Muslims should perform (number 182), the scholar suggests two superior narrations that the Shaykhayn did not mention. His desire to improve on, not necessarily to criticize, the two works is also clear in hadith number 137, where al-Dāraquṭnī simply states that another isnād could have provided a more direct link to the Prophet.\(^{52}\)

**Content: Was al-Dāraquṭnī Trying to Alter the Contents of the Šāhihayn?**

Even by al-Dāraquṭnī’s time, the Muslim community had dubbed the works of al-Bukhārī and Muslim crucial sources for their understanding of the Prophet’s religious and legal legacy. Yet for critical scholars like Schacht such an understanding, and even the details composing the Prophet’s Sunna, ‘are not based on authentic historical recollection . . . but are fictitious and intended to support legal doctrines’.\(^{53}\) As muṣannafāt, the Šāhihayn were certainly designed to serve ritual and legal purposes.\(^{54}\) Was al-Dāraquṭnī’s critique wholly or even partially a vehicle for advancing his specific understanding of Islam and the Shari‘a? We can answer this question by examining the extent to which the scholar promoted his own opinions and selection of ahādīth in the

\(^{50}\) Ibid. 456.

\(^{51}\) Ibn Ḥajar emphasizes this intertextuality in his response to al-Dāraquṭnī’s criticisms; Ibn Ḥajar, Ṣaf, i. 246. In one instance, the author of Kitāb al-tatabbu’ offers no criticism, but instead defends one of al-Bukhārī’s narrations against other unnamed critics. Concerning hadith no. 201 in the Tatabbu’, he argues that the material that al-Bukhārī included is correct; see KIT, 481.

\(^{52}\) Ibid. 356. The author refers to the concept of ‘idāw, or the brevity of an isnād. The shorter the isnād, and the fewer the transmitters between the compiler and the Prophet, the more favourable and reliable the narration.


\(^{54}\) Goldziher and, more recently, Muḥammad Fadel have discussed how al-Bukhārī used the headings in his collection to guide the reader towards the legal ruling one should derive from the text; see Muḥammad Fadel, ‘Ibn Ḥajar’s Ḥady al-Sāri’, 163–4; cf. Goldziher, 200–20.
Kitāb al-ilzāmāt and the Tatabbu’. The traditions that he preferred can be found in the collection of legal and ritual aḥādīth for which al-Dāraquṯnī became famous: the Sunan.55

A comparison between the narrations in the Sunan and those that al-Dāraquṯnī advances to correct faulty versions in al-Bukhārī and Muslim’s work shows a clear separation between the two groups. In ḥadīth number 35 of the Tatabbu’ he criticizes al-Bukhārī’s narrations in which the Prophet prohibits all intoxicants. As a Shafi’, al-Dāraquṯnī supports this ruling. Yet he does not advance any of the thirteen narrations on this subject that he includes in his Sunan to replace the problematic narration, despite their shared wording of ‘every intoxicant is prohibited’.56 The scholar’s perennial emphasis on isnāds provides a ready explanation. While al-Bukhārī’s narrations begin with Abū Mūsā al-Ash’arī, al-Dāraquṯnī’s rely on Ibn ‘Umar and ‘Ā’isha. It seems likely that al-Dāraquṯnī considered his own narrations irrelevant to his discussion of al-Bukhārī’s reports. On only one occasion does al-Dāraquṯnī use material from his Sunan to make a correction. In ḥadīth number 148 he faults al-Bukhārī for including a narration that describes the Prophet performing his witr prayer while riding a donkey. Al-Dāraquṯnī explains that the correct version features the Prophet praying on a camel and that it was the Companions Anas who prayed on the donkey. He cites this same narration through Ibn ‘Umar in his Sunan.57

An even clearer divide exists between the reports that al-Dāraquṯnī appends to the Sahihayn in his Kitāb al-ilzāmāt and those he chose for his Sunan. He states that Muslim should have included one of al-Bukhārī’s narrations in which the Prophet instructs his followers not to abandon their afternoon prayers.58 Yet al-Dāraquṯnī does not include this narration in his Sunan’s chapter on ‘The Severity of Leaving the Afternoon Prayer and the Unbelief of Him who Leaves It’.59 He also feels that both al-Bukhārī and Muslim erred in not including a narration detailing the wording of the Prophet’s qunūt (an invocation said during prayer). In the Sunan, however, he presents no such narration in his chapter on reading the qunūt.60 Again, his narrations addressing this

55 In his Tadhkirat al-huffāz, al-Dhahabī introduces al-Dāraquṯnī as ‘šāhib al-Sunan’. See al-Dhahabī, Tadhkira, iii. 991.
57 KIT, 390–1; SD, ii. 21.
58 KIT, 81.
59 SD, ii. 52. The title is ‘Bāb al-tashdīd fī tark ṣalāt al-‘āṣr wa-kufr man tarakahā, al-nahy ‘an qatl fā‘ilihā.’
60 KIT, 135; SD, ii. 31.
topic have *isnāds* differing completely from those of the *Shaykhayn*. Al-Dāraquṭnī was a master traditionist who did not think himself unworthy of pointing out al-Bukhārī and Muslim’s oversights. When he did so, however, he only employed narrations with *isnāds* related to the *Shaykhayn*’s own chains of transmission.61

Al-Dāraquṭnī thus clearly does not advance his own versions of specific traditions. More important, however, is the detachment of his criticism of the *Saḥīhayn* from his theological and legal stances. At no point in the *Kitāb al-tatabbu‘* does al-Dāraquṭnī attempt to counter a tradition conveying a non-Shāfī‘ī legal ruling. Contrary to the efforts he put forth in the *Kitāb al-ru‘ya* to present aḥādīth affirming that believers will see God on the Day of Judgement, al-Dāraquṭnī criticizes Muslim’s only narration for a tradition that portrays God lifting the veil (ḥijāb) dividing Him from the resurrected believers and allowing them the beatific vision.62 That al-Dāraquṭnī understood that he was undermining the only support for this traditionalist narration in either of the *Saḥīhayn* testifies to the integrity of the scholar’s critique. His decision not to use his adjustment as a forum for promoting his own vision of the Prophet’s *sunna* ultimately obviates the possibility of ideological or polemical motivations.

