

## WHY COMPARATIVE STUDY OF RELIGIONS IS IMPORTANT?

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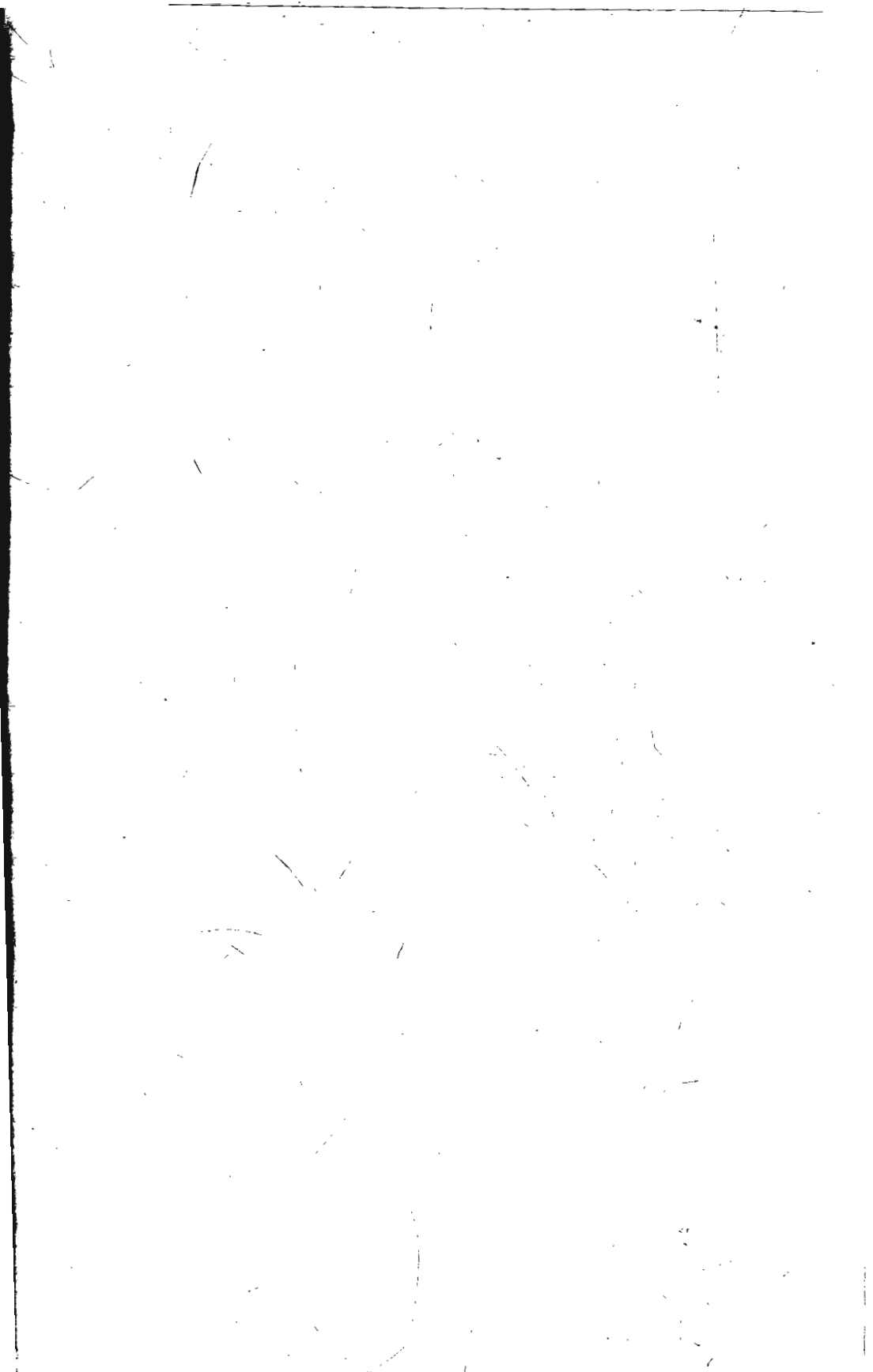
In this global age work in the field of comparative religions has become the most urgent. As religion is the ground from which the identity of persons, cultures and civilizations emerges, it is impossible to relate across peoples and civilizations unless the religious grounds upon which others build their lives is deeply and positively appreciated. . Because of the role of the religion in human culture, the study of religion can become the study of humanity itself. The study of comparative religion helps you to learn how to think critically, listen empathetically, speak thoughtfully, and write clearly—all skills that will be of great use no matter what you do. This paper highlights the significance of study comparative religion and its necessity in contemporary world. The current world and especially our country is in dire need of understanding the differences in people belonging to other sects and religion and creating a tolerant attitude and find a commonality to enhance the relationships and outlook towards life.

