

THE LIFE AND WORKS OF ABŪ DĀWŪD AL-SIJISTĀNĪ VIDA Y OBRAS DE ABŪ DĀWŪD AL-SIYĪSTĀNĪ

CHRISTOPHER MELCHERT

University of Oxford

Abū Dāwūd al-Sijistānī (d. Basra, 275/889) was a prominent collector of prophetic hadith. He seems to have collected in Iraq, Mecca, and Syria A.H. 220-35, then Khurasan till the early 240s, then Iraq, Syria, and Egypt till around 250. He claimed to have collected 500,000 in all. He spent most of the years 250-70 in Tarsus, composing his famous *Sunan*, then the last five years of his life teaching near Basra. This article reviews Abū Dāwūd's known works, especially *al-Sunan*, which became one of the Six Books. The *Sunan* was transmitted from him in slightly different versions by nine named traditionists. A little under 90 percent of it goes back to the Prophet. It is distinguished from other collections by its concentration on hadith that classify actions (*aḥkām*). Abū Dāwūd's express comments within the *Sunan* concern alternative versions, legal applications, and *riyāl* criticism. Because it seldom repeats hadith under multiple topics, it is probably the largest of the Six Books. It must be admitted that Abū Dāwūd was unusually careless at identifying men in *asānīd*. In his personal piety, Abū Dāwūd stood above all for modesty. His separate collection of hadith on renunciation, *al-Zuhd*, comprises mainly the sayings of Companions. In law, Abū Dāwūd was close to Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal (d. 241/855). In theology, he adhered to the ninth-century *ahl al-sunna wa-l-jamā'ah*. He is also said to have admired and been admired by the proto-Sufi Sahl al-Tustarī (d. 283/896?).

Key words: Abū Dāwūd; Sijistānī; Hadith; Six Books; Islamic Asceticism.

Abū Dāwūd al-Siyistānī (m. en Basora, 275/889) fue un eminente recopilador de hadices proféticos. Parece que esa labor de compilación la hizo en Iraq, La Meca y Siria entre los años 220-35 H.; en Jorasán hasta principios de la siguiente década y, ya nuevamente en Iraq y Siria, además de Egipto, hasta el año 250 H. Afirmó haber recopilado 500.000 hadices en total. Entre 250 y 270 H. permaneció fundamentalmente en Tarso, componiendo su famosa *al-Sunan* y dedicó los cinco últimos años de su vida a enseñar cerca de Basora. Este artículo revisa los trabajos conocidos del autor, especialmente *al-Sunan*, que llegará a ser uno de los "Seis libros" (compilaciones canónicas de hadiz). Esta obra fue transmitida, con pequeñas variaciones, por nueve tradiconistas que la tomaron de él. Casi el 90% de las tradiciones se remontan al Profeta. Esta obra se diferencia de otras colecciones porque se centra en hadices que clasifican acciones (*aḥkām*). Los comentarios expresos de Abū Dāwūd dentro de la obra se refieren a versiones alternativas, aplicaciones legales y la ciencia del *riyāl*. Dado que pocas veces repite un mismo hadiz bajo diferentes epígrafes, se trata probablemente de la más larga de las seis colecciones canónicas de hadices. Debe reconocerse que Abū Dāwūd era bastante descuidado a la hora de identificar individuos en las cadenas de transmisión. Su colección independiente de hadices relativos a la renuncia ascética, *al-Zuhd*, comprende fundamentalmente dichos de los Compañeros del Profeta. Por lo que se refiere al derecho, Abū Dāwūd estaba cerca de Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal (m. 241/855). En teología se adhirió al movimiento de los *ahl al-sunna wa-l-jamā'a* del siglo IX. Se dice que admiraba y era admirado por el proto-sufi Sahl al-Tustarī (m. 283/896?).

Palabras clave: Abū Dāwūd; Siyistānī; hadiz; seis colecciones canónicas de hadiz; ascetismo islámico.

Abū Dāwūd Sulaymān b. al-Ash'ath b. Ishāq b. Bashīr (or Bishr) b. Shaddād b. 'Amr b. Āmir (or 'Imrān) al-Azdī al-Sijistānī (d. Basra, 275/889) is mainly important as a collector of prophetic hadith, whose *Sunan* early won third place among the Six Books most highly regarded by Sunni Muslims.¹ He was also an important collector of the legal opinions and *rijāl* criticism of Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal (d. Baghdad, 241/855). The following account of his life and works (of which an extract will appear in *The Encyclopaedia of Islam*, third edition) offers a fuller account of his travels and a longer list of his works than have appeared hitherto. It also offers some new characterizations of the *Sunan* and *Zuhd*.

Life

According to Ibn Khallikān, some interpreted Abū Dāwūd's *nisbah* as referring to a village of Sijistan or Sijistanah in the environs of Basra.² However, most biographers suppose him to have come from the region of Sijistan south of Khurasan.³ From his name and tribal *nisbah*, he appears to have been ancestrally Arab. His ancestor 'Imrān is said to have perished at Ṣifḥīn, fighting with 'Alī.⁴ No biography inspected by me indicates that he was not ancestrally Arab, un-

¹ On Abū Dāwūd, v. Sezgin, F., *Geschichte des arabischen Schrifttums*, Leiden, 1967-2000, (hereafter *GAS*) 1:149-52, with further references. The only significant study in English has been Robson, J., "The Transmission of Abū Dāwūd's *Sunan*", *BSOAS*, 14 (1952), 579-88. I have read two short monographs in Arabic: Al-Mazāhirī, Taqī al-Dīn al-Nadwī, *Abū Dāwūd al-imām al-ḥāfiẓ al-faqīh*, Damascus, 1990, of which the Urdu original was published in India in 1967 (*ibid.*, 11), and 'Uwayḍah, Kāmil Muḥammad Muḥammad, *Abū Dāwūd Sulaymān b. al-Ash'ath al-Sijistānī ḥakam al-fuqahā' wa-l-muḥaddithīn*, Beirut, 1996. Mazāhirī's study seems superior to 'Uwayḍah's, but several editorial introductions are more useful. *V.* esp. al-Ājurri, *Su'ālāt Abī 'Ubayd al-Ājurri Abā Dāwūd Sulaymān b. al-Ash'ath al-Sijistānī (202-275 H.) fī ma'rifāt al-rijāl wa-jarḥihim wa-ta'dilihim*, 'Abd al-'Alīm 'Abd al-'Azīm al-Bastawī (ed.), Beirut and Mecca, 1997, and Abū Dāwūd, *Su'ālāt Abī Dāwūd [...] li-l-imām Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal [...] fī jarḥ al-rijāl wa-ta'dilihim*, Ziyād Muḥammad Maṣṣūr (ed.), Medina, Maktabat al-'Ulūm wa-l-Ḥikam, 1994. Supplants the edition of Muḥammad 'Alī Qāsim al-'Umarī, Medina, al-Jāmi'ah al-Islāmīyah, al-Majlis al-'Ilmī, 1983. 'Umarī's edition comprises the third part alone, corresponding to n.° 353-959 of Bastawī's.

² Ibn Khallikān, *Wafayāt al-a'yān wa-anbā' abnā' al-zamān*, Iḥsān 'Abbās (ed.), Beirut, 1968-73, 2:405.

³ Note al-Sam'ānī, *Kitāb al-Ansāb*, Muḥammad Aḥmad Hallāq (ed.), Beirut, 1999 (based on three MSS. unlike earlier editions), 3:21, s.n. *Sijistānī*.

⁴ Ibn 'Asākir, *Ta'rīkh madīnat Dimashq*, Muḥibb al-Dīn Abū Sa'īd 'Umar b. Gharāmah al-'Amrawī (ed.), Beirut, 1995, 22:191, s.n. Sulaymān b. al-Ash'ath.

like al-Bukhārī, whose great-grandfather was named Bardizbah, and Muslim, whose ancestry is never traced further back than his grandfather. Writing somewhat more than a century after his death, al-Ḥākim al-Naysābūrī (d. Nishapur, 405/1014) states that Abū Dāwūd and his descendants had properties in Sijistan until his own time.⁵ Al-Ḥākim also describes him as hearing hadith in Khurasan, particularly in his own locality and Herat, before travelling to Iraq.⁶

We have a few biographical data attributed to Abū Dāwūd directly. Abū 'Ubayd al-Ājurri quotes him as saying he was born in 202/817-18.⁷ He entered Baghdad when he was around 18, in time to pray at the funeral of 'Affān (d. Rabī' II 220/February-March 835).⁸ He may have been accompanied by an older brother, Muḥammad, also a traditionist.⁹ He entered Basra three months later, just after the death of 'Uthmān b. al-Haytham (d. Rajab 220/July 835).¹⁰ Abū 'Īsā al-Azraq quotes him as saying he entered Kufa for the first time in 221/835-6.¹¹ He must have made his first trip to Syria not long thereafter, for he is quoted as saying that he saw Abū l-Naḍr Ishāq b. Ibrāhīm (d. 227/841-2) in Damascus and wrote hadith at his dictation in 222/836-7.¹² He was back in Basra in 223/837-8, when he attended the funeral there of Muḥammad b. Kathīr al-'Abdī.¹³ He was probably in Syria again in 227/841-2, when he took dictation from 'Abbās b. al-Walīd b. Mazyad (d. 270/883?) of Beirut, although Abū Dāwūd does not expressly say where this took place.¹⁴

Al-Dhahabī believes that he must have made the pilgrimage to Mecca at the end of 220/November-December 835, hearing hadith

⁵ Al-Dhahabī, *Siyar a'lām al-nubalā'*, Shu'ayb al-Arna'ūṭ *et al.* (eds.), Beirut, 1981-8, 13:217, presumably quoting *Ta'rikh Naysābūr*.

⁶ *Idem*, *Ta'rikh al-Islām*, 'Umar 'Abd al-Salām Tadmurī (ed.), Beirut, 1987-2000, 20 (A.H. 261-80): 361, presumably quoting *Ta'rikh Naysābūr*.

⁷ Al-Ājurri, *Su'ālāt*, 2:294. The same from the Ḥanbalī Ibn al-Munādī *apud* al-Silafī, Abū Ṭāhir, *Muqaddimah* to al-Khaṭṭābī, *Ma'ālim al-sunan*, annexed to the Ṭabbākh edition (Aleppo, 1932-4), 4:355-82, to the Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyah edition, 4:326-45, 374 (ed. Muḥammad, 340).

⁸ Al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī, *Ta'rikh Baghdād aw madīnat al-salām*, Cairo, Maktabat al-Khānjī, 1931, 9:56, l. 14 10:77. (Repr. Cairo, Maktabat al-Khānjī and Beirut, Dār al-Fikr, n.d.). Citations in italics are to *Ta'rikh Madīnat al-salām*, Bashshār 'Awwād Ma'rūf (ed.), Beirut, Dār al-Gharb al-Islāmī, 2001.

⁹ Al-Dhahabī, *Siyar*, 13:221.

¹⁰ Al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī, *Ta'rikh*, 9:56, l. 15 10:77.

¹¹ *Ibidem*, 9:56, ll. 8-9 10:77.

¹² Al-Ājurri, *Su'ālāt*, 1:22, 2:225.

¹³ *Ibidem*, 1:25, 442.

¹⁴ Al-Ājurri, *Su'ālāt*, 1:23, 254-5.

there from al-Qa'nabī (d. Mecca? 221/835?) and Sulaymān b. Ḥarb (d. Basra, 224/839), among others. The list of shaykhs from whom Abū Dāwūd heard hadith is the principal evidence for Abū Dāwūd's travels.¹⁵ Interpretation is not always straightforward. Usually, one infers from a traditionist's being identified as, say, a Basran or a Damascene that Abū Dāwūd heard hadith from him in Basra or Damascus, respectively. Sometimes, however, we are told expressly that he heard hadith from someone in a different place. For example, Sulaymān b. Ḥarb has just been mentioned as someone from whom Abū Dāwūd heard hadith in Mecca, although he was by all accounts a Basran who died in Basra.¹⁶ Moreover, a fair proportion of Abū Dāwūd's shaykhs are unidentified in the biographical sources as to either place or date of death. (Indeed, a date of death or even an approximation is attached to only about 40 percent of all transmitters in the Six Books, to judge by Ibn Ḥajar, *Taqrīb al-Tahdhīb*).

Working with what we have, though, we may infer the outlines of Abū Dāwūd's travels as follows. Except for Ibrāhīm b. Mūsā al-Ṣaghīr of Rayy (d. 220s/835-45), Abū Dāwūd's shaykhs to the East, mainly the Jibal, Khurasan, and Transoxania, all died 238/852-3 and later; therefore, although he may have made a trip to Rayy in the 220s, the more likely alternative is that he caught Ibrāhīm b. Mūsā when they were both in Baghdad or Mecca and that Abū Dāwūd made his major trip to the East in the later 230s.¹⁷ Death dates for Abū Dāwūd's Iraqi shaykhs run from the early 220s to the early 270s/mid-830s to the mid-880s, so he presumably frequented the area more or less throughout this period. His Egyptian shaykhs died in 248/862-3 and later, so he presumably travelled to Egypt only then or a little before. This is confirmed by a report that he shared his Egyptian shaykhs with his son, with whom he cannot have travelled to Egypt before 241/856.¹⁸ Only two hadith reports in the *Sunan* come from Medinese shaykhs, and one

¹⁵ The obvious starting point is al-Jayyānī, *Tasmiyat shuyūkh Abī Dāwūd*, Abū Hājir Muḥammad al-Sa'id b. Basyūnī Zaghlūl (ed.), Beirut, Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyah, 1998; also edited by Jāsim b. Muḥammad b. Ḥammūd al-Fajjī, Beirut, Dār Ibn Ḥazm, 1999. Unfortunately, Jayyānī's list is incomplete (v. list of omissions at ed. Zaghlūl, 145-51), and neither edition is so copiously annotated as one would wish.

¹⁶ Ibn Ḥajar, *Kitāb Tahdhīb al-Tahdhīb*, Hyderabad, Majlis Dā'irat al-Ma'ārif al-Nizāmiyah, 1325-7, 4:178. (Repr. Beirut, Dār Ṣādir, n.d.).

¹⁷ On Ibrāhīm b. Mūsā al-Ṣaghīr, v. Ibn Ḥajar, *Tahdhīb*, 1:170.

¹⁸ Al-Khalīlī, *al-Irshād fī ma'rīfat 'ulamā' al-ḥadīth*, 'Āmir Aḥmad Ḥaydar (ed.), Mecca, 1414, 192. There is also a story that he deliberately disguised his son in order for

of these shaykhs turns out to have lived most of the year in Rabadhah, on the road between Kufa and Mecca, spending mainly the two festivals in Medina.¹⁹ Therefore, it seems doubtful whether Abū Dāwūd ever actually travelled to Medina.²⁰ It is striking that he apparently quotes nothing in his major books of shaykhs whom he heard in Khurasan in his youth, before travelling to Iraq in 220/835. It was not an absurd suggestion that he was named for a village near Basra rather than a district near Khurasan.

