

Received: 15 January 2024, Accepted: 02 April 2024

Chronological Categorization of Prophetic Traditions in Hadith Sciences: An Analysis of Meccan and Medinan Narratives

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Abstract

This research delves into the chronological categorization of prophetic (Peace Be Upon Him) traditions within Hadith sciences, specifically analyzing the distinct narratives from the Meccan and Medinan periods of Prophet Muhammad's (Peace Be Upon Him) life. It emphasizes the critical role these periods play in the theological and jurisprudential evolution of Islam, highlighting how each phase uniquely contributes to the corpus of Islamic law and doctrine. Through a detailed examination of both Meccan and Medinan Hadiths, the study explores the contextual significance and the specific teachings associated with each era. This approach not only aids in a deeper understanding of the Islamic legal and ethical frameworks but also underscores the adaptability and relevance of these teachings in contemporary Islamic thought. The research utilizes a blend of textual analysis and historical context to articulate the development of Islamic teachings, showing how the Prophet's messages were influenced by and responded to different socio-political environments. By focusing on the chronological division and the specific characteristics of the Hadith from each period, the paper provides insights into the continuity and dynamism inherent in Islamic jurisprudence, advocating for a nuanced interpretation of sacred texts that is rooted in both historical awareness and contemporary applicability.

Keywords: Hadith Chronology, Meccan vs. Medinan Narratives, Prophetic (Peace Be Upon Him) Traditions Analysis, Islamic Theological Evolution, Contextual Significance of Hadith

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Introduction

Allah, the Exalted, has conferred upon humanity the esteemed role of Khalifah (vicegerent) on earth¹, elevating them above all other creations to enact His divine Shari'ah (Law) and thereby manifest their distinction as the most noble of beings. In this divine scheme, Allah, the Lord of Majesty, has graced humanity with an unbroken chain of guidance through Anbiya' (prophets) and Rusul (messengers)², culminating in the Khatam an-Nabiyyin (Seal of the Prophets)³, Prophet Muhammad (Peace Be Upon Him), who consummated the faith of Islam⁴. The Kitab Allah (Book of Allah) and the Ahadith of the Prophet Muhammad (Peace Be Upon Him) constitute the wellsprings of Islamic Shari'ah, with the Hadith elucidating the Quran al-Karim (Noble Quran), expounding its tenets, and furnishing detailed expositions of its concise directives.

Prophet Muhammad (Peace Be Upon Him), the Mubayyin (Clarifier) of the Holy Quran, imparted teachings that encompass a spectrum of rulings and degrees. Addressing economic, social, political, and cultural spheres, these teachings are imbued with adaptability and potential for progression. The Prophet's guidance fosters an affinity for virtuous deeds and imparts wisdom to eschew reprehensible actions. Hence, the unfolding of Islam represents a Fiqhi (jurisprudential) evolution, advancing ceaselessly since the dawn of the faith. While it has attained its foundational and original maturation concomitant with revelation, its technical and jurisprudential development persists, destined to continue until the Yawm al-Qiyamah (Day of Judgment). This enduring and universal relevance stands as irrefutable evidence of Islam's global message. The historical progression and this ongoing process are recognized and validated by historians and intellectuals across the globe.

Contribution to Hadith Scholarship

The Prophet Muhammad (Peace Be Upon Him) was endowed with divine directives through both Wahi Matluw (manifest revelation) and Wahi Ghayr Matluw (non-manifest revelation), the latter constituting an additional source of Shari'ah. Allah Almighty decreed the impartation of the Kitab (Book) and Hikmah (wisdom) as His prophetic mandate, subsequently enjoining adherence and emulation⁵. The absence of Ittiba' al-Rasul (following the Messenger) renders faith ineffectual⁶ and deeds void; hence, absolute compliance was prescribed⁷.

A cursory examination of the etymology of "Hadith" reveals its common usage among the Arabs to denote 'news' or 'information', often in reference to significant days known as "Ayyam al-Arab", recounted through narratives. Abu al-Baqa al-Hanafi (d. 1094 AH) delineates the linguistic and technical nuances of Hadith: a term emanating from 'reporting', linked to the Qawl (sayings), Fi'l (actions), and Taqreer (approvals) ascribed to the Prophet (Peace Be Upon Him).⁸ Its plural form is 'Ahadith', deviating from standard pluralization norms. The esteemed grammarian Al-Farra posits that the plural of Hadith is 'Ahadotha' (matters of remembrance), with 'Ahadith' serving as its collective plural.⁹

The term Hadith is invoked in diverse contexts within the Quran al-Karim, even in allusion to the Quran itself¹⁰. Irrespective of the semantic breadth of Hadith, it invariably connotes the dissemination of news. The Prophet Muhammad (Peace Be Upon Him) himself employed “Hadith” to describe his sayings, pioneering its technical application. The Prophet (Peace Be Upon Him) remarked: “I presumed, O Abu Huraira, that none would inquire about this Hadith prior to you, given your avid pursuit of the Hadith.”¹¹

