

Fabrication Of Hadiths

http://www.muftisays.com/blog/Seifeddine-M/559_10-11-2010/fabrication-of-hadiths.html

The era of the best of generations [khayr al-qurun] (i.e. the first three generations of Muslims), gave way to the era of falsehood and fabrications, as foretold by Allah's Messenger (salallahu alayhi wa sallam). (At that time,) people began fabricating hadiths willfully. This is why many hadith scholars compiled books focusing only on fabricated hadiths (in order to expose them as unauthentic). Inspired by their vested interests, many of the fabricators used to concoct false hadiths. Consequently, whatever differences do occur in the accepted narrations will still be considered minimal (compared to what the situation could have been).

Ibn Lahi'a says, **"There was a person who was once a leader [shaykh] of the Khawārij (a deviated sect). He later received divine guidance to repent for all his wrongdoings. He advised, 'Before you accept a hadith, make sure you study the conditions of its narrators. When we (the Khawarij) wanted to propagate something, we used to fabricate a narration accordingly.'"**

Hammād ibn Salama (ra) narrates the statement of a Rāfidi (a member of the Shiite Twelver sect): **"Whenever any proposals used to be passed in our gatherings, we would fabricate a hadith accordingly."** Masih ibn Jahm narrates the incident of an innovator [mubtadi] who, when he repented, taking an oath, said: **"We had fabricated many baseless narrations which you narrated from us, and we used to consider leading you astray to be a meritorious act."** The hadith scholars have recorded many similar statements. Hāfiz ibn Hajar (ra) has made particular mention of such incidents in his book Lisan.

Some Reasons for the Fabrication of hadiths

My objective in relating a few of these incidents is to point out that the fabricators themselves have confessed to concocting hadiths. Some of these fabricators used to fabricate solely for what they called the preservation of their ideology [din], such as the Rāfidis, the Khawārij, etc. This is why the hadith scholars have laid down, among other

principles, the rule stating that if a person is known to have inclinations to the Rafidi sect, his narrations regarding the household [ahl al-bayt] of Allah's Messenger (salallahu alayhi wa sallam) will not be accepted.

Hammād ibn Zayd said, **"The hypocrites have fabricated fourteen thousand hadiths. One of them was Abd al-Karim ibn Abl al-Awja', who was hung in the time of (the Abbasi) Caliph Mahdi. While he was being hung he said, 'I had fabricated four thousand hadiths in which I had made many unlawful things lawful and vice versa.'"**

Some people used to fabricate hadiths merely to appease a king or a leader. Their stories are mentioned in detail in the books dealing with fabricated hadiths. One of the categories of hadith which has come under criticism by the Imams includes the hadiths of the Sufis and the Preachers [wā'izin]. The Sufis, having good thoughts of all and sundry, readily accepted all types of narrations. Considering such narrations to be authentic, they used to transmit them to others. Since the Sufis

were regarded as reliable people, the others in turn accepted their narrations. Imam Muslim (ra) has dealt with this topic extensively in the introduction to his Sahih. Similar is the case of the "Hadiths of the Preachers." Many a time, preachers tended to fabricate hadiths merely to add a bit more spice to their lectures. In fact, some people believed that it was permissible to fabricate hadiths with intent to create a yearning in the hearts of the people toward the delights of the hereafter, or to instill fear in them of the catastrophes of doomsday. The narrations of the Preachers can also be found in the books dealing with fabricated hadiths.

Imam Ahmad ibn Hanbal (ra) and Yahya ibn Ma'in (ra) once went into a certain masjid to offer their salat. After the, salat, a preacher [wa'iz] began narrating hadiths attributed to these two Imams during his lecture. At the termination of his lecture, Yahya ibn Ma'in beckoned the preacher with his hand to come over to them. Under the false impression that he was being summoned to be rewarded, he came over to them. Yahya asked, **"Who narrated these hadiths to you?"** Once again, he mentioned their names. This ignorant fool did not even know who he was talking to. Since these two personalities were very famous in the world of hadith, he had simply made use of their good names. Yahya said, **"I am Yahya ibn Ma'in and this is Ahmad ibn Hanbal. We did not narrate these hadiths to you nor have we ourselves heard them (from someone else)."** The preacher then asked, **"So you are Yahya ibn Ma'in?"** **"Surely that is me,"** replied Yahya. Upon this, he commented, **"I always heard that Yahyā ibn Ma'in is a stupid fool but today this hearsay has been confirmed."** **"How is this confirmation possible?"** asked Yahya. The preacher replied, **"How can you be under the impression that the names 'Yahya ibn Ma'in and 'Ahmad ibn Hanbal' refer only to you two? I have heard hadiths from seventeen people by the names Yahyā ibn Ma'in and Ahmad ibn Hanbal."** While this was taking place, Imam Ahmad ibn Hanbal covered his face out of grief while the lecturer brushed the whole incident off as a joke and vanished.

This was one of the main reasons 'Umar (ra) placed constraints on lecturing during his time. Abū Nuaym writes in Al-Hilya that Imam Zuhri said, **"When there are two, three, or even four links in a chain of narrators (for a hadith), there is no problem with the narration. However, the moment the chain exceeds this number, it is better to remain silent."**

Khabbab ibn al-Aratt narrates that Allah's Messenger (salallahu alayhi wa sallam) said, **"The annihilation of the Bani Isrā'il was also triggered by their indulging in (baseless) sermons."** Hafiz Zayn al-Din al-Iraqi says, **"One of the predicaments of the Preachers [wa'izin] is their tendency to narrate anything and everything before the masses. Often, the common laypeople are unable to fathom what is being said. This eventually leads to corrupt beliefs. When this is the case with true and authentic statements, what will then be the situation with fabricated statements?"**

These were the reasons which prompted the scholars to compile special books on fabricated hadiths. Just as they compiled books on authentic hadiths, they also compiled books on fabricated hadiths, to ensure that those who came after them do not fall into a trap of deception.