



Tracing Transmissions: The Accuracy of Sahih Muslim

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Introduction

Imām Muslim ibn al-Ḥajjāj’s (d. 261 AH) *al-Musnad al-Ṣaḥīḥ al-Mukhtaṣar*, better known as *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, has had an indelible impact on Islamic scholastic discourse and continues to shape the lives of ordinary Muslims.¹ People of all ages, genders, and professions sought out, at times creative, ways to be connected with the *Ṣaḥīḥ*.² The renowned lexicographer al-Fayrūzabādī (d. 817 AH) held the record of reading the entire text in three days, only to be beaten by Ibn Ḥajar al-‘Asqalānī (d. 852 AH) in an astonishing two days and a few hours.³ The erudite scholar of Nishapur, Umm al-Khayr Fāṭimah bint ‘Alī (d. 532 AH), studied the entire text with ‘Abd al-Ghāfir al-Fārisī (d. 448 AH), granting her one of the most elevated chains in her time.⁴ Between the years 500-1000 AH, at least 50 commentaries were written on it.⁵ Suffice it to say that *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* was considered *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*’s “superior by some, its equal by others, and second to it by most.”⁶

This paper will outline the transmitters of *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* and detail some of its extant manuscripts to shed light on its textual integrity. A word will then be presented on the claim that *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* was put into final form a generation after the author’s demise. Many arguments for the textual integrity of *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* can be gleaned from my [previous article](#) on the preservation of Ḥadīth literature. As such, this paper has been kept relatively short, touching only on the most essential

¹ The entire title of *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* is *al-Musnad al-Ṣaḥīḥ al-Mukhtaṣar min al-Sunan bi Naql al-‘Adl ‘an al-‘Adl ‘an Rasūl Allāh ṣallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam*. On the title of *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, see Abū Ghuddah, *Taḥqīq Ismay al-Ṣaḥīḥayn wa Ism Jāmi‘ al-Tirmidhī*, p. 33.

² Nizār Rayyān, *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Imām Muslim: Asānīduhu wa Nusakhuhu wa Makḥṭūṭatuhu wa Ṭaba‘ātuḥu*, *Majallat al-Jāmi‘ah al-Islāmiyyah*, p. 323.

³ Al-Sakhāwī, *al-Jawāhir wa al-Durar*, vol.1, p. 162. On the phenomenon of speed-reading Ḥadīth literature, see Garrett Davidson, *Carrying on the Tradition: An Intellectual and Social History of Post-Canonical Hadith Transmission*, pp. 107-112.

⁴ Al-Dhahabī, *Siyar A‘lām al-Nubalā’*, vol. 19, p. 625.

⁵ Mashhūr Ḥasan, *al-Imām Muslim ibn al-Ḥajjāj*, pp. 251-257.

⁶ Zubayr Siddiqi, *Ḥadīth Literature: Its Origins, Development, and Special Features*, p. 59.

points. A chart on the transmission of the *Ṣaḥīḥ* and folios from early authoritative manuscripts have been appended.

Transmitters

Imām Muslim spent 15 years compiling his *Ṣaḥīḥ*: he began in 235 AH and completed the work in 250 AH.⁷ When he passed away in 261 AH, he had spent eleven years teaching and disseminating the *Ṣaḥīḥ* to droves of students.⁸ However, in terms of documented transmission, a handful of his students gained prominence vis-à-vis the transmission of *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*. By the 7th century AH, Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ (d. 643 AH) observed that *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* had been so widely transmitted that it was unreasonable to doubt its authorship. Al-Nawawī (d. 676 AH) seconded this observation, and al-Sakhāwī (d. 902 AH) reiterated it in the 9th century AH.⁹

The primary transmitter is Abū Ishāq Ibrāhīm ibn Sufyān (d. 308 AH), a close pupil of Muslim who was celebrated for his asceticism and expertise in Ḥadīth.¹⁰ This route eventually became the dominant recension of the *Ṣaḥīḥ*.¹¹ Two people then transmitted from Ibrāhīm: Abū Aḥmad al-Julūdī (d. 368)—the most authoritative—and Muḥammad ibn Yazīd al-‘Adl.¹² A third person named Abū Bakr al-Kisā’ī (d. 385 AH) also transmitted the *Ṣaḥīḥ* from Ibrāhīm but al-Ḥākim

⁷ Abū Ghuddah, “Appendix,” in *al-Mūqīḥah*, pp. 137-140; ‘Abd al-Raḥmān Ṭawālbah, *al-Imām Muslim wa Manḥajuhū fī Ṣaḥīḥih*, pp. 104-105.

