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Ibrāhīm b. Ya‘qūb al-Sa‘dī al-Jūzjānī (d. 259/873?) and his *Aḥwāl al-rijāl*: an early systematic approach to *Rijāl* criticism

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Abstract

This article presents the first complete biography in English of the early hadith critic al-Jūzjānī (d. 259/873?), in addition to a thorough analysis of his work *Aḥwāl al-rijāl*, the earliest *Syngramma* dedicated to the genre of *al-jarḥ wa-l-ta‘dīl*. Through a detailed examination of al-Jūzjānī’s engagement with the opinions of earlier hadith critics, his use of the terms of hadith criticism and his own remarks, this article delineates his conception of the function of hadith, methodological framework and approach to the appraisal of hadith transmitters, arguing that al-Jūzjānī may have been the first and *only* hadith scholar to methodically incorporate the consideration of transmitters’ conformity to the “correct” doctrines in hadith criticism. His methodological innovation, however, departs from existing convention among *ahl al-ḥadīth*. As a result, although al-Jūzjānī’s authority as a hadith critic was well recognized, his approach failed to appeal to succeeding contributors to hadith criticism.

Keywords: al-Jūzjānī; early hadith criticism; *Aḥwāl al-rijāl*; *ahl al-bida‘*; *al-jarḥ wa-l-ta‘dīl*

Abū Ishāq Ibrāhīm b. Ya‘qūb b. Ishāq al-Sa‘dī al-Jūzjānī (d. 259/873?; hereafter, al-Jūzjānī¹) lived in the ninth century, when hadith collection, compilation and criticism flourished, and had become the intellectual pursuit and vocation of many towering figures of Muslim scholarly tradition. As the student of the founding fathers of hadith criticism, such as Yaḥyā b. Ma‘īn (d. 233/848), Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal (d. 241/855) and ‘Alī b. al-Madīnī (d. 234/849), and the contemporary of the compilers of what would later be known as the Sunnī “Six Books”, al-Jūzjānī was a well-established hadith critic. What distinguishes him from his teachers is his adoption of a systematic approach to the evaluation of hadith transmitters based on a definable methodological framework, paradigmatic of his contemporary compilers’ application of hadith criticism to their hadith works.

Al-Jūzjānī’s centrality to the edifice of hadith criticism can be gauged by Lucas’s study of the early development of hadith criticism. Surveying seven lists and three *ṭabaqāt* works, Lucas seeks to determine who the most significant hadith critics were by the end of the tenth century, whom he further divides into two grades, based on the frequency with which a critic is counted by these sources as the major authority in hadith

¹ Other spellings include Jawzjān and Jūzajān. Given its Persian origin, Gowz-gān(ān), I use Jūzjān throughout; see Clifford E. Bosworth, “Jowzjān” in *Encyclopædia Iranica*: <https://iranicaonline.org/articles/jowzjan>.

criticism.² Lucas identifies the chief critics active in the period 200–300/815–912 as Yaḥyā b. Maʿīn, ʿAlī b. al-Madīnī, Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal, al-Bukhārī (d. 256/870), Abū Zurʿa al-Rāzī (d. 264/878) and Abū Ḥātim al-Rāzī (d. 277/890), and recognizes al-Jūzjānī as a secondary critic of this time.³ This speaks of the esteem in which classical hadith scholars held al-Jūzjānī.

Despite his role in the discipline of hadith criticism, his scholarship and his *rijāl* work have yet to be treated in detail in any European language.⁴ Pavel Pavlovitch's recent entry on hadith criticism presents a brief overview of al-Jūzjānī's work, but his characterization of *Aḥwāl al-rijāl* ("The Situations of Hadith Transmitters") as a work which "abounds in debasing allegations and accusations of heresy" does not quite do justice to this early endeavour of *rijāl* criticism.⁵ Although in his *Aḥwāl al-rijāl* al-Jūzjānī appears unusually vocal in comparison with laconic and to-the-point early hadith critics, his contribution to *rijāl* criticism should not be disregarded due to the polemical elements of his work. Rather, a better understanding of al-Jūzjānī's conceptualization of hadith criticism is indispensable to a complete picture of the intellectual dynamics and socio-political contexts in which early Sunnī hadith scholarship took shape. This article provides a thorough analysis of al-Jūzjānī's evaluation of hadith transmitters and his methodological framework to further our current knowledge concerning early hadith criticism.