Abū Dāwūd relates a considerable volume of material from Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal, on which more below. Of interest now is what it means for the chronology of Abū Dāwūd's collecting hadith. Aḥmad was arrested near the beginning of the Inquisition in 218/833, then flogged and released by al-Mu'taṣim in (probably) 220/835, while Abū Dāwūd was collecting hadith in Basra for the first time.²¹ Aḥmad then kept to his house until the accession of al-Wāthiq on 18 Rabī' I 227/5 January 842. At that point, he returned to the mosque and resumed relating hadith. Reports vary as to just when Aḥmad swore not to relate hadith any longer, but one that sounds especially plausible places this at 26 Sha'bān 227/10 June 842, after a *qāḍī* had denounced him to the caliph but before the caliph had actually commanded him to stop relating hadith.²² Abū Dāwūd must have been in Baghdad during these five months writing down hadith from Aḥmad and probably his legal opinions and evaluations of traditionists as well. Aḥmad spent the rest of Wāthiq's caliphate out of sight. However, Abū Dāwūd met with him at least once not long thereafter, for he recalls being the first to tell Aḥmad of the death of his Basran teacher Musaddad b. Musarhad (d. 228/842-3).²³

him to take dictation from Aḥmad b. Ṣāliḥ (d. 248/862-3) of Old Cairo, who normally refused to have adolescents in his circle, although Dhahabī admittedly prefers an alternative story not involving Abū Dāwūd (al-Dhahabī, *Siyar*, 13:227, 231).

¹⁹ Ibrāhīm b. Ḥamzah al-Zubayrī (d. 230/844-5), on whom v. Ibn Sa'd, *Biographien*, Eduard Sachau *et al.* (eds.), Leiden, 1904-40, 5:324; repr. as *al-Tabaqāt al-kubrā*, Beirut, 1957-68, 5:441-2. The other Medinese is Abū Muṣ'ab al-Zuhrī (d. 242/857), on whom v. *GAS*, 1:471-2.

²⁰ Cf. doubts whether Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal ever travelled to Medina: Melchert, C., "The *Musnad* of Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal", *Der Islam*, 82 (2005), 32-51, 44.

²¹ On the Inquisition, v. *EP*, s.n. "Miḥna", by M. Hinds.

²² Ibn al-Jawzī, *Manāqib al-imām Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal*, Muḥammad Amīn al-Khānjī al-Kutubī (ed.), Cairo, Maṭba'at al-Sa'ādah, 1349, 348. Also edited by 'Abd Allāh b. 'Abd al-Muḥsin al-Turkī and 'Alī Muḥammad 'Umar, Cairo, Maktabat al-Khānjī, 1979, 471. Repr. Cairo, Hajr, 1988.

²³ Al-Ājurri, *Su'ālāt*, 1:21, 2:54.

Other data come from the life of Abū Dāwūd's son Abū Bakr 'Abd Allāh (d. Baghdad, 316/929), a traditionist of vast knowledge in his own right although somewhat disreputable.²⁴ An estimate of Abū Bakr's age at his death indicates that he was born about the first half of Jumādā II 230/second half of February 845.²⁵ Al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī assumes that this was in Sijistan.²⁶ By contrast, though, al-Ḥākim al-Naysābūrī suggests that Abū Dāwūd first took his son to hear from Ishāq b. Rāhawayh (d. Nishapur, 238/853?), then went to Sijistan to look after his affairs there.²⁷ (By the way, this also tells us how Abū Dāwūd was supported all those years of collecting hadith, mainly by remittances from home, probably agricultural rents. Compare al-Ṭabarī [d. 310/923], supported by remittances from Tabaristan.²⁸) Ājurri quotes Abū Dāwūd as saying he heard from al-Haytham b. Khālīd al-Juhānī (d. 239/854), a Kufan, in 235/849-50.²⁹ It seems likely, then, that Abū Bakr was actually born in Basra, and that Abū Dāwūd repaired to the East with him in 235/849-50 or shortly thereafter, then spent the later 230s/earlier 850s collecting hadith in Khurasan. Abū Bakr himself is quoted as saying that he was in the *kuttāb* (elementary school) with the son of Ishāq, whose funeral he attended A.H. 238. Three years later, he travelled to Tus for his first journey from home in search of hadith.³⁰

It is possible that Abū Dāwūd also travelled to the adjacent regions of Tabaristan, Quhistan, and Transoxania at this time; however, since there is over ten times more material in the *Sunan* from shaykhs of Khurasan than from shaykhs of these other three regions combined, it seems more likely that he caught shaykhs from there when they were visiting Khurasan. If we except the hadith he related from Ibrāhīm b. Mūsā al-Ṣaghīr, we may add Rayy as well to this list of places he probably never visited, since he otherwise related so little from Razi shaykhs. For Rayy, we have additional negative evidence in Ibn Abī Ḥātim al-Rāzī's personal recollection of Abū Dāwūd: "I

²⁴ For Abū Bakr 'Abd Allāh b. Dāwūd, v. *GAS*, 1:174-5 and al-Dhahabī, *Siyar*, 13:221-37, with further references.

²⁵ Al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī, *Ta'rikh*, 9:468, ll. 17-19 *II*:140.

²⁶ *Ibidem*, 9:464, ll. 15-16 *II*:136.

²⁷ Al-Dhahabī, *Siyar*, 13:218, presumably quoting *Ta'rikh Naysābūr*.

²⁸ Yāqūt, *Irshād al-arīb*, D.S. Margoliouth (ed.), Leiden, 1907-27, 6:458. Also edited by Iḥsān 'Abbās, Beirut, 1993, 6:2466.

²⁹ Al-Ājurri, *Su'ālāt*, 1:19, 185.

³⁰ Al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī, *Ta'rikh*, 9:465, ll. 10-14 *II*:137.

saw him in Baghdad. He came to salute my father.”³¹ Had Abū Dāwūd passed through Rayy, Ibn Abī Ḥātim ought to have mentioned his father’s meeting him there.³² Abū Dāwūd presumably returned to Syria in the early 240s. A direct quotation places him in Tarsus by 242/857, for there and then he missed the funeral of Ḥāmid b. Yaḥyā al-Balkhī on account of rain.³³ He is quoted as saying that he collected 500,000 hadith reports altogether.³⁴

Abū Dāwūd is also quoted as saying, “I lived in Tarsus for twenty years writing *al-Musnad* (properly attested hadith). I wrote four thousand hadith reports. Then I observed that the four thousand turned on just four of them.”³⁵ The point of the statement is the comprehensiveness of just four hadith reports (on which more below), so “twenty years” need not to be taken precisely. However, it does suggest that after his early travels in search of hadith, he retired for about that length of time to Tarsus, which probably means approximately the years 250-70/864-83. He must also have made periodic trips back to Iraq during this time, for a substantial number of his shaykhs in the *Sunan* are Iraqis who died only in these two decades. Moreover, Ibn Dāsah went to hear him relate hadith for four years in al-Ubullah, about 20 kilometres outside Basra.³⁶ It is possible that these were the last four years of his life, on which more below. However, Ibn Dāsah is also said to have heard the *masā’il* of Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal from Abū Dāwūd several years earlier, in 266/879, so it is possible that the stay in al-Ubullah took place around then.³⁷

³¹ Ibn Abī Ḥātim, *Kitāb al-Jarḥ wa-l-ta’dīl*, Hyderabad. Jam’iyyat Dā’irat al-Ma’ārif al-Uthmāniyah, 1360-71, 4:102. Repr. Beirut, Dār Iḥyā’ al-Turāth al-‘Arabī, n.d.

³² Abū Ḥātim lived at home in Rayy from 221/835-6 to 242/856-7 (Ibn Abī Ḥātim, *Kitāb al-Jarḥ*, 1:360), so Abū Dāwūd would have been able to find him had he visited Rayy in the later 230s. Ibn Abī Ḥātim was born in 240/254-5 or 241/855-6. He travelled to the West with his father 255-6/869-70 (al-Dhahabī, *Siyar*, 13:266), which is when they must have met Abū Dāwūd in Baghdad.

³³ Al-Ājurri, *Su’ālāt*, 1:23, 2:255. Abū Dāwūd names the year 242, but Ibn Yūnus, *Ta’rīkh al-ghurabā’*, is quoted as specifying that Ḥāmid died in Ramaḍān (January 857): Ibn Hajar, *Tahdhīb*, 2:170.

³⁴ Al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī, *Ta’rīkh*, 9:57, ll. 1-4 10:78; al-Silafī, *Muqaddimah*, 365-6 (ed. Muḥammad, 333-4).

³⁵ Al-Silafī, *Muqaddimah*, 366; ed. Muḥammad, 334, and al-Nawawī, *Tahdhīb al-asmā’ wa-l-lughāt*, Cairo, Idārat al-Ṭibā’ah al-Muniriyyah, 1927, 2:226; (repr. Beirut, Dār al-Kutub al-‘Ilmiyyah, n.d.) both citing a Muḥammad b. Šāliḥ al-Hāshimī, untraced by me.

³⁶ Al-Silafī, *Muqaddimah*, 369-70 (ed. Muḥammad, 336-7).

³⁷ Abū Dāwūd, *Kitāb Masā’il al-imām Aḥmad*, Muḥammad Bahjah al-Bayṭār (ed.),

Al-Khaṭṭābī, the first commentator on Abū Dāwūd's *Sunan*, relates a conversation between Abū Dāwūd and al-Muwaffaq, the effective ruler behind the nominal caliph al-Mu'tamid, his half-brother. The speaker is an Abū Bakr b. Jābir, servant to Abū Dāwūd: ³⁸

I was with him in Baghdad. We prayed the sunset prayer. Then there was a knock on the door, so I opened it, and lo, there was a servant saying "This is the *amīr* Abū Aḥmad al-Muwaffaq, asking permission to enter." I went in to Abū Dāwūd and informed him where he was. He gave him permission so he came in and sat down. Then Abū Dāwūd went to him, asking, "What has brought the prince at this time?" He said, "Three needs." He said, "What are they?" He said, "That you move to Basra and take it up as your residence so that students of hadith may go to you from the corners of the Earth. This way, you will be the means of its being inhabited, for it has been ruined and its populace driven away by what has happened through the tribulation of the Zanj." He said, "This is one." He said, "That you relate *Kitāb al-Sunan* to my sons." He said, "Yes. Tell me the third." He said, "That you arrange a session exclusively for them, for caliphs' sons do not sit with the general." He said, "There is no way to do this. When it comes to religious knowledge, people are equal, the noble and the base." So they came and sat... with a screen between them and the people, hearing along with the general.

Muwaffaq finally suppressed the Zanj revolt in 270/883, which provides a *terminus post quem* for the story. It ends with a point about Abū Dāwūd's piety, sounding suspiciously similar to stories about other traditionists. For example, Bukhārī is said to have got in trouble near the end of his life for refusing to offer private lessons to another *amīr*'s children. ³⁹ We may be dealing with a *topos*, likely inspired by the story of Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal and the caliph al-Mutawakkil, who asked him to teach one of his sons, the future caliph al-Mu'tazz. ⁴⁰

introduction and notes by Muḥammad Rashīd Riḍā, Cairo, Dār al-Manār, 1934, 326. (Repr. Beirut, Muḥammad Amīn Damj, n.d.).

³⁸ Al-Khaṭṭābī, *Ma'ālim al-sunan*, 'Abd al-Salām 'Abd al-Shāfi Muḥammad (ed.), Beirut, Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyah, 1996. This is a resetting of an earlier edition, probably that edited and published by Muḥammad Rāghib al-Ṭabbākh, Aleppo, 1932-4. (Repr. Beirut, al-Maktabah al-'Ilmiyah, 1981. Alternatively: Homs, Dār al-Ḥadīth, 1969-74). About the conversation between Abū Dāwūd and al-Muwaffaq: ed. Ṭabbākh, 1:7-8; ed. Muḥammad, 1:7.

³⁹ Al-Khaṭṭābī al-Baghādī, *Ta'rīkh*, 2:33-4 2:355-6.

⁴⁰ Ṣāliḥ b. Aḥmad, *Sīrat al-imām Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal*, Fu'ād 'Abd al-Mun'im Aḥmad (ed.), Alexandria, 1981, 100-6, also mentioning a courtier and his son, 105; Ḥanbal b. Ishāq, *Dhikr miḥnat al-imām Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal*, Muḥammad Naghsh (ed.), Cairo, 1977, 106-9. On stories patterned on a historical incident, v. Cooperson, M., *Classical Arabic biography: the heirs of the prophets in the age of al-Ma'mūn*, Cambridge, 2000, 44-5, 50-1, 60, *et passim*.

However, neither the fact of a transfer to Basra nor even the sponsorship of Muwaffaq need be dismissed as a fiction.⁴¹

Abū Dāwūd is said to have left Baghdad for the last time at the beginning of 271/June-July 884.⁴² Abū Dāwūd died in Basra, 15 or 16 Shawwāl 275/20 or 21 February 889.⁴³ He requested that his corpse be washed by Muḥammad b. al-Muthannā (d. 294/907). This was an aged Basran traditionist (born two years before Abū Dāwūd) who would not relate hadith until told to do so in a dream, evidently after Abū Dāwūd's death; however, the main issue was presumably that Abū Dāwūd trusted him to perform the rite correctly, for he also named precisely the book containing the hadith to guide them if Muḥammad b. al-Muthannā should decline.⁴⁴ He was prayed over by an 'Abbās b. 'Abd al-Wāḥid al-Hāshimī and buried next to the famous traditionist and jurisprudent Sufyān al-Thawrī (d. Basra, 161/777?)⁴⁵

Works

I have come across twenty-one works altogether attributed to Abū Dāwūd.

1. *Al-Sunan*.⁴⁶ A collection of sound hadith from the Prophet, on which more below.

⁴¹ For Muwaffaq's sponsorship of moderate traditionalism, v. Melchert, C., "Religious policies of the caliphs from al-Mutawakkil to al-Muqtadir", *ILS*, 3 (1996), 316-42, 339-40.

⁴² Al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī, *Ta'riḫ*, 9:58-9 10:81.

⁴³ The later date, quoted in a number of subsequent biographies, goes back to al-Ājurri, *Su'ālāt*, 2:296. The earlier date, quoted in even more subsequent biographies, goes back to al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī, *Ta'riḫ*, 9:59, ll. 2-4 10:81, likewise quoting al-Ājurri.

⁴⁴ Ibn Hajar, *Tahdhīb*, 4:173; al-Dhahabī, *Ta'riḫ*, 22 (A.H. 291-300): 131.

⁴⁵ Al-Ājurri, *Su'ālāt*, 2:296; Ibn Kathīr, *al-Bidāyah wa-l-nihāyah fī l-ta'riḫ*, Cairo, Maṭba'at al-Sa'ādah, 1932-9, 11:55. (Repr. Beirut, Maktabat al-Ma'ārif, 1977).