### INTRODUCTION

Religion is a powerful and dynamic force in shaping cultures and complex civilization. Religion can be defined as the human notions regarding the sacred, numinous, spiritual and divine. It is said to be a phenomenon essentially related to providing the answers to a number of basic questions about life, the destiny of man and the universe. It also caters to some deep-rooted needs of human nature. These needs, which become cravings for sensitive souls, comprise discovering the ultimate meaning of life and finding security and relief in the face of the transience, suffering and death.

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These standards provide evidence that this discourse is a sign of distinction of Islam. No tradition is acceptable without these standards. Neither the orthodox literature of philosophy and history nor the modern research methodologies of natural, physical or biological sciences, postmodern world of communication skills and large range of technology can provide precedent of this research methodology. If Hadith is not reliable after these measures and the narrators of Hadith are not trustworthy even after been assessed by these criteria, the word reliable should be removed from our literature and dictionaries.

### E Future Work:

After having knowledge about this paradigm of research methodology in 'Ilm Hadith, we are feeling a need of other dimensions of the research methodology in 'Ilm Hadith especially contemporary research methodology in 'Ilm Hadith.

وآخر دعوانا أن الحمد لله رب العلمين

<sup>1</sup>Early development of criticism of narrators has been discussed in our article "Criticism of Narrators of Hadith -A prelude" see Al Qalam: V 14: Issue 14 (December 2009)

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Ibn Hajar 'Asqalani	Authaq /Athbat	Thiqah, thiqah/Thabt Thabt/Thiqah Hafiz/'Adl Dabit	Shaikh/'Itibar		
Sayuti, Jalaluddin	Athbat	La yasalu 'anhu	Thiqah/Mutqin/ Hujjah/ 'Adl/Hafiz/ Dabit	Saduq/Mehelluh u Al Sidq/La Basa Bihi	Shaikh

### C Ranks of Jarh (Ascending Order: 1=Less Feeble)

Ibn Abi Hatim / Khtib Baghdadi	Lin	Lisa Bi Qawi	Da'if/Mudtarab	Matruk/Dhahib Al Hadith/Kadhab	
Ibn Al Salah	Lin	Laisa bidhak	Laisa biqawi aktubu	Da'if /Mudtarab	Matruk
Abu Zur'a Razi	Da'if/ Laisa Bidhaka	Laisa Biqawi/Lin	Da'if /Munkar	Dhahib/Muttaham/Wahhi	Wada'/ Muhtad
Dhahabi	Laisa Biqawi/Maqal	Munkar	Matruk/Dhahib	Muttaham	Dajjal/ Kadhab /Wada'
Bukhari	Lin/Yaktubu	Muqarib	Matruk/Kadhab/ Wada'		
Ibn Hajar	Lin/Maqal	Dajjal/Kadhab/Wada'	Akdhab/Munthah Alkidhb		

### D Conclusion:

The above discussion was divided into two parts, in part one we presented the methodology in the developed era of 'Ilm Jarh wa'Al Ta'dil. We started our discussion with the books on 'Ilm Jarh wa Al Ta'dil written in fourth century and different methodologies were adopted in compilation of these books. In the result of compilation of books, different terminologies and standards were maintained and the narrators of Hadith were accepted or rejected with different ranks according to their reliability or unreliability respectively. These standards developed a unique research methodology in 'Ilm Hadith.

(d.233), and Yahya b. Said al-Qattan (d.198 H) were strict in their assessment of the reliability of narrators, others like Abu 'Isa al-Tirmidhi and Al Hakim al Nishapuri (d. 405H) were not so strict, while Ahmad b. Hanbal(d.241), Al Bukhari (d.256) and Muslim (d. 261) were considered to be moderate.

We will present now two charts one of them will be about the standards of Ta'dil while the other will consist of standards of Jarh. With the help of forth coming charts our readers would be acquainted of the fact that when a critic using a particular word for the transmitter, what status of reliability been given to that transmitter. Consequently the chart of standards of Jarh would provide evidence about the unreliability of a narrator of a Hadith and its' status as a narrator. All the Traditionists did care for these standards before accepting or rejecting a narrator of Hadith.