As no biography of al-Jūzjānī is available in English,⁶ the first section will present a complete account of al-Jūzjānī's life, his travels in pursuit of knowledge and interpersonal networks. The second section will address al-Jūzjānī's work *Aḥwāl al-rijāl* by situating its production and characteristics in its context, and outlining its organizational structure. In the third section, al-Jūzjānī's approach to the evaluation of hadith transmitters, with regard to his engagement with the views of the predecessors to hadith criticism and the terms he uses in hadith criticism, will be studied in detail. The fourth section will examine his conception of the religious function and purpose of hadith and his methodology of *naqd al-rijāl* based on his own remarks and treatment of hadith transmitters. The article concludes with an assessment of al-Jūzjānī's contributions to hadith criticism, arguing that al-Jūzjānī is very likely the first and *only* critic to systematically and consistently implement the concept of doctrinal uprightness in *rijāl* criticism. His innovation, however, deviates from the established convention of *ahl al-ḥadīth* and thus inhibited his influence on the development of hadith criticism.

I. Al-Jūzjānī: a biography

The attributive al-Jūzjānī refers to a city, Jūzjān or Jūzjānān, in Khurāsān, between Balkh and Marrūdh.⁷ Despite the association with this Khurāsānī city, there is no evidence that Ibrāhīm b. Yaʿqūb al-Saʿdī al-Jūzjānī was born or grew up there, contra al-Sāmarrāʾī and

² Scott C. Lucas, *Constructive Critics, Ḥadīth Literature, and the Articulation of Sunni Islam: The Legacy of the Generation of Ibn Saʿd, Ibn Maʿīn, and Ibn Ḥanbal* (Leiden, 2004), 113–21.

³ Lucas, *Constructive Critics*, 122–4.

⁴ That al-Jūzjānī's significance is yet to be appreciated is illustrated by the fact that his attributive (*nisba*), al-Saʿdī, is unrecognizable to many, despite being an important source for later *rijāl* compilers: "The critics most often mentioned by Ibn ʿAdī al-Qaṭṭān (d. Gurgan, 365/976?) in his encyclopaedia of weak transmitters, *al-Kāmil fi ḍuʿafāʾ al-rijāl*, are al-Bukhārī and Yaḥyā ibn Maʿīn, followed in descending order by al-Nasāʾī, Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal, and the obscure al-Saʿdī." See Christopher Melchert, "The life and works of Al-Nasāʾī", *Journal of Semitic Studies* 59/2, 2014, 394–5.

⁵ Pavel Pavlovitch, "Ḥadīth criticism" in *EI*³, Brill online.

⁶ For a biography of al-Jūzjānī in Arabic, see footnote 8.

⁷ Yāqūt, *Muʿjam al-buldān* (Beirut, 1977), 2: 182; al-Samʿānī, *al-Ansāb*, (ed.) ʿAbd al-Raḥmān b. Yaḥyā al-Muʿallimī al-Yamānī (Hyderabad, 1977), 3: 400–01.

al-Ziriklī.⁸ Given that many of al-Jūzjānī's teachers based in Kūfa or Baṣra died before 205/820–21, al-Bastawī speculates, convincingly, that in all likelihood he would have been born in 180–89/796–805.⁹ His tribal attributive, Sa'ḍī, may be understood as a blood or cliental connection with a number of Arab tribes or the Companion Sa'ḍ b. Abī Waqqāṣ,¹⁰ but sources do not provide a conclusive answer in this regard.¹¹