⁸ For a list of Muslim’s students, see al-Dhahabī, *Siyar A’lām al-Nubalā’*, vol. 12, p. 562.

⁹ Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ, *Ṣiḥānat Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, p. 103; al-Nawawī, *al-Minhāj*, vol. 1, p. 11; al-Sakhāwī, *Ghunyat al-Muḥtāj*, p. 40.

¹⁰ Al-Dhahabī, *Siyar A’lām al-Nubalā’*, vol. 14, pp. 311-312.

¹¹ Ibrāhīm ibn Sufyān heard the *Ṣaḥīḥ* from Muslim in 257 AH. There are three sections where he says, “from Muslim” instead of “Muslim narrated to us,” which indicates that he may not have heard several ḥadīths directly from Muslim. Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ explains that Ibrāhīm received general authorization (*ijazah*) for these ḥadīths from Muslim or narrated them from him via *wijādah*. Ḥusayn Shawwāt states that this phraseology is based on the audition of 257 AH. Since Ibrāhīm stayed in Muslim’s company for several more years, it is not unlikely that he heard these ḥadīths from Muslim later. ‘Abd Allāh Damfū adds that even if we accept that Ibrāhīm only received general authorization for these ḥadīths, there is continuous audition for them in al-Qalānīsī’s recension. See *Ṣiḥānat Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, pp. 103-104; Ibn Ḥajar, *al-Mu’jam al-Mufahras*, pp. 27-28; ‘Abd Allāh Damfū, Ibrāhīm ibn Muḥammad ibn Sufyān: *Riwāyātuhu wa Ziyādātuhu wa Ta’līqātuhū ‘alā Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, Majallat al-Jāmi‘ah al-Islāmiyyah, vol. 111 (2001), pp. 178-182.

¹² Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ, *Ṣiḥānat Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, p. 104.

(d. 405 AH) took issue with his method of transmitting.¹³ Most, if not all, extant manuscripts and prints of the *Ṣaḥīḥ* are based on the recension of al-Julūdī via Ibrāhīm.

The second transmitter from Muslim is Aḥmad ibn ‘Alī al-Qalānisī, whose reliability was confirmed by al-Sam‘ānī (d. 562 AH).¹⁴ Ibn al-Ṣalāh notes that al-Qalānisī’s recension was exclusively found in the Maghrib (Muslim West), having reached there from Egypt in the early 5th century AH.¹⁵ Al-Dāraquṭnī (d. 385 AH) counseled the study of this recension of the *Ṣaḥīḥ* via Ibn Māhān (d. 387 AH) from al-Ashqar from al-Qalānisī.¹⁶ Although this recension is believed to have become extinct, the Moroccan scholar Aḥmad Maḥdī al-Nayfar is said to have obtained a manuscript of this recension.¹⁷ At any rate, the variants found in al-Qalānisī’s recension were preserved by early commentators like al-Jayyānī (d. 498 AH), al-Māzarī (d. 536 AH) and Qāḍī ‘Iyāḍ (d. 544 AH),¹⁸ and Ibn Khayr al-Ishbīlī (d. 575 AH) documented them in the margins of his manuscript.¹⁹

There are two other transmitters of the *Ṣaḥīḥ* whose recensions did not gain much prominence: Makkī ibn ‘Abdān (d. 325 AH) and Abū Ḥāmid Ibn al-Sharqī (d. 325 AH)—the latter only transmitted part of the *Ṣaḥīḥ*. Abū Bakr al-Jawzaqī transmitted these two recensions of the *Ṣaḥīḥ*.²⁰ Al-Sakhāwī writes that apart from the recension of Ibrāhīm ibn Sufyān, he only received authorization for the remaining three recensions without continuous audition.²¹ There were transmitters

¹³ Al-Sam‘ānī, *al-Ansāb*, vol. 11, p. 102.

¹⁴ Ibid., vol. 12, pp. 75-76.

¹⁵ Ibn al-Ṣalāh, *Ṣiyānat Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, pp. 103, 109.