The term ‘Ilm al-Hadith’ is a technical designation that encompasses all that is attributed to the esteemed personage of Prophet Muhammad (Peace Be Upon Him).¹² The illustrious Muhaddith and jurist, Sheikh Kermani (d. 786 AH), characterizes ‘Ilm al-Hadith’ as the scholarly domain through which the noble Qawl (sayings), Fi’l (actions), and Ahwal (states) of the Prophet Muhammad (Peace Be Upon Him) are ascertained. Per Sheikh Kermani, the focal point of Hadith science is the Messenger himself, in his capacity as the Rasul Allah (Messenger of Allah), elucidating his prophetic existence via his deeds, pronouncements, and validations. The Sahaba (Companions), may Allah be pleased with them, not only committed the Prophetic Ahadith to memory but also conveyed them with unwavering fidelity. The Salaf al-Salih (righteous predecessors) bequeathed these sanctified narratives across generations. Furthermore, they instituted robust Usul (principles) and Qawa’id (regulations) to shield the conveyance and recitation of these Ahadith from the incursions of fabrication. Subsequent Muslim scholars codified these principles into methodical treatises known as ‘Ilm Mustalah al-Hadith’.¹³

‘Ilm Mustalah al-Hadith’ delineates the science of axioms and criteria employed to discern the varying statuses of Maqbul (accepted) and Mardud (rejected) Ahadith via their Sanad (chains of narration) and Matn (text).¹⁴ The purview of ‘Ilm Mustalah al-Hadith’ includes the Sanad and Matn concerning their admissibility. This discipline is also referred to as ‘Dirayat Ilm al-Hadith’, ‘Ulum al-Hadith’, and ‘Usul al-Hadith’. A plethora of invaluable and exemplary works have been composed on ‘Ulum al-Hadith’, accompanied by their Sharh (explanations) and Ikhtisar (abridgments), such as Qazi Abu Muhammad Hassan Khalad Ramahurmuzi’s (d. 360 AH) ‘Al-Muhaddith al-Fasil bayn al-Rawi wal-Wa’i’, Imam Hakim Nishapuri’s (d. 405 AH) ‘Ma’rifat Ulum al-Hadith’, and the preeminent text by Abu Amr Usman bin Abd al-Rahman al-Shahrazuri (d. 643 AH), known as Ibn Salah, titled ‘Ma’rifat Anwa’ Ulum al-Hadith’, commonly referred to as ‘Muqaddimah Ibn Salah’.¹⁵ ¹⁶

In the Science of Hadith: The Meccan and Medinan Division

Within ‘Ilm al-Hadith’ (Science of Hadith), Ahadith are meticulously categorized into diverse types and classifications. These encompass divisions based on the ‘Adad al-Sanad’ (number of transmission chains) and the Ruwat (narrators), as well as the Qawi (strength) and Da’if (weakness) of Ahadith, and the Maqbul (accepted) and Mardud (rejected) traditions. Additional Mustalahat (terminologies) are also articulated. Contrary to ‘Ulum al-Quran’ (sciences of the Quran), where Suwar (chapters) and Ayat (verses) are demarcated

as Makki (Meccan) and Madani (Medinan), such a chronological division is not conventionally applied to Ahadith.¹⁷

It is imperative to elucidate the application of Makki and Madani designations. Analogous to the identification of Makki and Madani verses, which is contingent upon the Waqt al-Wahy (time of revelation) rather than the Mekan al-Wahy (place of revelation), a similar criterion should be extended to Ahadith. Conversely, the geographical categorization of Ahadith has been comprehensively undertaken in the ‘Musnad Imam Ahmad ibn Hanbal’. Within this compilation, Ahadith are delineated not solely by locale but also by the narrators’ personal affiliations. The divisions encompass the Musnad al-Makkiyin and Musnad al-Madaniyin, as well as the Musnad of the people of Sham, Kufa, Basra, and the Ansar. Each Musnad systematically arranges the Ahadith of all Companions from the respective regions in an alphabetical order.¹⁸

Significantly, in Musnad al-Makkiyin, Imam Ahmad assembled the narrations of all Companions pertinent to Mecca, albeit not exclusively from the Makkan phase of the Prophet’s esteemed life. A parallel approach is adopted for Musnad al-Madaniyin. Hence, it is discernible that within the Musnads, Ahadith are aggregated by the narrators and their narrations predicated on location rather than the Makki and Madani epochs. Therefore, the establishment of a temporal division of Ahadith is indispensable, and its scholarly significance and practicality are unequivocal.

For the erudite and investigative examination of the socio-economic, societal, and political milieus of the Makki and Madani phases of the Prophetic (Peace Be Upon Him) era, and the Islamic injunctions promulgated during these intervals, the bifurcation of Ahadith into Makki and Madani is profoundly consequential. The exigencies, determinants, and occurrences of the Makki and Madani durations mandated that Islamic directives be aptly tailored for each context. The distinct acknowledgment of each epoch, to be perpetuated until the Yawm al-Qiyamah (Day of Judgment), necessitates a bifurcation of Ahadith into Makki and Madani, akin to the segmentation of Quranic chapters (surah) and verses (ayat).