**II. Methodology**

*A Typology of the Flaws Mentioned by al-Dāraquṭnī*

Unfortunately, al-Dāraquṭnī provides few clues about the methodology he followed in reviewing the works of al-Bukhārī and Muslim.63 An analysis of the narrations he criticizes, however, reveals that he recognized nine species of flaws in the material he examined. These consist of objective flaws, which stand out independently as defects in al-Dāraquṭnī’s opinion, and comparative flaws, which the scholar identifies only by comparing the narration in question with other versions of the same tradition. He exposes comparative flaws by

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61 The *Sunan* contains many problematic narrations to which the author himself draws attention, so he might have been aware that some of his material did not meet the standards of the *Saḥīhayn*. For an example of an admittedly weak narration, see SD, ii. 99.
62 KIT, 266; see n. 72 below for the details on this case of normative *matn* addition.
63 In his introduction to *al-‘Ilal al-wārīda fi al-aḥādīth al-nabawīyya*, Maḥfūz al-Raḥmān al-Salafi devotes a section to ‘*manhaj* al-Dāraquṭnī’, but it consists only of a non-analytical collection of the various manners in which the scholar reacted to problematic aḥādīth; see al-Dāraquṭnī, *al-‘Ilal al-wārīda fi al-aḥādīth al-nabawīyya*, ed. Maḥfūz al-Raḥmān al-Salafi, 11 vols. (Riyadh: Dār al-Ṭayba, 1422/2001), i. 89.
contrasting numerous existing narrations and then selecting those of greater quality or quantity.64

**Objective Criticisms:**

1. **Defective Isnâd.** A significant number of the narrations criticized in the *Kitâb al-tatabbu* suffer from broken (*munqaṭī*) chains of transmission. Often, the *isnâds* lack the human link necessary for two people who could never have met each other to have transmitted a *hadîth* orally. Since this is one of the criteria of a sound *hadîth*, this flaw undermines the reliability of the narration. In *hadîth* number 80, in which the Prophet states that the Day of Judgement will not occur until the Byzantines are the largest nation on Earth, al-Dâraquṭnî asserts that ‘Abd al-Karîm b. Hârîth never met the Companion al-Mustawrid b. Shaddâd. 65 He uses the work of al-Bukhârî’s foremost teacher, ‘Alî b. al-Madînî (d. 234/849), to show that where the former assumed two transmitters had communicated a narration by word of mouth, the latter believed that they had in fact depended on an intermediary. 66

2. **Defective transmitter.** Occasionally, al-Dâraquṭnî also criticizes chains of transmission if he considers one of their constituents weak or religiously deviant. In one instance of confusion over the correct version of the *isnâd*, al-Dâraquṭnî dismisses the *isnâd* cited by the prominent *hadîth* transmitter Qatâda because he frequently omitted his teachers’ names from *isnâds*. 67 Regarding another narration (number 192), al-Dâraquṭnî refers to various scholars’ opinions that one of the transmitters was simply unreliable. 68 He rejects one ‘Imrân b. Hîṭṭân because as an adult he supported the Khârijites and even praised ‘Alî’s murderer in a poem. 69

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64 The editor of *Kitâb al-ilzâmât wa-l-tatabbu*, Muqbil b. Hâdi, provides a typology of the *ahadîth* criticized in his introduction to the book. This typology, however, focuses on how al-Dâraquṭnî’s criticisms were later rebutted and not on the characteristics of the flaws that he identified. Another excellent summary of the flaws that occur in Prophetic *ahadîth* can be found in Mahfûz al-Râhmân al-Salafi’s introduction to al-Dâraquṭnî’s *Kitâb al-‘ilal*. This typology, however, deals only with the superficial characteristics of the flaws and does not attempt to tie them together conceptually or identify the overarching problems on which al-Dâraquṭnî’s Hadîth criticism focuses.

65 KIT, 281. Muslim includes another narration of this *hadîth*.

66 Ibid. 413. Al-Dâraquṭnî shows that Ibn Burayda did not hear the *hadîth* directly from Abû al-Aswad, but rather through Yahyâ b. Ya’mar.

67 Ibid. 338.

68 Ibid. 465.

Comparative Flaws:

1. Addition in Isnād. Problematic isnād additions make up the bulk of the flaws that al-Dāraquṭnī identifies in the Kitāb al-tatabbuʿ. The scholar does not deem the addition of a transmitter appropriate if he is not verifiably reliable (thiqa) or if several esteemed authorities transmit narrations without the addition. Such isnād addition often occurs when a narration links someone who never met the Prophet to him through a Companion. In a ḥadīth (number 107 from Muslim’s Šāhīḥ) that Ibn ‘Abbās supposedly narrated about the Prophet’s supplications in times of worry, al-Dāraquṭnī presents an expert whose isnād for the tradition does not extend back to that Companion. Rather, the narration comes from Abū al-ʿĀliya, a tābiʿī who never encountered the Prophet. By revealing the inappropriate addition of a Companion in the isnād, al-Dāraquṭnī shows that Muslim’s narration is incomplete because it lacks the last link in the chain (i.e. that it is mursal).  

When the preponderance of scholars supports an isnād addition, however, al-Dāraquṭnī accepts it. In ḥadīth number 100, he defends Muslim’s selection of a musnad narration against others promoting an isnād lacking a Companion (riwāya mursala). He asserts that the one featuring the isnād addition is more favourable, for it enjoys the support of five trustworthy transmitters. When Muslim and al-Bukhārī include a narration (number 92) from an authority named ‘Amr b. ‘Alī that adds ‘Abd al-Raḥmān b. Jābir to the isnād, al-Dāraquṭnī supports them due to ‘Amr’s outstanding reliability. 