### B Ranks of Ta'dil

(Descending Order: 1=Most Significant)

Name: Of The Critics	Rank:1	Rank:2	Rank:3	Rank:4	Rank:5
Yahya b. Me'in	Thiqah	La Basa bihi	Saduq/Mamun/Khair		
Abn Abi Hatim	'Adil/Hafiz	Saduq		Salih Al Hadith	
Bukhari/Khtib Baghdadi	Thiqah/Mutqin	Saduq	Saikh	Salih Al Hadith /Yaktubu/ Lin Al Hadith /Laisa Biqawi	
Dhahabi, Muhammad b. Ahmad b. Uthman	Thabt, Hujjah/Thabt, Hafiz/Thabt, Mutqin/Thiqah, thiqah	Thiqah,Saduq/La Basa Bihi	Mehelluhu Al Sidq/Jayid Al Hadith /Salih Al Hadith /Shaikh Wasat/Shaiikh Hasan Al Hadith /Swallih		

	on Tradition is based	
Saqit	Deteriorated	ساقط
Sayi Al Hifz	Ill Sustainer	سبى الحفظ
Shaikh	Gentleman	شيخ
Suwailih	Not too Substantial	صويلح
Ta'n	Impeach	طعن
Tabqah	Generation	طبقة
Tad'if	Enfeeblement	تضعيف
Tafarrud	Solitude in his narration	تفرد
Tajhamu	To Regard With Displeasure	تجهم
Talammadha	Become a Student/Apprentice	تلمذ
Taliin	Softening	تليين
Tathabbut	Confirmation	تثبت
Thabt	Reliable	ثبت
Thiqah	Trustworthy	ثقة
Tilmidh Tawil Al Mulazimah	Boarder/Internal student	تلميذ طويل الملازمة
Wadda'	Fabricator	وضاع
Wahi	Weak/Feeble	واهي
Wahm	Conjecture	وهم
War'	Careful	ورع
Wast	To Choose or appoint as mediator	وسط
Yad'u	He Fabricates Hadith	يضع
Yakdhibu	He Tells a Lie	يكذب
Yaktubu	He Writes/He Keeps Record	يكتب
Yanzuru	He looks/Reads	ينظر
Yaqtdi	Pursuant to	يقفدي
Yasrequ	Embezzle/Pilfer	يسرق

The above-mentioned term chart consists of the terms been used in 'Ilm Jarh wa Al Ta'dil to accept the narrators or otherwise. We will be able to be aware of correct accent of the terms and their meanings by this chart. These terms form the standards of criticism in 'Ilm Hadith. Critics made appraisal of the narrators of Hadith according to their standards Kamali (2002:115) very rightly says:

The 'ulama are not unanimous in their assessment of the character and qualifications of the transmitters of Hadith. While some scholars like Yahya b. Ma'in



Matruh	Cast Down	مطروح
Matruk	Abandoned	متروك
Mawaddah	Friendship	مودة
Mubtadi'	Innovator	مبتدع
Mudallas	Counterfeit	مدلس
Mudallis	Counterfeit/ Deceit	مدلس
Mudtarab	Confused	مضطرب
Muhajir	The Maccans who emigrated with Holy Prophet (S.A.W)to Madina	مهاجر
Muhtafiz	Cautious/Alert	محتفظ
Mukhtalat	Mixed	مختلط
Munkar	Indeterminate	منكر
Muntaha	Highest Degree	منتهي
Muntha Al Kidhb	Highest Degree in Deceit	منتهي الكذب
Muqarib	Almost Equal	مقارب
Mutashye'	Partisan	متشيع
Mutayaqiz	Awake/Vigilant	متيقظ
Mutmasik	Cohesive	متماسك
Mutqin	God fearing	متقن
Muttaham	Accused	متهم
Muttaqi	Pious	متقي
Muttasil	Persistent/Continued	متصل
Naqd	Criticism/Critical Comment or Remark	نقد
Nazar	Minor Objection	نظر
Qawi	Vigorous	قوي
Radd	Irrefutable	ردد
Rami	Accused	رمي
Rawi	Transmitter/Narrator	راوي
Rukn Al Kidhb	Stake of Deceit	ركن الكذب
Saduq	Truthful/Sincere	صديق
Safih	Silly	سفيه
Sahib Al Hawa	Dissenters	صاحب الهوي
Sahih	Sound/Authentic	صحيح
Salih	Substantial	صالح
Sanad	Ascription of Islamic Tradition/Chain of Authorities	سند