The Ahkam (commands) of the Madani period of the Prophet’s (Peace Be Upon Him) noble life are intrinsically rooted in the Makki precepts, underscoring the universality and perpetuity of Islam, transcending any semblance of discord. The Makki Ahkam are foundational yet articulated with clarity and simplicity. Conversely, the Madani Ahkam serve as a complement, expanding upon the initial teachings. Given that the Madani directives are predicated on the Makki principles, an in-depth study and analysis of Ahadith within the context of the Makki and Madani epochs, as well as their categorization into Makki and Madani, are pivotal. Comprehension of the relevant Shari’ah (Islamic Law) is contingent upon understanding the Makki Ahadith. To appraise and discern the Makki Ahadith, a meticulous examination of the conditions, events, Ahkam, and teachings of the Makki era, alongside the proliferation of Islam during this juncture, is vital to ascertain the expanse of Islam and the identities of those blessed to embrace Islam in this era. Thus, a profound study of the embracement of Islam during the Makki period, demarcating the advent of the Prophet’s (Peace Be Upon Him) migration to Medina, has been undertaken. “Mubahith Seerat Mustafa (Peace Be Upon Him), in the Light of

Makki Ahadith” represents a distinguished scholarly endeavor to decode the Makki life of the Prophet (Peace Be Upon Him) through Ahadith. The foreword by the esteemed biographer and historian Dr. Muhammad Yaseen Mazhar Siddiqui lauds this research, affirming, “Respected Shaheen Shehzadi has laid such a formidable and steadfast groundwork of the Makki period of the Prophetic (Peace Be Upon Him) life that it vividly elucidates the continuity and evolution into the Madani period.”¹⁹

During the Makki period, the Sahaba (Companions) in Mecca and neighboring tribes such as Ghifar, Banu Aslam, Banu Asad bin Khuzaymah, and Ashar, as well as those from regions like Sham, Abyssinia, and Yemen, were deemed auspicious. Likewise, the Muslims of Medina up to that point were recognized as the Ahl al-Madina (people of Medina). The enumeration and specifics derived from an extensive review of the Siyar (biographies), Tarajim (translations), and history are as follows:

- **Ahl al-Makka:** 567
- **Ahl al-Madina:** 122
- **Total Makki Sahaba:** 689

The tally of individuals graced with the companionship of the Habib al-'Alamin (beloved of the universe) (Peace Be Upon Him) during the thirteen-year Makki period of his esteemed life is undoubtedly conservative. The approximation stands at 689, inclusive of 567 from Mecca and other nations and tribes, and 122 from Medina. Among these, an estimated 140 Ruwat (narrators), comprising 106 men and 34 women, have transmitted the Prophetic Ahadith. Their indices are meticulously cataloged in the aforementioned treatise.²⁰

Divine Protection and Human Effort in Preserving the Sunnah

The tapestry of human life is richly embroidered with various incidents and events that underpin the world’s system. When these events intersect with Deeni (religious) matters, their significance is magnified exponentially. The Ummah (Muslim community) stands unique in its rigorous establishment of Usul (principles) and Ahkam (regulations) to safeguard every aspect of the esteemed life of the Shari’ (Lawgiver of Islam), Prophet Muhammad (Peace Be Upon Him). This encompasses the preservation of his Qawl (sayings), Hal (states), Fi’l (actions), and Taqreer (tacit approvals). The Ummah’s unwavering commitment to these principles is in direct response to the divine mandate: “Indeed, We have sent down the Dhikr (Reminder) and indeed, We will be its guardian” (Quran 15:9). Thus, the Kalam Allah (Words of Allah) and the Sunnah of the Prophet (Peace Be Upon Him) are meticulously preserved, destined to endure until the Yawm al-Qiyamah (Day of Judgment). No chapter in human annals can claim a parallel to this unparalleled preservation.

Profound Foundations and Evolutionary Trajectories: The Science of Hadith Methodology in Islamic Studies

In the discipline of Hadith, the ‘Ilm al-Usul al-Hadith’ (Science of Hadith Methodology) holds paramount importance. Muhaddithun (Scholars of Hadith) are distinguished for their pivotal role in establishing Usul (principles), a characteristic uniquely profound compared to other civilizations. The Mustalahat (terminologies) of Hadith are deemed the epitome of precision and contemporary methodology, encompassing extensive scholarly discourse. Numerous seminal and meritorious Kitab (books) have been authored on these subjects, along with their respective Sharh (commentaries) and Ikhtisar (summaries), enriching the Islamic literary heritage.

For the initial three centuries post-Hijra, the Usul al-Hadith remained somewhat unstructured. The Sahaba (Companions of the Prophet Muhammad, PBUH) exercised utmost prudence concerning the Ahadith [sayings and actions of the Prophet (Peace Be Upon Him)]. Luminaries such as Abu Bakr al-Siddiq, Umar ibn al-Khattab, Ali ibn Abi Talib, Abdullah ibn Umar, Aisha bint Abi Bakr, Abu Sa’id al-Khudri, Abdullah ibn Abbas, Ubada bin al-Samit, and Anas bin Malik, may Allah be pleased with them all, established the foundational Usul of Hadith, including the principles of Naqd (criticism) and Tasfiyah (authentication).

Hafiz al-Dhahabi (d. 748 AH), in his ‘Tadhkirat al-Huffaz’, elucidates that Abu Bakr al-Siddiq was the first to manifest caution in accepting reports, Umar ibn al-Khattab instituted the method of Tahqiq (verification) for Ruwat (transmitters of Hadith), and would abstain from acknowledging a report if in doubt. He also records that Ali ibn Abi Talib would require an oath from the narrator if he had not heard the Hadith directly from the Prophet (Peace Be Upon Him). Abu Hurairah is famously cited in Ibn Abd al-Barr’s ‘al-Tamhid’, emphasizing, “This knowledge is Deen (religion), so be vigilant from whom you acquire it.” Successors like Sa’id bin al-Musayyib, Al-Sha’bi, and Muhammad bin Sirin furthered the scrutiny of Ruwat.

During the second century Hijri, in the tenure of Umar bin Abd al-Aziz (d. 110 AH), the formal documentation of Hadith commenced. Imam al-Zuhri (d. 124 AH) orchestrated the Usul and regulations for the compilation and transmission of Hadith, thus considered the forerunner of ‘Ilm Mustalah al-Hadith’.