2. Normative Matn addition. For some traditions, the majority of its narrations ascribe its wording to a Companion. When one of its narrations cites the Prophet himself as the source of the ḥadīth, al-Dāraquṭnī alerts the reader to ziyyāda. In this case, the species of addition is the normative increase of the matn’s legal and ritual bearing (see Fig. 1.2). Ḥadīth number 78 presents an excellent example, where al-Dāraquṭnī indicates that an isnād comparable to the chain of transmission cited by Muslim mentions neither the Companion, Šuhayb, nor the Prophet as the original sources for the tradition. Regarding one of Muslim’s ḥadīth (number 133) in which the narration quotes the Prophet’s statements about the virtues of praying the dawn

70 KIT, 447.
71 Ibid. 304.
72 Ibid. 287–8.
73 Ibid. 266–7. Muslim provides two isnād branches converging on the following common section: [Hammād b. Salama – Thābit al-Bunānī – Ibn Abī Laylā – Šuhayb – Prophet]. Al-Dāraquṭnī asserts that this is a case of normative matn addition, because other narrations cite neither the Prophet nor Šuhayb as the source: [Hammād – Thābit – Ibn Abī Laylā].
prayer in a group, al-Dāraquṭnī adduces a myriad of narrations that trace the tradition to the caliph ‘Uthmān b. ‘Affān.\(^74\) In another instance (ḥadīth number 102), al-Dāraquṭnī criticizes Muslim’s marfū‘ (ascribed to the Prophet) narration because ‘the correct [version]... is the mawqūf one (ascribed to a Companion) because those who attribute it to the Prophet (rafa‘ahu) are scholars who cannot compete with Manṣūr and Shu‘ba (supporters of the mawqūf narration).’\(^75\)

3. Literal Matn addition. Al-Dāraquṭnī also finds fault with the inappropriate addition of material in the text of the ḥadīth. Like the examples in the two previous sections, the acceptability of literal matn addition depends entirely on the relationship between the different narrations of the tradition; ultimately, al-Dāraquṭnī promotes the narration favoured among the scholars whose opinions he respects. In ḥadīth number 71, al-Dāraquṭnī thus rejects the narration of ‘Abd al-Raḥmān b. ‘Abdallāh because no other Ḥadīth scholars vouched for his addition of a lengthy phrase about a Muslim fighter’s rewards in heaven.\(^76\) In the aforementioned ḥadīth (number 69) of the mutalā‘inān, al-Dāraquṭnī states that the eminent traditionist Sufyān b. ‘Uyayn erred in transmitting the additional phrase ‘he [the Prophet] separated them’.

4. Idrāj/insertion. Al-Dāraquṭnī also criticizes the Shaykhayn for allowing the phenomenon of idrāj to go unnoticed in several narrations. In ḥadīth number 199, both al-Bukhārī and Muslim include several narrations of a tradition in which the Prophet forbids his followers to sell date palms until they are in blossom (ḥattā tuzhiya...). All the versions (except one from al-Bukhārī) that they detail feature an explanatory comment telling those listening that God has forbidden any exchange in which someone wrongfully deprives another Muslim of his property. While the context of al-Bukhārī’s and Muslim’s narrations suggest that the Prophet himself offered this explanation, al-Dāraquṭnī presents several prominent traditionists who trace this statement to Anas b. Mālik, the Companion who narrated the tradition.\(^78\)

5. Differences in Isnāds. Comparing and contrasting different chains of transmissions provides the basis for identifying comparative flaws. Yet al-Dāraquṭnī often favours a narration to those listed in the Ṣaḥīḥayn

\(^{74}\) Ibid. 360.
\(^{75}\) Ibid. 308.
\(^{76}\) Ibid. 254. Here al-Dāraquṭnī rejects this narration because it is mufrad, or unique, and thus an unreliable addition.
\(^{77}\) Ibid. 252.
\(^{78}\) Ibid. 477. Among the authorities that al-Dāraquṭnī cites are Ismā‘īl b. Ja‘far (d. 180/796), Ibn al-Mubārak (d. 181/797), and Yazid b. Hārūn (d. 206/821). Al-Ḥākim al-Naysābūrī considers this a case of matn addition; see al-Ḥākim, 167.
simply due to superior narrators or a clearer indication that they met and heard from each other. Sometimes al-Dāraquṭnī also finds mistakes in al-Bukhārī or Muslim’s isnāds. Such errors may result from conflating two transmitters or confusing their names.\footnote{For an example, see no. 135 in Kitāb al-tatabbu‘; KIT, 365.}

The Shaykhayn might also have misrepresented an isnād. Like other types of comparative flaws, the quality and quantity of traditionists preferring different isnāds sways al-Dāraquṭnī’s opinion. In an instance very typical of isnād difference (number 151), the Companion Ibn ‘Umar teaches a new generation of Muslims that the Prophet sometimes combined his evening and night prayers. Al-Dāraquṭnī states that various master muḥaddithūn disagreed with the course of Muslim’s narration. Figure 3.0 above demonstrates how the scholar advances a better chain of transmission preferred by three leading Hadith scholars of the second century: Shu‘ba b. Ḥajjāj (d. 160/776), Ṣufyān al-Thawrī (d. 161/778),\footnote{H. P. Raddatz, ‘Ṣufyān al-Thawrī’, EI². This death date is according to Ibn Sa‘d.} and Isrā’īl b. Yūnus (d. 160–2/776–8).\footnote{KIT, 396.}