Like hadith scholars of his time, al-Jūzjānī travelled in pursuit of hadith and related knowledge. Yet, as his connection with Jūzjān seems unclear, it is hard to reconstruct his itineraries – it is plausible that he studied under scholars based in Khurāsānī cities, such as 'Abdallāh b. 'Uthmān b. Jabala (d. 221/836), the leading scholar of Marw.¹² A reference in his *Aḥwāl al-rijāl* indicates his presence in Hamadhān in 230/844–45.¹³ Yet, many of his *shuyūkh* originating in the eastern provinces or bearing the pertinent *nisbas* also travelled to or settled in the Ḥijāz, Jazīra or Iraq. Thus, it is difficult to estimate the influences of Khurāsān on al-Jūzjānī.¹⁴

He studied and lived in Mecca, Basra and al-Ramla,¹⁵ and was the student of Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal in Baghdad the year when al-Wāqidī died (207/823).¹⁶ He also studied under Wāsiṭī and Kūfan scholars, such as al-Faḍl b. Dukayn (d. 219/834), 'Ubaydallāh b. Mūsā (d. 213/829) and Yazīd b. Hārūn (d. 206/821).¹⁷ Iraqi hadith scholars' influence on him are evident in the composition of his teachers and students, as indicated by al-Mizzī's list, and his practice of hadith criticism, which was built upon the cumulative efforts of his most prominent teachers, Yaḥyā b. Ma'īn, Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal and 'Alī b. al-Madīnī, as discussed in the third section.

Al-Jūzjānī came to Egypt in 245/859–60, where in all likelihood he met Sa'īd b. al-Ḥakam b. Abī Maryam (d. 224/838–39), 'Abdallāh b. Šāliḥ b. Muḥammad (d. 223/837) and, perhaps, 'Abdallāh b. Yūsuf (d. 218/833–34), before he finally settled in Damascus sometime between 232/846–47 and 241/855–56.¹⁸ In Damascus, he remained

⁸ Šubḥī al-Sāmarrā'ī, "Tarjamat al-mu'allif", in al-Jūzjānī, *Aḥwāl al-rijāl* (Beirut, 1985), 10; Khayr al-Dīn al-Ziriklī, *al-A'lām* (Beirut, 2002), 1: 81. See al-Bastawī's doubt in 'Abd al-'Alīm 'A. al-Bastawī, "al-Imām al-Jūzjānī wa-minhajuhu fi al-jarḥ wa-l-ta'dīl", in al-Jūzjānī, *al-Shajara fi aḥwāl al-rijāl* (Riyadh, 1990), 11.

⁹ Al-Bastawī, "al-Imām", 10.

¹⁰ Al-Sam'ānī, *al-Ansāb*, 7: 128–44.

¹¹ Al-Bastawī, "al-Imām", 11.

¹² Al-Dhababī, *Siyar al-'alām al-nubalā'*, (eds) Shu'ayb al-Arna'ūt et al., eleventh ed. (Beirut, 1996), 10: 270–1.

¹³ Al-Jūzjānī, *Aḥwāl al-rijāl*, (ed.) Šubḥī al-Sāmarrā'ī (Beirut, 1985), no. 378. A comparison of the editions by al-Sāmarrā'ī and al-Bastawī with the manuscript of *Aḥwāl al-rijāl* shows that the latter meticulously marks the marginal notes and the textual ambiguities with a more robust critical apparatus, whereas the former provides an optimum reading. Both reflect the original text faithfully. I use al-Sāmarrā'ī's edition throughout this article, as the numbering of the subjects in this edition is more accurate. When referring to the biographical entries in *Aḥwāl al-rijāl*, I cite the numbers given by the editor; otherwise, page numbers are cited.