The third century Hijri heralded the zenith of Hadith compilation, with scholars documenting treatises on a myriad of topics. For example, Yahya bin Ma’in (d. 234 AH) delved into the Asma’ al-Rijal (biographies of narrators), Muhammad bin Sa’d (d. 230 AH) authored the Tabaqat, and Ahmad bin Hanbal (d. 241 AH) penned works on ‘Ilal (defects) and Naskh (abrogation). The sciences of Sahih Hadith, Kuna wa Alqab (nicknames and titles of narrators), among others, were also significantly developed.

In the fourth century Hijri, the Mustalahat al-Hadith (terminologies of Hadith) were meticulously organized and inscribed in esteemed Kutub (reference books). Qadi Abu al-Hasan Khalad al-Ramahurmuzi (d. 360 AH) penned the inaugural treatise on the science of Hadith, ‘Al-

Muhaddith al-Fasil bayn al-Rawi wal-Wa'i', addressing myriad facets within the 'Ilm al-Hadith. Imam al-Hakim (d. 405 AH) enumerated 52 'Ulum al-Hadith' (sciences of Hadith) in his 'Ma'rifat Ulum al-Hadith'. Thereafter, Imam Ibn al-Salah (d. 643 AH) authored 'Ulum al-Hadith', also known as 'Muqaddimah Ibn al-Salah', delineating 65 sciences of Hadith, which subsequent 'Ulama (scholars) have extensively utilized and derived benefit from.

The Mustalahat al-Hadith, in conjunction with other terminologies, have classified various Ahadith based on Ruwat (transmitters), Qubul (acceptance) and Radd (rejection), the attribution of the Hadith, the Kathrat (abundance) and Qillat (scarcity) of Sanad (transmission chains), Riwayat al-Hadith (narration of Hadith), Matn (text) and Isnad (chain), 'Ittisal (connection) and 'Inqita' (disconnection) of the chain, the 'Adad al-Ruwat (number of narrators), and the Shurut al-Ruwat (conditions of the narrators), among others. However, unlike the Taqsim (divisions) of the Suwar (surahs) and Ayat (verses) of the Holy Quran, which are delineated based on Zaman (time) and Makan (place), such a categorization has not been applied to the Hadith corpus.

A meticulous examination of Hadith compilation reveals that, akin to the Quran, the assemblage and systematization of Hadith commenced during the epoch of Nubuwwah (prophethood). A testament to this is the Sahifah (scroll) of Hammam bin Munabbih, a disciple of Abu Hurairah, which he transcribed. This Sahifah, unearthed by Dr. Hamidullah in a German museum, has been disseminated as "Sahifah Hammam bin Munabbih." There exist additional compilations, with some published and others yet to be.

Imam Anas bin Malik al-Ansari (d. 93-179 AH) orchestrated the Fiqhi (jurisprudential) chapters in the compilation of "Al-Muwatta'" by Imam Malik. Imam Muhammad ibn Ismail al-Bukhari (d. 194-256 AH), esteemed as the preeminent Hadith scholar of his era, structured a credible Sanad (chain of transmission) in his magnum opus, "Al-Jami' al-Musnad al-Sahih al-Mukhtasar min Umur Rasul Allah wa Sunnatihi wa Ayyamihi," widely known as Sahih al-Bukhari. Succeeding him, Imam Muslim bin al-Hajjaj al-Qushayri (d. 204-261 AH) chronicled only those Ahadith whose authenticity was corroborated by the consensus of the majority of Ulama (scholars). Imam Muslim compiled "Al-Jami' al-Sahih." Subsequent scholars augmented this repository of authentic Ahadith. Imam Abu Dawud al-Sijistani (d. 202-275 AH) authored "Sunan Abi Dawud," Imam Abu Isa al-Tirmidhi (d. 209-279 AH) compiled "Al-Jami' al-Kabir" or "Sunan al-Tirmidhi," Ahmad bin Shu'aib al-Nasa'i (d. 214-300 AH) prepared "Al-Sunan al-Kubra," and Abu Abdullah Muhammad bin Yazid al-Qazwini (d. 207-283 AH) penned "Sunan Ibn Majah." These seminal Hadith texts serve as foundational sources from which later scholars have extrapolated elucidations and synopses, and researchers will indefinitely derive benefit from them. Notably, these treatises do not demarcate between Makki and Madani Ahadith.

Between January and March 2017, corresponding to Rabi' al-Thani to Jumada al-Akhir 1438 AH, the quarterly 'Islamic Research Journal' featured a seminal study by Dr. Muhammad Yasin Mazhar Siddiqui titled "Hadiths of the Meccan Period: A Study in the Seerah of Ibn Ishaq." The

researcher posits that within the Seerah of Ibn Ishaq, numerous accounts are not merely historical narratives but also hold the stature of Ahadith. The paper undertakes a scholarly inquiry and critical analysis of these Ahadith Nabawiyyah. Presently, twenty-nine (29) Ahadith from the Makki period are scrutinized. Dr. Siddiqui presents a narrative structured upon the thematic framework of Ibn Ishaq's chronicle, succeeded by a critical discourse on the significance and technical dimensions of these Ahadith. The forthcoming paper promises a comprehensive examination of Medinan Ahadith and their thematic essence.