Imam Al Hadith	Master of Hadith	امام الحديث
Imam Al' Sunnah	Master of Sayings and Doings of The Holy Prophet (S.A.W)	امام السنة
Irja	Hoping For	ارجاء
Iirmi	A Feeling which Lay Far Behind Him	ارم
Jayyid	Outstanding	جيد
Jihalat	Ignorance	جهالة
Kadhab	Untruthful	كذاب
Khalf	Successor	خلف
Khi iar	Elite	خير
La Basa bihi	There is no objection to it	لا بأس به
La yuhtajju bihi	Not authoritative	لا يحتج به
La yu'tabaru bihi	Not Considerable	لا يعتبر به
Laisa Bidhalika	Not So	ليس بذا لك
Laisa Biqawi	Not Vigorous	ليس بقوي
Lin	To be or become soft/Gentle	لين
M'adan Al Kidhb	Treasure of Deceit	معدن الكذب
Mabsut	Well –to-do	مبسوط
Majhul	Unknown	مجهول
Makhrum Al Muruwah	Not Comprising all Knightly Virtues	مخروم المروءة
Mamun	Harmless	مامون
Manb' Al Kidhb	Source of Deceit	منبع الكذب
Maqal	Objection/Contention	مقال
Maqbul	Acceptable/Satisfactory	مقبول
Marda	Means affording Satisfaction/Gratification	مرضي
Mardud	Yield	مردود
Maris	Experienced	مارس
Mastur	Hidden	مستور
Mat'un	Cursed	مطعون
Matan	Text/Annotation (of Tradition) as Distinguished from the Sanad	متن
Matin	Firm/Strong	متين
Matrah	Place Where Something is Thrown	مطرح

'Adl	Fairness	عدل
'Aib	Blemish	عيب
'Umdah	Distinguished	عمده
A'lam	Having More Knowledge	أعلم
Absar	Eye Intelligence	أبصر
Adbat	Man of Great Apprehension	اضبط
Adna	Of Less Significance	أدنى
Ahl Al Hawa	Dissenters	أهل الهوى
Akdhab	Greater Impostor/Liar	أكذب
Al Asma	Names	الاسماء
Al I'tibar	Subjective Approach	الاعتبار
Al Jarh	To Declare Unreliable	الجرح
Al Kuna	Agnomen(Consisting of Abu or Umm Followed by the name of Son	الكنى
Al Nasb	Monument	النصب
Al Qadr	Value	القدر
Al Ta'dil	To declare Honest	التعديل
Ansar	Adherents: The Madina Followers of Holy Prophet (S.A.W)who Granted him Refuge after Hijra	أنصار
Athbat	More Reliable/To be Very Firm of Character and Courageous	أثبت
Auham	Conjectures	أوهام
Authaq	Stronger/Firmer	أوثق
Baligh	Matured	بالغ
Batl	To be Abolished	بطل
Da'f	Feebleness	ضعف
Da'if	Feeble	ضعيف
Dabit	A man of Apprehension	ضابط
Dabt	Apprehension/Accuracy	ضبط
Dajjal	Quack	دجال
Hafiz	Who Sustain/Vindicate The Tradition	حافظ
Halik	Irredeemable	هالك
Hasan	Approved	حسن
Hujjah	Authoritative	حجة

unreliable and this criticism been narrated to us with a reliable source and with the reason of incredibility of narrator. However criticism on a narrator who is unknown (مجهول) to us is acceptable even without the detail of incredibility.

- Before making a judgment about a narrator, we have to go deep to appraise that what he means by the term he used for a narrator.<sup>3</sup>
- If any narrator has been called feeble in narrating the Hadith of a particular traditionist, the narrations transmitted by him from the other scholars will not been called feeble.<sup>4</sup>
- There is no saying that Ibn Hajar has provided the abstract of thoughts of about all renowned personalities of 'Ilm Jarh Wa T'dil.

