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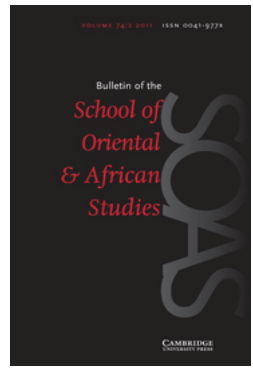

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The relationship between *maghāzī* and *ḥadīth* in early Islamic scholarship

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Abstract
The relationship between the traditional biographical material on Muḥammad (*maghāzī*- or *sīra*-material) and the narrations of his words and deeds (*ḥadīth*-material) has long been debated in Islamic studies. While some scholars have argued that the biographical material is fundamentally *ḥadīth* material arranged chronologically, others have argued the opposite: that *ḥadīth* material originally consists of narrative reports about the life of Muḥammad which were later deprived of their historical context to produce normative texts. This article argues that both views are untenable and that *maghāzī* and *ḥadīth* emerged as separate fields; each influenced the other but they preserved their distinctive features. While traditions that originated and were shaped in one field were sometimes transferred to the other, the transfer of traditions from one field to the other apparently did not as a rule involve any deliberate changes to the text.
Keywords: Biography of the Prophet Muḥammad, Early Islamic fields of learning, Historiography, *maghāzī*, *ḥadīth*, *sīra*, Early Islamic literature

It is a widespread assumption in Islamic studies that the fields of *sīra* or *maghāzī* on the one hand and *ḥadīth* on the other are closely related and should be studied together.[1] While it is obvious that both fields have a great deal in common with regard to content, form and transmission, the nature of their relationship remains a matter of debate. This article aims to contribute to the discussion of the early development of both fields, their distinctive features and their mutual influence.

1 See for instance Meir J. Kister, "The *Sīrah* literature", in A.F.L. Beeston et al. (eds), *The Cambridge History of Arabic Literature. Arabic Literature to the End of the Umayyad Period* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), 352: "The development of *Sīrah* literature is closely linked with the transmission of the *Ḥadīth* and should be viewed in connection with it". Marco Schöller (*Exegetisches Denken und Prophetenbiographie. Eine quellenkritische Analyse der Sīra-Überlieferung zu Muḥammads Konflikt mit den Juden* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz 1998, 5)), argues that the *sīra*-traditions cannot be studied without taking into account the beginnings of Islamic legal thinking (*fiqh*) and the emergence of the *isnād*. Josef Horovitz, "Alter und Ursprung des Isnād", *Der Islam* 8, 1908, 39–47, 39 f., points to the close relationship between the two fields regarding both form and content and claims that the material presented in *sīra* works and in *ḥadīth* collections is basically the same but is arranged according to different criteria.

For the sake of simplicity, the field of the biography of the Prophet will consistently be referred to as *maghāzī* in what follows, although the sources use different terms, such as *sīra*, *siyar* and *maghāzī*, which may or may not be used interchangeably.[2] For our purposes it is of only minor importance whether the material relating to the biography of the Prophet was referred to as *maghāzī* or *sīra* material.

In the twentieth century two radically different views of the relationship between the fields of *maghāzī* and *ḥadīth* were proposed. According to one view, *maghāzī*-material is simply exegetical and juridical *ḥadīth* chronologically arranged. This view was put forward by Henri Lammens[3] and was followed at least partly by C. H. Becker.[4] Becker summarizes Lammens' view as follows: "In its detailed accounts, which are often diffuse, the *Sīra* is not an independent historical source. It is merely *ḥadīth*-material arranged in biographical order. The individual *ḥadīths*, however, are either exegetical elaborations of Qur'anic allusions or later inventions of dogmatic-juristic tendency. [...] The actual historical material is extremely scanty. So the allusions of the *Qur'ān* are taken and expanded; and, first and foremost, the already existing dogmatic und juristic *ḥadīths* are collected and chronologically arranged. The result is the *Sīra*."[5]

Thus, according to this view, the exegetical and juridical *aḥādīth* existed before they were used in the *maghāzī* tradition, and *maghāzī* material is derived from exegetical and juridical *ḥadīth*. As far as I can see, this view is popular today almost exclusively with regard to exegetical traditions and much less with juridical ones.[6]

According to the other view, the development was the other way round: the *maghāzī* material is older and *maghāzī* traditions were deprived of their historical setting and context and reduced to the juridical or theological aspects they contained to be then used as normative *aḥādīth*. This development, from *maghāzī* to *ḥadīth*, was proposed by John Wansbrough, who observed a "development from loosely structured narrative to concise *exemplum*"[7] and concluded: "The movement from *narratio* to *exemplum* illustrates perfectly the stylistic difference between *Sīra* and Sunna, between the mythic and normative

2 For a discussion of the divergent usages of *maghāzī* and *sīra* see Martin Hinds, "'Maghāzī' and 'Sīra' in early Islamic scholarship", in Toufic Fahd (ed.), *La vie du prophète Mahomet. Colloque de Strasbourg* (Paris, 1983), 57–66; cf. Fuat Sezgin, *Geschichte des Arabischen Schrifttums*, 12 vols (Leiden, 1967–2000), I 251, 275; Maher Jarrar, *Die Prophetenbiographie im islamischen Spanien. Ein Beitrag zur Überlieferungs- und Redaktionsgeschichte* (Frankfurt am Main, 1989), 1–43.

3 See e.g. Henri Lammens, "Qoran et tradition, comment fut composée la vie de Mahomed", *Recherches de Science Religieuse* 1, 1910, 27–51.

4 Carl Heinrich Becker, "Prinzipielles zu Lammens' Sīrastudien", *Der Islam* 4, 1913, 263–9.

5 Becker, "Prinzipielles zu Lammens' Sīrastudien", 262; the translation follows W. Montgomery Watt, "The materials used by Ibn Isḥāq", in Bernard Lewis and Peter Malcolm Holt (eds), *Historians of the Middle East* (London, 1962), 23–34, 23.

6 See e.g. Patricia Crone, *Meccan Trade and the Rise of Islam* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1987), 214 f.: "[I]t should be plain that much of the apparently historical tradition is in fact of exegetical origin"; Schöller, *Exegetisches Denken*, 128–33.