The study entitled "Themes of Medinan Ahadith: A Study and Review" heralds a pioneering contribution to the field. Hitherto, no scholarly work has surfaced within 'Ilm al-Hadith that appraises the Prophetic (Peace Be Upon Him) Ahadith through the lens of the Makki and Madani periods or deliberates upon the themes of Makki and Medinan Ahadith, acknowledging their distinct import and stature.

Regardless of whether the inception is traced to the second or seventh century Hijri, the span extending to the fifteenth century has largely eluded scholarly attention. In this milieu, my MPhil thesis, under the mentorship of Professor Dr. Humayun Abbas from the Department of Islamic Studies at Government College University Faisalabad, ventured as the initial scholarly endeavor. This thesis elucidated the principles for differentiating between Makki and Medinan narrators, classified the blessed Ahadith into six categories, and expansively depicted the Seerah, Aqeedah (beliefs), Ibadah (worship), and Mu'amalat (dealings) illuminated by Makki Ahadith.

In March 2019, subsequent to revisions and augmentations, the thesis materialized into a publication titled "Discussions on the Seerah of Mustafa (Peace Be Upon Him) in the Light of Makki Ahadith" by Progressive Books, Lahore. This authoritative work meticulously delineates the chronological demarcations of Makki and Medinan Ahadith, alongside probing the embracement of Islam during the Makki epoch, assembling indices of Makki Sahaba (Companions) and Ruwat al-Hadith (Hadith narrators) by category to lay a solid groundwork for the bifurcation of Ahadith. Additionally, post the compilation of the indices of the Prophet's (Peace Be Upon Him) Companions, discrete indices were constituted for both male and female Muhaddithun (narrators of Hadith).

Number of Meccan Hadiths and Their Themes

The table below provides a systematic enumeration of the Meccan Ahadith and their thematic categorizations as detailed in the book "Mabahith Sirat Mustafa (SAW) in the Light of Makkah Ahadith":

Chapter/Section	Title	Number of Themes	Number of Meccan Ahadith
Chapter Two	<i>Meccan Ahadith on the Noble Life of the Prophet (Peace Be Upon Him)</i>		
Section One	Pre-Prophethood Life of the Prophet (Peace Be Upon Him)	66	102
Section Two	Post-Prophethood Life of the Prophet (Peace Be Upon Him)	228	322
Section Three	Virtues of the Sahaba, Prophetic Bushra, and Nubuwwat	52	152
Chapter Three	<i>Meccan Ahadith on Islamic Teachings</i>		
Section One	Aqeedah and Iman	188	509
Section Two	Ibadat	172	775
Section Three	Mu'amalat	200	645
Total		906	2505

The tally of the Prophet’s (Peace Be Upon Him) Sahaba from Mecca is documented as 689. The Meccan Ahadith expound upon the foundational Islamic tenets of Tawhid (monotheism), Risalah (prophethood), Akhirah (afterlife), and their ancillary beliefs encompassing the Kutub (scriptures), Mala’ika (angels), Qadar (destiny), Jannah (paradise), and Jahannam (hell). Moreover, they delineate the incipient stages of the Arkan al-Islam (pillars of Islam) and moral injunctions.

The Phase of Determining Meccan and Medinan Hadiths

The process of distinguishing between Meccan and Medinan Ahadith is a critical phase in the study of ‘Ilm al-Hadith’. After the identification of the Ruwat (narrators) and the authentication of the narrations from the Makkan era of the Prophetic (Peace Be Upon Him) mission, the

subsequent step involves the classification of Ahadith into Makki or Madani categories. The Makki Ahadith encompass events and rulings from the period preceding the Prophet's (Peace Be Upon Him) mission up to his Hijrah (migration) to Medina, inclusive of the pre-prophetic (Peace Be Upon Him) and post-prophetic (Peace Be Upon Him) phases. Narratives from before the mission are deemed Makki Ahadith as they include the initial revelations to Prophet Muhammad (Peace Be Upon Him), which are categorized as Wahi Ghair Matluw (non-recited revelation), a classification that enjoys Ijma' (consensus). The words and meanings of Wahi Matluw (recited revelation) are attributed to Allah, while the words of Wahi Ghair Matluw are those of Prophet Muhammad (Peace Be Upon Him), with the meanings originating from Allah (SWT). Similar to the Quran al-Karim, the text of Hadith is preserved, albeit the Quranic text is absolutely safeguarded, whereas the Hadith text is contingent upon the words and statements of the Hadith narrators.²¹ There are two primary types of Hadith narration:

- **Riwayat Bil Lafz** (Narration by exact wording): This includes narrations where the exact words of Prophet Muhammad (Peace Be Upon Him) are reported verbatim.
- **Riwayat Bil Ma'na** (Narration by meaning): This includes narrations where the narrator conveys the meaning of the Prophet's (Peace Be Upon Him) words in his own language.²²

Regardless of whether the Ahadith are narrated by exact wording or by meaning, no significant divergence in meaning is permissible, and any variation in wording does not compromise the authenticity of the Hadith. Discrepancies in Hadith texts may arise because the Prophet (Peace Be Upon Him) might have articulated the same Hadith differently on separate occasions. This variation also underscores the integrity and reliability of the Sahaba, who narrated each Hadith precisely as they heard it.²³

Subsequently, the aforementioned basic types were further subdivided into three sub-categories each, thereby establishing six categories of Ahadith in total, with three categories being Makki and three being Madani. This classification underscores the meticulous nature of Hadith studies and the profound commitment to preserving the Prophetic (Peace Be Upon Him) teachings with utmost accuracy.