¹⁶ Al-Jayyānī, *Taqyīd al-Muḥmal*, vol. 1, p. 66.

¹⁷ Muḥammad al-Shādhilī, “Introduction,” in *al-Mu‘lim bi Fawā’id Muslim*, p. 181.

¹⁸ See, for instance, al-Jayyānī, *Taqyīd al-Muḥmal*, vol. 3, p. 768; al-Māzarī, *al-Mu‘lim*, vol. 1, pp. 396, 397, 418; ‘Iyāḍ, *Ikmāl al-Mu‘lim*, vol. 1, pp. 238, 329, 489, 585.

¹⁹ See, for instance, pp. 10 (*qāl Muslim: Jarīr kunyatuhu...*), 11 (the word *khamsah*). A link to a digital copy of this manuscript is provided below.

²⁰ Al-Sakhāwī, *Ghunyat al-Muḥtāj*, p. 40.

²¹ Ibid.

besides the four listed here, like Ibn Khuzaymah (d. 311 AH),²² but their transmission never survived the ravages of time or remained undocumented.²³ The transmission of the *Ṣaḥīḥ* naturally expanded in the succeeding generations. Figure 1 illustrates the transmission of the *Ṣaḥīḥ* over five generations.²⁴

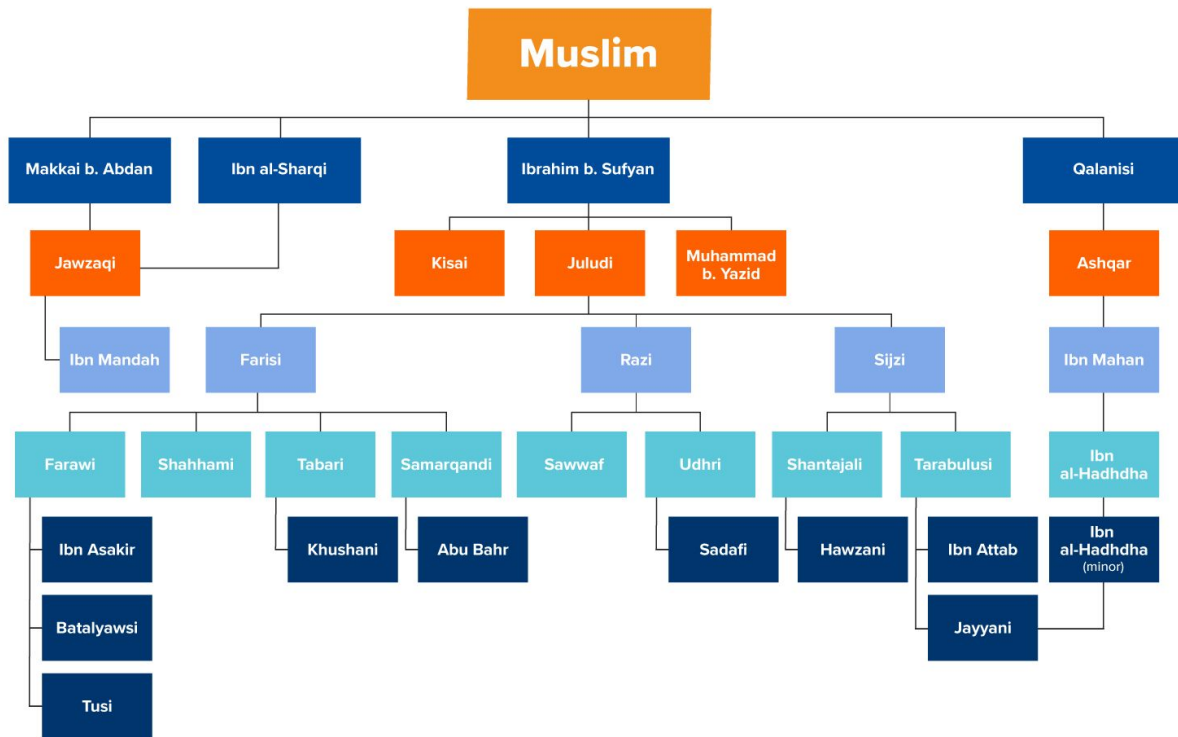


Figure 1: Transmission of *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* over five generations (3rd to 6th centuries AH).