6. Inversion of Matn and Isnād. A common error among the muḥaddithūn was incorrectly attaching a matn and isnād. In light of the enormous quantity of Hadith material in circulation by the

\[\text{Fig 3.0. Al-Dāraquṭnī’s alternative isnāds}\]
third/ninth century, fixing a tradition to the correct chain of transmission took great expertise. It is thus a testament to al-Bukhārī’s and Muslim’s mastery of their field that al-Dāraquṭnī discovers only two instances of maqlūb (inverted or switched) ahādīth. In hadīth number 166, this inversion plays a large role in the overall problem of this narration. Al-Bukhārī and Muslim collectively present three chains of transmission from the Prophet ending with two distinctly different matsns, one from ‘Alī and the other from Abū Dharr al-Ghifārī. Al-Dāraquṭnī states that one of the three narrations must be inverted because al-Bukhārī and Muslim each ascribe the same matn to both ‘Ali and Abū Dharr.82

7. Matn difference. Hadith authorities also differed on the content of a tradition. Unlike literal matn addition, a phenomenon endemic to a science in which transmitters sometimes repeated only the essential part of an account and sometimes recounted it in its entirety, matn difference (al-ikhtilāf fī al-matn) resulted from a fundamental disagreement on the wording of a tradition. In hadīth number 128, al-Bukhārī includes two narrations in which the caliph ‘Uthmān praises the virtues of al-Zubayr b. al-‘Awwām. In the first, the caliph states ‘Indeed you know that he is the best among you,’ and in the second he says ‘By Him who holds my soul in His hand, from what I know [al-Zubayr] is the best among them, and indeed he was the most beloved of God’s Prophet .’83 Al-Dāraquṭnī shows no preference for either narration, perhaps because they share much of the same isnād and authorities were divided on the matter. He merely states that, where the isnād splits, the two narrators disagree on the wording (lafẓ) of the hadīth. This lack of unanimity constitutes a flaw in his opinion.84

Here we must note that at no point in the Kitāb al-tatabbu‘ does al-Dāraquṭnī object to the theological, legal, or ritual content of any hadīth. His criticisms do sometimes involve the texts of the reports, but only to the extent that they contain elements differing from other narrations.

82 Ibid. 418.
83 Ibid. 353.
84 The first version: innakum latā‘lamūn annahu khayrūkum’. The second version: . . .innahu lakhayrūhum mā ‘alimtu . . . . These two narrations also differ in the amount of contextual explanation they provide. ‘Alī b. Mushir’s narration (second) explains the setting of the caliph’s statement: his illness in the Year of the Nosebleed (sanat al-ru’āf, 24 AH) and the community urging him to name a successor. Hammād b. Usāma’s (al-Dāraquṭnī refers to him as Abū Usāma) narration only includes the caliph’s words. The reason that al-Dāraquṭnī did not consider this an instance of literal matn addition is that the contextual explanation was not the caliph’s own speech. Rather, it was the work of one of the witnesses to the event, Marwān b. al-Ḥakam. The ‘hadīth’ itself, in the sense of reported speech, is the caliph’s statement about al-Zubayr.
III. Methodological Context

The Development of Ziyādat al-Thiqa: al-Dāraquṭnī’s Context

Detailing the flaws that al-Dāraquṭnī identified in the Šāhiḥayn informs us how he critiqued the two works, but it does not explain his motivations. Isolating any methodological differences between al-Dāraquṭnī and the Shaykhayn might explain the driving force behind his critique. The study of the Prophetic tradition did not stop after the Six Books were written. As such, ample space existed in which serious methodological differences could arise between their authors and al-Dāraquṭnī.

The above typology demonstrates the dominant role of problematic addition (ziyāda) in al-Dāraquṭnī’s adjustment of the Šāhiḥayn. The majority of the narrations for which the scholar faults Muslim and many of al-Bukhārī’s inclusions suffer from inappropriate additions in either the isnād or the matn, examples of which appear in the previous section. In their rebuttals of al-Dāraquṭnī’s criticisms, both al-Nawawī and Ibn Ḥajar al-‘Asqalānī (d. 852/1449) thus devote significant effort to addressing the controversy surrounding ziyādat al-thiqa, the addition made by a reliable transmitter.

Beginning in the third/ninth century, Muslim Hadith scholars gradually developed their understanding of addition, evolving from a broad vision of ziyāda to treat the more nuanced questions of law and transmission that it raised. Their initially uniform notion of the subject flowed directly from their focus on the isnād as the main guarantor of authenticity; if a trustworthy transmitter makes an addition, whether in the isnād or matn, his status alone should guarantee its veracity. While traditionists dealt with both isnād and matn addition in their daily studies, a theoretical distinction between the two appears not to have arisen until the time of al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī in the fifth/eleventh century. Before him, scholars like Ibn Ḥanbal, Ibn Khuzayma (d. 311/924), and Ibn Hibbān (d. 354/965) had commented on the issue but had made no technical study. Ahmad b. Hanbal appears to have accepted matn addition if the person providing it was reliable and the great Iraqi expert could locate a corroborating report. Ibn Hibbān approved of

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85 The study of ziyāda is regrettably underdeveloped in both Muslim and Western scholarship. The only two Arabic works devoted to the subject are Khaḍān al-Aḥdab’s ‘Ilm al-zawā‘id (Damascus: Dār al-Qalam, 1992) and ‘Abd al-Salām Muḥammad ‘Allūsh’s ‘Ilm zawā‘id al-hadith (Beirut: Dār Ibn Hazm, 1415/1995). I have found no significant study of it in any European language.

86 Zayn al-Dīn Ibn Ra’jāb, Sharḥ ʿilal al-Tirmidhī, ed. Ṣubḥān Jāsim al-Badrī (Baghdad: Matb‘at al-ʿĀnī, [1396/1976]), 306–7. Ibn Hanbal would not even accept a ziyāda narration from Mālik b. Anas until he had found a report that seconded the addition.
isnād addition as long as the added transmitter possessed the legal acumen to understand the material he was passing on. Similarly, al-Tirmidhī (d. 279/892) accepted isnād addition if he could rely on the transmitter’s memory. Muslim left no extant opinion, and al-Bukhārī’s terse acceptance of isnād addition lacks the context necessary to clarify his stance. One can only glean their positions from the work of later scholars such as al-Nawawī and Ibn Hajar.