Biography Writing Styles in the Light of Blessed Ahadith

After the discernment of Makki and Madani Ahadith, these narrations were systematically organized in an academic and research-driven manner to construct the biography of Prophet Muhammad (Peace Be Upon Him). This methodology has inaugurated a novel paradigm in the craft of biography writing and has integrated the knowledge of Makki and Madani Ahadith into the domain of 'Ilm al-Hadith'.

Emulating the framework of Makki Ahadith, an erudite and research-intensive work on the examination and review of the themes of Madani Ahadith is anticipated to be published soon,

Insha'Allah, which will consummate the biography of the Noble Prophet (Peace Be Upon Him) through the lens of Madani Ahadith.

1. Styles and Trends in Biography Writing (Fann Seerat Nigari Ke Usul o Rujhanat)

Diverse methodologies and tendencies are discernible in the art of biography writing, evolving from the era of prophethood to the present. The technique of crafting biographies illuminated by Ahadith represents a distinctive contribution, being introduced for the first time.

2. Historical Style and Trend (Moarikhana Asloob o Rujhan)

This style, diverging from the methodology of Hadith scholars, entails the enumeration of all narrators and the consolidation of their biographical data. This trend gained prominence with the biographical endeavors of Urwah bin Zubair (d. 92 AH), and was embraced by Ibn Shihab al-Zuhri (d. 120 AH), Ibn Ishaq (d. 150 AH), Muhammad bin Umar al-Waqidi (d. 207 AH), Ibn Saad (d. 230 AH), and Abdul Malik bin Hisham (d. 312 AH).

3. Hadith Scholar Style and Trend (Muhaddithana Asloob o Rujhan)

Esteemed Hadith scholars pioneered this trend by partitioning biographical content into discrete chapters within Hadith compilations. Exemplary biographers in this genre include Hafiz Ibn Abdul Barr (d. 463 AH), Ibn Sayyid al-Nas (d. 734 AH), and Hafiz Ibn Kathir al-Damishqi (d. 774 AH).

4. Jurisprudential Style and Trend (Fuqihana Asloob o Rujhan)

In this genre, the life events of the Prophet (Peace Be Upon Him) are portrayed such that the resultant Fiqhi (jurisprudential) rulings are elucidated. Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyyah (d. 740 AH) is noted for adopting this style.

5. Scholastic Style and Trend (Mutakallimana Asloob o Rujhan)

Biographies penned in the light of logical discourse represent the scholastic style. These works encompass theological deliberations. Qadi Iyad (d. 544 AH) is renowned for his contributions to this style in the art of biography writing.

6. Authorial Style and Trend in Biography Writing (Muallifana Asloob o Rujhan)

This approach to biography writing compiles information from Seerah sources into a cohesive narrative. Initiated in the late third century Hijri, this style was advanced by Taqi al-Din al-Maqrizi (845 AH), Muhammad bin Yusuf al-Salihi al-Shami (942 AH), and Ali bin Burhan al-Din al-Halabi (1043 AH), who were instrumental in its promotion.

7. Literary Style and Trend (Adeebana Asloob o Rujhan)

Originating in Persian literature and later flourishing in Arabic, this trend presents the events of the Seerah in a literary manner. Notable works by Qazi Badr al-Daulah (1280 AH), Muhammad

Baqir Agha (1220 AH), and Inayat Ahmad Kakorvi (1279 AH) exemplify this style, portraying the noble biography of the Prophet (Peace Be Upon Him) with artistic expression.

8. Polemical Style and Trend (Manazirana Asloob o Rujhan)

Particularly emerging in the Indian subcontinent, this style frames the biography of the noble Prophet (Peace Be Upon Him) within religious or sectarian ideologies. Sir Syed Ahmad Khan (1288 AH) pioneered this approach, countering the unfounded criticisms found in William Muir's "The Life Of Muhammad."

9. Quranic Style and Trend in Biography Writing (Quran Majeed Ki Roshni Mein Seerat Nigari Ka Asloob o Rujhan)

This innovative trend, which draws exclusively from the Quran for biographical writing, was first introduced by Allama Muhammad Iqbal (1328 AH). It was further popularized by Muhammad Abdul Shakoor Lucknawi (1352 AH), with subsequent adoption by Abul Kalam Azad (1348 AH), Syed Abul Ala Maududi (1369 AH), and Ghulam Ahmad Parwez (1375 AH).

10. Unpointed Style and Trend (Ghair Manqota Asloob o Rujhan)

Initiated by Wali Razi, the son of Mufti Muhammad Shafi, this style features biographical books written without diacritical marks, a practice he began around the time of Pakistan's creation.

11. Biography Writing in the Light of Blessed Hadiths (Ahadees Mubarakah Ki Roshni Mein Seerat Nigari Ka Asloob o Rujhan)

The concept of composing biographies illuminated by blessed Hadiths was first conceptualized by Dr. Muhammad Humayun Abbas. Under his guidance, research culminated in the publication of "Discussions on the Seerah of Mustafa (Peace Be Upon Him) in the Light of Meccan Hadiths" in March 2019 (Rajab 1439 AH). This work received the first Presidential Award for the best book by the Government of Pakistan on November 9, 2019 (12 Rabi' al-Awwal 1440 AH), marking a new trend in biography writing. Research on Medinan Hadiths is currently in progress.

