CHAPTER II

THEORITICAL BACKGROUND

This chapter will examine and elaborate terms related to subject matter of this thesis, these terms are *hadīts*, *sanad* and *isnād*, *rāwi* (transmitter).

A. Hadits

The study will be started by defining the concept of *hadits*. There are many definitions of *hadits* according to scholars, they also will be comprehensively described here.

1. Literal meaning of hadits

The Arabic word *hadits* literally means communication, story, conversation: religious or secular, historical or recent. Whenever used as adjective it means new. It has been used in Qur'ān 23 times. On the other hand, it also used in the sayings of the Prophet. Here are a few examples:

Usage of the word hadits in the Qur'an for:

a. Religious communication, message, or the Qur'ān:

Almighty Allah says: 2 أَلْكُ نَزُّلَ أُحْسَنَ ٱلْحَدِيثِ كِتَنبًا

¹ Muhammad Ajjaj al-Khatib, *Ushul al-Hadits: Ulumuhu Wa Mushtholāhuhu* (Beirut: Dar al-Fikr, 1989), 26.

²The Qur'an, al-Zumar, 23.

"Allah has revealed (time after time) the most beautiful *hadits* (message) in the form of a book".

- "Then leave me alone with such as reject this hadits (meaning the Our'ān)".
- b. Story of a secular or general nature:

- "And whenever you meet such as indulge in (blasphemous) talk about our message, turn thy back upon them until they begin *hadits* (conversation) of some other things".
- c. Historical story:

"Has the hadits (story) of Musa reached thee?".

³The Qur'an, al-Qalam, 44.

⁴The Qur'ān, al-an'ām, 68.

⁵The Qur'ān, Tāhā, 9.

d. Current story or conversation:

"When the Prophet confined a hadits (a secret) to one of his wives".

We may conclude that this word has been used in the Qur'an in the sense of story and communication or message, be it religious or secular, from a remote past or of the present time.

Usage of the word hadits in the sayings of the Prophet

The word *hadits* used in the same sense by the Prophet, as it has been used in the Qur'ān. Here are a few examples:

a. Religious communication:

The Prophet said: أحسن الحديث كتاب الله 'the best hadits is the book of Allah". And the Prophet said: غفر الله امرءا سمع منا حديثا فحفظه حتى يبلغه فرب Allah". And the Prophet said: عفر الله امرءا سمع منا حديثا فحفظه حتى يبلغه فرب 'Allah illumines a man who hears hadits from me, preserves it carefully and passes it on to others..."

b. Secular or general conversation or tale:

⁶The Qur'an, al-Tahrim, 3.

⁷Muhammad ibn Isma'il Al-Bukhori, al-Jami' al-Shahih, adab (Beirut: Dar Ibn Katsir, 1987), 70.

⁸Ahmad ibn Hanbal, Musnad al-Imam Ahmad Ibn Hanbal, I (Cairo: Mu'assasat Qurthubah), 437.

The Prophet said: من استمع الى حديث قوم و هم له كار هون أو يفرون منه، The Prophet said: من استمع الى حديث قوم و هم له كار هون أو يفرون منه، One who tries to eavesdrop on the hadits (conversation) of the people when they dislike his doing so and want to keep away from him, in the hereafter hot copper would be poured in his ear".

c. Historical story:

The Prophet said: حدثوا عن بني اسرائيل "You may transmit hadits from Bani Isrā'il" ¹⁰

d. Current story, secret or conversation:

" If someone tells a hadits (secret) then goes his way, his words become a trust". 11

2. Terminological meaning of hadits

According to *Muhadditsīn* it stands for what was transmitted on the authority of the Prophet, his deeds, sayings, tacit approval, or description of his *shifāt* (features) meaning his physical appearance. Meanwhile, physical appearance of the Prophet is

⁹Al-Bukhari, al-Jami'..., ta'bir, 45.

¹⁰Ihid, anbiya', 50.

¹¹Muhammad Ibn 'Isa Al-Tirmidzi, al-Jami' al-Shahih Sunan al-Tirmidzi, birr (Beirut: Dar Ihya' al-Turats al-'Arabiy), 39.

not included in the definition used by jurists. 12 There are various views in defining hadits by Muhadditsīn. The differences appear based upon their observation. However, they generally defined hadits as:

Sometimes some other words were also used in the same sense, such as *khabar* and *atsar*. Most of the scholars use the three terms, *hadits*, *khabar*, and *atsar*, as synonymous. However, some scholars used to differentiate between *khabar* and *atsar*. They used the *khabar* in the sense of *hadits*, and the term *atsar* restricted to the sayings and decisions of the Companions.