By the fifth/eleventh century, some Muslim jurists and Hadith scholars had distinguished between the two types of matn addition and isnād addition, upholding a variety of positions on their acceptability. Al-Dāraquṭnī’s own student, al-Ḥākim al-Naysābūrī, accepted both literal and normative matn addition without reservation. This question received its most extensive treatment in al-Baghdādī’s comprehensive al-Kifāya fi‘ilm al-riwāya, where the author summarizes the varying positions held by scholars until his time and defends his own stance on the topic. He tackles the question of isnād addition in the form of the argument over the priority of a musnad report, one that can be traced back to the Prophet through an uninterrupted isnād, and a mursal report, one that is ascribed to the Prophet but lacks a Companion to complete the chain of transmission. When presented with several narrations of a tradition, some mursal and some musnad, al-Baghdādī states that most Hadith scholars (aṣḥāb al-ḥadīth) and jurists deem the tradition mursal and thus question its reliability. He further states that another party judges by the number and quality of the differing narrations. If the number of musnad chains is greater than their mursal counterparts and their transmitters more reliable (ahfāz), then scholars should accept it as musnad (and thus as potentially sound). Al-Baghdādī concludes by describing a third group that accepts any musnad report provided that the narrator satisfies all the requirements of reliability, regardless of the number or provenance of competing mursal chains. Al-Baghdādī himself adheres to this last position, and he adduces a

88 IKH, 302.
89 Al-Ḥākim states that ‘an addition [of a phrase in the matn] by a reliable transmitter is acceptable’. When one narration is mawqūf and the others marfū, he considers the tradition to be marfū; see al-Ḥākim, 27, 50.
90 Al-Baghdādī’s work was a milestone in the Islamic elaboration of ‘ilm al-ḥadīth. The traditionist Abū Bakr b. Nuqṭa (d. 629/1231) elegized al-Baghdādī by saying ‘all who have written [about the science of Hadith] after al-Khaṭīb [al-Baghdādī] are dependent on his books (iyyāl alā kutubihī); see Ibn al-Ṣalāh, Muqaddima, 12. Ibn al-Ṣalāh informs us that al-Baghdādī devoted an entire book (now lost) to the subject of ziyāda in the isnād, entitled Kitāb tamyīz al-mazīd fi muttasāl al-asānīd; see Ibn al-Ṣalāh, Muqaddima, 480.
report from al-Bukhārī to support it. Apparently, when that towering scholar was asked about a musnad version of a report transmitted by Isrā‘īl b. Yūnus, he stated ‘an addition by a trustworthy transmitter (al-ziyāda min al-thiqa) is acceptable, and Isrā‘īl b. Yūnus is trustworthy. Even if Shu‘ba [b. al-Hajjāj] and [Suﬁyān] al-Thawrī consider it mursal, that does not affect the report.’

Al-Baghdādī also addresses the issues of literal and normative matn addition, although he identiﬁes them in a different manner. For this scholar, the roots of normative matn addition lie in Companions on one occasion quoting the Prophet and on another uttering religious judgement directly inspired by his words. A report in which a Companion repeats a ruling without citing the Prophet thus does not contradict another narration ascribing that statement to the Prophet. Al-Baghdādī does, however, acknowledge that the majority of traditionists (muḥaddithūn) feel more comfortable accepting the mawqūf (Companion’s) version and rejecting the Prophetic narration as an illegitimate attempt to bolster the reliability of the report.

The acceptability of literal matn addition follows in the next chapter of the Kifāya. There al-Baghdādī poses the question: do we accept a report with additional material if only one reliable transmitter narrates it? He feels that the majority of traditionists and legal scholars (jamhūr al-fuqahā’ wa-aṣḥāb al-hadith) accept such a narration. He goes on to

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92 Ibid. 456. This material appears under the title ‘bāb fi al-hadith yarfa’uḥu al-rāwī tāraṭan wa-yaqifuhu ukhbrā, mā hukmuhu?‘; translated, ‘Chapter on the ruling of reports that are sometimes attributed to the Prophet and sometimes to Companions: How it should be judged’.

93 Al-Baghdādī, al-Kifāya, 449; cf. al-Nawawī, i. 37.

94 Muslim scholars have found the different opinions cited by al-Baghdādī to be at loggerheads. The great ninth/tenth-century traditionist Shams al-Dīn al-Sakhawī (d. 902/1497) struggled with what he considered opposing statements: al-Baghdādī’s claim that the majority of traditionists reject ziyāda but that the body (jamhūr) of both legal scholars and traditionists accept it. Al-Sakhawī reconciles the two statements by explaining that ‘jamhūr’ does not apply to legal scholars and traditionists equally. It is thus very possible for the majority of both groups taken together to accept ziyādat al-thiqa. If the traditionists were considered separately, however, they would generally reject it; see IKH, 305. I believe that my distinction between normative and literal matn addition better explains al-Baghdādī’s statement. His first statement deals with normative matn addition, while his second addresses the separate issue of literal matn addition.
describe a school of thought that only accepts such a report if it actually has bearing on a legal ruling. Interestingly, he describes a group identifying themselves with the Shāfi‘i doctrine (firqa mimman yantahīlu madhhab al-Shāfi‘i) that accepts this sort of addition only if the narration with ziyāda is transmitted by someone other than the person who carried the original report. Presumably this group faulted someone who narrated both versions for his oversight. A last group of traditionists rejects any matn addition that does not enjoy the support of at least several skilled narrators (huffāz). Like his stance on isnād addition, al-Baghdādi accepts all forms of matn addition by a reliable transmitter. All arguments against this categorical acceptance, he asserts, rely on notions of probability that fail to account for all the circumstances in which an honest, consistent narrator might transmit a report with additional phrases.95