Types of Meccan Hadiths

The categorization of Meccan Ahadith is pivotal in the study of 'Ilm al-Hadith'. Here are the three types of Meccan Ahadith:

- 1. Meccan Narrators - Meccan Ahadith:** This category encompasses the Sahaba who accepted Islam during the Makkan period of Prophet Muhammad (Peace Be Upon Him), prior to the Hijrah to Medina. These Sahaba may hail from Mecca, its vicinity, Medina, or even other regions. Their narrations pertaining to the Makkan period, including events before and after the advent of Prophethood, are classified as Meccan Ahadith.

Example: Narration by Usamah bin Zaid, who reports from his father, Zaid bin Harithah, a Sahabi from the Makkan era, as he embraced Islam before the Hijrah.

“Angel Jibril (Gabriel) brought the revelation to the Prophet (Peace Be Upon Him), instructed Him in the methods of wudu (ablution) and salah (prayer). Upon completing the wudu, He sprinkled water over His private area.”²⁴

2. **Medinan Narrators - Meccan Ahadith:** This group includes those Sahaba who became Muslims during the Madinan period of Prophet Muhammad (Peace Be Upon Him), subsequent to the Hijrah. Their narrations that recount Makkan incidents and teachings are deemed Meccan Ahadith.

Example: Narration by Umm Atiyyah, who details Arabian customs and various rulings. Umm Atiyyah is recognized as a Madinan Sahabiya as her Islam occurred post-Hijrah.

“Umm Atiyyah narrated that we were prohibited from mourning any deceased for more than three days, except for a husband, whose mourning lasted four months and ten days. During this period, we were not to apply kohl, wear perfume, or don colorful attire, save for Yemeni fabrics. Post-menstruation purification permitted the use of fragrance. We were also advised against following janazah (funeral) processions.”²⁵

3. **Meccan Narrators - General Commandments Based Ahadith:** This classification includes Ahadith that are not directly associated with specific events or contexts from either the Makkan or Madinan periods. The determination of these Ahadith as Makki or Madani hinges on the narrator. If the narrator is from Mecca, the Hadith is regarded as Makki.

Example: Narration by Abu Bakr Siddiq, concerning the merits of employing the miswak. Abu Bakr Siddiq is a Makkan Sahabi as he accepted Islam before the Hijrah and is among the earliest Muslims.

“Abu Bakr Siddiq narrated that the Prophet (Peace Be Upon Him) said, ‘Utilizing the miswak cleanses the mouth and gratifies the Rabb (Lord).’”²⁶

These classifications aid in the meticulous study of Ahadith and contribute to a deeper understanding of the Prophetic teachings within their historical context. The distinction between Makki and Madani Ahadith is essential for scholars and students of Islamic studies to accurately interpret and apply the wisdom of the Ahadith.

Classification of Medinan Hadiths

The detailed classification of Medinan Ahadith, based on the narrators and the content of the narrations, is as follows:

1. **Meccan Narrator - Medinan Ahadith:** Ahadith narrated by Meccan narrators that encompass events, rulings, commands, and prohibitions from the Medinan period of Prophet Muhammad (Peace Be Upon Him) are considered Medinan Ahadith.

Example: A hadith narrated by Abu Bakr Siddiq, a Meccan Sahabi, pertaining to Arab customs and various commandments:

“I was sitting with the Prophet (Peace Be Upon Him) when Ma'iz bin Malik came and confessed (to adultery) in his presence once, and he sent him away. Then he came and admitted it in his presence a second time and he sent him away. Then he came and admitted it in his presence a third time and he sent him away. I said to him: If you confess a fourth time, he will stone you. Then he admitted it the fourth time, so he detained him and asked about him, and they said: We do not know anything but good about him. Then he ordered that he be stoned.”²⁷

2. **Medinan Narrator - Medinan Ahadith:** All ahadith that include events, rulings, commands, and prohibitions from the Medinan period and are narrated by Medinan narrators are classified as Medinan ahadith.

Example: A hadith narrated by Abdullah bin Saib, a Medinan narrator:

“Abdullah bin Saib reports that on the day of the Conquest of Mecca, the Prophet (Peace Be Upon Him) prayed and then removed his shoes to his left side.”²⁸

3. **Medinan Narrator - General Commandments Based Ahadith:** These are the ahadith whose content does not specifically relate to either Meccan or Medinan events or contexts. The classification of these ahadith as Meccan or Medinan depends on the narrator. If the narrator is from Medina, the hadith is considered Medinan.

Example: A hadith narrated by Uthman bin Talha, a Medinan narrator, who embraced Islam during the Treaty of Hdaybiyyah:

A general commandment narrated by Uthman bin Talha would be considered in this category.

This classification aids in comprehending the context and application of various ahadith, enriching the study of the life and teachings of Prophet Muhammad (Peace Be Upon Him). It underscores the importance of the narrators' origins and the periods to which the ahadith belong, offering a structured approach to understanding the Hadith literature.

The Significance of Discerning the Meccan and Medinan Divisions

In the discipline of 'Ilm al-Hadith' (Science of Hadith), the mastery of Usul al-Hadith (principles of Hadith) is indispensable. Proficiency in these principles is vital for comprehending the Sanad (chain of transmission) and Matn (text) of Ahadith, along with their complexities. Muhaddithun (Hadith scholars) have contributed extensively to this field. Similarly, in 'Ulum al-Quran' (sciences of the Quran), the chronological and locational categorization of verses and chapters is well-established. The segmentation of Quranic verses into Makki (Meccan) and Madani (Medinan) hinges on the life of Prophet Muhammad in Mecca and Medina. An examination of Shari'ah rulings indicates that foundational beliefs and certain commandments were revealed in Mecca, while the completion of Islamic tenets and commandments occurred in Medina. Hence, the bifurcation of Prophetic Ahadith into Makki and

Madani is crucial for grasping the contexts, locales, and timings of these narrations. It also elucidates the rationale behind the stipulated commandments, and sheds light on the cultural and societal dynamics of Mecca and Medina, demonstrating the progressive revelation of Islamic commandments.