3. The word *sunnah* and its meaning.

Literally, Sunnah means a clear path or a beaten track but it has also been used to imply normative practice, or an established course of conduct. It may be a good example or a bad, and it may be set by an individual, a sect or a community. In pre-Islamic Arabia, the Arabs used the word 'Sunnah' in reference to the ancient and continuous practice of the community which they inherited from their forefathers. 13

¹²Thahir Al jazairi, *Taujth Al Nazhar IIa Ushuult Al-Atsar* (Cairo: Maktabah al-Matbuu'aat al-Islamiyah, 1995), 2.

¹³M.M. Azami, *Studies in Hadith Methodology and Literature* (Indianapolis: American Trust Publication, 1978), 3.

The opposite of *Sunnah* is *bid'ah*, or innovation, which is characterized by lack of precedent and continuity with the past. In the Qur'an' the word *'Sunnah'* and its plural, *sunan*, have been used on a number of occasions (16 times to be precise). In all these instances, *sunnah* has been used to imply an established practice or course of conduct. To the scholars of Hadith, *Sunnah* refers to all that is narrated from the Prophet, his acts, his sayings and whatever he has tacitly approved, plus all the reports which describe his physical attributes and character. The scholars of jurisprudence, however, exclude the description of the physical features of the Prophet from the definition of *Sunnah*.

Some scholars had a notion that *hadits* is specifically related to only the Prophet's saying and act. Meanwhile, *sunnah* contains the Prophet's sayings, acts, tacit approval, or description of his *shifāt* (features). 15

B. Sanad

Sanad literally means something rising from the earth. While sanad in terminology has meaning: the way of matn (text of hadits) or the chain of transmitters transferring the matn from the first source. 16

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¹⁵Muhammad Abu Syuhbah, Al-Wasith Fi Ulum Wa Mushthalah Al-Hadits (Cairo: Dar al-Fikr al-Arabi), 16.

Isnad means process of bringing and relating hadits to the source. 17 Or in the simple way we can name it with transmission. The transmission of the hadits' were handed down either by word of mouth or written down throughout the generations and these chains consist of thousands of both learned men and women.

According to the life span of the people in the chain, the numbers of links in the chain up to the Holy Prophet, praise and peace be upon him, vary. In some where a long life has prevailed you find for example, the chain contains only thirty names, in another you may find forty. The last link in the chain being alive today and it is he who bears the source of Islamic knowledge.

C. Rawi (Narrator/Transmitter)

The strength of a Hadith greatly depends upon its *Ruwat*. The *Rawi* of a Hadith must be Baligh (adult), sane, Muslim, 'Aadil, and of good memory. The theory is that traditions were transmitted in a regular manner, so that those who heard them from their authorities were entitled to transmit them in turn. One is not justified in assuming that from the beginning traditions were very particular in their methods; but as time went on, and Tradition became a matter of vital importance, rules were elaborated. To illustrate just how strict the rules became, here a summarized account of eight methods of transmission as described by Muhammad Abu Syuhbah in his al-

¹⁶al-Khatib, *Ushul al-Hadits*.... 32.

¹⁷Abu Syuhbah, Al-Wasith..., 18.

Wasith. 18

- 1. Sama (Hearing) a shaikh's words, which he dictates, or recites with out dictating. He may make this recititation from memory, or read it from his book. This is generally held to be the highest form, and the one who hears it may say haddathana, akhbarana, anba'ana, sami'tu, or qal lana fulana (so and so said to us).
- 2. Ard: (Reading to Teacher) Reading over to a sheikh what one has heard. It is all the same whether one reads it oneself, or is present, when someone else is reading. The one who recites may do so from memory, or from a written copy. The sheikh may know the material by heart and merely isten; but if he does not know it by heart, he must have his copy in his hand.
- 3. *Ijaza* (licence). The first type is to give a specified person licence to transmit a specified amount. The second is to give a specified person licence to transmit something, which is not specified. One may say, "I give you licence to transmit all that I have heard." There is a difference of opinion about the value of this, but the majority are said to consider it perfectly satisfactory. The third is to give licence, merely using a qualification without specifying a person. One may say, "I give licence to the Muslims,"
- 4. Munawala (handing over). This is of two types, the better of which is combined

¹⁸Ibid, 141-144.

with a licence to transmit, which is generally agreed to be also the highest type of *ijaza*. For example Zuhri(51-124) gave his manuscript to several scholars, like Thauri, Auza'I and 'Ubaidullah b. 'Umar. It was called *munawala*.

- 5. **Kitabah**. (correspondence). This means that the sheikh writes to the student when he is absent some of his traditions in his own handwriting; or he may write it for him when he is present or may employ someone else to write it for the student as from him. *I'lam*: to inform about a hadith
- 6. The narrator may tell pupil that a certain tradition, or a certain book is what he heard from so and so. Without saying any thing about his transmitting it.