⁴⁶ Abū Dāwūd, *al-Sunan*, many editions: Muḥammad Muḥyī l-Dīn 'Abd al-Ḥamīd (ed.), Cairo, Maṭba'at Muṣṭafā Muḥammad, 1935. Repr. Beirut, al-Maktabah al-'Asriyah, n.d.; Beirut, Dār Iḥyā' al-Turāth al-'Arabī, n.d.; Beirut, Dār al-Fikr, n.d.; Cairo, Dār Iḥyā' al-Sunnah, n.d.; 'Izzat 'Ubayd al-Da'ās and 'Ādil al-Sayyid (eds.); Homs, Muḥammad 'Alī al-Sayyid, 1969-74; Repr. Beirut, Dār Ibn Ḥazm, 1997. This edition includes most of al-Khaṭṭābī, *Ma'ālim al-sunan* in the notes; regrettably, however, its division into sections is not compatible with Wensinck, *Concordance*. Useful introduction and addenda also to be found in the edition of Muḥammad 'Abd al-'Azīz al-Khālīdī, Beirut, Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyah, 1996. Three one-volume editions currently available are that edited by Muḥammad 'Abd al-'Azīz al-Khālīdī (Beirut, Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyah, 2001), that edited

2. *Al-Marāsīl*.⁴⁷ A collection of 544 hadith reports related by some Follower (*tābi'*) directly from the Prophet, without any named Companion in between. Arranged by topic. The published text evidently combines recensions from Ibn 'Abd' and Ibn Dāsah, further identified below among transmitters of the *Sunan*.⁴⁸ Ibn Khayr al-Ishbīlī knew the recension of al-Lu'lu'i, likewise further identified below, which he says Lu'lu'i related in Basra in 325/936-7.⁴⁹ It is said to survive in manuscript.⁵⁰ Ibn Ḥajar knew the recension of Ibn Dāsah.⁵¹ The *Risālah ilā ahl Makkah* implies that it is an integral part of the *Sunan*.⁵²

3. *Al-Risālah ilā ahl Makkah*.⁵³ An introduction to *al-Sunan*, on which more below.

4. *Kitāb al-Ba'th*.⁵⁴ Eighty hadith reports (90 percent going back to the Prophet) about death and resurrection, often with dubious *asānīd*.

by Haytham b. Nizār Tamīm (Beirut, Dār al-Arqam, 1999), and that with no named editor (Beirut, Dār Ibn Ḥazm, 1998), the last not recommended.

⁴⁷ Abū Dāwūd, *Marāsīl ma'a al-asānīd*, 'Abd al-'Azīz al-Sayrawān (ed.), Beirut, Dār al-Qalam, 1986 and *ibidem*, Shu'ayb al-Arna'ūṭ (ed.), Beirut, Mu'assasat al-Risālah, 1988. The first edition, from 'Alī al-Sunnī al-Maghribī al-Ṭarābulusī (Cairo, Maṭba'at al-Taḡaddum, 1310), omitted *asānīd*.

⁴⁸ E.g. v. Abū Dāwūd, *Marāsīl*, *Kitāb al-Ṣalāh* 6 (ed. Sayrawān, 79).

⁴⁹ Al-Ishbīlī, Ibn Khayr, *Fahrasah*, Beirut, 1998, 91, n.° 155. A resetting of *Index librorum de diversis scientiarum ordinibus quos a magistris didicit Abu Bequer Ben Khair*, edited by F. Codera and J. Ribera in *Bibliotheca arabico-hispana*, 9-10, Caesaraugustae, 1894-5.

⁵⁰ Khalaf, Najm 'Abd al-Rahmān, *Istidrākāt 'alā ta'rīkh al-turāth al-'arabī li-Fu'ād Sīzkīn fī 'ilm al-ḥadīth*, Beirut, 2000, n.° 695.

⁵¹ Ibn Ḥajar, *al-Mu'jam al-mufahras*, Muḥammad Shakkūr Maḥmūd al-Ḥajjī Umrayr al-Mayādīnī (ed.), Beirut, 1998, 51, n.° 47.

⁵² Abū Dāwūd, "Risālat al-imām Abī Dāwūd al-Sijistānī ilā ahl Makkah fī waṣf Sunanih", in *Thalāth rasā'il fī 'ilm muṣṭalaḥ al-ḥadīth*, 'Abd al-Fattāḥ Abū Ghuddah (ed.), Beirut, Dār al-Bashā'ir al-Islāmīyah, 1997, 29-54, 51. Confirmed by al-Ishbīlī, *Fahrasah*, 91, n.° 155, which states that *al-Marāsīl* was sometimes annexed to *al-Muṣannaf*. He does say the same of *al-Zuhd* (al-Ishbīlī, *Fahrasah*, 92, n.° 156), whereas Abū Dāwūd's *Risālah* states expressly that the *Sunan* does not include *al-Zuhd*, among other topics (Abū Dāwūd, *Risālah*, ed. Abū Ghuddah, 54). However, there is also some manuscript evidence for *al-Marāsīl* annexed to *al-Sunan*: v. *GAS*, 1:152, VII (Reisülküttap and Köprülü MSS.) and Khalaf, *Istidrākāt*, n.° 695. A parallel is *Kitāb al-'ilal* normally annexed to al-Tirmidhī, *al-Jāmi' al-ṣaḥīḥ (al-Sunan)*.

⁵³ First published as Abū Dāwūd, *Risālat Abī Dāwūd al-Sijistānī fī waṣf ta'līfī li-Kitāb al-Sunan*, Muḥammad Zāhid al-Kawtharī (ed.), Cairo, Maṭba'at al-Anwār, 1369. There have been many subsequent editions, of which I happen to use *Risālah*, ed. Abū Ghuddah. The *Risālah* is short enough that all quotations should be easy to trace.

⁵⁴ Abū Dāwūd, *Kitāb al-Ba'th*, Abū Ishāq al-Ḥuwaynī al-Atharī (ed.), Beirut, 1988. This is the only edition I have examined, but others have appeared.

5. *Al-Zuhd*.⁵⁵ A collection of hadith (perhaps two collections) on renunciation of the world, on which more below.

6. *Masā'il al-imām Aḥmad*.⁵⁶ Juridical opinions from Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal, with a very few additional comments from others, mainly on orthodox belief, on which more below.

7. *Su'ālāt li-Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal*.⁵⁷ Identifications and evaluations of traditionists, 98 percent from Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal, on which more below. Mostly arranged by city. The sole known manuscript is missing the beginning and a section in the middle, so there is no history there of its transmission from Abū Dāwūd; however, its editor has found 71 apparent quotations in *Ta'rīkh Baghdād*, each with an *isnād*, which suggest that we have the recension of al-Ḥusayn b. Idrīs b. Khurram (d. 301/913-14).⁵⁸

8. *Su'ālāt Abī 'Ubayd al-Ājurri*.⁵⁹ Identifications and evaluations of traditionists, mostly from Abū Dāwūd, as collected by Abū 'Ubayd Muḥammad b. 'Alī al-Ājurri (d. early fourth/tenth century?). Arranged by city. The sole known manuscript is missing the beginning.

9. *Tasmiyat al-ikhwah alladhīna ruwiya 'anhum al-ḥadīth*.⁶⁰ On brother traditionists.

10. *Nāsikh al-Qur'ān wa-mansūkhuh*.⁶¹ On abrogation within the Qur'ān. Ibn Khayr al-Ishbīlī and Ibn Ḥajar knew the recension of Abū Bakr Aḥmad b. Sulaymān (Salmān?) al-Najjād (d. 348/960). Not extant.

11. *Al-Tafarrud*.⁶² On hadith found among the traditionists of only one city. Ibn Khayr al-Ishbīlī and Ibn Ḥajar knew the recension of Ibn Dāsah. Not extant.

⁵⁵ Abū Dāwūd, *Kitāb al-Zuhd*, ed. Ḥusayn. This is the only edition I have examined (published with al-Marrūdhī, *Kitāb al-Wara'*, Muṣṭafā Maḥmūd Ḥusayn (ed.), Tanta, Maktabat Dār al-Ḍiyā' li-Taḥqīq al-Turāth, 2003), but others have appeared: edited by Ḍiyā' al-Ḥasan al-Salafī, Bombay, al-Dār al-Salafīyah, 1413; edited by Abū Tamīm Yāsir b. Ibrāhīm b. Muḥammad and Abū Bilāl Ghunaym b. 'Abbās b. Ghunaym, Hilwan, Dār al-Mishkāh, 1993.

⁵⁶ Abū Dāwūd, *Kitāb Masā'il*, ed. Baytār.

⁵⁷ *Idem*, *Su'ālāt*. This is the *Kitāb fī l-rijāl* noted in *GAS*, 1:152, n.° VIII.

⁵⁸ Introduction to Abū Dāwūd, *Su'ālāt*, 123-7, 134. Ten interpolations into the text from someone named al-Ḥusayn (listed *ibid.*, 129) constitute further evidence.

⁵⁹ Al-Ājurri, *Su'ālāt*.

⁶⁰ Abū Dāwūd, *Tasmiyat al-ikhwah alladhīna ruwiya 'anhum al-ḥadīth*, Bāsim Fayṣal al-Jawābirah (ed.), Riyadh, 1988.

⁶¹ Mentioned by Ibn al-Nadīm, *Kitāb al-Fihrist*, Gustav Flügel, Johannes Roedigger and August Mueller (eds.), Leipzig, 1872, 37, *fann* 3, *maqālah* 1, also by al-Ishbīlī, *Fahrasah*, 43, n.° 81, and Ibn Ḥajar, *al-Mu'jam*, 109, n.° 373; likewise *idem*, *Tahdhīb*, 4:170, ll. 10-11.

⁶² Mentioned by al-Ishbīlī, *Fahrasah*, 92, n.° 158, and Ibn Ḥajar, *al-Mu'jam*, 51, n.° 47.

12. *Dalā'il al-nubūwah*.⁶³ Presumably a collection of hadith showing that Muḥammad was a genuine prophet, probably also comparing him with earlier prophets. Ibn Khayr al-Ishbīlī and Ibn Ḥajar knew the recension of Ibn Dāsah. Not extant.

13. *Al-Radd 'alā ahl al-qadar*.⁶⁴ Presumably a collection of predestinarian hadith. Transmitted from Abū Dāwūd by Abū 'Abd Allāh Muḥammad b. Aḥmad b. Ya'qūb al-Mattūthī, otherwise untraced by me. Not extant.

14. *Al-Du'ā'*.⁶⁵ Presumably a collection of prayers. Not extant.

15. *Faḍā'il al-anṣār*.⁶⁶ Presumably a collection of hadith extolling the Medinese who adhered to the Prophet's cause on his transferring there from Mecca. Not extant.

16. *Musnad Mālik*.⁶⁷ Presumably a collection of hadith transmitted by Mālik b. Anas (d. Medina, 179/795). *Musnad* in the title is ambiguous. It may indicate that the collection was arranged by Companion as opposed to topic, like Aḥmad's *Musnad*. It may indicate that it comprised only hadith with complete *asānīd*, similar to the *Musnad Mālik b. Anas* of al-Qāḍī Ismā'īl b. Ishāq (d. 282/895).⁶⁸ In this case, it would be opposed to the *Kitāb al-Sunan min Muwaṭṭa' Mālik b. Anas* to which Abū Dāwūd refers in the *Risālah ilā ahl Makkah*, which expressly included a good share of *marāsīl*.⁶⁹ Finally, and most likely, it may indicate exactly the book referred to in the *Risālah*, with *musnad* meaning simply that every hadith report in it came with some form of *isnād*, unlike some of the hadith in the *Muwaṭṭa'*. Transmitted from Abū Dāwūd by Ismā'īl b. Muḥammad al-Ṣaffār (d. 341/952). Not extant.

⁶³ Mentioned by *ibidem*, 93, n.° 159, and Ibn Ḥajar, *al-Mu'jam*, 76-7, n.° 198, under the title *A'lām al-nubūwah*, although it is *Dalā'il al-nubūwah* in Ibn Ḥajar, *Tahdhīb*, 1:6, l. 12.

⁶⁴ Mentioned by al-Mizzī, *Tahdhīb al-Kamāl fī asmā' al-rijāl*, Bashshār 'Awwād Ma'rūf (ed.), Beirut, 1980-92, 1:149, and Ibn Ḥajar, *Tahdhīb*, 4:170, ll. 9-10. Ibn Ḥajar notes shaykhs who appear here but not in Abū Dāwūd's *Sunan*; however, his information must have come to him indirectly, for he does not mention the *Faḍā'il* in the *Mu'jam*, among books he had personally learnt. The same goes for n.° 14-18 to follow.

⁶⁵ Ibn Ḥajar, *Tahdhīb*, 1:6, l. 12.

⁶⁶ Mentioned by al-Mizzī, *Tahdhīb*, 1:150, and Ibn Ḥajar, *Tahdhīb*, 1:6, l. 5.

⁶⁷ Mentioned by *ibidem*, 1:150, and Ibn Ḥajar, *Tahdhīb*, 1:6, l. 6, 4:170, l. 12.

⁶⁸ On which v. Muranyi, M., "Das *Kitāb Musnad ḥadīṭ Mālik b. Anas* von Ismā'īl b. Ishāq al-Qāḍī (199/815-282/895)", *ZDMG*, 138 (1988), 128-47.

⁶⁹ Abū Dāwūd, *Risālah*, ed. Abū Ghuddah, 34.

17. *Ibtidā' al-waḥy*.⁷⁰ Presumably a collection of hadith on the Prophet's earliest reception of inspiration. Not extant.

18. *Akḥbār al-khawārij*.⁷¹ Most likely a history of the movement, but also possibly a collection of hadith from Khawārij, for Abū Dāwūd is quoted as saying that no heretics had sounder hadith than they.⁷² Not extant.

19. *Aṣḥāb al-Sha'bī*.⁷³ On traditionists who related hadith from the famous Basran 'Āmir b. Sharāḥīl (d. after 100/718-19). Not extant.

20. *Ma'rifat al-awqāt*.⁷⁴ Presumably a collection of hadith on the times of the required ritual prayers. Not extant.

21. *Kitāb al-kunā*.⁷⁵ Presumably a list of past traditionists by *kunyah* ("teknonymic" seems to be the leading English equivalent.)⁷⁶ Not extant.

A book called *al-Ādāb al-shar'īyah*, presumably treating personal conduct as suggested by revelation, appears on one list of Abū Dāwūd's works, but this seems to be a mistake.⁷⁷ The later Hanbali writer Ibn Muflīḥ al-Qāqūnī (d. Damascus, 763/1362), in the introduction to his own book on personal conduct, refers to Abū Dāwūd as the earliest of seven others who had written on the topic.⁷⁸ But when Ibn Muflīḥ

⁷⁰ Mentioned by Ibn Ḥajar, *Tahdhīb*, 1:6, l. 12.

⁷¹ Mentioned by *ibidem*, 1:6, l. 13.

⁷² Al-Ājurri, *Su'ālāt*, 1:68, 2:117.

⁷³ *Ibidem*, 1:36, 320.

⁷⁴ Al-Suyūṭī, *Tadrīb al-rāwī fī sharḥ Taqrīb al-Nawāwī*, Abū 'Abd al-Rahmān Ṣalāḥ b. Muḥammad b. 'Uwayḍah (ed.), Beirut, 1996, *naw'* 60 (Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyah ed. 2:206); Kātib Ḥalebī, *Kitāb Kashf al-zunūn 'an asāmī l-kutub wa-l-funūn*, Şereftin Yaltkaya and Rifat Bilge (ed.), Istanbul, 1941-3, 2:1739.