## Part 2

### A Term chart of Al Jarh and T'dil

Original Terminology (Transliteration)	English Translation	Original Terminology (Arabic)
'Adad	Measured	أعداد
'Adala	Integrity	عدالة

<sup>3</sup> There are different terminologies have been used for reliability of a narrator or otherwise in different meanings and ranks as you will perceive in the Tem Chart and Standards' table in coming pages .

<sup>4</sup> If we see the methodology of critics of early centuries, like Yahya b. Said al Qattan,'Ali b. Al Madini, Ma'mar b. Rashid etc we can perceive that while discussing any narrator's creditability, they comment that he is not reliable in narrating of Hadith of a specific scholar. Ibn Hajar while expressing his methodology, says that this narrator would not be called unreliable in all Hadith narrated by him from the other teachers.

He managed new research methodologies in the light of the thoughts of his predecessors and many of the terms for assessment of the narrators of Hadith.

We will discuss his methodology in the light of two of his books named, Tahdhib Al Tahdhib and Lisan Al Mizan.

### **Methodology of Ibn Hajar**

The salient features of Ibn Hajar's methodology are as under:

- His first book has been compiled in first category and in type one while the second one falls in type three.<sup>2</sup>
- Tahdhib consists of twelve volumes. These volumes deal with 8461 narrators and their biographical details while Lisan consists of eight volumes and 8004 biographies with the opinions of different critics about the narrators of Hadith.
- According to the opinion of Ibn Hajar, a narrator is reliable until any critic has considered him

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<sup>2</sup> Books written exclusively on critical appraisal consist of four types:

- **Biographies:** Some books written on biographies of narrators in general despite of narrator is trustworthy or otherwise.
- **Biographies of Trustworthy Narrators:** The second type of books consists of the biographies of only trustworthy narrators.
- **Biographies of Non- trustworthy Narrators:** In this type of books biographies of only non-trustworthy narrators were included.
- **Technical Biographies:** In this type of critical appraisal, books were written on Identification of names of narrators and their patronymic (Kunniyat) and these books are called books on (معرفة الأسماء والكنى)

The last mentioned two books are very popular in ‘Ilm Jarh Wa Ta‘dil.

### **Methodology of Dhahabi:**

We will be limited to last mentioned two books to describe Dhahabi’s methodology.

- He distributed the biographies in his book Tadhkirah into Tabaqat (Generations) and divided the traditionists into 21 Tabaqat.
- Author has provided 1176 biographies of the traditionists.
- He started his book with biographies of Sahabah and Tabi‘in.
- He incorporated the opinions of all distinguished critics of the narrators of Hadith.
- He considers the transmitters whom reliability is narrated unanimously on the highest significant rank while the traditionist whom reliability is differential, measured less significant by Dhahabi<sup>1</sup>

### **(3) Ahmad b. ‘Ali b. Hajar ‘Asqalani (D: 852 A.H/1447 A.D)**

Ibn Hajar was born in Sha‘ban 773 A.H in a village named ‘Asqalan situated on the bank of river Nil. He completed the memorization of the Holy Quran when he was nine years old. In 793 A.H, he diverted his attention towards ‘Elm Hadith and travelled to Egypt, Hijaz, Yaman, and Damascus Where he was educated by more than six hundred luminaries.

Ibn Hajar has compiled many of the books the number of his compiled research exceeds from figure of 150. His books are remarkable milestones in the research methodology in ‘Ilm Hadith.

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<sup>1</sup> Abu ‘Abdurrahman Muhammad Al thani compiled a research thesis on the methodology of Dhahabi entiteled: Dawabit Al Jarh wa Al T‘dil ‘Inda Al Hafiz Dhahabi and presented it to Jamiah Islamiah Madinah Munawrah. the Thesis has been published by Majallah Al Hikmah Leeds, Uk in 2000.

discourse. According to A'zami (1977: 57) Khatib introduces a new methodology in criticism in Hadith. He says:

All the statements come under three categories. One of them is known as erroneous. The cause of this knowledge is that 'Aql (wisdom) refuses to accept it.