¹⁴ Al-Mizzī's (654–742/1256–1341) list of his teachers shows that the majority of them are Iraqi, Baṣran and Kūfan *par excellence*: al-Mizzī, *Tahdhīb al-kamāl fi asmā' al-rijāl*, (ed.) Bashshār 'A. Ma'rūf (Beirut, 1987), 2: 244–7; al-Bastawī, "al-Imām", 16–26; al-Sāmarrā'ī, "Tarjama", 10. Examples of the Eastern scholars on the list who moved about include, but are not limited to, Muḥammad b. al-Šabbāḥ (d. 227/841), originally from Harāt, settled in Baghdad: al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī, *Ta'rikh madīnat al-salām wa-akhbār muḥaddithihā wa-dhīkr quṭṭānihā al-'ulamā' min ghayr ahlihā wa-wāridihā*, (ed.) Bashshār 'A. Ma'rūf (Beirut, 2001), 3: 342–5; al-Ḥajjāj b. Muḥammad (d. 206/821–22), Tirmidhī by origin, lived in Baghdad and Miššisa: Ibn Sa'ḍ, *Kitāb al-Ṭabaqāt al-kabīr*, (ed.) 'Alī M. 'Umar (Cairo, 2001), 9: 335; al-Khaṭīb, *Ta'rikh*, 9: 142–5; al-Ḥasan b. Mūsā al-Ashyab, of Khurāsānī origin, settled in Baghdad and took up the judgeship of Homs and Mosul: al-Khaṭīb, *Ta'rikh*, 8: 456–60; Makkī b. Ibrāhīm (d. 215/830), a Balkhī scholar, claimed to have performed *ḥajj* 60 times: Ibn Sa'ḍ, *Kitāb al-Ṭabaqāt*, 9: 377; al-Khaṭīb, *Ta'rikh*, 15: 143–6.

¹⁵ Al-Mizzī, *Tahdhīb*, 2: 248.

¹⁶ Al-Bastawī, "al-Imām", 14; al-Jūzjānī, *Aḥwāl*, 228.

¹⁷ Al-Bastawī, "al-Imām", 22–3, 26.

¹⁸ Al-Bastawī, "al-Imām", 15; al-Mizzī, *Tahdhīb*, 2: 248.

in correspondence with Aḥmad b Ḥanbal, and is said to have read the latter's letters from the pulpit and collected two volumes of his responsa.¹⁹ He was also liaised with Abū Zur'ā al-Rāzī and Abū Ḥātim al-Rāzī.²⁰ Al-Jūzjānī was the teacher of Abū Dāwūd al-Sijistānī (d. 275/889), al-Tirmidhī (d. 279/892) and al-Nasā'ī (d. 303/915?), in addition to several Damascene scholars.²¹ Different death dates are given in the biographical sources: after 244/858–59,²² 256/869–70 or during Dhū al-Qa'da 259/873.²³ The final date seems most plausible, as it was provided by al-Jūzjānī's Damascene student, Abū al-Daḥdāḥ Aḥmad b. Muḥammad b. Ismā'īl (d. 328/939–40),²⁴ who also narrated one of his works, *Amārāt al-nubuwwa* ("The Signs of Prophethood"), which survives in fragments.²⁵

Al-Jūzjānī is noted for his anti-ʿAlī tendencies (*al-inḥirāf ʿan ʿAlī*),²⁶ but a "Nāṣibī" accusation against him was rejected by the editors of *Aḥwāl al-rijāl* for numerous reasons.²⁷ It is important to keep in mind that the sectarian labels used during the first four centuries of Islam were highly fluid and ought to be understood in relative terms.²⁸ Al-Dāraquṭnī (d. 385/995) describes al-Jūzjānī as a reliable compiler with a retentive memory (*kāna min al-ḥuffāz al-muṣannifin wa-l-mukharrrijin al-thiqāt*),²⁹ but al-Jūzjānī cannot be considered a prolific compiler by the standards of his time. In addition to the responsa of Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal, mentioned earlier, he authored a *Tārīkh* that does not survive and a collection of hadith about the miraculous acts and thaumaturgic knowledge of the Prophet, titled *Kitāb Amārāt al-nubuwwa*.³⁰ The latter survives in a fragment of four folios, consisting of 13 traditions, which were extracted from the sixth volume (*juzʿ*) of the original collection.³¹ Al-Jūzjānī seems to have been among the earliest contributors to the topic of the proof of prophethood (*dalāʿil* or *aʿlām al-nubuwwa*).³² It seems that the only surviving complete work of al-Jūzjānī is *Aḥwāl al-rijāl*, which is discussed in detail in the following section.