7 John Wansbrough, *The Sectarian Milieu. Content and Composition of Islamic Salvation History* (Oxford, 1978), 77.

preoccupations (*Geistesbeschäftigungen*) of early Muslim literature".[8] He further remarked that it is possible to trace a theme "from the *sīra-maghāzī* literature, where it was historically articulated, to the *sunna-ḥadīth* literature, where it was idealized and hence shorn of its historical dimension".[9] Wansbrough's main argument, that the narrative biographical interest in Muḥammad preceded the interest in him as an authority for legal matters, is not our concern here. However, Wansbrough also argued that this development can be observed in the study of single *ḥadīths*.[10] A similar view was held by Tilman Nagel, who observed in the *ḥadīth* literature an aim to eliminate historical contexts and instead create timeless, universally valid statements.[11] Martin Hinds seems in general to subscribe to Wansbrough's view, but sees the development as being rather "from *maghāzī* to *sunna* via *siyar* and then *sīra*".[12]

Both views imply that traditions originate in one field and are then transferred to another, being reshaped on the way. While this seems likely, it is difficult to prove. It has long been known that traditions were not stable and underwent considerable changes in the course of transmission and the process can easily be demonstrated by comparing several versions of the same tradition.[13] The main difficulty lies in establishing where a tradition, which can now be found in different genres of literature, originated. If it can be shown that a tradition originated in one field and was only later used in others, we may gain valuable insights into the mechanisms that govern this kind of transfer.

A glimpse at the material in question shows us that all observations regarding the relationship between *maghāzī* and *ḥadīth* only apply to a part of the material. There are a vast number of traditions in the *ḥadīth* collections which have no parallel in the works on *maghāzī*, for example a large part of the material with ritual content. On the other hand, the books on *maghāzī* comprise much more than just *ḥadīth*: apart from traditions given with an *isnād*, some of which may also be included in collections of *ḥadīth*, there are quotations from the Quran, poems, lists of persons who took part in different events, a few documents (whose historical value shall not be discussed here) and comments and introductory sentences to other material.[14] Nothing of these latter types of material is included in any of the *ḥadīth* collections.

8 Wansbrough, *The Sectarian Milieu*, 78.
9 Ibid., 87.
10 Ibid., 76–8, and see below.
11 Tilman Nagel, "Ḥadīṯ – oder: Die Vernichtung der Geschichte", in *XXV. Deutscher Orientalistentag vom 8. bis 13.4.1991 in München. Vorträge* (Stuttgart, 1994), 118–28, 126f.
12 Hinds, "'Maghāzī' and 'Sīra' in early Islamic scholarship", 63; ibid., "al-Maghāzī", in *EI*^{2}, V, 1161–4.
13 Cf. Andreas Görke, "Eschatology, history, and the common link: a study in methodology", in Herbert Berg (ed.), *Method and Theory in the Study of Islamic Origins* (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2003), 179–208, 182, for an overview of changes that typically occur in the course of transmission.
14 For a categorization of the different types of material included in works on *maghāzī*, cf. Watt, "The materials", 24–31; Watt, "The reliability of Ibn-Isḥāq's sources", in *La Vie du prophète Mahomet. Colloque de Strasbourg (octobre 1980)* (Paris, 1983), 31–43; Wim Raven, "Sīra", in *EI*^{2}, IX, 660–3, 662 f.; see also Stefan Leder, "The literary use of the *Khabar*: a basic form of historical writing", in L. Conrad and A. Cameron (eds), *The*

Our view of the range of material included in works on *maghāzī* is of course heavily dependent on the extant sources, but there are indications that different types of material played a role in *maghāzī* traditions in earlier periods and are typical of the *maghāzī* literature. For instance, many early *maghāzī* scholars are said to have included poems in their works.[15] *Maghāzī* scholars who are said to have used poems or be lovers of poetry include: Abān b. ʿUthmān,[16] ʿUrwa b. al-Zubayr,[17] Wahb b. Munabbih,[18] ʿAbdallāh b. Abī Bakr,[19] al-Zuhrī,[20] and of course Ibn Isḥāq, al-Wāqidī and, to a lesser extent, Ibn Saʿd.[21] The same applies to lists of participants, which some of the early authorities of *maghāzī* are said to have kept,[22] and to documents, such as letters of the Prophet, which were included by some.[23] Thus it is likely that earlier authorities on *maghāzī* collected different types of material of about the same scope as are included in the later works of Ibn Isḥāq, al-Wāqidī, and others.

It may be worth establishing the true scope of the intersection between the material included in books on *maghāzī* and that included in collections of *ḥadīth*, but this is not our concern here. For our purposes we will concentrate on the material included both in books on *maghāzī* and in collections of *ḥadīth*.

Considering the differing aims of *muḥaddithūn* and *maghāzī* scholars, it is to be expected that they dealt differently with the material. The *muḥaddithūn* were primarily interested in the transmission and preservation of the material according to certain standards, and in its legal or ritual relevance. They were considered to be authorities on the reliability of certain transmitters and certain lines of transmission, whether a certain tradition was more or less reliable or legally binding, the exact wording of certain traditions, and on who was the original narrator of a story.

Maghāzī scholars on the other hand were interested in creating a continuous and coherent narrative of the life of Muḥammad. To this end they had to draw connections between different traditions and establish causalities between them. As we have seen, they also drew on different kinds of material. They were

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Byzantine and Early Islamic Near East, I: Problems in the Literary Source Material (Princeton: The Darwin Press, 1992), 277–315, 309f.

15 Cf. Kister, "The Sīrah literature", 357–61; James T. Monroe, "The poetry of the *Sīrah* literature", in A.F.L. Beeston et al. (eds), *The Cambridge History of Arabic Literature. Arabic Literature to the End of the Umayyad Period* (Cambridge, 1983), 368–73.

16 Horovitz, *The Earliest Biographies of the Prophet and Their Authors* (Princeton: The Darwin Press, 2002), 14.

17 Ibid., 27–9.

18 Ibid., 39; Raif Georges Khoury, *Wahb b. Munabbih. Teil 1: Der Heidelberger Papyrus PSR Heid Arab 23. Leben und Werk des Dichters* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1972), 144, 146, 148.