⁷⁵ Introduction to al-Jayyānī, *Tasmiyah*, ed. Fajjī, 22, citing Ibn Ḥajar, *al-Iṣābah fī tamyiz al-ṣaḥābah*, 3:437. Unfortunately, Fajjī must be using some edition of *al-Iṣābah* other than the three I have been able to check, so I have not been able to confirm his citation.

⁷⁶ To judge by some searching on Google, 8 August 2006. The alternatives "teknonym", "tecnonym", and "tecnonymic" were not to be found. Franz Rosenthal proposed that the correct English word, if one existed, would be "hyionymic" or "paidonymic": *A History of Muslim historiography*, Leiden, 1968, 169 fn. Google shows that the alternative spellings "paedonym" and "paedonymic" have some currency among word fanciers, while "paidonymic" has at least been taken up by someone in our field: v. Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ, *An Introduction to the science of the ḥadīth*, Eerik Dickinson and Muneer Fareed (transl.), Reading, 2005, 249-57.

⁷⁷ Introduction to Abū Dāwūd, *Kitāb al-Zuhd*, ed. Ḥusayn, 19.

⁷⁸ Ibn Muflīḥ al-Qāqūnī, *al-Ādāb al-shar'īyah*, Shu'ayb al-Arna'ūt and 'Umar al-Qayyām (eds.), Beirut, 1996, 1:27. Ḥusayn cites another edition, probably 3 vols. (Cairo: Maṭba'at al-Manār, 1348-9).

quotes Abū Dāwūd in the body of his work, it is a matter of hadith found in the *Sunan*, so we need not suppose a separate work on *adab*.⁷⁹

The *Sunan*

Abū Dāwūd's most famous work was the *Sunan*. It has usually been counted the next soundest of the Six Books after those of Bukhārī and Muslim, followed in descending order by the collections of al-Tirmidhī, al-Nasā'ī, and Ibn Mājah.⁸⁰ A few later critics did say Nasā'ī's collection was the more thoroughly reliable.⁸¹ The *Sunan* comes with no preface parallel to Muslim's for his collection of sound hadith; however, there is extant the letter to the people of Mecca that describes it (n.º 3 on the above list of works). Our text of that letter evidently comes not from the Meccan to whom the letter was originally addressed but from someone who took it down from Abū Dāwūd's dictation in Basra, repeating what he had earlier written "to the people of Mecca and elsewhere".⁸² It is an early witness to Abū Dāwūd's having assembled a book called *al-Sunan*, which is expressly how he refers to it.⁸³ Its remarks about the *Sunan* fit the book we know, such as Abū Dāwūd's declaration that he has often abridged hadith reports for the sake of emphasizing their juridical applications.⁸⁴

Abū Dāwūd's letter stresses hadith with legal applications.⁸⁵ "I have collected in *Kitāb al-Sunan* only *aḥkām* (ordinances). I have not collected the books of renunciation, the virtues of works, and so on. These 4,800 all concern ordinances. As for the many sound hadith concerning

⁷⁹ E.g. *ibidem*, 1:58, 59, 60.

⁸⁰ E.g. al-Mizzī, *Tahdhīb*, 1:147, and al-Ḥusaynī, *al-Tadhkirah bi-ma'rifat rijāl al-kutub al-'asharah*, Riḥ'at Fawzī 'Abd al-Muṭṭalib (ed.), Cairo, 1997, 1:5. Cf. Ibn Mandah (d. Isfahan, 395/1005), said to have named as the soundest collections those of Bukhārī and Muslim, then Abū Dāwūd and Nasā'ī: al-Silafī, *Muqaddimah*, 367-8 (ed. Muḥammad, 335).

⁸¹ E.g. Ibn Hajar, *al-Nukat 'alā kitāb Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ*, Rabī' b. Hādī 'Umayr (ed.), Medina, al-Jāmi'ah al-Islāmīyah, 1984, 1:484; same text also 'Ajman, Maktabat al-Furqān, 2003, 1:314. For other rankings: al-Mazāhirī, *Abū Dāwūd*, 61-3.

⁸² Abū Dāwūd, *Risālah*, ed. Abū Ghuddah, 30.

⁸³ *Ibidem*, 33. Cf. what is commonly known as the *Sunan* of al-Tirmidhī, more properly entitled *al-Jāmi' al-ṣaḥīḥ*, and the *Sunan* of al-Nasā'ī, more properly *al-Mujtabā*.

⁸⁴ *Ibidem*, 32.

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, 54.

renunciation, the virtues of works, and so on, I have not brought them out". My own content analysis generally confirms the stress.

TABLA 1.—Contents of three major hadith collections ⁸⁶

	Abū Dāwūd	Muslim	Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal
<i>Aḥkām</i>	77%	43%	52%
<i>Al-targhīb wa-l-tarhīb</i>	16%	17%	11%
History, including prophetic biography	none	11%	17%
<i>Sunan al-dīn</i>	2%	4%	13%
Devotions (e.g. sample prayers)	1%	7%	6%
Reward and punishment	none	6%	5%
Eschatology	1%	2%	3%
Qur'ānic glosses	2%	2%	1%

In discussions of *uṣūl al-fiqh*, *aḥkām* has been properly translated as “assessments” or “categorizations.” ⁸⁷ Hadith reports of *aḥkām* are characteristically those that indicate in which category a given act belongs. Since “recommended” and “discouraged” are important categories in Islamic law, it must sometimes be difficult to distinguish between hadith of *aḥkām* and of *al-targhīb wa-l-tarhīb*, “making to aspire and making to fear” (i.e. encouraging piety and discouraging impiety). Very likely, another analyst would classify these samples somewhat differently. However, the starting point for the enumeration of the above categories is a statement by Muslim in the introduction to his *Ṣaḥīḥ* that it comprises “*sunan al-dīn*, *aḥkām*, reward and punishment, *al-targhīb wa-l-tarhīb*, and so forth”, so I am not imposing an alien distinction here. I take it any analyst would classify something like this saying of the Prophet as *al-targhīb wa-l-tarhīb*: “There are three

⁸⁶ Figures for Muslim’s *Ṣaḥīḥ* and Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal’s *Musnad* from Melchert, “The *Musnad* of Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal”, 45. Based on randomly collected samples of 104 hadith reports from Abū Dāwūd’s *Sunan*, 89 from Muslim’s *Ṣaḥīḥ*, 273 from Aḥmad’s *Musnad*, so “none” means “very few” and percentages should be taken mainly as showing orders of magnitude.

⁸⁷ Reinhart, A.K., *Before revelation: the boundaries of Muslim moral thought*, Albany, 1995, 3 and Weiss, B.G., *The Search for God’s law: Islamic jurisprudence in the writings of Sayf al-Dīn al-Amīdī*, Salt Lake City, 1992, 1.

prayers that will doubtless be answered: that of a parent, that of a traveller, and that of someone wronged.”⁸⁸ And the *Sunan* undoubtedly includes whole books without legal application; e.g. *Kitāb al-malāḥim* on the Last Days to come. Still, it apparently does include much more on *aḥkām* than the collections of Muslim and Aḥmad, for example, and significantly less on the early history of the community.

Earlier jurists and collectors whom Abū Dāwūd mentions in the letter (the categories still overlap somewhat) are Ibrāhīm al-Nakha‘ī (d. Kufa, 96/714-15?), Yazīd b. Abī Ḥabīb (Egyptian, d. 128/745-6), al-Awzā‘ī (d. Beirut, 157/773-4?), Sufyān al-Thawrī, Ḥammād b. Salamah (d. Basra, 167/784), Mālik b. Anas, Ibn al-Mubārak (d. Hit, 181/797), Abū Yūsuf (d. Baghdad, 182/798?), Wakī’ b. al-Jarrāḥ (d. Fayd, 197/812?), al-Shāfi‘ī (d. Old Cairo, 204/820), ‘Abd al-Razzāq (Yemeni, d. 211/827), Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal, and al-Ḥasan b. ‘Alī al-Khallāl (Meccan, d. 242/856-7). The list is not surprising for a Baghdadi traditionalist of his generation. Abū Dāwūd expresses no systematic preference for the jurists of any particular city, as his contemporary Ibn Qutaybah (not so thorough a traditionalist) does for those of Medina.⁸⁹

More surprising is Abū Dāwūd’s declaration, “I know of no one else who has collected to the extent that I have.” Al-Ḥasan b. ‘Alī al-Khallāl had collected about 900 hadith reports, he goes on, while Ibn al-Mubārak had asserted that there were altogether about 900 *sunan* from the Prophet. By contrast, he had selected 4,800.⁹⁰ This seems an odd history of collecting hadith. If we exclude repeats (substantially the same hadith reports with alternative *asānīd*), then Abū Dāwūd’s *Sunan* is indeed the most comprehensive of the Six Books, followed by Muslim, then Ibn Mājah, then Tirmidhī; still, not by a margin of thousands.⁹¹ Probably, Abū Dāwūd was unaware of rival collections from Khurasan, where he had not travelled since before

⁸⁸ Abū Dāwūd, *Sunan*, n.° 1536, *al-witr* 29, *bāb al-du‘ā’ bi-ḥaḍr al-ghayb*.

⁸⁹ Melchert, C., “How Ḥanafism came to originate in Kufa and traditionalism in Medina”, *ILS*, 6 (1999), 318-47, 345-6; *idem*, “Traditionist-jurists and the framing of Islamic law”, *ILS*, 8 (2001), 383-406, 404-5.

⁹⁰ Abū Dāwūd, *Risālah*, ed. Abū Ghuddah, 35.

⁹¹ Muslim’s *Ṣaḥīḥ* has been estimated as including 12,000 hadith reports including all variant *asānīd*, 4,000 without variants: Ibn Ḥajar, *al-Nukat*, ed. Medina, 1:296, ed. ‘Ajmān, 1:151. Cf. Ḥamdān, N., *Muwaṭṭa‘āt al-imām Mālik*, Damascus, 1992, 319, reporting 11,000 altogether, 3,033 without repeats.

242/856-7. Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal's *Musnad*, which includes some 5,200 hadith reports without repeats, was redacted only by Aḥmad's son 'Abd Allāh (d. Baghdad, 290/903), hence unavailable in Abū Dāwūd's lifetime.⁹² But the *Muṣannaf* of 'Abd al-Razzāq includes almost 5,000 items from the Prophet, that of Ibn Abī Shaybah (d. Kufa, 235/849) over 7,000. Perhaps Abū Dāwūd overlooked them because they did not collect exclusively either sound hadith or prophetic; alternatively, he overlooked them because both *Muṣannafs* were actually redacted posthumously.⁹³ Certainly, alongside al-Ḥasan b. 'Alī al-Khallāl's present obscurity, it is further evidence that reputations normally took some time to establish, so that scholars and books that look like giants from our perspective may have been all but unknown to their contemporaries, while others that looked like giants in their time have since shrunk out of sight.

Abū Dāwūd is emphatic that he has included all the sound hadith available, at least concerning *aḥkām*. "This is a book such that you will never come across a *sunnaḥ* from the Prophet... with a sound *isnād* but that it is included."⁹⁴ He also declares that he has provided a warning wherever he has had to include something less than certain. "When it contains a questionable (*munkar*) hadith report, I have pointed out that it is questionable, there being nothing else on its topic."⁹⁵ "Whatever is in my book by way of hadith with some severe weakness, I have made it clear."⁹⁶ This description of his method of selection has puzzled commentators for a long time, for Abū Dāwūd

⁹² Melchert, "The *Musnad* of Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal", 39, 47-9.

⁹³ For studies of the redaction of 'Abd al-Razzāq's *Muṣannaf*, v. Motzki, H., *The Origins of Islamic jurisprudence: Meccan fiqh before the classical schools*, Marion H. Katz (transl.), Leiden, 2002, chap. 2, and *idem*, "The Author and his work in the Islamic literature of the first centuries: the case of 'Abd al-Razzāq's *Muṣannaf*", *JSAI*, 28 (2003), 171-201. Neither study has convinced me that 'Abd al-Razzāq himself must have redacted the collection we know. However, I do not see that there is a strong case against Motzki, either, and their stress on post-prophetic hadith (over 75 percent of 'Abd al-Razzāq's *Muṣannaf*, 80 percent of Ibn Abī Shaybah's) seems an additional reason to suppose that the two *Muṣannafs* did predate the Six Books.

⁹⁴ Abū Dāwūd, *Risālah*, ed. Abū Ghuddah, 45.

⁹⁵ *Ibidem*, 33. The definition of *munkar* changed over time, apparently from outright "rejected" in the generation before Abū Dāwūd to designating a hadith report known by only one chain of transmitters (something like *shādhidh*) among systematizers of the eleventh century and after. Abū Dāwūd's usage seems already intermediate. V. Eerik Dickinson's discussion in Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ, *Introduction*, 59fn.

⁹⁶ Abū Dāwūd, *Risālah*, ed. Abū Ghuddah, 37-8.

seems to have included much questionable material. For example, Dhahabī says, “He makes clear what is plainly weak but is silent when it comes to what is probably weak. It cannot be that whenever he is silent, it is fairly sound (*hasan*) in his view, rather there may be a certain weakness to it.”⁹⁷ Ibn Ḥajar treats the problem sensibly. There are many discontinuous (*munqaṭiʿ*) *asānīd* in the *Sunan*, so Abū Dāwūd’s silence is not to be taken as an indication that something is perfectly sound as hadith; rather, if he is silent about something, it means he thinks it good enough to be adduced as a legal proof (*li-l-ḥujjah*). One must bear in mind that Abū Dāwūd preferred weak hadith to *qiyās*.⁹⁸

It is not easy to measure the *Sunan*’s renown. It evidently reached Mecca in Abū Dāwūd’s lifetime, hence the *Risālah*. Nine men (listed below) are remembered as transmitting it from Abū Dāwūd, which is more than are remembered as transmitting most of the other Six Books. Our earliest extant biography of Abū Dāwūd, from Ibn Abī Ḥātim al-Rāzī (d. Rayy, 327/938), has been quoted already. It lists a few of his shaykhs, recalls how he came to salute his father in Baghdad, and concludes, “He was trustworthy.”⁹⁹ There is no hint that Abū Dāwūd was responsible for a massive collection of sound hadith. However, Ibn Abī Ḥātim likewise fails to mention that Bukhārī and Muslim had major collections of sound hadith.¹⁰⁰ Also, the *Sunan* may have been noted in other biographies now lost to us. Abū Bakr al-Khallāl (d. Baghdad, 311/923), author of the earliest Ḥanbali biographical dictionary, described him as having “unprecedented knowledge of bringing out (useful things in) the sciences, for which he knew where to look”, which might well be an allusion to the *Sunan*.¹⁰¹ A Cordovan, Muḥammad b. ‘Abd al-Malik b. Ayman (d. 330/942), compiled a *Sunan* after the pat-

⁹⁷ Al-Dhahabī, *Taʾrīkh*, 20 (A.H. 261-80): 360.

⁹⁸ Ibn Ḥajar, *Nukat*, ed. ‘Ajman, 1:279.

⁹⁹ Ibn Abī Ḥātim, *Kitāb al-Jarḥ*, 4:102.

¹⁰⁰ *Ibidem*, *Kitāb al-Jarḥ*, 7:191, 8:182-3.