Subsequent to the Quran, the themes of Makki and Madani Ahadith lay the groundwork for Islamic Shari'ah and will persist as a reference point until the Yawm al-Qiyamah (Day of Judgment). The distinct demands, factors, and circumstances of the Prophet's (Peace Be Upon Him) life during the Makki and Madani eras necessitated that the divine commandments align with these conditions. Therefore, it is imperative that the themes of Prophetic Ahadith be delineated in a manner that accentuates the unique statuses of these two periods.

Islam's universality and timelessness are reflected in its Shari'ah rulings, which are divisible into those promulgated during the Makki and Madani periods. The underpinnings for the Madani rulings are also rooted in the foundational principles set forth in the Makki period. The evolution of these rulings is a testament to Islam's adaptability, underscoring its global and enduring nature rather than engendering discord.

For the extraction and formulation of jurisprudential matters, these rulings and principles must be considered, fostering the ongoing development of Fiqh (Islamic jurisprudence), which will endure till the end of times. Scholars and Fuqaha (jurists) will persist in addressing contemporary issues, and it is essential for them to employ Makki and Madani Ahadith for the derivation and inference of rulings.

Understanding the distinction between Meccan and Medinan narratives is indeed a significant aspect of 'Ilm al-Hadith' (Science of Hadith). Here are the benefits outlined, with some additional context:

1. **Alignment with the Circumstances of Unrecited Revelation (Wahy Ghair Matluw):** The alignment of Hadith with the events and conditions of unrecited revelation is crucial. It ensures that the teachings of Islam are conveyed with consideration for the audience's capacity and circumstances, reflecting the divine wisdom in the gradual introduction of Islamic principles.
2. **Gradual Evolution of Islamic Commandments:** The progression of Islamic commandments from the **Makkan** to the **Medinan** period demonstrates the thoughtful approach of Islam in introducing its tenets. This gradualism facilitated the early Muslims' transition towards the comprehensive Islamic way of life, accommodating their readiness and societal context.
3. **Training and Guidance for the Proclaimers of Allah's Message:** The method and content of the Prophet's (Peace Be Upon Him) teachings serve as a model for those who invite others to Islam. It underscores the importance of prioritizing fundamental concepts

and adapting the approach—whether stringent or gentle—based on the audience’s disposition and environment.

4. **Identification of Abrogation (Naskh) and Abrogated (Mansukh) Narratives:** Recognizing which Hadiths supersede others is simplified when a Medinan Hadith, meeting the criteria of abrogation, succeeds a Meccan Hadith. Given that Medinan Hadiths are chronologically subsequent, they are often regarded as abrogating the earlier Makkan ones, reflecting the dynamic nature of Islamic jurisprudence.
5. **Relevance of Shariah Commandments to Circumstances:** The evolution and rationale behind the commandments become more apparent when considering their relevance to specific situations. This highlights the adaptive nature of Islamic rulings, facilitating a deeper understanding of their wisdom and application in various contexts.

These insights contribute to a nuanced understanding of the Hadith corpus and underscore the importance of context in Islamic teachings. They also illustrate the meticulous care taken by Islamic scholars to preserve and interpret the Hadith accurately, ensuring that the wisdom of the Prophet Muhammad (Peace Be Upon Him) is transmitted with fidelity to subsequent generations.

Conclusion

The chronological categorization of Hadith into Meccan and Medinan periods serves as a cornerstone in the discipline of Hadith sciences, illuminating the strategic and pedagogical unfolding of Islamic teachings. This research has demonstrated the inherent benefits of understanding the chronological contexts of prophetic (Peace Be Upon Him) traditions, which are critical in comprehending the progressive nature of Islamic jurisprudence.

Through an analytical exploration of Meccan and Medinan Hadiths, we appreciate the Prophet Muhammad’s (Peace Be Upon Him) adaptive approach in addressing the spiritual and societal needs of his followers. Meccan Hadiths, primarily focused on foundational faith principles, gradually gave way to Medinan Hadiths, which encompassed comprehensive legal and social commandments suitable for a burgeoning Islamic state. This transition underscores the divine wisdom in nurturing a nascent community towards a structured and sophisticated society.

Furthermore, the identification of abrogative traditions among the Hadiths underscores the dynamic and flexible nature of Islamic legal rulings, accommodating changing circumstances and ensuring the relevance of the Shariah across times and cultures. This study not only affirms the historical progression of Islamic laws but also enhances our understanding of the contextual applicability of these laws.

In conclusion, the chronological categorization of Hadith is indispensable for any serious study of Islam. It provides a clear framework for understanding the evolution of Islamic teachings and offers profound insights into the legislative wisdom and adaptability inherent within Islam. This approach not only enriches our academic understanding but also deepens our spiritual

appreciation of the prophetic (Peace Be Upon Him) mission, as it demonstrates the meticulous care with which divine guidance was tailored to human circumstances and needs over time.

This research contributes to a more nuanced understanding of Hadith sciences and paves the way for further scholarly exploration into how the chronological context influences the interpretation and application of Islamic teachings today.

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