19 Horovitz, *The Earliest Biographies*, 44 f.

20 Ibid., 66.

21 Ibid., 122.

22 For instance Shuraḥbīl b. Saʿd and Mūsā b. ʿUqba (cf. Horowitz, *The Earliest Biographies*, 30, 70).

23 For instance ʿUrwa b. al-Zubayr, ʿAbdallāh b. Abī Bakr, and Mūsā b. ʿUqba (cf. Horovitz, *The Earliest Biographies*, 27, 44, 71, 87).

considered experts not in the question of the authenticity of the material they used, but in questions of context. The *maghāzī* scholars knew – or at least were supposed to know – when a certain event took place, its causes, and whether or not it preceded another event. They were also experts on which people were involved: they knew who was present at a certain event, how many people took part in a battle, if a specific individual took part in a battle, if someone belonged to the *muhājirūn* or to the *anṣār*, if someone died before or after a certain event – the kind of information that could not usually be derived from a single *ḥadīth* and could not be passed on by relying solely on *aḥādīth*.

In order to form coherent narratives from their material, it was almost inevitable that authors would have to abstain from naming informants, and among the oldest authorities on *maghāzī*, such as ʿUrwa b. al-Zubayr (d. 93 or 94), Saʿīd b. al-Musayyab (d. 94) and Ibn Shihāb al-Zuhrī (d. 125) we frequently find traditions given without any indication of their sources. It is precisely this handling of the material that makes it possible to trace its origins back to the field of *maghāzī* and not to *ḥadīth*. This applies mainly to long traditions that contain complete accounts of what happened at a certain event, mostly major events in the life of Muḥammad such as the beginning of the revelation, the Hijra, the battles of Badr and Uḥud, the treaty of al-Ḥudaybiya and the conquest of Mecca, to name but a few. The long traditions regarding these events are usually made up of several elements which are combined into a coherent narrative. That they are made up of different and independent units can be seen since, in different versions of the narratives, these units often appear in a different order; sometimes they even appear in different contexts.[24] These stories often presuppose an omniscient narrator, a narrator who knows and reports what is happening and what is said both in the camp of the Muslims and in that of the Meccans. In ʿUrwa b. al-Zubayr's account of al-Ḥudaybiya, for instance, discussions among the Muslims and those among the Quraysh in Mecca (when their delegates return from Muḥammad), are reported in direct speech. Later in this account, even the conversation between Abū Baṣīr and his two counterparts is given in direct speech.[25] Such an omniscient narrator should not occur in the field of *ḥadīth*, where the rules say that the original narrator has to be an eyewitness,[26] particularly when direct speech is reported.[27] Whether these were really eyewitness reports or if this was just a literary convention is irrelevant here. In any case, it would be against the rules for an original narrator to present dialogues of scenes at which he cannot possibly have been present. Thus, while these stories do not conform to the standards of *ḥadīth*, they would still be

24 Cf. Andreas Görke and Gregor Schoeler, *Die ältesten Berichte über das Leben Muḥammads: Das Korpus ʿUrwa ibn az-Zubair* (Princeton: The Darwin Press, 2008), 266 f.

25 See e.g. al-Bukhārī, Muḥammad b. Ismāʿīl, *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, 3 vols (Vaduz: Thesaurus Islamicus Foundation 2000) *Kitāb al-Shurūṭ*, 15.

26 Cf. Sebastian Günther, "Fictional narration and imagination within an authoritative framework. Towards a new understanding of Ḥadīth", in Stefan Leder (ed.), *Story-Telling in the Framework of Non-Fictional Arabic Literature* (Wiesbaden: Harrassovitz, 1998), 433–71, 440 f., 464 f.

27 Cf. Daniel Beaumont, "Hard-boiled: narrative discourse in early Muslim traditions", *Studia Islamica* 83, 1996, 5–31, 10, 18, 23.

considered to be *akhbār*.[28] In general, the literary conventions of *akhbār* are not very different from those of *ḥadīth*, but they seem to have been less strictly observed in fields outside *ḥadīth* proper. One notable distinction is that for *akhbār* it is characteristic that the narrator is absent from the narration.[29] This is usually the case in these long narratives, but not necessarily in *ḥadīth*.

Many of these complex narratives were based on earlier accounts from different informants and constitute combined reports. Combined reports are a common feature in Islamic historiography at least from the time of Ibn Isḥāq and al-Wāqidī. They result from the merging of different accounts into a single narrative. Usually Ibn Shihāb al-Zuhrī (d. 124/742) is credited with introducing the technique of combined reports.[30] This attribution to al-Zuhrī seems to be based on his use of collective *asānīd*.[31] However, there is evidence that earlier authorities of *maghāzī* already combined different reports to a coherent narrative, although they mostly did not provide them with collective *asānīd*. A comparison of different versions of *maghāzī* traditions can provide evidence that the practice of combining reports was common among early *maghāzī* authorities.[32] A similar practice can be observed in the field of the *ayyām al-ʿarab*,[33] which may have served as a model for the *maghāzī* scholars.

At the beginning these reports seem to have been given without any mention of *isnād*, and only later, possibly under the influence of the *muḥaddithūn*, with a kind of collective *isnād*. We can find narratives without an *isnād* going back to an eyewitness, for instance in the traditions of Shuraḥbīl b. Saʿd, ʿUrwa b. al-Zubayr, al-Zuhrī, Wahb b. Munabbih, ʿAbdallāh b. Abī Bakr, ʿĀṣim b. ʿUmar and Mūsā b. ʿUqba. The use of the collective *isnād* reached its highest development with al-Wāqidī, but it can also be found in Ibn Isḥāq's book. Occurrences of collective *asānīd* can also be detected in traditions from Mūsā

28 The distinction between *ḥadīth* and *khabar* was controversial among Muslim traditionalists and remains so among scholars. For different views on the relationship between *ḥadīth* and *khabar*, cf. Pierre Larcher, "Le mot de ḥadīṯ vu par un linguiste", in Tilman Nagel and Claude Gilliot (eds), *Das Prophetenḥadīṯ: Dimensionen einer islamischen Literaturgattung* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2005), 7–13, 12 f.; Ella Landau-Tasseron, "Sayf Ibn ʿUmar in medieval and modern scholarship", *Der Islam* 67, 1990, 1–16, 6–9; Muhammad Qasim Zaman, "*Maghāzī* and the *muḥaddithūn*: reconsidering the treatment of 'historical' materials in early collection of ḥadīth", *IJMES* 28, 1996, 1–18; Rizwi S. Faizer, "The issue of authenticity regarding the traditions of al-Wāqidī as established in his *Kitāb al-Maghāzī*", *JNES* 58, 1999, 97–106, 100; Beaumont, "Hard-boiled", 26 f.