¹⁰¹ Al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī, *Tārīkh*, 9:57 10:79. It is hard to say whether this is a quotation from Khallāl’s *Ṭabaqāt*, of which only an abridgement survives apart from quotations, for which v. *GAS*, 1:512, n.° 2. Ibn Abī Yaʿlā, who includes Abū Dāwūd in his biographical dictionary of the Ḥanbali school, does not quote Khallāl concerning Abū Dāwūd but does include him among those whom Abū Dāwūd taught (*Ṭabaqāt al-ḥanābilah*, Muḥammad Ḥamid al-Fiḳī (ed.), Cairo, 1952, 1:59-62). Al-ʿUmarī is non-committal as to whether al-Khaṭīb quotes Khallāl from his *Ṭabaqāt*: al-ʿUmarī, *Akrām Ḍiyāʾ*, *Mawārid al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī fī Taʾrīkh Baghdad*, n.p., Maṭbaʿat

tern of Abū Dāwūd's, which shows that it reached al-Andalus in the lifetime of its transmitters from Abū Dāwūd himself.¹⁰² Al-Khaṭṭābī (d. Bust, 388/998?), its earliest commentator, states that it is the most popular collection of hadith among the people of Iraq, Egypt and the Maghrib, among other places, although the people of Khurasan are devoted above all to the *ṣaḥīḥ* collections of Bukhārī and Muslim.¹⁰³ Khaṭṭābī was also author of the first extant commentary on Bukhārī's *ṣaḥīḥ* collection.¹⁰⁴ Ibn Khayr al-Ishbīlī (d. Cordova, 575/1179) calls Abū Dāwūd's collection *al-Muṣannaf*, referring to its arrangement by topic.¹⁰⁵ He relates that an Abū l-Qāsim Khalaf b. al-Qāsim (d. 393/1002-3) preferred Bukhārī to Nasā'ī but Abū Dāwūd to Bukhārī. This was going too far, according to Ishbīlī, but Abū Dāwūd's collection had reached the Cordovans long before Bukhārī's, hence their excessive regard for it.¹⁰⁶

Four recensions were available to Ibn Khayr al-Ishbīlī.¹⁰⁷

1. Abū Bakr Muḥammad b. Bakr b. Muḥammad b. Dāsah (d. 346/957-8), on whom v. Dhahabī, *Siyar* 15:538-9, with further references. V. Mizzi, *Tuḥfah*,¹⁰⁸ n.º 1587, 4842.

Muḥammad Hāshim al-Kutubī, 1975, 180. "Bringing out" is of course a literal translation of *takhrīj*. One of the referees for this article has objected that this means precisely to "cite a tradition with a full *isnād*", adducing Roy Mottahedeh, review of Bulliet: *The Patricians of Nishapur*, in *JAOS*, 95 (1975), 491-5. Although regretting to disagree, I am certain it does not always refer to quoting hadith with full *isnād* (most importantly, v. Hallaq, W.B., *Authority, continuity and change in Islamic law*, Cambridge, 2001, 43-56, for its meaning in a juridical context) and I doubt whether it means here no more than quoting hadith, to the exclusion of pointing out legal implications.

¹⁰² Presumably a series of hadith reports with the same content (*matn*) as hadith in Abū Dāwūd's collection but with different chains of transmitters (*isnād*), mentioned by Dhahabī (*Siyar*, 15:242).

¹⁰³ Al-Khaṭṭābī, *Ma'ālim*, 1:6 (both eds.). Khaṭṭābī's estimate of the *Sunan*'s popularity in Iraq is confirmed by its prominence in al-Jaṣṣāṣ al-Rāzī (d. Baghdad, 370/981), *Aḥkām al-Qur'ān*, which I thank Michael Cook for pointing out to me; however, it is perhaps contradicted by the *Sunan*'s absence from Ibn al-Nadīm (d. 380/990), *Kitāb al-Fihrist*, 232-3, *fann* 6, *maqālah* 6.

¹⁰⁴ Al-Khaṭṭābī, *A'lām al-ḥadīth fī sharḥ Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, Muḥammad b. Sa'd b. 'Abd al-Raḥmān Āl Sa'ūd (ed.), Mecca, Jāmi'at Umm al-Qurā, Ma'had al-Buḥūth al-'Ilmiyah wa-l-ḥiyā' al-Turāth al-Islāmī, Markaz Iḥyā' al-Turāth al-Islāmī, 1988. Also as *A'lām al-sunan fī sharḥ Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, Yūsuf al-Kattānī (ed.), Rabat, 'Ukāz, n.d.

¹⁰⁵ Al-Ishbīlī, *Fahrasah*, 88, n.º 154.

¹⁰⁶ *Ibidem*, 90-1, n.º 81; Robson, "Abū Dāwūd's", 580.

¹⁰⁷ Al-Ishbīlī, *Fahrasah*, 88-9, n.º 81.

¹⁰⁸ *Tuḥfat al-ashraf bi-ma'rifa al-aṭraf*, 'Abd al-Ṣamad Sharaf al-Dīn (ed.), Bombay, Dār al-Qimah, 1965-76. (Repr. Beirut, Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyah, 1999). Also edited

2. Abū Sa'īd Aḥmad b. Muḥammad b. al-A'rābī (d. Mecca, 340/952?), on whom v. *GAS* 1:660-1 and Dhahabī, *Siyar* 15:407-11, with further references. V. Mizzi, *Tuhfah*, n.º 4555, 13793.

3. Abū 'Isā Ishāq b. Mūsā b. Sa'īd al-Ramlī, on whom v. al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī, *Ta'riḫ* 6:395 7:433. V. Mizzi, *Tuhfah*, n.º 7269, 10581. Ibn Khayr al-Ishbīlī states that al-Ramlī, Abū Dāwūd's *warrāq* (copyist, publisher), transmitted the *Muṣannaḥ* in Baghdad in 317/929-30.¹⁰⁹

4. Abū 'Alī Muḥammad b. Aḥmad b. 'Amr al-Lu'lu'ī (d. 333/944-5), on whom v. Dhahabī, *Siyar* 15:307, with further references. V. Mizzi, *Tuhfah*, n.º 8874, 16619. Lu'lu'ī is said to have recited the *Sunan* for twenty years.¹¹⁰

These and four additional recensions of the *Sunan* were available to al-Mizzi (d. Damascus, 742/1341).¹¹¹

5. Abū l-Ḥasan 'Alī b. al-Ḥasan b. (al-) 'Abd (d. 328/940), on whom v. al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī, *Ta'riḫ* 11:382 13:313. V. Mizzi, *Tuhfah*, n.º 4555, 13793.

6. Abū 'Amr Aḥmad b. 'Alī al-Baṣrī. V. Mizzi, *Tuhfah*, n.º 9914, 17957.

7. Abū l-Ṭayyib Aḥmad b. Ibrāhīm *al-Ushnānī*. V. Mizzi, *Tuhfah*, n.º 54, 6014.

8. Al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī (d. Baghdad, 463/1071), on whom v. *EP*, s.n., by R. Sellheim. V. Mizzi, *Tuhfah*, n.º 17910. This recension must go back to Lu'lu'ī's but was evidently different enough from others to stand by itself.

One more is named by Ibn Ḥajar alone:

9. Abū Usāmah Muḥammad b. 'Abd al-Malik b. Yazīd al-Rawwās, otherwise untraced by me, unless he is the traditionist described by al-Sulamī as sometime disciple to the Sufī Abū Ḥamzah al-Baghdādī (d. Baghdad, 269/882-3?).¹¹²

by Bashshār 'Awwād Ma'rūf, Beirut, Dār al-Gharb al-Islāmī, 1999. Each has different pagination but the same item numbers. Ma'rūf's edition appears to be more faithful to Mizzi's text.

¹⁰⁹ Al-Ishbīlī, *Fahrasah*, 89, n.º 154.

¹¹⁰ Al-Dhahabī, *Siyar*, 15:407.

¹¹¹ The following list based mainly on Ṭawālibah, Muḥammad 'Abd al-Raḥmān, *al-Ḥāfiẓ al-Mizzi wa-l-takhrīj fī kitābihi*, Amman, 1998, 152-3.

¹¹² Ibn Ḥajar, *Tahdhīb*, 4:170, ll. 8-9; al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī, *Ta'riḫ*, 2:348 3:604, s.n. Muḥammad b. 'Abd al-Malik b. Yazīd, quoting from Sulamī, *Ta'riḫ al-ṣūfiyah*.

Ibn Hajar personally received the *Sunan* in four recensions, n.º 1, 2, 4, and 8 above.¹¹³

As with Abū Dāwūd's *Sunan*, so with the rest of the Six Books: literary sources mention a higher number of transmitters than whose recensions can actually be traced; that is, than those whose handing down to later scholars can be traced and from which readings can be identified.

TABLE 2.—Transmitters of the Six Books¹¹⁴

Bukhārī	5 mentioned, 3 traceable
Muslim	2 mentioned, 2 traceable
Abū Dāwūd	9 mentioned, 8 traceable
Tirmidhī	4 mentioned, 2 traceable
Nasā'ī, <i>al-Sunan al-kubrā</i>	10 mentioned, 4 traceable
Nasā'ī, <i>al-Mujtabā</i>	1 mentioned, 1 traceable
Ibn Mājah	10 mentioned, 1 traceable

Inasmuch as Nasā'ī's larger collection, *al-Sunan al-kubrā*, has traditionally not been included among the Six Books (and until recently was thought lost), it appears that the *Sunan* of Abū Dāwūd is textually the most securely attested of the lot.

According to Muḥammad Muḥyī l-Dīn 'Abd al-Ḥamīd, who edited the *Sunan* in the 1930s, the recension of al-Lu'lu'ī, n.º 5 above, was the most popular in the Mashriq, whereas that of Ibn Dāsah, n.º 1, was the most popular in the Maghrib.¹¹⁵ 'Abd al-Ḥamīd also alleges that there is no difference between them except as to the order of

¹¹³ Ibn Hajar, *al-Mu'jam*, 29-31, n.º 3.

¹¹⁴ Based on articles by J. Fück ("Beiträge zur Überlieferungsgeschichte von Bukhārī's Traditionssammlung", *Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft*, 92 (n.F. 17, 1938), 60-87) and J. Robson ("The Transmission of Ibn Mājah's 'Sunan'", *Journal of Semitic Studies*, 3 (1958), 129-41; "The Transmission of Muslim's Ṣaḥīḥ", *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*, 1949, 49-60; "The Transmission of Nasā'ī's 'Sunan'", *Journal of Semitic Studies*, 1 (1956), 38-59 and "The Transmission of Tirmidhī's *Jāmi'*", *BSOAS*, 16 (1954), 258-70). Also *GAS*, 1:116-17, which adds one name to Fück's list of those who transmitted Bukhārī's *Ṣaḥīḥ*, and the present study, which adds two names to Robson's list of those who transmitted the *Sunan* from Abū Dāwūd and four to his list of those whose recensions can be traced to later scholars. Robson's article confuses the two works of al-Nasā'ī, for a superior treatment of which v. Abū Bakr, 'Umar Īmān, *al-Imām al-Nasā'ī wa-kitābuhu al-Mujtabā*, Riyadh, 2003.

¹¹⁵ Introduction to Abū Dāwūd, *al-Sunan*, ed. 'Abd al-Ḥamīd, 1:9. The same opinion attributed to Shāh 'Abd al-'Azīz al-Dihlāwī (d. 1823 C.E.) by al-Futūḥī, Abū l-Ṭayyib Ṣādiq Ḥasan, *al-Ḥiṭṭah fī dhikr al-kutub al-sittah*, Beirut, 1985, 216.

hadith reports, by contrast with the recension of Ibn al-A‘rābī, n.º 3 above, which was missing some parts. Ibn Khayr al-Ishbīlī quotes an Abū ‘Alī al-Ghassānī as naming those missing parts.¹¹⁶

To the contrary, however, Ibn Khayr al-Ishbīlī of the Maghrib had, as we have seen, both of these recensions and two more besides. Moreover, Khaṭṭābī of the Mashriq seems to have heard the *Sunan* from Ibn Dāsah, n.º 1, and Ibn al-A‘rābī, n.º 2. He never mentions Lu‘lu‘ī. As for order, Khaṭṭābī’s commentary presents books in a different order from what we are accustomed to, presumably reflecting his use of Ibn Dāsah’s recension rather than Lu‘lu‘ī’s. Within each book, he reviews hadith reports in very near the familiar order.¹¹⁷ As for missing hadith, Dhahabī describes Ibn al-A‘rābī’s recension as having “additions as to both *mutūn* and *asānīd*”. He does not mention missing parts.¹¹⁸ Mizzī, *Tuhfat al-ashraf* mentions three hadith reports found in the recension of Ibn Dāsah (among others) but not, implicitly, in that of al-Lu‘lu‘ī. (Dhahabī states that the additional hadith reports in Ibn Dāsah’s recension were ones that Abū Dāwūd himself struck out at the very last, doubting their *asānīd*.¹¹⁹) Mizzī also mentions ten hadith reports found in the recension of Ibn ‘Abd, n.º 2 above, but not elsewhere, three in the recension of Ibn al-Ushnānī, n.º 7 above, but not elsewhere, as well as one in the recension of Ibn al-A‘rābī but not elsewhere.¹²⁰ Therefore, it seems likely that (1) Ghassānī’s copy of Ibn al-A‘rābī’s recension was defective, (2) different recensions differed substantially as to the order of books but not of topics within books, and (3) the different recensions were very similar but not, *contra* ‘Abd al-Ḥamīd, identical.

According to ‘Abd al-Ḥamīd, again, the version of the *Sunan* available today is composite, not corresponding to any one of the recensions listed above. He had presumably observed how the present text of the *Sunan* expressly names four redactors (all of n.º 1 to 4) in one place or another.¹²¹ This seems decisive evidence *contra* Robson, who identi-

¹¹⁶ Also Robson, “Abū Dāwūd’s”, 581.

¹¹⁷ Al-Bāṭilī, Aḥmad b. ‘Abd Allāh, *al-Imām al-Khaṭṭābī wa-āthāruhu al-ḥadīthīyah wa-manhajuhu fīhā*, [Riyadh], 2005, 567-71.

¹¹⁸ Al-Dhahabī, *Siyar*, 15:408.

¹¹⁹ *Ibidem*, 15:407.

¹²⁰ My starting point here was Abū Dāwūd, *al-Sunan*, ed. Khālidī, 3:571. The numbers just named are restricted to what I have been able to trace, which includes most but not all of Khālidī’s references.