²² Al-Khalīlī, *al-Irshād*, vol. 3, p. 826. In a treatise on this topic, al-Ḍiyā' al-Maqdisī (d. 643 AH) lists ten people who transmitted the *Ṣaḥīḥ* from Imām Muslim. See 'Ādīl al-Sabī'ī, *Riwāyāt Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, Majallat al-Jāmi'ah al-Islāmiyyah li al-'Ulūm al-Sharī'ah, no. 185, pp. 133-134.

²³ Mashhūr Ḥasan, *al-Imām Muslim ibn al-Ḥajjāj*, p. 167.

²⁴ For more information on the names of the transmitters found in the appended chart, see the introduction to *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, ed. Dār al-Ta'ṣīl, vol. 1, pp. 118-177. Some transmissions were omitted from the chart for brevity, such as the route of Hātim al-Ṭarābulusī from Abū Muḥammad al-Ṣiqillī from al-Kisā'ī from Ibrāhīm ibn Sufyān. See Ibn Khayr, *al-Fihrist*, p. 86; cf. al-Mizzī, *Tuḥfat al-Ashraf*, no. 8206.

Manuscripts

There are at least five hundred extant manuscripts of *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* that have been transcribed over a millennium by scribes from different regions.²⁵ The preponderance of its manuscripts is second only to *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*.²⁶ An early partial manuscript held in the Khuda Bakhsh Oriental Library was transcribed some time in the 5th century AH. The exact date of its transcription is not documented, but it was used by Abū Bakr al-Ṭūsī in 486 AH to teach the text.²⁷ Another partial manuscript dated to 471 AH is held in the Zāhiriyyah Library (al-Assad National Library) in Damascus.²⁸ Although the details of Muslim's exemplar are unknown, important secondary and tertiary manuscripts were accessible to classical scholars. The manuscript of al-Julūdī via the recension of Ibrāhīm ibn Sufyān was accessible in the 6th century to the commentator al-Māzarī.²⁹ Ibn al-Ḥadhdhā's (d. 416 AH) manuscript of al-Qalānisī's recension—via Ibn Māhan—was used by Abu 'Alī al-Jayyānī (d. 498 AH) for his celebrated work *Taqyīd al-Muhmal*.³⁰

Several valuable manuscripts are easily accessible today and have been used by researchers to produce a critically edited version of the text. One early manuscript was transcribed by 'Abd Allāh ibn 'Īsā al-Murādī in 559 AH. This was read to and verified by Ḥadīth experts like Abū 'Alī al-Baṭalyawsī (d. 568 AH), Ibn 'Asākir (d. 571 AH), and al-Dimyāṭī (d. 705 AH), all of whom noted variants found in their respective manuscripts.³¹ The physical copy is held in the El Escorial Library in Spain, and a digital copy is available online.³² Another manuscript was transcribed

²⁵ The al-Fahras al-Shāmil catalogue details the whereabouts of 532 manuscripts of *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*. See *al-Fahras al-Shāmil li al-Turāth al-'Arabī al-Islāmī al-Makḥūṭ*, pp. 574-590.

²⁶ Brockelmann, *Geschichte der Arabischen Litteratur* (Arabic trans.), vol. 3, p. 180.

²⁷ See the Khuda Bakhsh Oriental Library catalog, vol. 5, pp. 79-80.

²⁸ *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, ed. Dār al-Ta'sīl, vol. 1, p. 187 (note 1).

²⁹ See, for instance, al-Māzarī, *al-Mu'lim bi Fawā'id Muslim*, vol. 1, p. 451.

³⁰ Al-Jayyānī, *Taqyīd al-Muhmal*, vol. 1, p. 65; cf. *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, ed. Dār al-Ta'sīl, vol. 1, pp. 178-180, 182.

³¹ *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, ed. Dār al-Ta'sīl, vol. 1, p. 225 ff.