29 Günther, "Fictional narration", 464; Leder, "The literary use of the *Khabar*", 307.

30 E.g. Hamilton A. R. Gibb, "Ta'rīkh", in *Enzyklopaedie des Islām. Geographisches, ethnographisches und biographisches Wörterbuch der muhammedansichen Völker*, Ergänzungsband (Leiden: Brill, 1938), 249–63, 251; ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz al-Dūrī, *The Rise of Historical Writing among the Arabs*, ed. and trans. Lawrence I. Conrad (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1983), 29; Michael Lecker, "Wāqidī's account on the status of the Jews of Medina: a study of a combined report", *JNES* 54, 1995, 15–32, 19 f.

31 Cf. al-Dūrī, *The Rise*, 29, 111; Horovitz, "Alter und Ursprung", 43.

32 Görke and Schoeler, *Die ältesten Berichte*, 63, 68, 74–7, 90–1, 99.

33 Geo Widengren, "Oral tradition and written literature among the Hebrews in the light of Arabic evidence, with special regard to prose narratives", *Acta Orientalia* 23, 1958, 201–62, 234–9.

b. ʿUqba, al-Zuhrī and even ʿUrwa b. al-Zubayr, but they seem to be the exception here rather than the rule.

With or without collective *asānīd*, these long and complex narratives originated in all likelihood in the field of *maghāzī*, and not in the field of *ḥadīth*. Nevertheless, a number of them can also be found in *ḥadīth* collections, sometimes in chapters on *maghāzī*, sometimes in other chapters, according to their legal implications.

These traditions thus enable us to observe how the *muḥaddithūn* were dealing with material which was originally part of the *maghāzī* tradition. Comparing different versions of these long accounts as quoted in the works on *maghāzī* on the one hand and in *ḥadīth* collections on the other, it can be observed that these long traditions are sometimes quoted in full in *ḥadīth* collections, while sometimes only the legally relevant parts are adduced, often in different chapters of the same collection: quoting only part of a tradition was obviously considered to be an acceptable practice.

Wansbrough, in a study of the story of the slander about ʿĀ'isha, the *ḥadīṯ al-ifk*, argued on the basis of a critical analysis of three versions of the tradition that the version included in al-Bukhārī's *ḥadīth* collection is a late reworking of the basic narrative recorded by Ibn Isḥāq. The purpose of the reduction of the story to its "parabolic nucleus", according to Wansbrough, was exclusively paradigmatic.[34] However, Schoeler, on the basis of an analysis of the texts and *asānīd* of numerous versions of the tradition, showed that the version included in al-Bukhārī's collection is very close to the oldest recension of the story, while Ibn Isḥāq combined different traditions to build his narrative.[35] Thus in this case there is no indication of a deliberate reshaping of the tradition to make it conform to the needs of the *muḥaddithūn*.

The *ḥadīth al ifk* is one of a number of long and complex narratives on the life of Muḥammad going back to ʿUrwa b. al-Zubayr, versions of which are included both in *maghāzī* works and in *ḥadīth* collections. Some versions of these traditions are more elaborate and embellished than others, and some versions contain elements lacking in others. But the versions adduced in *ḥadīth* collections do not differ in any systematic way from those quoted elsewhere; for instance they do not as a rule contain fewer names or omit place names. What can be observed, however, is that they are usually equipped with complete *asānīd*, while in the works of *maghāzī* this may or may not be the case.

We may therefore infer that when *muḥaddithūn* included material based on long narratives originating in the field of *maghāzī* in their collections, they were trying to get hold of the versions that best conformed to their standards. They also felt free to quote only part of a tradition, but they did not as a rule reshape the tradition to produce normative texts.

Where shorter traditions are involved things become more complicated; unlike the long narratives or combined reports, these would also conform to the standards of *ḥadīth*. In this case it is more difficult to establish where a tradition originated and how it was employed in other fields.

34 Wansbrough, *The Sectarian Milieu*, 76–8.

35 Gregor Schoeler, *Charakter und Authentie der muslimischen Überlieferung über das Leben Mohammeds* (Berlin and New York: de Gruyter, 1996), 142–3.

In what follows two case studies shall be discussed. The first consists of several versions of a tradition relevant to the discussion of whether it is permissible to eat game while being in the ritual state of *iḥrām*. They served Nagel as the basis for his argument that the *maghāzī* materials were deprived of their historical setting when they were transferred to the field of *hadīth*.[36] First I will present a common version of the tradition and then Nagel's view of its development. The tradition in one version in al-Bukhārī's *Ṣaḥīḥ* is given with the following wording: ʿAbdallāh b. Abī Qatāda al-Aslamī narrates from his father, Abū Qatāda, who says:

> One day I was sitting with some of the Prophet's companions on the way to Mecca. The Prophet was ahead of us. Everybody was in the state of *iḥrām* but I was not. While I was busy repairing my shoes, they saw a wild ass. They did not tell me about it but they wished I had seen it. Then I looked up and saw it. So, I turned to the horse, saddled it and mounted it, but I forgot the whip and the spear. So I said to them: "Hand me the whip and the spear" but they said, "No, by God, we shall not help you in that in any way". I became angry and dismounted and picked up both things. Then I mounted the horse again, went at the wild ass and slew it. It died and I brought it to them. They took it and ate it. But then they had doubts about whether it was allowed for them to eat it while they were in the state of *iḥrām*. We proceeded and I hid with me the wild ass's forearm. We met the Prophet and asked him about the case. He asked, "Do you have something of it with you?" I answered in the affirmative and gave him the forearm. He ate it completely while he was in the state of *iḥrām*.[37]

There are several versions of this tradition and they differ in many details. Sometimes the Prophet simply allows the pilgrims to eat from the meat without doing so himself, sometimes place names are given, in some versions the Prophet asks if anyone has encouraged or ordered Abū Qatāda to hunt the wild ass, and only after this is denied does he allow the pilgrims to eat from the meat.[38]

36 Nagel, "Ḥadīṯ – oder: Die Vernichtung der Geschichte", 127; Nagel, "Verstehen oder nachahmen? Grundtypen der muslimischen Erinnerung an Mohammed", in *Jahrbuch des Historischen Kollegs* 2006, 73–94, 80–84.