Although other leading traditionists such as Ibn al-Ṣalāh and Ibn Rajab (d. 795/1392) continued the study of addition in the centuries following al-Baghdādi, the orthodox ruling on its acceptability took its definitive form in the work of al-Nawawī and Ibn Hajar al-‘Asqalānī. These two scholars present not only the culmination of the study of ziyāda; they also made the most concerted attempts to recreate Muslim’s and al-Bukhāri’s stances on the subject. Unfortunately, the writings of the Shaykhayn did not fully explain their methodologies to later generations. Indeed, al-Bukhāri’s Ṣahih does not set out his approach at all. In the introduction to his Ṣahih, Muslim does describe his project as well as his criteria for trustworthy narrations, but he never addresses the minute technical issues that would become matters of contention for later scholars seeking to reconstruct the criteria of the Shaykhayn.96

Al-Nawawī echoes al-Baghdādi’s unquestioning acceptance of an addition made by a reliable transmitter (ziyādat al-thiqa). ‘Additions [in the text or isnād] made by reliable transmitters are categorically acceptable according to the body of traditionists as well as legal scholars and theorists (abl al-hadith wa-l-fiqh wa-l-usūl)’, he states, relying on al-Baghdādi’s testimony as proof. Al-Nawawī grants similar acceptance to normative matn addition, regardless of the number and quality of opposing narrations.97 He defends this position in his introduction to his sharh of Muslim’s Ṣahih, and his broad acceptance is certainly hostage to Muslim’s extensive use of narrations containing additions.

96 See G. H. A. Juynboll’s ‘Muslim’s Introduction to his Sahih’, 263–311.
97 Al-Nawawī, i. 37.
Almost 200 years later, Ibn Ḥajar displays considerably more nuance on the subject of addition. Unconcerned by al-Baghdādī’s dominant opinions or the rulings of later scholars, he plumbs the work of al-Bukhārī, Muslim, Abū Zur‘a (d. 264/877), and Abū Hātim al-Rāzī (d. 277/890) for their views on addition. He determines that they did not operate according to any rigid guidelines for the acceptability of addition but rather judged each instance according to its specific circumstances (qarā‘in). It cannot be demonstrated that any of them categorically accepted addition,’ he concludes. This echoes the position of the Ḥanbali traditionist Ibn Rajab, who died some 60 years before Ibn Ḥajar. He contends that the story in which al-Bukhārī approves of ziyādat al-thiqa represents a specific ruling only and does not apply universally. While al-Nawawī defends Muslim’s inclusion of addition-narrations by accepting ziyādat al-thiqa categorically, Ibn Ḥajar’s emphasis on the subtleties of circumstance allows al-Bukhārī’s and Muslim’s expertise to defend itself. He states that al-Bukhārī and, after him, Muslim were the greatest Hadith scholars in Islamic history. This not only justifies their acceptance of addition in certain circumstances de facto, it also precludes any general ruling on the subject that does not take circumstances (qarā‘in) into consideration.

al-Dāraquṭnī’s Stance on Ziyādat al-Thiqa

Unfortunately, the lack of any methodological introduction in al-Dāraquṭnī’s works deprives us of comprehensive, first-hand information about his stance on ziyādat al-thiqa. The author does, however, refer to it once in his Kitāb al-tatabbu’ and a few times in his Kitāb al-ilal. The work of scholars like al-Baghdādī, Ibn Rajab, and Ibn Ḥajar also provides external indications. Combined with the typology of the flaws he documented in the Sahīḥayn as well as his ‘Ilal, we can reconstruct al-Dāraquṭnī’s beliefs on the issue. These data suggest that the scholar adhered to a middle position that accepted addition when supported by a preponderance of evidence, but preferred not to give narrators the benefit of the doubt. As a rule, al-Dāraquṭnī appears to have been very stringent about preserving the text of traditions. Contrary to his own opinion and that of the majority of fifth/eleventh-century traditionists, al-Baghdādī cites al-Dāraquṭnī teaching his students the words of an

98 Other narrations criticized in the Kitāb al-tatabbu’ that Ibn Ḥajar says involved circumstances in which ziyāda was acceptable include nos. 108, 110, 114, 177, and 186.
99 IKH, 309.
100 Ibn Rajab, 312.
101 KIT, 53.
early *muhaddith* who disliked abbreviating the *matn* in any circumstances because it ‘corrupted the meaning’.102

Surviving Hadith texts explicitly state that al-Dāraquṣṭānī neither categorically accepted nor denied *ziyādat al-thiqa*, and eminent traditionists who knew his work unanimously respected his understanding of addition. Ibn Rajab states that al-Dāraquṣṭānī was correct in accepting addition in certain circumstances and rejecting it in others.103 When Ibn Ḥajar turned to the early pillars of Hadith criticism and deduced that none followed any set policy on addition, he included al-Dāraquṣṭānī in their ranks.104

There is more that can shed light on al-Dāraquṣṭānī’s attitude towards the different aspects of *ziyāda*. Statements attributed to him strongly suggest that he distinguished between *matn* and *isnād* addition. He once praised one Abū Bakr b. Ziyād by exclaiming, ‘he had mastered the addition of phrases in the texts of *ahādith* (kāna ya’rifu *ziyādat al-alfāz fī al-mutūn*).’105 Yet al-Dāraquṣṭānī’s *Kitāb al-tatabbu‘* makes only one reference to addition in any form. This occurs in *ḥadīth* number 209, which the scholar criticizes for both a defective *isnād* and *isnād* addition. Oddly, it is the author’s explanation of the defective *isnād* that leads him to mention *ziyāda*. Al-Dāraquṣṭānī challenges Muslim’s principal narration by presenting another in which the transmitter Qatāda receives the report from someone named ‘Amr b. Murra instead of Sālim. Concerning this addition, he adds, ‘although he [Qatāda] is trustworthy (*thiqa*), and we accept addition by a trustworthy transmitter, he sometimes pretends he heard a report from someone when in fact he received it through an intermediary (*yudallis*)’ (my emphasis).106

Other segments of *Kitāb al-tatabbu‘* also allude to this acceptance of *isnād* addition under certain conditions. In *ḥadīth* number 100, al-Dāraquṣṭānī authenticates Muslim’s choice of a *musnad* narration in the face of opposing *mursal* reports because five trustworthy transmitters support it. Only the renowned traditionist Sufyān al-Thawrī proposes the *mursal* version.107 It therefore seems clear that al-Dāraquṣṭānī accepts *isnād* addition when the evidence for it outweighs opposing arguments.