³² <https://archive.org/download/m-0002/06870-0311007.zip> (last accessed November 30, 2018).

by Abū al-Qāsim al-Amawī in 573 AH. Ibn Khayr al-Ishbīlī compared this manuscript with his own manuscript—which he spent an entire lifetime refining—and in the margins he noted the variants that were found in his copy.³³

‘Abd al-Ḥayy al-Kattānī praised this manuscript as one of the most important in North Africa.³⁴ The physical copy is held in the University of al-Qarawiyyīn in Fes, Morocco, and a digital copy is available online.³⁵

The earliest print of *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* was produced by ‘Azīm al-Dīn and Ghulām Akbar in 1849 CE through Maṭba‘-e Karīmī in Calcutta³⁶ followed by Aḥmad ‘Alī al-Sahāranpūrī’s print—decorated with al-Nawawī’s commentary—in 1853 CE through his prestigious Maṭba‘-e Aḥmadī in Delhi.³⁷ Between 1911-1915 CE, the Istanbul-based al-Ṭab‘ah al-‘Āmirah printed an edition of the *Ṣaḥīḥ* that was compared with reliable manuscripts and annotated with concise notes.³⁸ This edition was later improved and reproduced by Zuhayr Nāṣir in 2013.³⁹ In 2014, Dār al-Ta’šīl printed an exceptionally accurate edition of the *Ṣaḥīḥ* that was compared with five manuscripts, including al-Murādī’s and Ibn Khayr’s manuscripts detailed earlier and a partial manuscript with a reading certificate dated to 461 AH.⁴⁰ That the last manuscript was used for audition in 461 AH means it was transcribed

³³ Abū Ghuddah, *Taḥqīq Ismā‘ al-Ṣaḥīḥayn wa Ism Jāmi‘ al-Tirmidhī*, pp. 43-45.

³⁴ Al-Kattānī, *Fahras al-Fahāris*, vol. 1, p. 385. Shaykh ‘Abd al-Fattāh Abū Ghaddah writes that due to its thorough cross-analysis, marginal notes, and auditions, Ibn Khayr’s manuscript is, in fact, the most valuable extant manuscript in the world, not only in North Africa as Shaykh al-Kattānī mentioned. See Abū Ghuddah, *Taḥqīq Ismā‘ al-Ṣaḥīḥayn*, p. 45.

³⁵ <http://wadod.com/bookshelf/book/734> (last accessed November 30, 2018).

³⁶ See the closing remarks of their edition on vol. 2, p. 744; cf. Brockelmann, *Geschichte der Arabischen Litteratur* (Arabic trans.), vol. 3, p. 180.

³⁷ Nūr al-Ḥasan Kāndhlawī, *Ḥazrat Mawlānā Aḥmad ‘Alī Sahāranpūrī kī Khidmāt-e Ḥadīth*, in *Hindustān awr ‘Ilm-e Ḥadīth*, pp. 286-287.

³⁸ The text was edited by Aḥmad Rif‘at and Muḥammad ‘Izzat several times using reliable manuscripts. Unfortunately, a description of these manuscripts was not provided. It was then revised and annotated by Muḥammad Shukrī al-Anqarawī. See Muṣaddiq al-Dūrī, *Riwāyat Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim min Ṭarīq Ibn Māhān Muqāranah bi Riwayāt Ibn Sufyan*, pp. 45-46.

³⁹ Zuhayr Nāṣir, “Preface,” in *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Imām Muslim*, vol. 1, p. 30.

⁴⁰ *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, ed. Dār al-Ta’šīl, vol. 1, pp. 225 ff., 246, 273. For the purposes of text-verification, Dār al-Ta’šīl also consulted other resources like commentaries and supplementary works on the *Ṣaḥīḥ*.

before that time, making it one of the earliest, albeit partial, manuscripts of *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* accessible today.⁴¹

Finalized Text or Fluid Text?

Here we will address a concern that was raised concerning the authorship of the *Ṣaḥīḥ* as we have it today: did Muslim complete the *Ṣaḥīḥ* during his lifetime or was it put into final form by subsequent students? As a result of issues like “organic texts, pseudepigraphy, and long-term redactional activity,” Norman Calder argued that *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* was put into final form a generation after the author’s demise.⁴² To be clear, there are definitely variations between the recensions of the *Ṣaḥīḥ*. But that was a natural outcome of the process of transmission.⁴³ To claim that the entire text was extremely fluid and only received final form a generation later is untenable.