¹²¹ E.g. Abū Dāwūd, *Sunan*, n.º 330, *ṭahārah* 124, *bāb al-tayammum fī l-ḥaḍar*; Ibn Dāsah; n.º 24, *ṭahārah* 13, *fī l-raḥul yabūlu bi-l-layl*; Ibn al-A‘rābī; n.º 3991, *al-ḥūrūf*

fies the version of the *Sunan* available today as Lu'lu'ī's.¹²² However, when Mizzī, *Tuhfat al-ashraf* observes that Ibn 'Asākir overlooked this or that hadith report, it suggests that Ibn 'Asākir, at least, was working with Lu'lu'ī's recension, which thus may have been the medieval standard. 'Abd al-Ḥamīd's edition introduced numbers for individual hadith reports in the *Sunan*. These make it easy to trace citations of individual hadith reports. Their disadvantage is that they inhibit the reintroduction of missing hadith from Mizzī. The more helpful editions also indicate *kitāb* and *bāb* after Mizzī, *Tuhfah* and Wensinck, *Concordance* (commonly referred to in Arabic as *al-Mu'jam*).¹²³

A little under 90 percent of the hadith in the *Sunan* go back to the Prophet. Some of the rest cite Companions and Followers as themselves authoritative expounders or examples of the law; for example, of Ḥammah bint Jaḥsh, Abū Dāwūd reports with *isnād* "that when she was *mustahāḍah* [had an issue of blood distinct from menstruation], her husband had sexual intercourse with her."¹²⁴ Others cite someone's legal application of a given hadith report from the Prophet; e.g. "Makhūl [al-Shāmī, d. 116/734-5?] used to say that no one had a right to do that after the Messenger of God."¹²⁵ Abū Dāwūd takes the examples of Followers very seriously. For example, he offers two hadith reports by which the Prophet forbade letting the hands hang at the sides in the course of the ritual prayer, in both of whose *asānīd* appears the Meccan Follower 'Aṭā' (d. 114/732-3?). Then he offers a report by which 'Aṭā' himself was seen praying with his hands hanging. Abū Dāwūd comments, "This weakens that hadith report." His reasoning is evidently that 'Aṭā' cannot have believed that the Prophet had forbidden this posture, hence also that he doubtfully would have transmitted a hadith report by which the Prophet had.¹²⁶

wa-l-qirā'āt 23, *ad* Q. 56:89, Abū 'Īsā (al-Ramlī); n.° 4924, *adab* 52, *bāb karāhiyat al-ghinā' wa-l-zamr*; Abū 'Alī al-Lu'lu'ī.

¹²² Robson, "Abū Dāwūd's", 581, 584.

¹²³ E.g., among recent single-volume editions, Abū Dāwūd, *Sunan*, ed. Tamīm and *ibid.*, ed. Khālidi (2001) include references to Mizzī and Wensinck, whereas *ibid.* (Dār Ibn Hazm) does not.

¹²⁴ Abū Dāwūd, *Sunan*, n.° 310, *ṭahārah* 119, *bāb al-mustahāḍah yaghshāhā zawjuhā*. The unnamed authority in this case is her husband Ṭalḥah, a leading Companion.

¹²⁵ *Ibidem*, n.° 2113, *nikāḥ* 30, *bāb fī l-tazwīj 'alā al-'amal yu'mal*.

¹²⁶ Abū Dāwūd, *Sunan*, n.° 543-4, *al-ṣalāh* 85, *bāb al-sadl*. On the point of law, v. Dutton, Y., "'Amal v. ḥadūth in Islamic Law: the case of *sadl al-yadayn* (holding one's hands by one's sides) when doing the prayer", *Islamic Law and Society*, 3 (1996), 13-40.

The proportion of non-prophetic material in the *Sunan* may explain a number in Abū Dāwūd's *Risālah ilā ahl Makkah* that has puzzled some commentators. Abū Dāwūd refers there to having collected 4,800 hadith reports, yet the present text of the *Sunan* comprises 5,274 in the standard numbering.¹²⁷ If one counts only items in the *Sunan* going back to the Prophet, however, they do come to more like 4,800 (although 4,700 would have been a still closer estimate). Alternatively, Abū Dāwūd simply did not count exactly, just guessed. After all, he refers at the same place to "about 600 *marāsīl*", whereas the extant collection *al-Marāsīl* comprises 544, suggesting an error of about the same size, 10 percent.¹²⁸ (Abū Ghuddah offers two explanations, neither of which seems likely to me. First, he proposes that the discrepancy between 5,274 and 4,800 comes of differing recensions; however, Mizzī suggests that the eight different recensions known to him were much more similar than this. Second, Abū Ghuddah proposes that 4,800 omits repeats with similar *asānīd*. By my estimate, however, alternative *asānīd* comprise somewhere around 250 items in the *Sunan*, not four or five hundred. Most of its alternative *asānīd* are not numbered separately).¹²⁹

Abū Dāwūd offers an express comment on about a fifth of the hadith reports in the *Sunan*. Most often, he provides one or more alternative versions of the hadith report just mentioned; e.g. "Al-Layth b. Sa'd, al-Awzā'i, Manṣūr b. al-Mu'tamir, and 'Irāk b. Mālik all related it with the same gist as Ibn 'Uyaynah [whose version has just been given in full]. Al-Awzā'i added, 'and ask God's forgiveness'."¹³⁰ Also fairly often, he glosses a word; e.g. "*Istiḥdād* means shaving the pubes."¹³¹ He also identifies men in *asānīd*; e.g. "Abū l-Ḥawrā' was Rabī'ah b. Shaybān."¹³² But equally often he ventures his own express comment on the legal application of a particular

¹²⁷ Abū Dāwūd, *Risālah*, ed. Abū Ghuddah, 52. The same number, 4,800, is quoted by Ibn Dāsah, *apud* al-Silafī, *Muqaddimah*, 365 (ed. Muḥammad, 333), and al-Nawawī, *Tahdhīb*, 2:226.

¹²⁸ Admittedly, there are also a few *marāsīl* within the *Sunan*; e.g. n.° 381, *Kitāb al-Ṭahārah*, 136, *bāb al-arḍ yuṣībuhā al-bawl*.

¹²⁹ E.g. Abū Dāwūd, *Sunan*, n.° 996, *Kitāb al-Ṣalāh* 184, *bāb fī l-salām*, with nine variant *asānīd*. Abū Dāwūd relates about one hadith report in thirteen from more than one shaykh.

¹³⁰ Abū Dāwūd, *Sunan*, n.° 2391, *ṣawm* 38, *bāb kaḥḥarat man atā ahlahu fī Ramaḍān*.

¹³¹ *Ibidem*, n.° 4201, *tarajjul* 16, *bāb fī akhdh al-shārib*.

¹³² *Ibid.*, n.° 1425, *al-witr* 5, *bāb al-qunūt fī l-witr*.

hadith report; e.g. “This is an argument for the man who takes something to which he has a right.”¹³³ A few comments seem clearly spontaneous, added at some particular session of dictation; e.g. “Abū Dāwūd was asked, ‘Had al-Qa‘nabī anything from Shu‘bah besides this hadith report?’ Abū Dāwūd said, ‘No.’”¹³⁴

Abū Dāwūd collected over a third of the hadith in the *Sunan* in Basra, about half that much in Baghdad, and somewhat over a tenth in Kufa. Altogether, two-thirds of it was collected in Iraq. Mecca, Syria, Egypt, and the East account for roughly a tenth each. This distribution is most similar to that of Bukhārī’s collection, among the Six Books.

Abū Dāwūd apparently includes an extraordinarily large number of hadith reports with unidentified persons in the *asānīd*: “Ibrāhīm b. Abī ‘Ulbah < a man”, “Ismā‘īl b. Abī Khālīd < his brother”, and so on. Al-Ḥusaynī (d. Damascus, 765/1364) appends a list of such ambiguities (*mubhamāt*) to his list of transmitters in the Ten Books (the Six Books plus one for each eponym of a surviving Sunni school of law) comprising 443 names. Here are the percentages of the 443 included in each collection.

(Percentages add up to more than 100 because many ambiguous names appear in more than one collection). It is hardly surprising that Aḥmad’s *Musnad* should lead the way, for it is over twice as large as any other collection here considered. Similarly, it is unsurprising that Nasā’ī’s collection should come in second, for the book under consideration is *al-Sunan al-kubrā*, over twice as large as Abū Dāwūd’s *Sunan*. What Abū Dāwūd’s high percentage probably reflects is not mainly carelessness but rather his traditionalist desire to answer every juridical question by means of relevant hadith. That is, in order to minimize resort to *qiyās* and other rational procedures, he cites a hadith report every time he possibly can, even if the best one available is formally weak, as by having an ambiguity in the *isnād*.

Several lists are available of commentaries on Abū Dāwūd’s *Sunan*, which I cannot complete.¹³⁵ The earliest and most significant commentary is that of Abū Sulaymān al-Khaṭṭābī, which offers comments on about a third of the hadith in the *Sunan*.¹³⁶ Khaṭṭābī is prin-

¹³³ *Ibid.*, n.° 3752, *aṭ‘imah* 5, *bāb mā jā’a fī l-dīyāfah*.

¹³⁴ *Ibid.*, n.° 4997, *adab* 6, *bāb fī l-ḥayā’*.

¹³⁵ Al-Ḥabashī, ‘Abd Allāh Muḥammad, *Jāmi‘ al-shurūḥ wa-l-ḥawāshī*, Abu Dhabi, 2004, 1052-6, and Khalaf, *Istidrākāt*, n.° 679-89, 694.

¹³⁶ Al-Khaṭṭābī, *Ma‘ālim*.

TABLE 3

Abū Ḥanīfah	3%
Mālik	3%
Shāfi'ī	2%
Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal	52%
Bukhārī	1%
Muslim	1%
Abū Dāwūd	22%
Tirmidhī	8%
Nasā'ī	28%
Ibn Mājah	7%

cipally concerned with legal applications (as opposed to, say, *isnād* criticism), and normally argues for the position of al-Shāfi'ī when there is disagreement among schools. A number of scholars have identified Khaṭṭābī as a traditionalist, whereas Daniel Gimaret normally locates him with the Ash'ā'irah and other semi-rationalist Sunni theologians in the middle of the theological spectrum. I expect future research to confirm Gimaret's identification.¹³⁷ Otherwise, the most remarkable features of the list of commentaries seem to be how many of the medieval ones were never finished and how many of the rest have come from the Indian subcontinent.

His Piety

An important part of Abū Dāwūd's authority lay in his personal piety.¹³⁸ Al-Khallāl's praise has been cited already: "the *imām*, exalted in his time, having unprecedented knowledge of bringing out (useful things in) the sciences, for which he knew where to look, peerless in his age, a scrupulous man who was exalted."¹³⁹ The word

¹³⁷ Tokatly, V., "The *A'lām al-ḥadīth* of al-Khaṭṭābī: a commentary on al-Bukhārī's *Ṣaḥīḥ* or a polemical treatise?", *Studia Islamica*, 92 (2001), 53-91, and other studies cited there, esp. by Günther and al-Bātilī. Cf. Gimaret, D., *Dieu à l'image de l'homme: les anthropomorphismes de la sunna et leur interprétation par les théologiens*, Paris, 1997, 127-8 *et passim*.

¹³⁸ Others before me have connected personal authority with personal piety; e.g. Carter, M.G., "Another Khalīl, courtier, teacher, and sage", in *Early medieval Arabic: studies on al-Khalīl b. Aḥmad*, Karin C. Ryding (ed.), Washington, 1998, 16-43, concerning a grammarian, and Hurvitz, N., *The Formation of Hanbalism: piety into power*, London, 2002, concerning a school of law.

¹³⁹ Al-Khaṭṭāb al-Baghdādī, *Tārīkh*, 9:57 10:79.

translated here as “scrupulous” is *wariʿ*, indicating someone unusually careful to avoid whatever had the least possibility of being wrong. Another early biographer, Abū Ishāq b. Yāsīn al-Ḥaddād (d. 334/946), described him as “One of those in Islam who preserved the hadith of the Messenger of God, its weaknesses and chains of transmission (who lived) in the highest degree of austerity, chastity, uprightness and scrupulosity; one of the knights of hadith.”¹⁴⁰

As noted above, Abū Dāwūd is quoted as saying, “I lived in Tarsus for twenty years.” The main reason for Tarsus would have been pious, mainly the opportunity to participate from there in the holy war against the Byzantines. Alternatively, since he was in his fifties and sixties at that time and doubtfully useful for actual fighting, he would have dwelt there to soak up the piety of a frontier outpost, perhaps to support the actual fighters at their staging area and all the Muslims in case of Byzantine attack.

The four hadith reports he named as sufficing for a man’s faith were these: “Works are (judged) by intentions”; “Among the comely elements of a man’s Islam is his ignoring what does not concern him”; “A believer is not a believer until he wishes for his brother what he wishes for himself”; and “The licit is clear and the forbidden is clear, between them being ambiguous matters”.¹⁴¹ Although, oddly, only two of the four turn up in Abū Dāwūd’s *Sunan*, the same four are named in a quotation from Ibn Dāsah as well as the mysterious Muḥammad b. Šāliḥ al-Ḥāshimī, so it seems reasonable to suppose that they did constitute Abū Dāwūd’s guide to righteous living.¹⁴² (Abū Dāwūd may also have included all four in the lost prophetic version of *Kitāb al-Zuhd*). The last of the four is a clear injunction to be scrupulous, sticking to what is clearly permitted and no more, but the second may also involve this quality.

Abū Dāwūd himself wore a garment with one sleeve wide and one narrow. Asked the reason for it, he explained, “The wide one is for (car-

¹⁴⁰ *Ibidem*, 9:58, ll. 1-6 10:80, presumably quoting *Taʾrīkh Harāh*.

¹⁴¹ Al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī, *Taʾrīkh*, 9:57 10:78-9; al-Nawawī, *Tahdhīb*, 2:226. Doubtfully by coincidence, all four of these (or at least versions thereof) are found among Nawawī’s famous forty essential hadith, for which v. Pouzet, L., *Une herméneutique de la tradition islamique: le commentaire des Arbaʿūn an-Nawawīya*, Beirut, 1982, n.º 1, 12, 13, and 6, respectively.

¹⁴² Al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī, *Taʾrīkh*, 9:56-7 10:78-9. The ones that do turn up are *innamā al-aʿmāl bi-l-nīyāt*, n.º 2201, *al-ṭalāq* 10, *bāb fī mā ʿuniya bihi*, and *inna al-ḥalāl bayyin wa-inna al-ḥarām bayyin*, n.º 3329, *al-buyūʿ* 3, *bāb fī jīnāb al-shubuhāt*.

rying) notebooks, whereas the other is not needed.”¹⁴³ No one would have argued that non-utilitarian clothing was forbidden, but Abū Dāwūd would have felt that a useless sleeve was a temptation to pride, and so he preferred to be on the safe side by doing without it. It seems a good example of tension with the world among third/ninth-century traditionalists.

Pride is also the danger against which Abū Dāwūd warned in an original aphorism often quoted in biographies: “The innermost desire is love of leadership (*ḥubb al-riyāṣah*).”¹⁴⁴ The main thrust of the first of his four essential hadith reports is also a warning against pride, mainly engaging in devotional works for the sake of being seen and applauded by men. Abū Dāwūd would have been aware of the temptation to perform works for worldly renown both in fighting the Byzantines and in relating hadith.

Abū Dāwūd’s chief contribution to the literature of piety was *al-Zuhd* (besides *al-Du‘ā’*, no longer extant).¹⁴⁵ What survives of it is a collection of 521 sayings on the life of renunciation; for example < Ziyād b. Ayyūb < Ismā‘īl < Šāliḥ b. Rustam < ‘Abd Allāh b. Abī Mulaykah: “I travelled with Ibn ‘Abbās from Medina to Mecca and from Mecca to Medina, and he stayed up half the night.”¹⁴⁶ Ibn Khayr al-Ishbīlī distinguishes between a recension from Ibn Dāṣah comprising hadith from the Prophet and another from Ibn al-A‘rābī comprising hadith from Companions and Followers.¹⁴⁷ Ibn Ḥajar seems to have known it in two recensions, one from Ibn Dāṣah, the other from an Ismā‘īl b. Muḥammad (b.) al-‘Ayzār.¹⁴⁸ Some 80 percent of all items in the extant text go back to Companions, so what we have is presumably the recension of Ibn al-A‘rābī. (The one extant manuscript includes no account of its transmission from Abū Dāwūd). Here are some other collections for comparison.