37 al-Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, *Kitāb al-hiba*, 3.

38 See e.g. al-Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, *Kitāb jazā' al-ṣayd*, 2–5; ibid., *Kitāb al-jihād*, 46, 88; ibid., *Kitāb al-aṭʿima*, 19; ibid., 2 vols, *Kitāb al-dhabā'iḥ wa-l-ṣayd*, 10, 11; Muslim b. Ḥajjāj, *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, (Vaduz: Thesaurus Islamicus Foundation, 2000) 8. *Kitāb al-ḥajj*; Aḥmad b. Shuʿayb al-Nasā'ī, *Sunan*, (Vaduz: Thesaurus Islamicus Foundation, 2000), Kitāb *Manāsik al-ḥajj*, 78, 80, 81; ibid., *Kitāb al-ṣayd wa-l-dhabā'iḥ*, 32; Abū Dā'ūd, *Kitāb al-Manāsik*, 42; Abū ʿĪsā Muḥammad b. ʿĪsā al-Tirmidhī, *Sunan al-Tirmidhī*, 2 vols (Vaduz: Thesaurus Islamicus Foundation, 2000), *Kitāb al-ḥajj*, 25; Muḥammad b. Yazīd Ibn Māja, *Sunan Ibn Māja* (Vaduz: Thesaurus Islamicus Foundation, 2000), *Kitāb al-Manāsik*, 93; Mālik b. Anas, *al-Muwaṭṭa'* (Vaduz: Thesaurus Islamicus Foundation, 2000), *Kitāb al-ḥajj*, 24; Ibn Ḥanbal, *Musnad*, V: 296, 301, 302, 304, 305 f., 307, 308.

These details are of course important for the juridical aspect of this story: while it is forbidden to hunt in the state of *iḥrām*, this tradition can be adduced as an argument that it is permitted to eat game so long as the *muḥrim* is not involved in the hunting in any way. In fact, most elements of the tradition seem to serve a legal argumentation and show that Abū Qatāda's companions did not help him in any way. They did not call his attention to the wild ass and they did not hand him the whip or spear, although he asked them to do so.

Our main point of interest is the place name, as in some versions this story is said to have taken place in the year of al-Ḥudaybiya on the way to Mecca.[39] This is also the context in which al-Wāqidī places the story: it took place near al-Abwā', and although he does not mention all of the details given above, the outline of the story is the same.[40]

Nagel argued that this context, the story of the attempted pilgrimage of Muḥammad which resulted in the treaty of al-Ḥudaybiya, is indeed the origin of this tradition. In his view, in the *ḥadīth*-version the connection to al-Ḥudaybiya was eliminated and instead the explicit permission of Muḥammad to eat the meat, which can be found in several versions of the *ḥadīth*, was added. The aim of this was to eliminate the historical context and instead create a timeless, universally valid statement.[41]

However, this view is questionable: the tradition in question cannot be found in the context of al-Ḥudaybiya in the *maghāzī* literature before the time of al-Wāqidī. The *ḥadīth* was apparently not included by Ibn Isḥāq and as I see it was not transmitted by Mūsā b. ʿUqba, ʿUrwa b. al-Zubayr, al-Zuhrī or any other famous authority of *maghāzī*. On the other hand, as we have seen, it is present in numerous *ḥadīth* collections and plays an important part in the question of whether it is permitted for a *muḥrim* to eat meat from hunted animals. In Muslim's *Ṣaḥīḥ*, nine versions of this *ḥadīth* are presented next to six *aḥādīth* giving the opposite view, saying that Muḥammad was in the state of *iḥrām* when he was offered meat from someone who hunted it and that he refused to eat from it. Other *hadīth* collections offer a similar view: the Abū Qatāda *ḥadīth* is one of several relevant to the question of whether a *muḥrim* is allowed to eat game.

In most of these *aḥādīth* no historical context is mentioned while in a few versions of the Abū Qatāda *ḥadīth* it is mentioned that the incident happened on the way to al-Ḥudaybiya or in the year of al-Ḥudaybiya. It is instructive to look at the *asānīd*: all versions containing the reference to al-Ḥudaybiya share the common transmitter Yaḥyā b. Abī Kathīr, while Yaḥyā is not present in any version of the *ḥadīth* without reference to al-Ḥudaybiya. The only exception is the version adduced by al-Wāqidī, in which reference to al-Ḥudaybiya is made, but in the *isnād* of which Yaḥyā b. Abī Kathīr is not mentioned. However, al-Wāqidī regularly uses fictitious *asānīd* in order not to reveal his

39 E.g., al-Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, *Kitāb jazā' al-ṣayd*, 2–3; Muslim, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, *Kitāb al-ḥajj*, 8; al-Nasā'ī, *Sunan*, *Kitāb Manāsik al-ḥajj*, 80; Ibn Māja, *Sunan*, *Kitāb al-Manāsik*, 93; Ibn Ḥanbal, *Musnad*, 5: 301, 304.

40 al-Wāqidī, *al-Maghāzī*, II, 576.