A recent study revealed that between the two major recensions of the *Ṣaḥīḥ*—(i) Ibrāhīm ibn Sufyān and (ii) Ibn Māhān⁴⁴ via al-Qalānisī—there are only 117 instances of variations, 56 in the chains of transmission and 61 in the texts; more than half of these variations, however, can be harmonized.⁴⁵ An example of this

⁴¹ A digital copy is available online: <https://ia800204.us.archive.org/29/items/m-0001/3736---01.pdf> (last accessed December 7, 2018). The al-Fahras al-Shāmil catalog details a manuscript of *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* that is dated to 368 AH, a century after Muslim’s demise, located in the Alexandria Municipal Library in Egypt. See *al-Fahras al-Shāmil li al-Turāth al-‘Arabī al-Islāmī al-Makhṭūṭ*, p. 574. However, the information provided in the catalog is incorrect. The manuscript held in the Alexandria Library (item no. 836B) is correctly dated to 368 AH and is even titled “*al-Juz’ al-Thālith ‘Ashar min Ṣaḥīḥ al-Imām Muslim*,” but unfortunately it is not a manuscript of *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*. Rather, it is a partial manuscript of Qāḍī Ishāq al-Bustī’s (d. 307 AH) Qur’ānic exegesis. It is possible that the librarian who labelled this manuscript confused the two books due to similarities in their structure: al-Bustī’s work is a transmission-based exegesis (*ma’thūr*) filled with chains of transmission that resemble the structure of Muslim’s *Ṣaḥīḥ*. I would like to thank Shaykh Aḥmad ‘Āshūr from Madinah for sharing his insights on this manuscript. The manuscript can be obtained here: https://ia600705.us.archive.org/15/items/m0368/tafsir_busti.pdf (last accessed December 7, 2018).

⁴² Norman Calder, *Studies in Early Muslim Jurisprudence*, p. 194.

⁴³ Muṣaddiq al-Dūrī, *Riwāyat Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim min Ṭarīq Ibn Māhān Muqāranah bi Riwayāt Ibn Sufyan*, p. 79.

⁴⁴ Abū ‘Alī al-Jayyānī writes that Ibn Māhān transmits the entire *Ṣaḥīḥ* from al-Ashqar via al-Qalānisī apart from the last three parts which he transmits via al-Julūdī from Ibrāhīm. See al-Jayyānī, *Taqyīd al-Muḥmal*, vol. 1, p. 66; Ibn al-Ṣalāh, *Ṣiyanat Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, p. 109; al-Dhahabī, *Siyar A’lām al-Nubalā’*, vol. 16, p. 536.

⁴⁵ From 117 cases, there are only 36 instances in Ibn Māhān’s recension and 4 instances in the recension of Ibrāhīm Sufyān that are mistakes or scribal errors. See al-Dūrī, *Riwāyat Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, p. 390.

conflict is the description of Saʿīd ibn Jubayr’s action: *raḥaltu* (I traveled) in the recension of Ibrāhīm ibn Sufyān and its variant *dakhaltu* (I entered) in the recension of Ibn Māhān via al-Qalānisī.⁴⁶ This variation is not serious and can be harmonized by taking Ibrāhīm’s recension as a reference to Saʿīd’s travel and Ibn Māhān’s variant as his entering Ibn ‘Abbās’ room after the travel.⁴⁷ To put the negligible conflict between these recensions into perspective, based on the Dār al-Taʾsīl numbering of total reports in the *Ṣaḥīḥ* (7525),⁴⁸ variations are found in 1.55% of reports, an inconsequential percentage considering the extensive nature of the work.

We saw earlier that *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* was transmitted adequately during the author’s lifetime and extensively over subsequent generations. Any significant alteration in or tampering with such a widely received text could not have gone unnoticed. Moreover, a copy of *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* was presented to Abū Zurʿah al-Rāzī (d. 264 AH) and Ibn Wārah (d. 270 AH), contemporaries of the author; an incomplete text would not have been presented.⁴⁹ Likewise, Abū Bakr al-Ṣāʿigh (d. 270 AH) wrote a *mustakhraj* on the *Ṣaḥīḥ* during Muslim’s lifetime.⁵⁰ The *mustakhraj* genre consisted of books whose authors used an existing Ḥadīth collection as a template to narrate ḥadīths via personal transmission until they met with the chain of the author of the template collection.⁵¹ Therefore, *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* needed to be a complete text in order for al-Ṣāʿigh to have written a *mustakhraj* on it.⁵²

It is worth adding that the transmitters of the *Ṣaḥīḥ* infrequently provided comments (*taʿlīqāt*) and added material to the text (*ziyādāt*). The direct transmitter of the *Ṣaḥīḥ* Ibrāhīm ibn Sufyān added thirteen chains of transmission and his

⁴⁶ Muslim, *al-Musnad al-Ṣaḥīḥ*, no. 3023.