102 Al-Baghdādì, *al-Kifāya*, 225. This opinion was attributed to Abū ‘Āṣim al-Nabīl (d. 212/827). Al-Baghdādì states that ‘many people allow a transmitter to [abbreviate a narration’s text] in any condition and make no specifications’. The author personally accepts abbreviating the *matn* as long as it does not affect the ruling or the gist (*murād*) of the tradition; see ibid. 224.

103 Ibn Rajab, 312.

104 IKH, 309.

105 Ibn Rajab, 314.

106 KIT, 492.

107 Ibid. 304.
We should probably understand al-Dāraquṭnī’s acceptance of ziyyādat al-thiqa in its broadest sense, for it seems likely that the same principle applied to normative matn addition. In hadith number 102 (mentioned above), al-Dāraquṭnī favours the mawqūf narrations over the marfū’ because ‘those who attribute it to the Prophet (rafa‘ūbu) are scholars who cannot compete with Maṃṣūr and Shu‘ba’ (supporters of the mawqūf narration).108 Extrapolating from the scholar’s explanation, he probably would have championed the marfū’ narration had it enjoyed more support.

The most useful external clues to al-Dāraquṭnī’s stance on addition come from al-Baghdādī’s lengthy description of the various schools of thought on the subject. The two Baghdad scholars died only 76 years apart, and al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī was quite familiar with his predecessor’s work.109 From the indications illustrated above (and number 71 in the typology section on Literal Matn Addition), al-Dāraquṭnī seems to fit into the group of traditionists whom al-Baghdādī describes rejecting any lone literal matn addition (mufrad) that lacks the support of several experts (ḥuffāz).110 Of particular interest is al-Baghdādī’s reference to a group of Shafī‘īs who would not accept any ‘addition from a reliable transmitter’ if he also narrated the version without the addition. In his Sunan, al-Dāraquṭnī rejects literal matn addition when the same transmitter communicates an addition and non-addition version.111 Moreover, many of the narrations that al-Dāraquṭnī discredits in his Kitāb al-tatabbu‘ are cases of isnād addition in which the transmitter making the addition clearly heard from both the original narrator and the newly added person in the isnād. Such instances demonstrate that al-Dāraquṭnī did not accept additions in the isnād or the matn from

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108 Ibid. 308. See the section on Normative Matn Addition above for the discussion of this narration.
109 Al-Baghdādī claimed an extended ijāza relationship with al-Dāraquṭnī based on the ijāza of one of his teachers; see Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ, Muqaddima, 343.
110 Al-Baghdādī, al-Kifāya, 465.
111 SD, ii. 83–4. I conclude that al-Dāraquṭnī rejected this instance of ziyyāda because the same person transmitted both the ziyyāda and non-ziyyāda version, not because he was not thiqa. This transmitter is none other than the problematic Muhammad b. Ishāq (d. 150/767), compiler of the Sīra. He was generally considered reliable by critics like Ahmad b. Ḥanbal and al-‘Ilijī, but Ibn Hajar states definitively that he did not meet al-Bukhārī’s standards (see KIT, 484). Although al-Dāraquṭnī seems to have shared al-Bukhārī’s standards on many occasions, in the one instance that Ibn Ishāq is mentioned in the Kitāb al-tatabbu‘, al-Dāraquṭnī does not explicitly identify him as weak. Nor does al-Dāraquṭnī share Mālik b. Anas’s damning opinion of Ibn Ishāq, for he does not include him in his Kitāb al-ḏu‘afā‘ wa-l-matrūkin.
people who also transmitted an original version. As a Shāfi‘ī, he may thus have belonged to the group mentioned by al-Baghdādī.112

Higher Standards in Men
While many of the comparative flaws in the Ṣaḥīḥayn resulted from trenchant differences between al-Dāraquṭnī’s stance on ziyādat al-thiqa and that of the Shaykhayn, his criticism of weak transmitters stems from far less dramatic disagreements. The scholar seems to have been only marginally more stringent than other major rijāl critics, for the standards he uses to evaluate transmitters do not seem to differ drastically from those of his fellow scholars. Oddly, al-Dhahābī considers al-Dāraquṭnī one of the more lenient Hadith critics.113 But in a sample of 75 men selected randomly from al-Dāraquṭnī’s Kitāb al-du‘afā‘ wa-l-matrūkin, the author rejects 9.3 per cent of the transmitters approved by other major Hadith scholars of the third/ninth and fourth/tenth centuries, including the Shaykhayn, as well as al-Dhahābī and Ibn Ḥajar.114

In the context of the Ṣaḥīḥayn, at least, Al-Dāraquṭnī proves only slightly more demanding than the Shaykhayn, and as a result he identifies no more than three defective transmitters in their two books.

112 Faulting such narrations continually baffles both Ibn Ḥajar and al-Nawawī, who constantly remind the reader that the narrations suffer from no flaw because the transmitter also conveyed the non-addition report; see KIT, 439.