Table: Some early, extant works on *zuhd*

1. Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal, *al-Zuhd* (actually collected by ‘Abd Allāh b. Aḥmad, from whom about a third of it comes independently of his

¹⁴³ Al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī, *Tārīkh*, 9:58, ll. 13-16 10:80-1.

¹⁴⁴ *Ibidem*, 9:58, ll. 16-18 10:81.

¹⁴⁵ Abū Dāwūd, *Kitāb al-Zuhd*, ed. Ḥusayn. V. al-Ājurri, *Su‘ālāt*, 34.

¹⁴⁶ Abū Dāwūd, *Kitāb al-Zuhd*, ed. Ḥusayn, 178, n.º 342.

¹⁴⁷ Al-Ishbīlī, *Fahrasah*, 92, n.º 156, 157.

¹⁴⁸ Ibn Ḥajar, *al-Mu‘jam*, 89, n.º 259.

father).¹⁴⁹ About 2,400 items, very roughly arranged biographically. About a fifth each from the Prophet and Followers, a third from Companions. (Unusually, earlier prophets and anonymous Israelites account for another fifth).

2. Ibn al-Mubārak, *Kitāb al-Zuhd*.¹⁵⁰ About 1,600 items (of which about a fifth come from al-Ḥusayn b. al-Ḥasan al-Marwazī (d. 246/860-1) independently of Ibn al-Mubārak), 2,050 including additions from another recension (98% from Ibn al-Mubārak), roughly arranged by topic. Prophetic sayings 35%, Companion 23%, Follower 33%.

3. Ibn Abī Shaybah (d. Kufa, 235/849), *Kitāb al-Zuhd*, a section of *al-Muṣannaf*.¹⁵¹ About 1,500 items, most roughly arranged biographically but some by topic. Prophetic sayings 10%, Companion 33%, Follower 43%.

4. Hannād b. al-Sarī (d. 243/857), *Kitāb al-Zuhd*.¹⁵² 1,443 items, roughly arranged by topic. Prophetic sayings 45%, Companion 28%, Follower 24%.

5. Ibn Abī al-Dunyā (d. Baghdad, 281/894), *Dhamm al-dunyā*.¹⁵³ 645 items, randomly arranged. Prophetic sayings 14%, Companion 10%, Follower 19%.

¹⁴⁹ Aḥmad b. Hanbal (attributed), *al-Zuhd*, ‘Abd al-Raḥmān b. Qāsim (ed.), Mecca, Maṭba‘at Umm al-Qurā, 1357. Several other editions available: Muḥammad Jalāl Sharaf (ed.), Beirut, Dār al-Nahḍah al-‘Arabīyah, 1971; Beirut, Dār al-Kutub al-‘Ilmiyah, 1976; Beirut, Dār al-Kutub al-‘Ilmiyah, 1983; Muḥammad Muḥammad ‘Āmir (ed.), Cairo, Dār al-Da‘wah al-Islāmiyah, 2002. N.º 2 here is a photomechanical reprint of the Meccan edition, while the others present the same text with different pagination. Yūsuf ‘Abd al-Raḥmān al-Mar‘ashlī, *Fihris aḥādīth Kitāb al-Zuhd*, (Beirut, Dār al-Nūr al-Islāmī, 1988), indexes n.º 1 and 3. Muḥammad Muḥammad Sharīf, *Mawsū‘at fahāris kutub al-zuhd*, (Dammam, Dār Ibn al-Jawzī, 1992) indexes n.º 2.

¹⁵⁰ *Kitāb al-Zuhd wa-l-raqā‘iq*, Ḥabīb al-Raḥmān al-A‘zamī (ed.), Malegaon, Majlis Iḥyā’ al-Ma‘ārif, 1386. (Repr. Beirut, Dār al-Risālah, n.d., also Alexandria, Dār Ibn Khaldūn, n.d., with different pagination but the same paragraph numbers). Indices to the first edition in Yūsuf ‘Abd al-Raḥmān al-Mar‘ashlī, *Fihris aḥādīth Kitāb al-Zuhd*, Beirut, Dār al-Nūr al-Islāmī, 1987. Indexed by number in Sharīf, *Mawsū‘ah*.

¹⁵¹ Ibn Abī Shaybah, *Kitāb al-Muṣannaf*, ‘Abd al-Khāliq Khān al-Afghānī (ed.), Hyderabad, al-Maṭba‘ah al-‘Azīziyah, 1966. The only newer edition actually based on collation of manuscripts is that by Muḥammad b. ‘Abd Allāh al-Jum‘ah and Muḥammad b. Ibrāhīm al-Luḥayḍān, Riyadh, Maktabat al-Rushd, 2004.

¹⁵² Hannād b. al-Sarī, *Kitāb al-Zuhd*, ‘Abd al-Raḥmān b. ‘Abd al-Jabbār al-Faryawā‘ī (ed.), Kuwayt, 1985. Indexed by number in Sharīf, *Mawsū‘ah*.

¹⁵³ Published several times, but I have happened to use Ibn Abī al-Dunyā, *Kitāb al-Zuhd*, Yāsīn Muḥammad al-Sawwās (ed.), Damascus, 1999 (so renamed by its editor). Of course, Ibn Abī al-Dunyā compiled many other small books on related topics. V. Weipert, R. and Weninger, S., “Die erhaltenen Werke des Ibn Abī d-Dunyā. Ein vorläufige Bestandsaufnahme”, *ZDMG*, 146 (1996), 415-55.

6. Wakī', *al-Zuhd*.¹⁵⁴ 539 items, randomly arranged. Prophetic sayings 42%, Companion 28%, Follower 21%.

7. Al-Jāḥiẓ (d. Basra, 255/868-9), *Kitāb al-Zuhd*, a section of *al-Bayān wa-l-tabyīn*.¹⁵⁵ 338 items, randomly arranged. Prophetic sayings 1%, Companion 11%, Follower 30%.

8. Ibn Abī 'Āṣim al-Nabīl (d. Isfahan, 287/900?), *Kitāb al-Zuhd*.¹⁵⁶ 288 items, randomly arranged. Prophetic sayings 74%, Companion 9%, Follower 12%.

A history of the genre is difficult inasmuch as n.º 1, 2, 4, and 6 on this list were redacted a generation or two later than their putative authors. Certainly, Abū Dāwūd's *Zuhd* is comparatively short and comprises comparatively much material from Companions. Its principle of arrangement seems closest to that of the *Zuhd* of Aḥmad and his son. In the list above, n.º 5 and 7 are part of the *adab* tradition. Jāḥiẓ is especially attracted to elegant locutions and usually omits *asānīd*, while Ibn Abī l-Dunyā is likewise attracted to elegant locutions and more subtly to the humorous side of his material.¹⁵⁷ Abū Dāwūd was obviously rather in the hadith tradition. He includes many glosses of the Qur'ān (about 12 percent of all items) but no poetry. Abū Dāwūd evidently collected the material in *al-Zuhd* (in descending order) in Basra, Kufa, Baghdad, Syria, and elsewhere. Here also, his collection seems closest to the *Zuhd* of Aḥmad and his son, although that has relatively more items collected in Baghdad and fewer in Syria.

Abū Dāwūd's relations with other authorities of his time

Abū Dāwūd's association with Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal has arisen several times hitherto. Two of his works are mainly quotations from

¹⁵⁴ Wakī' b. al-Jarrāḥ, *al-Zuhd*, 'Abd al-Raḥmān 'Abd al-Jabbār al-Faryawā'ī (ed.), Medina, Maktabat al-Dār, 1984. (Repr. Riyadh, Dār al-Ṣumay'ī, 1994). Indexed in Sharīf, *Mawsū'ah*.

¹⁵⁵ Al-Jāḥiẓ, *al-Bayān wa-l-tabyīn*, 'Abd al-Salām Muḥammad Hārūn (ed.), Cairo, 1948-50, 3:125-202.

¹⁵⁶ *Kitāb al-Zuhd*, 'Abd al-'Alī 'Abd al-Ḥamīd (ed.), Bombay, 1983. A second edition (1987) offers different pagination and notes but the same paragraph numbers.

¹⁵⁷ For the emergence of *zuhd* as a distinct genre among littérateurs, v. Chabbi, J., "Remarques sur le développement historique des mouvements ascétiques et mystiques au Khurasan", *Studia Islamica*, 46 (1977), 5-72, 23-5; also Hamori, A., "Ascetic poetry (*zuhdiyyāt*)", in *'Abbasid belles-lettres*, J. Ashtiany, T.M. Johnstone, J.D. Latham, R.B. Serjeant and G. Rex Smith (eds.), Cambridge, 1990, 265-74.

Aḥmad (n.º 6 and 7 on the list of his works above, with over 100 additional quotations in n.º 8).¹⁵⁸ Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal is quoted in the *Sunan* 323 times.¹⁵⁹ (Additionally, there is a report that Abū Dāwūd showed his *Sunan* to Aḥmad, who expressed warm approval. Al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī indicates mistrust of the report by introducing it with the words, “It is said”, as well as by mentioning no *isnād*).¹⁶⁰

Abū Dāwūd has also been mentioned already in connection with members of the nascent Ḥanbali school. Abū Bakr al-Najjād, transmitter of *Nāsikh al-Qur’ān*, was a prominent Ḥanbali, teacher to Ibn Ḥāmid.¹⁶¹ Abū Dāwūd’s son Abū Bakr is sometimes identified as leader of the Ḥanbali assault on al-Ṭabarī at the end of his life.¹⁶² Another extensive account of Ṭabarī’s trouble admittedly names other Ḥanābilah, not Abū Bakr.¹⁶³ But Abū Bakr is also said to have become a Ḥanbali apart from the trouble with Ṭabarī.¹⁶⁴

Abū Dāwūd is claimed for the Shāfi‘ī school by two leading biographical dictionaries, those of al-‘Abbādī (d. Herat, 458/1066) and al-Subkī (d. Damascus, 771/1370).¹⁶⁵ He did spend time with Abū Thawr (d. Baghdad, 240/854) and al-Rabī‘ b. Sulaymān al-Murādī (d. Old Cairo, 270/884), disciples to Shāfi‘ī in Baghdad and Old Cairo, respectively. The *Sunan* includes seven hadith reports from Abū Thawr and ten from al-Rabī‘.¹⁶⁶ However, Abū Ishāq al-Shīrāzī (d.

¹⁵⁸ Introduction, al-Ājurri, *Su’ālāt*, 1:86.

¹⁵⁹ Al-Jayyānī, *Tasmiyah*, ed. Zaghlūl, 60 fn. Two shaykhs are the source of more material: Musaddad b. Musarhad, 651 hadith reports, and al-Qa’nabī, 345 (*ibid.*, 102fn, 105fn).

¹⁶⁰ Al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī, *Ta’rīkh*, 9:56, ll. 3-4 10:76. Cf. Introduction, *Thalāth rasā’il*, ed. Abū Ghuddah, 12-13.

¹⁶¹ On Najjād, v. al-Dhahabī, *Siyar*, 15:502-5 with additional references; also Laoust, H., “Le Hanbalisme sous le califat de Bagdad”, *Revue des Études Islamiques*, 27 (1959), 67-128, 88.

¹⁶² Ibn al-Jawzī, *al-Muntaẓam*, Hyderabad, Dā’irat al-Ma’ārif al-‘Uthmāniyah, 1357-60. Also edited by Muḥammad ‘Abd al-Qādir ‘Aṭā and Muṣṭafā ‘Abd al-Qādir ‘Aṭā, with Nu’aym Zurzūr, Beirut, Dār al-Kutub al-‘Ilmiyah, 1992, 6:172, 13:217; al-Dhahabī, *Siyar*, 14:277; Ibn Ḥajar, *Lisān al-Mīzān*, Hyderabad, Majlis Dā’irat al-Ma’ārif, 1329-31, 3:295. (Repr. Beirut, Mu’assasat al-A’lamī, 1986).

¹⁶³ Yāqūt, *Irshād*, ed. Margoliouth, 6:435-7; ed. ‘Abbās, 6:2450-1.

¹⁶⁴ Ibn ‘Adī l-Qaṭṭān, *al-Kāmil fī ḍu‘afā’ al-rijāl*, ‘Ādil Aḥmad ‘Abd al-Mawjūd and ‘Alī Muḥammad Mu‘awwad (eds.), Beirut, 1997, 5:437, s.n. ‘Abd Allāh b. Sulaymān.

¹⁶⁵ Al-‘Abbādī, *Kitāb Ṭabaqāt al-fuqahā’ al-shāfi‘īya*, Gösta Vitestam (ed.), Veröffentlichungen der “De Goeje Stiftung”, 21, Leiden, 1964, 60, and Subkī, *Ṭabaqāt al-shāfi‘īyah al-kubrā*, Maḥmūd Muḥammad al-Ṭanāḥī and ‘Abd al-Fattāh al-Ḥulw (eds.), Cairo, 1964-76, 2:293-6.

¹⁶⁶ Al-Jayyānī, *Tasmiyah*, ed. Zaghlūl, 66fn, 79fn.

Baghdad, 476/1083), who had no particular interest in exaggerating the size of the Ḥanbali school, lists Abū Dāwūd in the first generation of Ḥanbali jurists.¹⁶⁷ Al-Khallāl probably included him in the earliest Ḥanbali biographical dictionary, as Ibn Abī Ya‘lā certainly did in the earliest extant one, and Ibn Muflīḥ al-Qāqūnī names him alongside half a dozen Ḥanbali writers.

It is difficult to point to distinctively Ḥanbali juridical positions that Abū Dāwūd’s *Sunan* can be seen to endorse.¹⁶⁸ For example, the early Ḥanbali school called for raising the hands at the initial *takbīr* of the ritual prayer as far as the shoulders. Abū Dāwūd relates hadith in favour both of raising the hands to the ears and to the shoulders, which might seem to deliberately avoid endorsing the Ḥanbali position; however, Aḥmad himself does the same.¹⁶⁹ Concerning the penalty for adultery, Abū Dāwūd does relate hadith in favour of flogging and stoning together for the sometime-married adulterer, the Ḥanbali position, but no hadith in favour of stoning alone, the position of the Mālikī, Shāfi‘ī, and Ḥanafī schools.¹⁷⁰ To the contrary, however, the *Sunan* includes a notice that Abū Dāwūd was asked whether the ritual prayer at night (voluntary, not required) was to be performed by twos (*mathnā*); that is, with a salutation (*taslīm*) after every two sets of bowings (*rak‘atayn*). He said, “If you like, by twos, and, if you like, by fours.”¹⁷¹ This is contrary to what he himself related of Aḥmad, that the night prayer is by twos.¹⁷²

¹⁶⁷ Al-Shīrāzī, Abū Ishāq, *Ṭabaqāt al-fuqahā’*, Iḥsān ‘Abbās (ed.), Beirut, 1970, 171.