⁴⁷ Al-Dūrī, *Riwayāt Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, p. 388.

⁴⁸ *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, ed. Dār al-Taʾsīl, vol. 1, pp. 99-102, 291.

⁴⁹ Abū Zurʿah al-Rāzī, *al-Ḍuʿafāʾ*, vol. 2, pp. 674-677. On Abū Zurʿah’s comments on *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, see Mashhūr Ḥasan, *al-Imām Muslim ibn al-Ḥajjāj*, pp. 101-02; ʿAwwāmah, *Annotations on Tadrīb al-Rāwī*, vol. 2, pp. 326-328.

⁵⁰ Abū Zurʿah al-Rāzī, *al-Ḍuʿafāʾ*, vol. 2, pp. 674-675.

⁵¹ Al-Suyūṭī, *Tadrīb al-Rāwī*, vol. 2, pp. 421-427.

⁵² Jonathan Brown, *The Canonization of al-Bukhārī and Muslim*, p. 386.

students al-Julūdī added four. By no stretch of the imagination can these additions be considered tampering with the text. The purpose of these additions was to provide an alternative shorter chain among other considerations. Most importantly, these additions are marked with the transmitter's name and were obviously not given the canonical status afforded to the *Ṣaḥīḥ*.⁵³ Take the following example:

*Abū Bakr ibn Abī Shaybah narrated to us, saying: Wakī' narrated to us, saying: al-A'mash narrated to us, from al-Ma'rūr ibn Suwayd, from Abū Dharr, who said: the Messenger of Allāh (peace and blessing be upon him) said: Allāh said, "Whoever carries out a good deed will receive tenfold or more..." Ibrāhīm said: al-Ḥasan ibn Bishr narrated to us, saying: Wakī' narrated to us (continuing with Muslim's chain) this ḥadīth.*⁵⁴

Ibrāhīm's addition is marked as his own, so as not to be confused with Muslim's chain. Moreover, he merely provided an alternative chain of transmission that leads to a mutual source (Wakī') for the purposes of elevation (*uluww*). Transmitter-additions feature in many classical works and Ḥadīth literature, like Mālik's *Muwattā'*, Khalīfah ibn Khayyāt's *Tārīkh*,⁵⁵ and Ibn Mājah's *Sunan*. These additions were distinguished from the actual text and were not seen as a form of tampering.⁵⁶

Conclusion

Recent criticisms of the authorship of canonical Ḥadīth literature like *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī* and *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* fail to grasp the nature of pre-print transmission. Often, insignificant and expected manuscript variations are seen as reasons to

⁵³ Damfū, Ibrāhīm ibn Muḥammad ibn Sufyān: *Riwāyātuhu wa Ziyādātuhu wa Ta'līqātuhu 'alā Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, pp. 171, 192 ff. Ibrāhīm makes six comments throughout the *Ṣaḥīḥ*. See *ibid.*, pp. 215-228.

⁵⁴ Muslim, *al-Musnad al-Ṣaḥīḥ*, no. 2687.

⁵⁵ Tobias Andersson, *Early Sunnī Historiography: A Study of the Tārīkh of Khalīfa b. Khayyāt*, pp. 21-28.

⁵⁶ Damfū, Ibrāhīm ibn Muḥammad ibn Sufyān, pp. 186-190; Mutawallī, *Ziyādāt al-Imām Muḥammad ibn Yūsuf ibn Maṭar al-Firabrī 'alā Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, pp. 593-598.

doubt a text's attribution to its purported author. Given the evidence available to us—documented transmission, extant manuscripts, supplementary works,⁵⁷ and the absence of serious manuscript variations—we can confidently say that *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* was compiled by Imām Muslim ibn al-Ḥajjāj and that it was transmitted by subsequent generations as precisely as humanly possible—Allāh have mercy on them.