¹⁹ Al-Mizzī, *Tahdhīb*, 2: 248; Ibn Abī Yaʿlā, *Ṭabaqāt al-ḥanābila*, (ed.) Muḥammad Ḥ. al-Fiqī (Cairo, 1952), 1: 98.

²⁰ Ibn Abī Ḥātim, *Kitāb al-Jarḥ wa-l-taʿdīl* (Hyderabad, 1952), 2: 148–9.

²¹ Al-Bastawī, "al-Imām", 27–30; al-Sāmarrāʿī, "Tarjama", 11.

²² Ibn Ḥibbān, *Kitāb al-Thiqāt*, (ed.) Muḥammad ʿA. Khān (Hyderabad, 1973), 8: 81–2.

²³ Ibn ʿAsākir, *Tārīkh madīnat dimashq*, (ed.) ʿUmar b. Gh. al-ʿAmrī (Beirut, 1995), 7: 281–2; Khalīl b. Aybak al-Ṣafadī, *al-Wāfi bi-l-wafayāt*, (eds) Aḥmad al-Arnāʿūt and Turkī Muṣṭafā (Beirut, 2000), 6: 109.

²⁴ Al-Dhahabī, *Siyar*, 15: 268–9.

²⁵ Al-Bastawī, "al-Imām", 32–3, 380–1.

²⁶ Ibn ʿAdī, *al-Kāmil fī duʿafāʾ al-rijāl*, (eds) ʿĀdil A. ʿAbd al-Mawjūd and ʿAlī M. Muʿawwaḍ (Beirut, n.d.), 1: 504; al-Ṣafadī, *al-Wāfi*, 6: 109; al-Dhahabī, *Mizān al-iʿtidāl fī naqd al-rijāl*, (eds) ʿAlī M. Muʿawwaḍ and ʿĀdil A. ʿAbd al-Mawjūd (Beirut, 1995), 1: 205; Ibn Ḥibbān, *al-Thiqāt*, 8: 81–2; Ibn Ḥajar al-ʿAsqalānī, *Tahdhīb al-tahdhīb*, (eds) Ibrāhīm al-Zaybaq and ʿĀdil Murshid (Beirut, n.d.), 1: 95; Ibn ʿAsākir, *Tārīkh*, 7: 281.

²⁷ Al-Bastawī, "al-Imām", 50–9; al-Sāmarrāʿī, "Tarjama", 14–17. See the excerpt of al-Jūzjānī's *Amārāt al-nubuwwa* in al-Jūzjānī, *al-Shajara fī aḥwāl al-rijāl*, (ed.) ʿAbd al-ʿAlīm ʿA. al-Bastawī (Riyadh, 1990), 399–400. See also Mareike Koertner, "Dalāʿil al-Nubuwwa literature as part of the medieval scholarly discourse on prophecy", *Der Islam* 95/1, 2018, 91–109. I thank one of the anonymous reviewers for this reference. On "Nāṣibiyya" among *aḥl al-ḥadīth*, see Nebil Husayn, *Opposing the Imām: The Legacy of the Nawāṣib in Islamic Literature* (Cambridge, 2021), esp. 60–4, 201–2; Tobias S. Andersson, *Early Sunnī Historiography: A Study of the Tārīkh of Khalīfa b. Khayyāt* (Leiden; Boston, 2019), 80–7.

²⁸ I-Wen Su, *The Shīʿī Past in the Great Book of the Songs* (New Jersey, 2021), 60–92, 242–6; Adam R. Gaiser, *Sectarianism in Islam: The Umma Divided* (New York, 2022), ch. 7; Harry Munt, "Versifying history in Abbasid Iraq: the universal history of ʿAlī b. al-Jahm", in *The Historian of Islam at Work: Essays in Honor of Hugh N. Kennedy*, (eds) Maaika van Berkel and Letizia Osti (Leiden, 2022), 80–2.

