

‘Abū Hurayra’ a Narrator of Ḥadīth Revisited: An Examination into the Dichotomous Representations  
of an Important Figure in Ḥadīth with special reference to Classical Islamic modes of criticism

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## Abstract

The task of preserving the Ḥadīth was undertaken, according to the classical Muslim view, by the Companions of the Prophet Muḥammad and, thereafter, the *Ṭabiʿun* (Successors), and then from generation to generation. Thus, we find this great amount of Ḥadīth in front of us today. From amongst these Ḥadīth we find as it is alleged a great proportion narrated by the Companion Abū Hurayra (d.57/58/59AH/681/682/683CE). He has narrated various kinds of narration, from those on creed to those on the ethics of Islam. However, his narrations have been looked upon with certain scepticism and criticism, as has his own personality, in both Classical Ḥadīth scholarship and Modern Ḥadīth scholarship.

This research, entitled: '*Abū Hurayra*' a Narrator of Ḥadīth Revisited: An Examination into the Dichotomous Representations of an Important Figure in Ḥadīth with special reference to Classical Islamic modes of Criticism, will discuss specifically Abū Hurayra the Companion of the Prophet Muḥammad and his alleged status as a prolific narrator of the Ḥadīth. The aim of this study is to highlight how Abū Hurayra is depicted and perceived by both Classical Ḥadīth Scholarship and Modern Ḥadīth Scholarship. Furthermore, the central argument of this thesis is that the charge of Abū Hurayra being a *Mukthir* (a prolifically active narrator who embellished his reports) is unfair for the simple reason that those traditions he uniquely transmits are rather small in number. Most of the other traditions with which his name is associated have concomitant and parallel *isnāds* (Chains of Narration).

This study therefore sets out to critically examine and analyse the life and narrations of Abū Hurayra in view of the academic debates on the wider issues of the authenticity of the sources and how they affect the arguments put forward by this research.

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