Appendix

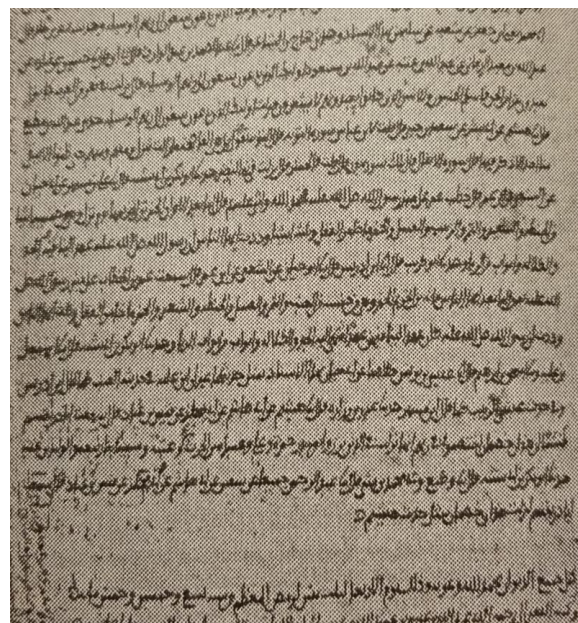


Figure 2: A widely audited manuscript transcribed by al-Murādī in Ramaḍān 27, 559 AH/August 18, 1164 CE.

⁵⁷ There are nearly 20 exclusive *mustakhraj* works on *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* and at least 50 commentaries that were written between 500-1000 AH, not to mention a long list of other material. Furthermore, countless books were written on the two *Ṣaḥīḥs* collectively. See Mashhūr Ḥasan, *al-Imām Muslim ibn al-Ḥajjāj*, pp. 221-224, 251-257.

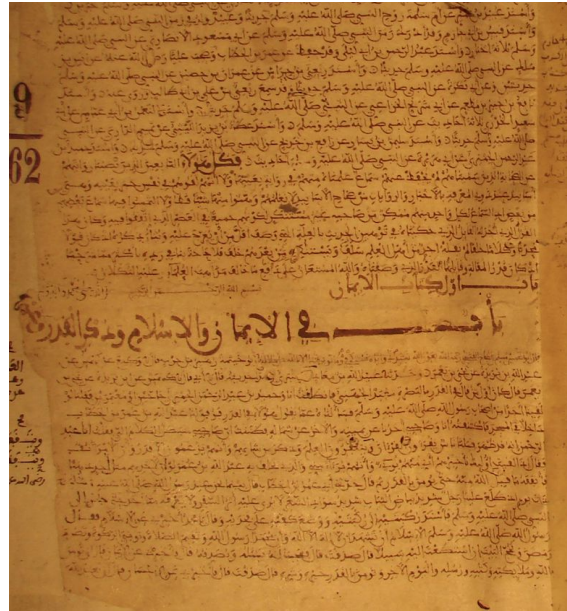


Figure 3: Ibn Khayr al-Ishbīlī's manuscript transcribed in Sha'bān, 573 AH/January, 1178 CE.

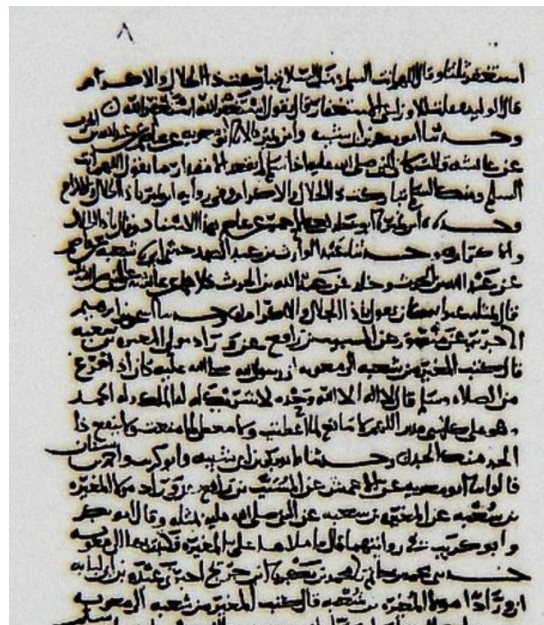


Figure 4: A manuscript used for audition in Baghdad in Shawwāl, 461 AH/August, 1069 CE.