²⁹ Al-Mizzī, *Tahdhīb*, 2: 248. On the use and meaning of the term *ḥāfiẓ* among early traditionists, see Leonard T. Librande, "The scholars of Ḥadīth and the retentive memory", in *Cahiers d'onomastique Arabe 1988–1992* (Paris, 1993), 39–48.

³⁰ Al-Bastawī, "al-Imām", 35, 37.

³¹ Al-Bastawī, "al-Imām", 380.

³² Al-Bastawī, "al-Imām", 378–80. See also Koertner, "Dalāʿil al-Nubuwwa Literature", 95–6.

II. *Aḥwāl al-rijāl*: an early work of *al-jarḥ wa-l-ta'dīl*

Al-Jūzjānī's *Aḥwāl al-rijāl*, which is examined closely here, is also known by other titles, such as *al-Mutarjam*, *Kitāb al-Du'afā'* and *Ma'rifat al-rijāl*.³³ It is preserved in only one manuscript, held in al-Maktabat al-Zāhiriyya, Damascus, copied after 511/1117–18.³⁴ The title found in the manuscript is *Kitāb al-Shajara fī aḥwāl al-rijāl*, but both al-Bastawī and al-Sāmarrā'ī rejected the word *al-shajara*, written in a different script, as an interpolation by a later scribe. Furthermore, the colophon of the manuscript (*samā'āt*) refers to this work as *Aḥwāl al-rijāl li-l-Jūzjānī*, a title they considered more apposite to its content.³⁵ However, later on in the addendum of his edition al-Bastawī preferred *Kitāb al-Shajara* as the correct title, because Abū Bakr b. al-ʿArabī (d. 543/1148) refers to *Aḥwāl al-rijāl* as *Kitāb al-Shajara li-l-Jūzjānī fī asmā' al-muḥaddithīn*.³⁶

Aḥwāl al-rijāl seems to have been the first *Syngramma* exclusively dedicated to *al-jarḥ wa-l-ta'dīl*, as it is mainly concerned with the (un-)reliability of hadith transmitters and their sectarian tendencies. While Ibn Sa'd's *al-Ṭabaqāt* includes the assessment of traditionists, it pertains to the *adab* genre rather than a proper *rijāl* work.³⁷ Furthermore, given the existence of *al-Ṭabaqāt*'s different recensions and posthumous additions,³⁸ in its current state this work cannot be seen as a *Syngramma* in a strict sense. And although al-Jūzjānī's teachers, ʿAlī b. al-Madīnī, Yaḥyā b. Maʿīn and Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal, are regarded as the leading hadith critics of their time, their literary output is more the result of the cumulative efforts of their students rather than their own. *Rijāl* and *ʿilal* works attributed to Yaḥyā b. Maʿīn, ʿAlī b. al-Madīnī and Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal were collated and collected by their students, whose authorial/editorial renderings palpably determined, to varying degrees, the organization and presentation of their teachers' words and views.³⁹ Moreover, such collections of the opinions of al-Jūzjānī's teachers often contain rather miscellaneous content. A great deal of them treat hadith transmitters' biographical information (teknonyms, patronyms, personal names, nicknames and/or *nisbas*), the quantity and quality of their narrations (how many hadith and by what means one transmits from a reputed source) and their interpersonal links (whether a transmitter truly narrates from a reputed source) – the evaluation of hadith transmitters' credentials constitutes merely

³³ Al-Bastawī, “al-Imām”, 136–8, 37; al-Sāmarrā'ī, “Tarjama”, 17–18.

³⁴ For further details, see al-Bastawī, “al-Imām”, 156–61; al-Sāmarrā'ī, “Tarjama”, 18–21. This manuscript will be referenced to as ms. 349 henceforth.

³⁵ Al-Bastawī, “al-Imām”, 130–7; see also the photocopy of the manuscript's front page on page 23 and al-Sāmarrā'ī, “Tarjama”, 17–18.