41 Nagel, "Ḥadīṯ – oder: Die Vernichtung der Geschichte", 127; Nagel, "Grundtypen", 82 f.

true sources, as can be shown in several cases.[42] We should not therefore pay too much attention to his indication of the tradition's origin. Yaḥyā b. Abī Kathīr would thus be a partial common link according to the terminology of Gautier Juynboll.[43] Juynboll was among the first to apply systematically the common link theory, first formulated by Joseph Schacht,[44] and to develop it further, introducing a number of helpful technical terms. While the significance of the common link has been subject to debate,[45] some conclusions can usually be drawn from a study of the *asānīd* and the respective variants in the transmitted texts. For instance, given that there are a large number of variants of one tradition, it seems safe to assume that a specific element in the text of a *ḥadīth* was introduced by a certain transmitter if this element occurs only in those variants that were passed on by this transmitter and does not occur in any other variant.

Judging from the *asānīd* we thus have to assume that it was Yaḥyā b. Abī Kathīr who first made a connection between the Abū Qatāda *ḥadīth* and al-Ḥudaybiya. Yaḥyā b. Abī Kathīr died in 129 or 132,[46] and although he is usually considered to be trustworthy, al-Ṭabarī accuses him of tampering with *asānīd*.[47]

Taking into account the markedly legal character and the prominence of the Abū Qatāda *ḥadīth* in the *ḥadīth* collections – it is found in all canonical and several other collections – and its relative absence from the *maghāzī* tradition, it is highly unlikely that this *ḥadīth* originated in the *maghāzī* tradition on al-Ḥudaybiya. On the contrary, we must assume that this *ḥadīth* was circulating among the *muḥaddithūn*, that it was part of a purely legal discussion and that it was only later included by al-Wāqidī in his material on the *maghāzī*. The context apparently was provided within the legal discussion.

If this assumption is right, how can we explain that the *ḥadīth* was furnished with a historical context at a secondary stage within the legal discussion? Might this simply reflect a desire on the part of the transmitters to supply information originally left vague? This is, of course, possible. However, in a legal discussion, the historical context was not of primary importance. On the other hand, the context may become important when it comes to the possible abrogation of *aḥādīth*. Just as later verses from the Quran could abrogate contradicting earlier verses, the same was true for *aḥādīth*. A legal decision taken by the Prophet in the last years of his life would invalidate earlier rulings to the contrary, as is

42 Görke and Schoeler, *Die ältesten Berichte*, 122, 142–4, 183–4, 215, 221, 248, 252, 254, 266–7.

43 Cf. Gautier H. A. Juynboll, "Some *isnād*-analytical methods illustrated on the basis of several women-demeaning sayings from *ḥadīth* literature", *al-Qanṭara. Revista de estudos árabes* 10, 1989, 343–83, 352; Gautier H. A. Juynboll, *Encyclopedia of Canonical Ḥadīth* (Leiden: Brill, 2007), I, xx.

44 Joseph Schacht, *The Origins of Muhammadan Jurisprudence* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1950), 171–5.

45 Cf. Harald Motzki, "Dating Muslim traditions. A survey", *Arabica* 52, 2005, 204–53, 222–42; Görke, "Eschatology, history, and the common link", 188.

46 Shams al-Dīn Muḥammad b. ʿUthmān al-Dhahabī, *Taʾrīkh al-Islām wa-wafayāt al-mashāhir wa-l-aʿlām*, ed. ʿU. Tadmurī, 51 vols (Beirut: Dār al-Kitāb al-ʿArabī 1409/1989–1421/2000), 8: 297–9.

47 Abū Jaʿfar Muḥammad b. Jarīr al-Ṭabarī, *Taʾrīkh al-rusul wa-l-mulūk* (*Annales*), ed. M. J. de Goeje et al., 15 vols (Leiden: Brill 1879–1901), III, 2503.

explained for instance in Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ's *ʿUlūm al-ḥadīth*.[48] Books on abrogating and the abrogated in the *ḥadīth* form a literary genre of their own. The editor of Ibn Shāhīn's *Kitāb Nāsikh al-ḥadīth wa-mansūkhihi*, Karīma bt. ʿAlī, lists fourteen works on the topic.[49] None of the works she mentions date from before the third century AH; however, it is most likely that the discussions about abrogation in *ḥadīth* predate the first works dedicated to the topic considerably. Providing the Abū Qatāda *ḥadīth* with a context in the year of al-Ḥudaybiya, only four years before Muḥammad's death, could strengthen the position of those scholars who argued that the *muḥrim* is allowed to eat game, since the *ḥadīth* might be abrogating earlier *aḥādīth* to the contrary. Al-Wāqidī was himself an expert in *fiqh*,[50] and included far more legal *aḥādīth* in his work than did for instance Ibn Isḥāq.[51] It is conceivable that al-Wāqidī included the Abū Qatāda *ḥadīth* in his account on al-Ḥudaybiya not only because he felt that this was its correct historical context, but also because the legal view expressed in this *ḥadīth* corresponded to his own opinion. He does quote a tradition to the contrary – Muḥammad refuses to take a piece of wild ass offered to him because he is in the state of *iḥrām* – immediately following the Abū Qatāda *ḥadīth*.[52] But in the context of the farewell pilgrimage, yet another similar story is told: someone on the way offers Muḥammad a wild ass he hunted. Muḥammad and his companions are in the state of *iḥrām* and Muḥammad offers the meat to them, saying that it is allowed for them, so long as they did not hunt themselves nor order someone else to do so.[53] Whether or not al-Wāqidī included these traditions to support a legal view, it should have become clear that this tradition first circulated among legal and *ḥadīth* scholars and was only transferred to the *maghāzī*-tradition at a secondary stage.

The second case consists of several versions of a tradition dealing with a woman who committed theft and who is punished by having her hand cut off. The tradition again is found in numerous versions that differ in several details.[54] A typical version adduced by al-Bukhārī reads as follows:

> ʿĀ'isha narrated that the Quraysh were worried about the woman from Makhzūm who had committed theft. They said, "Who can speak (in favour

48 In the 34th category on abrogating and abrogated *ḥadīth*. Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ al-Shahrazūrī, *ʿUlūm al-ḥadīth*, ed. Nūr al-Dīn ʿItr, (Dimašq: Dār al-Fikr, 1406/1986), 286–8, esp. 288.

49 Ibn Shāhīn, *Kitāb Nāsikh al-ḥadīth wa-mansūkhihi*, ed. Karīma bt. ʿAlī (Bayrūt: Dār al-Kutub al-ʿilmiyya, 1420/1999), 55–7.