¹⁶⁸ Al-Mazāhirī, *Abū Dāwūd*, 41-2 for a list of allegedly Ḥanbali positions, actually no more than a tendency to rigour.

¹⁶⁹ Abū Dāwūd, *Sunan*, n.º 721, 724, 728, 730, 737-8, 740, *Ṣalāh* 115-16, *bāb raf‘ al-yadayn fī l-ṣalāh* and *bāb iftitāḥ al-ṣalāh*; Aḥmad, *Musnad* 4:317 31:150-1 with parallels.

¹⁷⁰ Abū Dāwūd, *Sunan*, n.º 4415-16, *ḥudūd* 23, *bāb fī l-rajm*. Ibn Rushd names al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī, Ishāq b. Rāhawayh, Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal, and Dāwūd al-Zāhirī as the jurists who called for both flogging and stoning: *Bidāyat al-mujtahid*, *Kitāb fī aḥkām al-zinā*, *bāb* 2, ‘Abd al-Majīd Ṭu‘mah Ḥalabī (ed.), Beirut, 1997, 4:273.

¹⁷¹ Abū Dāwūd, *Sunan*, n.º 1296; *al-taṭawwu’* 13, *bāb fī ṣalāt al-nahār*. Oddly, there later comes a hadith report from the Prophet expressly confirming that the night prayer is by twos: n.º 1326, *al-taṭawwu’* 24, *ṣalāt al-layl mathnā mathnā*.

¹⁷² *Idem*, *Kitāb Masā’il*, 72. Confirmed as Aḥmad’s opinion by ‘Abd Allāh b. Aḥmad, *Masā’il al-imām Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal*, Zuhayr al-Shāwīsh (ed.), Beirut, 1981, 89 and Ibn Hānī al-Naysābūrī, *Masā’il al-imām Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal*, Zuhayr al-Shāwīsh (ed.), Beirut, 1400, 1:106. Mālik and al-Shāfi‘ī likewise endorsed praying by twos, Abū Ḥanīfah by twos, threes, fours, sixes, or eights, according to Ibn Rushd, *Bidāyat al-mujtahid*, *Kitāb al-ṣalāh* 2, *bāb* 3 *fī l-nawāfil*.

The *Sunan* includes a few comments on juridical matters from Aḥmad; for example, “It pleases me that, in the required prayer, one pray using what is in the Qur’ān.”¹⁷³ The next latest authority he quotes with any frequency on juridical matters is Mālik.¹⁷⁴ Otherwise, Abū Dāwūd quotes mainly Followers and Companions; e.g. Makḥūl, mentioned above, on letting a man marry for no higher a bride price than teaching his wife some chapters of the Qur’ān, or Ibrāhīm al-Nakha‘ī and ‘Abd Allāh b. Shaddād (d. 81/700-1) on how often a woman with an issue of non-menstrual blood need wash herself.¹⁷⁵ At the level of theory, his express disdain for books of law, as opposed to hadith, seems highly similar to Aḥmad’s.¹⁷⁶ His implicit preference for weak hadith over *qiyās*, noted by Ibn Ḥajar, likewise sounds very Ḥanbali. Formal schools of law in the classical sense formed only after Abū Dāwūd’s lifetime, and he plainly did not feel bound to agree with Aḥmad on every point. However, it seems safe to say that Abū Dāwūd was as much a Ḥanbali as any of his contemporaries.

In theology, Abū Dāwūd strictly adhered, so far as we know, to *ahl al-sunnah wa-l-jamā‘ah*. But he was part of the transition to the catholic Sunnism of the later third/ninth century and after, not so extreme as his shaykh Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal’s Sunnism. He did not discriminate strictly on theological grounds among traditionists. On the one hand, he admittedly refused to take dictation from ‘Abd al-Raḥmān b. Šāliḥ, a Kufan who lived in Baghdad (d. 235/849-50), because “He wrote a

¹⁷³ Abū Dāwūd, *Sunan*, n.º 884, *ṣalāh* 149, *bāb al-du‘ā’ fī l-ṣalāh*. Not found by me in Abū Dāwūd, *Kitāb Masā’il*.

¹⁷⁴ E.g. Abū Dāwūd, *Sunan*, n.º 769, *al-ṣalāh* 118, *bāb mā yustaftaḥu bihi l-ṣalāh min al-du‘ā’*: < al-Qa’nabī < Mālik: “There is no harm in *du‘ā’* in the course of the ritual prayer, whether at the beginning, middle, or end, in the required or non-required.” Šāfi‘ī appears occasionally; e.g. at n.º 1897, *al-manāsik* 53, *bāb ṭawāf al-qārin*.

¹⁷⁵ Abū Dāwūd, *Sunan*, n.º 296, *ṭahārah* 111, *bāb man qāla tajma‘u bayna al-ṣalātayn*.

¹⁷⁶ Abū Dāwūd quotes Aḥmad disparaging the *ra’y* of Mālik and others (Abū Dāwūd, *Kitāb Masā’il*, 275-7, 282), but the only book he quotes him as disparaging is admittedly Abū ‘Ubayd, *Kitāb al-Gharīb* (i.e. *Gharīb al-ḥadīth*), which he blames for distracting people from learning ‘ilm (i.e. hadith; *Masā’il*, 282). Aḥmad’s most striking disparagement of books comes from ‘Abd Allāh: “This Abū Ḥanīfah wrote a book, then Abū Yūsuf came and wrote a book, then Muḥammad b. al-Ḥasan (al-Shaybānī) came and wrote a book —there is no end to this—. Whenever a man comes along, he writes a book. This Mālik wrote a book, al-Šāfi‘ī came and wrote a book, too, and this one (meaning Abū Thawr) has come and written a book. These books that he has written are an innovation. Whenever a man comes along, he writes a book and abandons the hadith of the Messenger of God” (‘Abd Allāh, *Masā’il*, 437).

book on the faults of the Companions of the Messenger of God”, a standard complaint about the Shi‘ah.¹⁷⁷ On the other hand, although he observed that “Bishr b. al-Ḥārith would not talk to Sulaymān b. Ḥarb because he disparaged Mu‘āwiyah”, Abū Dāwūd himself sought him out in Mecca, as we have seen, and included 56 hadith reports from him in the *Sunan*.¹⁷⁸ Conversely, the Basran Aḥmad b. ‘Abdah b. Mūsā al-Ḍabbī (d.245/859) was accused of *naṣb*, meaning excessive regard for Mu‘āwiyah and contempt for ‘Alī, yet Abū Dāwūd included 17 hadith reports from him in the *Sunan*.¹⁷⁹ He wrote hadith from Ismā‘īl b. Mūsā (d.245/859-60) even though he considered him a Shi‘i and Wahb b. Muḥammad al-Bunānī even though he considered him a Qadari.¹⁸⁰ He did deliberately refuse to write hadith from the Basran ‘Abd al-Raḥmān b. al-Mutawakkil (d.a little after 230/844-5), offering as explanation that he used to teach *alḥān*; that is, recitation of the Qur’ān to tones, rejected by traditionalists.¹⁸¹ He does not mention Abū Ḥanīfah or al-Shaybānī among the jurists who interest him, but he speaks less contemptuously than Aḥmad, again, of Awzā‘ī and Sufyān al-Thawrī. He scorned involvement with rulers and rulership, lamenting that his son Abū Bakr should have sought a judgeship;¹⁸² yet he did accept Muwaffaq’s commission to teach in Basra.

Two stories associate Abū Dāwūd with the important renunciant Sahl b. ‘Abd Allāh al-Tustarī (d. Basra, 283/896?). According to one, Sahl warned Abū Dāwūd’s disciple Ibn Dāsah that it would do him no good to collect Abū Dāwūd’s hadith and become in his turn an equally sought-after traditionist. Hearing of it, Abū Dāwūd himself went to visit Sahl. In the course of their conversation, Sahl explained a troublesome hadith report (“Everyone born is born after the original nature...”), provoking Abū Dāwūd to bend down and kiss his foot.¹⁸³

¹⁷⁷ Al-Ājurri, *Su‘ālāt*, 2:302.

¹⁷⁸ *Ibidem*, 2:51; al-Jayyānī, *Tasmiyah*, ed. Zaghlūl, 157.

¹⁷⁹ Ibn Ḥajar, *Tahdhīb*, 1:59; al-Jayyānī, *Tasmiyah*, ed. Zaghlūl, 154-5.

¹⁸⁰ Al-Ājurri, *Su‘ālāt*, 1:225, 359. Cf. Melchert, “How Hanafism”, 330, on lack of correlation between orthodoxy and trustworthiness in transmitting hadith as attributed in the *Ṭabaqāt* of Ibn Sa‘d.

¹⁸¹ For Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal’s position, v. Melchert, C., “Aḥmad Ibn Ḥanbal and the Qur’ān”, *Journal of Qur’anic Studies*, 6/2 (2004), 22-34, 25-6.

¹⁸² Ibn ‘Adī al-Qaṭṭān, *Kāmil*, s.n. ‘Abd Allāh b. Sulaymān, ed. ‘Abd al-Mawjūd and Mu‘awwad, 5:436.

¹⁸³ Al-Silafī, *Muqaddimah*, 369-70 (ed. Muḥammad, 336-7). Abū Dāwūd, *Sunan*, includes a variant of this hadith report at n.º 4714, *al-Sunnah* 17, *bāb fī dharārī*

According to the second story, Sahl came to Abū Dāwūd, who welcomed him and had him sit down. Sahl asked a favour of him, refusing to name it till Abū Dāwūd had agreed to it. The favour he asked was that he stick out his tongue, with which he had related hadith of the Messenger of God, for Sahl to kiss. Abū Dāwūd dutifully stuck out his tongue and Sahl kissed it.¹⁸⁴

Sufi literature is replete with fictional meetings. Perhaps the most famous are those in which al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī (d. 110/728) meets Rābi‘ah al-‘Adawīyah (d. 185/801-2?), related by ‘Aṭṭār (fl. sixth/twelfth cent.) to establish the superiority of mysticism to mere renunciation.¹⁸⁵ Michael Cooperson has interpreted stories relating Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal and Bishr al-Ḥāfi as a debate over the relative merits of traditionists and renunciants.¹⁸⁶ Stories relating Sahl and Abū Dāwūd seem most likely to have to do not with a debate between traditionists and renunciants but rather between the Ḥanābilah and Sālīmīyah (Māliki in law) over the legacy of Sahl al-Tustarī. The Sālīmīyah were a party of renunciants named for Ibn Sālim (d. early 4th/10th cent.), disciple to Sahl.¹⁸⁷ The Ḥanbali jurist Abū Ya‘lā b. al-Farrā’ (d. Baghdad, 458/1065) assembled a famous list of their errors.¹⁸⁸ The Ḥanbali biographical tradition makes out Sahl to have been master to al-Barbahārī (d. Baghdad, 329/941), a major Ḥanbali.¹⁸⁹ The Ḥanābilah would have been happy to associate Sahl with Abū Dāwūd, another of theirs, as well. Abū Dāwūd is also re-

l-mushrikīn, with a gloss from Ḥammād b. Salamah at n.° 4716 connecting it with the day when God asked all Adam’s progeny, “Am I not your Lord?” (Q. 46:172). Sahl’s explanation is the usual one, that Jewish and Christian parents mislead their children into becoming Jews and Christians, although he goes on to make a less usual point about the relative responsibilities of parents (great) and Satan (negligible). For a comprehensive treatment of the problem, v. Gobillot, G., *La fiṭra. La conception originelle. Ses interprétations et fonctions chez les penseurs musulmans*, Cairo, 2000, with special attention in chaps. 4-5 to Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal, who sometimes interpreted “original nature” (*fiṭrah*) to mean Islam, as here, but also sometimes to mean God’s predestination.

¹⁸⁴ Al-Silafī, *Muqaddimah*, 370 (ed. Muḥammad, 337); Ibn Khallikān, *Wafayāt*, 2:404-5.

¹⁸⁵ ‘Aṭṭār, *The Tadhkiratu l-awliyā’*, Reynold A. Nicholson (ed.), London, 1905-7, 1:24-40, 59-73, esp. 64.

¹⁸⁶ Cooperson, *Classical Arabic biography*, chap. 5.

¹⁸⁷ Provisionally *EP*², s.v. “Sālīmīyya”, by L. Massignon and B. Radtke.

¹⁸⁸ Massignon, L., *Essay on the origins of the technical language of Islamic mysticism*, Benjamin Clark (transl.), Notre Dame, 1997, 201-3. I expect future research to confirm more of the list than Radtke allows in *EP*², s.v. “Sālīmīyya”.

¹⁸⁹ Ibn Abī Ya‘lā, *Ṭabaqāt*, 2:18.

membered as denouncing four renunciants of the late second/eighth century for *Zandaqah*, probably meaning secret unbelief.¹⁹⁰

We know almost nothing of Abū Dāwūd's private life. What we know of his relations with his son Abū Bakr is that he supervised his earliest collection of hadith; that he was pleased to hear from whom he had first collected hadith on his own, in Tus; that they travelled together to the Hijaz and Egypt, among other places; and that Abū Bakr eventually disappointed him. His disapproval of Abū Bakr's ambition to become a *qāḍī* has been mentioned already. Of his reliability as a traditionist, Abū Dāwūd is quoted as saying, "This son of mine, 'Abd Allāh, is a liar (*kadhdhāb*)."¹⁹¹

Abū Dāwūd seems historically significant mainly insofar as he represents hadith science in his time. The proportion of hadith from the Prophet in his *Sunan* (almost 90 percent), by contrast with the proportion in, say, Ibn Abī Shaybah's *Muṣannaf* (scarcely 20 percent), illustrates the rapid shift of attention among the jurists of his time away from Companion and Follower hadith towards prophetic. His announced concern to provide hadith supporting the juridical opinions of an earlier generation illustrates a new willingness to make hadith science ancillary to jurisprudence, all the more notable for Abū Dāwūd's association with the extremist, Ḥanbali wing of nascent Sunnism. It contrasts with Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal's conflation of hadith and jurisprudence, expecting hadith to speak for themselves and disdaining the supposed jurist with a limited repertory of hadith at his command. (Whether it also illustrates the way hadith were generated in the first place, mainly to support rules arrived at earlier by other means, stubbornly remains controversial.) He seems to have had little time for anything but hadith. It must depend on personal taste whether stories of his austere living and devotion to frontier warfare make him a more or less attractive figure.

Recibido: 16/11/05

Aceptado: 29/06/06

¹⁹⁰ Ibn Ḥajar, *Lisān*, 2:469. For more on these persons and their identification, Massignon, *Essay*, 79 and Melchert, C., "Baṣran origins of classical Sufism", *Der Islam*, 83 (2006), 221-40, 225-6.

¹⁹¹ Ibn 'Adī, *al-Kāmil*, 5:436, s.n. 'Abd Allāh b. Sulaymān b. al-Ash'ath. The transmitter of this from Abū Dāwūd is one 'Alī b. al-Ḥusayn b. al-Junayd, probably the traditionist and *rijāl* critic of Rayy (d. 291/904?), on whom v. al-Dhahabī, *Siyar*, 14:16-17, with further references.