The Baghdad scholar seems to have had slightly higher standards than Muslim, for later apologists such as al-Nawawī were unable to refute al-Dāraquṭnī’s attack on one ‘Abdallāh b. Khuthaym, on whom Muslim depends in one narration.115 Al-Dāraquṭnī accuses Ibn Khuthaym of being weak (da‘īf),116 but one can find no hint of this serious accusation in al-Dhahabi’s staunchly canonical compilation of expert opinions on this transmitter.117 In al-Mizzī’s (d. 742/1341) Ṭabdhīb al-kamāl, al-Nasā’ī (d. 303/915), Ibn Ḥibbān, Abū Ḥātim al-Rāzī, and Abū al-Ḥasan Ahmad al-‘Ijlī (d. 261/875) also vouch for Ibn Khuthaym’s strength and probity.118 Amid this tremendous praise, however, Ibn Ḥajar notes that Ibn al-Madīnī, al-Bukhārī’s most illustrious teacher, labelled Ibn Khuthaym ‘munkar al-ḥadīth (that he alone contradicts more reliable experts).’119 It thus seems likely that, even with so much support behind him, al-Nawawī could not defend Muslim’s decision in the face of Ibn al-Madīnī’s venerable opposition. As a principle, muḥaddithūn generally considered one negative evaluation of a transmitter (jarḥ) weightier than multiple approvals (tā’īl).120

Al-Dāraquṭnī also demonstrates his unusually high standards when criticizing one of al-Bukhārī’s transmitters, ʿImrān b. Ḥiṭṭān, whom he faults for deviant beliefs (ṣīʿaʾ iʿītīḥādībi). Although Ibn Ḥajar admits that this Khārijite propagandist’s heretical leanings undermine the narration and can only excuse al-Bukhārī by reminding us that it is an auxiliary narration, other prominent traditionists argue that al-Bukhārī only included this narration because ʿImrān had transmitted it before joining the Khārijite camp.121 Nonetheless, in his Lisān al-mīzān, Ibn Ḥajar

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115 See ḥadīth no. 4246 in Muslim’s Bāb al-Fadāʾil.
116 KIT, 465.
117 See al-Dhahabi, Mīzān al-iʿtīdāl, ii. 460.
119 KIT, 465 and Ibn Ḥajar, Ṭabdhīb al-tadhīb, 12 vols. (Beirut: Dār Ṣādir, 1968; repr. Hyderabad: Dāʾirat al-Maʿārif, 1326/[1908–9]), v. 537. Al-Nasāʾī also demonstrated some reservations about Ibn Khuthaym, but his opinion was apparently based on that of Ibn al-Madīnī.
120 J. Robson, ‘al-djarḥ wa al-ta’dīl’, EF.2
121 KIT, 333. It is extremely interesting to note, however, that even after specifically calling them either weak or deviant, al-Dāraquṭnī includes neither ‘Abdallāh b. Khuthaym nor ʿImrān b. Ḥiṭṭān in his Kitāb al-duʿāfāʾ wa-l-matrūkīn. There are several possible explanations for this fact: (a) these two transmitters represent changes in the scholar’s opinion between his writing of the KIT and Kitāb al-duʿāfāʾ wa-l-matrūkīn; (b) the author applied a more rigorous set of standards when reviewing the Sahihayn than in his own work; or (c) the author or copyist erred.
attempts to exonerate ‘Imrân with a barrage of approving experts such as al-‘Ijli, Qatâda b. Di‘âma (d. 118/736), and Abû Dâwûd (d. 275/888). Al-Dâraquṭnî therefore proves not only more demanding than a host of other critics, including al-Bukhârî and Muslim, but is also unwilling to accept narrations that may have predated a transmitter’s deviant beliefs.

CONCLUSION

Al-Dâraquṭnî cuts an interesting figure in the pantheon of Sunnî scholarship. As one of the most prominent Hadith masters of the classical period, his critique of the two most esteemed collections of Prophetic traditions provides irrefutable proof of the critical review process through which even these canonical texts have passed. His persona disorients the historian accustomed to the contours of modern Sunnî orthodoxy and its reverence for the Šâhiḥayn: a champion of the Prophetic legacy, his Kitâb al-tatabbu‘ seems to flout its canonization; a staunch theological literalist opposed to free reasoning, his criticism of the Šâhiḥayn never touches on any matters of substance or content. We can resolve this conundrum, however, by realizing that al-Dâraquṭnî was, above all, a master of form. In a scholarly world that esteemed attention to rote detail, he was more meticulous than most. His approach to Hadith criticism centred solely on the processes and vagaries of transmission, to the exclusion of its ideological content. He concerned himself with transmitters and the chains they formed, limiting his interest in the matn to the part it played in the holistic course of transmission. His focus on comparing and evaluating individual narrations without addressing their content meant that al-Dâraquṭnî never overtly rejected any of the Prophetic traditions included in al-Bukhârî’s and Muslim’s collections. As his œuvre demonstrates, al-Dâraquṭnî was undeniably fascinated with the Šâhiḥayn. He clearly deemed them seminal embodiments of the Prophet’s Sunna, and his adjustment of them constituted an act of productive criticism. Al-Dâraquṭnî certainly never intended to alter the theological, ritual, or legal material of the Shaykhayn with his own opinions. Rather, we must understand al-Dâraquṭnî’s objections to certain aspects of al-Bukhârî’s and Muslim’s compilations through specific methodological developments within ‘ilm al-hadîth between the third/ninth and ninth/fifteenth

centuries. Al-Dīraquṭnī simply proved more systematically stringent on issues such as addition (ziyāda) than al-Bukhārī, Muslim, and mainstream Sunnī scholarship as it coalesced after the fourth/tenth century. As the writings of al-Baghdādī, al-Nawawī, and Ibn Ḥajar demonstrate, the centuries following al-Dīraquṭnī’s death saw first a more lenient approach to addition and later an abandonment of the general rules of ziyādat al-thiqa, embodied in works such as the Kitāb al-tatabbuʿ, in favour of a reliance on the expert judgement of al-Bukhārī and Muslim. It was this later development in Sunnī Hadith scholarship and al-Dīraquṭnī’s lack of interest in questioning the actual substance of al-Bukhārī or Muslim’s aḥādīth that allowed later scholars such as al-Nawawī and Ibn Ḥajar to reconcile the tenth-century critic’s work with the Hadith canon.