50 Leder, "al-Wāḳidī", *EI*^{2}, XI, 101.

51 Horowitz, *The Earliest Biographies*, 115.

52 al-Wāqidī, *al-Maghāzī*, II, 576.

53 al-Wāqidī, *al-Maghāzī*, III, 1092 f.

54 E.g. al-Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, *al-Shahādāt*, 8; ibid., *Aḥādīth al-anbiyā'*, 57; ibid., *al-Maghāzī*, 55; ibid., *al-Ḥudūd*, 12, 13; Muslim, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, *al-Ḥudūd*, 2; Abū Dā'ūd, *Sunan*, *al-Ḥudūd* 4, 15; al-Trimidhī, *Sunan*, *al-Ḥudūd*, 6; al-Nasā'ī, *Sunan, Qaṭʿ al-Sāriq* 5, 6; Ibn Māja, *Sunan*, *al-Ḥudūd*, 6; Ibn Ḥanbal, *Musnad*, VI, 162; ʿAbd al-Razzāq b. Ḥammām al-Ṣanʿānī, *Kitāb al-Muṣannaf*, ed. H. R. al-Aʿẓamī, 11 vols (Beirut: al-Majlis al-ʿilmi, 1970–72), X, 201 f.; Muḥammad b. ʿAbdallāh al-Ḥākim al-Nīsābūrī, *al-Mustadrak ʿalā l-Ṣaḥīḥayn*, ed. M. ʿA. ʿAtā, 5 vols, 2nd. ed. (Beirut: Dār al-kutub al-ʿilmīya, 1422/2002), 379 f.; Ibn Saʿd, *al-Ṭabaqāt al-kabīr*, ed. E. Sachau et al., 9 vols, (Leiden: Brill, 1904–28), VI.1, 48 f.; VIII, 192 f.

> of her) to the Prophet and who would dare to do so except Usāma, the favourite of the Prophet?" So Usāma spoke to the Prophet, and the Prophet replied, "Do you intercede against one of the legal punishments of God?" Then he got up and addressed the people, saying, "O people! Those before you went astray because if a noble person committed theft, they used to leave him, but if a weak person among them committed theft, they used to inflict the legal punishment on him. By God, if Fāṭima, the daughter of Muḥammad [i.e. his own daughter] committed theft, Muḥammad would cut off her hand!"[55]

While in most versions of this *ḥadīth* it is not indicated where or when the incident happened, in some versions the story is said to have taken place during the conquest of Mecca.[56] Following the arguments of Wansbrough or Nagel we should assume that the story is taken from the *maghāzī* material and that the form given above – which does not mention this historical context – is a later reworking. But the story is not found in this context in most of the books on *maghāzī*. It is mentioned by Ibn Saʿd and Ibn Kathīr, but not by al-Wāqidī or Ibn Isḥāq. It is often quoted on the authority of al-Zuhrī and ʿUrwa b. al-Zubayr, but it is not included in their long accounts of the conquest of Mecca.[57]

It is helpful to look at the variants in more detail. The tradition is included in ʿAbd al-Razzāq's *Muṣannaf*, where the person intervening in favour of the woman is once given as Usāma b. Zayd (which is the most popular version), and once as ʿUmar b. Abī Salama.[58] Muslim once names Umm Salama as the one who intercedes on behalf of the woman.[59] Ibn Saʿd once gives the name of the woman – who is not usually mentioned by name – as Fāṭima bt. al-Aswad b. ʿAbd al-Asad and once as Umm ʿAmr bt. Sufyān b. ʿAbd al-Asad. In the latter case the affair is said to have happened at the farewell pilgrimage.[60] It is interesting to note that Ibn Saʿd mentions the incident only in the biographical entries of Usāma b. Zayd[61] and Fāṭima bt. al-Aswad,[62] but not in the passages on the conquest of Mecca or the farewell pilgrimage.

It is very probable that this alleged saying of Muḥammad, too, was provided with a context only at a secondary stage: there are different versions regarding both the persons involved and the historical context, which is given either as the conquest of Mecca or the farewell pilgrimage. As in the case of the Abū Qatāda tradition, a study of the *asānīd* indicates who may be responsible for establishing a connection between the story and the conquest of Mecca: all versions placing the story in this context of the conquest share the transmitters

55 al-Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥiḥ*, *Ḥudūd,* 12.
56 E.g. al-Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥiḥ*, *al-Shahādāt*, 8; ibid., *Maghāzī*, 55; Muslim, *Ṣaḥiḥ, al-Ḥudūd*, 2; Abū Dā'ūd, *Sunan*, *al-Ḥudūd.* 4; al-Nasā'ī, *Sunan*, *Qaṭʿ al-Sāriq*, 6.
57 Görke and Schoeler, *Die ältesten Berichte*, 240, 242–4.
58 ʿAbd al-Razzāq, *al-Muṣannaf*, x, 201 f.
59 Muslim, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, Ḥudūd, 2 (last tradition).
60 Ibn Saʿd, *al-Ṭabaqāt*, VIII, 192 f.
61 Ibn Saʿd, *al-Ṭabaqāt*, IV.1, 48 f.
62 Ibn Saʿd, *al-Ṭabaqāt*, VIII, 192 f.

ʿAbdallāh b. Wahb (125–197)[63] and Yūnus (d. 152 or 159),[64] while all versions transmitted by other individuals do not establish this connection. As both ʿAbdallāh and Yūnus occur in all versions mentioning Mecca, we cannot be sure who ultimately made the connection, but it seems probable that the connection was not made before the first half of the second century.

The variants regarding historical context and persons involved as well as the fact that the tradition cannot be found in the works on *maghāzī* prior to Ibn Saʿd make it probable that it is a legal tradition only later included in works on *maghāzī*. As in the case of the Abū Qatāda tradition, it is not unlikely that the association of the story with events in the last years of the Prophet – the conquest of Mecca and the farewell pilgrimage – was made in support of the legal implications of the *ḥadīth* and results from the discussion about abrogation of *ḥadīth*. Another possible explanation would again be the desire to supply additional information, which in this case might account for the conflicting identifications of the woman and those interceding on her behalf. In any case, the historical context seems to have been provided only at a secondary stage, but still within the legal discussion. This historical context, provided in some variants of the tradition, led to their eventual inclusion in works on *maghāzī*.