I have tried to give a broad outline of the methodology of Hadith criticism, avoiding technical language as far as it was possible. One may say that it is only glimpse and no more. But I do hope that it will help a non-specialist who wants to know something about the method of criticism". (Khatib,1357:17)

When 'Ilm Jarh Wa Ta'dil approaches the 8<sup>th</sup> century, it comes to an apex position. Here we found the name of top ranking personality in this discourse named:

**(2) Abu 'Abdullah Muhammad b. Ahmad b. Uthman Al Dhahabi**

**(D: 748A.H/1347A.H).** The most eminent scholar of Hadith of this age like Ahmad b. Hibah Allai, b. 'Asakir, Ibn Daqiq Al 'Eid and Yusuf b. Ahmad Qamuli were the teachers of Dhahabi. He is the author of about 65 books. The following milestones in this century took place by him:

- A. Al Nubala Fi Shuyukh Al Sunnah
- B. Tabaqat Al Huffaz
- C. Tabaqat Mashahir Al Qurra
- D. Siyar al Nubala
- E. Al Tahrir fi Asma al Sahabah
- F. Mushtabah Al Nisbah
- G. Al Muntaqa Fi Mughni Al Du'afa
- H. Tadhkirah Al Huffaz
- I. Mizan Al I'tidal

Al Jarh is an adjective when a narrator or witness suffers an allegation, he becomes unreliable and his news will not be valid for any action.

According to Abu 'Abdurrahman (2000:20) Hafiz Dhahabi defines AL Ta'dil:

وصف الراوي بما يقتضي قبول روايته

Quality of narrator which enables his narration to be accepted

Diaurrahman 'Azami (1424:47) a well-known contemporary scholar of Hadith very well said and defined Al Jarh:

هو بيان لعيوب رواة الحديث التي لأجلها تسقط عدالتهم ويكون حديثهم  
عداد الضعاف

Description of faults of narrators of Hadith by which faults narrators lose their credibility and their traditions become feeble.

It is a matter of fact that some symbols of criticism of narrators were seen in early age of Islam but the term of Jarh and Ta'dil were not visible.<sup>1</sup> We will discuss in this writing the developed era of criticism in which not only the said terms was in use but the standards of accepting of narrator or otherwise were also developed. In part, 1 we will present the history of post developed era of this discourse (after 4<sup>th</sup> century) and the standards for accepting or rejecting the narrators of Hadith.

### **E 'Ilm Al Jarh wa Ta'dil in Developed Form:**

Ilm Al Jarh Wa Al Ta'dil when advanced to 5<sup>th</sup> century and onward, we find the names of personalities who are blinking stars in this discourse. To perceive the top edge of the development of 'Ilm Jarh Wa al Ta'dil we will describe only three distinguished names of this field of knowledge.

(1) **Khatib Al Baghdadi (D: 463A.H/1066 A.D)** wrote a book **Tarikh Baghdad**. In this book, he accumulated biographies of the citizens of Baghdad

Khatib also compiled a book named **Al Kifayah Fi 'Ilm Al Riwayah**. In this book Khatib discussed the prerequisites of transmitters of Hadith and basic principles of criticism in 'Ilm Al Hadith. The book is an authority and primary source in this



The root of Ta'dil is 'adl (justice) which means 'to put something or person in its or his right position'.

### III Definition of al- Jarh wa al- Ta'dil:

According to Abu 'Abd al-Rahman al-Thani (2000:20), Hafiz Zahabi defines al- Jarh wa al- Ta'dil as follows:

الجرح: وصف الراوي بما يقتضي تليين روايته أو تضعيفها أو ردها.

Al Jarh means to criticize the character of narrator on which the softening, enfeeblement and refutation of his narration is based.

التعديل: وصف الراوي بما يقتضي قبول روايته

Al Ta'dil means to discuss the character of narrator on which his narration's acceptance is based.

Ibn Abi Hatim another famous critic of narrators of Hadith presents the definition of this discourse in comprehensive way, he (NDA: Preface) says:

هو علم يبحث فيه عن جرح الرواة وتعديليهم بألفاظ مخصوصة وعن مراتب تلك الألفاظ

In this discourse the narrators of Hadith been discussed with special terminologies and these terms are the bases of different positions of narrators.

Dr. Mahmud Al Tahhan (ND: 149) defines this term in the following words:

ان الحكم علي الحديث صحة و ضعفا بعدالة الرواة وضبطهم او الطعن في عدالتهم وضبطهم.

To decide about a narration whether it is correct or otherwise on the bases of Narrator's character and his power of remembrance or any objection by an expert on a narrator with reference of these two things.

Ibn Al Athir (NDA: 126) defines Al Jarh and said:

الجرح وصف متي التحق بالراوى و الشاهد سقط الاعتبار بقوله و بطل العمل به