The case studies adduced above suggest that it is indeed possible in some cases to establish that the occurrence of a tradition in one field preceded its use in another. That some traditions were employed in one field before they were transferred to others is not *per se* surprising and can best be explained by envisaging different circles of scholars discussing different issues. Traditions with juristic content would circulate mainly among jurists and *ḥadīth* scholars, while traditions with historical content would circulate mainly among those occupied with the *maghāzī* or related fields.

We have seen that traditions in the course of transmission were subject to change; the circumstances of transmission and the different interests of the transmitters involved shaped them and led to the emergence of numerous variants of a tradition. The fact that *ḥadīth* and *maghāzī* scholars had different aims and priorities when passing on traditions this left its mark on those traditions.[65]

We can therefore show that some traditions – the long coherent accounts of the main events in the life of Muḥammad, but possibly other traditions too – were included in the field of *ḥadīth* only after they obtained their basic form in *maghāzī* circles. On the other hand we have juristic *aḥādīth* that were only introduced into the field of *maghāzī* after they had circulated among *ḥadīth* scholars and were shaped by them. The transfer of traditions from one field to the other did not necessarily involve any deliberate changes to the text.

It is less obvious than it first seems that *maghāzī* material found its way into some collections of *ḥadīth*. Of course, it can be argued that everything the

63 al-Dhahabī, *Taʾrīkh al-Islām*, XIII, 264–9.

64 al-Dhahabī, *Taʾrīkh al-Islām*, IX, 674.

65 These circles, of course, should not be regarded as exclusive. We know of several authorities in *maghāzī* who were also considered to be experts in law or *ḥadīth*, and they may be partly responsible for the traditions spreading from one circle to the other. However, it seems reasonable to assume that the different conventions prevailing in the different fields led to different changes.

Prophet did is *sunna* and therefore everything from the *maghāzī* tradition might become part of the *ḥadīth* as long as it met the formal standards. But as we know the *ahl al-maghāzī* were often said to be transmitting traditions according to standards that were not acceptable to the *muḥaddithūn*, and so the *muḥaddithūn* sometimes adduced *maghāzī* material although it did not really conform to their standards. We can find such traditions, for instance combined reports going back only to ʿUrwa b. al-Zubayr or al-Zuhrī and not to an eyewitness in ʿAbd al-Razzāq's or Ibn Abī Shayba's *Muṣannafs*.

Apparently, the traditions of some of the authorities on *maghāzī* were deemed by the *muḥaddithūn* to be good enough to be included in their works. It seems that this happened only with traditions of those early *maghāzī* scholars who were also known for their expertise in *ḥadīth*, as Saʿīd b. al-Musayyab, ʿUrwa b. al-Zubayr, ʿAbdallāh b. Abī Bakr, or al-Zuhrī.[66] The combined reports of later authorities in both *maghāzī* and *ḥadīth*, such as Mūsā b. ʿUqba were not adopted by the *muḥaddithūn*.

The versions included in the canonical *ḥadīth* collections are usually the ones with the best *isnād*. It is not clear at this point whether the *isnād* was deliberately improved when the materials came to be used and transmitted by the *muḥaddithūn*, or whether the *muḥaddithūn* simply selected the versions with the best *asānīd* from all the different versions that existed. In some cases, the *isnād* of one of the informants, of one part of the combined report, seems to have been regarded as the *isnād* for the whole tradition.

Maghāzī scholars, on the other hand, did not of course have a problem including juristic *aḥādīth* in their materials. Apparently, as the corpus of *ḥadīth* was growing and the first collections of *ḥadīth* were emerging, *maghāzī* scholars were starting to use and exploit these sources as they were using poems, verses from the Quran, stories from *quṣṣāṣ* and other material. This is a trend that seems to have continued for a long time: Ibn Isḥāq does not quote many explicitly legal *aḥādīth*, yet al-Wāqidī has a large number of these *aḥādīth* and Ibn Kathīr adduces even more. This is of course not necessarily a general development but might also be due to the personal preferences of the authors.

The influence of *ḥadīth* on *maghāzī* is not limited to the additional material it provided. *Maghāzī* scholars were also influenced by the *muḥaddithūn* regarding formal aspects of transmission. The use of the *isnād* – the backbone of the sciences of *ḥadīth* – came to be more important in the field of *maghāzī*. It was quite possibly the scholars versed in both *ḥadīth* and *maghāzī* who first advocated and advanced the use of the *isnād* in the field of *maghāzī*, and the importance of the *isnād* and its use in the field of *maghāzī* was continually growing.

It is noteworthy that the early expert in *maghāzī* and *ḥadīth*, ʿUrwa b. al-Zubayr, only occasionally gave indications of his sources in his long historical accounts. This is in contrast to the legal or exegetical traditions transmitted on his authority, which are usually provided with *asānīd* that include ʿUrwa's sources. However, it is impossible to say whether these *asānīd* grew

66 Cf. Horovitz, *The Earliest Biographies*, 12, 23, 27, 55, 60 ff.; see also Leder, "The literary use of the *Khabar*", 313.

backwards and were improved in the course of transmission. A generation later, with Ibn Shihāb al-Zuhrī, it had become customary to furnish the long historical traditions with some kind of *isnād*, but there are still traditions attributed to him and not traced back any further. A further generation later, with Ibn Isḥāq, it seems to have become the rule that most of the material should be introduced with an *isnād*; Ibn Isḥāq regularly employs collective *asānīd* when he introduces his combined reports, and so does al-Wāqidī.

We may conclude that although the fields of *maghāzī* and *ḥadīth* are closely related, they remained distinct.[67] They influenced each other, and quite a number of traditions from one field could also be seen relevant to the other. But neither can the *maghāzī* be regarded as secondary to and derived from the *ḥadīth*, nor can the opposite view be upheld.

67 Cf. Landau-Tasseron, "Sayf Ibn ʿUmar", 9, who comes to a similar conclusion.