³⁶ Al-Jūzjānī, *al-Shajara fī aḥwāl al-rijāl* (Riyadh, 1990), 477. I thank one of the anonymous reviewers for this reference.

³⁷ Melchert, “The life and works of Al-Nasā'ī”, 400.

³⁸ Melchert, “The life and works of Al-Nasā'ī”, 399; Ahmad Nazir Atassi, “The transmission of Ibn Sa'd's biographical dictionary ‘Kitāb al-Ṭabaqāt al-Kabīr’”, *Journal of Arabic and Islamic Studies* 12, 2012, 68–75.

³⁹ For example, al-Dārimī (d. 280/894) arranges Yaḥyā b. Maʿīn's views by transmitter name, in alphabetical order, and is quite vocal when disagreeing with his teacher. Al-Dūrī (d. 271/884) organizes Yaḥyā b. Maʿīn's opinions in the *ṭabaqāt* structure beginning with the Companions and followed by the Successors and scholars based in different regions, whereas Ibn Junayd (d. c. 260–69/873–83) and Ibn Muḥriz' collections appear to be haphazardly arranged; see Aḥmad M. N. Sayf, *Yaḥyā b. Maʿīn wa-kitābuhu al-tārīkh: dirāsa wa-tartīb wa-taḥqīq* (Mecca, 1979), 1: 142–57. On Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal's *Kitāb Ma'rifat al-rijāl wa-l-ʿilal*, see Christopher Melchert, *Aḥmad Ibn Hanbal* (Oxford, 2006), 53–4; Lucas, *Constructive Critics*, 216–17. See also Christopher Melchert, “The Musnad of Aḥmad Ibn Ḥanbal: how it was composed and what distinguishes it from the six books”, *Der Islam* 82/1, 2005, 32–51. Regarding ʿAlī b. al-Madīnī's works, see I-Wen Su, “ʿAlī b. al-Madīnī (161–234/778–849): a critical reconstruction of his biography and evaluation of his contribution to ḥadīth criticism”, *Journal of Islamic Studies* 33/1, 2021, 1–34; I-Wen Su, “The ambiguity of early hadith criticism: ʿAlī b. al-Madīnī's (161–234/778–849) evaluation of hadith transmitters”, *The Muslim World* 112/4, 2022, 492–518.

one of many subjects entertained by this generation of hadith critics.⁴⁰ Hadith scholars contemporary with al-Jūzjānī were accustomed to the emerging writerly culture, but their *rijāl* works were primarily preoccupied with the identification of hadith transmitters, that is, knowledge of their names and tribal and/or geographical affiliations. The assessment of their (un)reliability was only occasionally provided and was often interposed with other kinds of information.⁴¹ For example, Melchert's analysis of al-Bukhārī's *al-Tārīkh al-kabīr* shows that few transmitters are evaluated, accounting for only 6 per cent of the sample. Thus, according to Melchert, "it seems unlikely that anyone could use TK [*al-Tārīkh al-kabīr*] directly to tell which transmitters to include in a collection of reliable hadith, which not".⁴² While al-ʿIjlī's (d. 261/875) *Thiqāt* mainly focuses on the assessment of hadith transmitters, it was probably collected by his son and preserved in the form of a *hypomnēma*.⁴³

In contrast, al-Jūzjānī's *Aḥwāl al-rijāl* is a product of his own design. It is clear that al-Jūzjānī divides this book based on the transmitters' sectarian tendencies or geographical affiliations, as shown below. The work itself is also sandwiched by a preface and an epilogue – both unusual in the *rijāl* works of his predecessors and contemporaries. Hence, al-Jūzjānī's *Aḥwāl al-rijāl* can arguably be seen as the first *Syngamma* work on the appraisal of hadith transmitters, that is, the earliest known and surviving example of the genre *al-jarḥ wa-l-taʿdīl*.⁴⁴

In terms of structure, *Aḥwāl al-rijāl* is partly influenced by an Iraqi compilatory convention prevalent among early scholars and *ahl al-akḥbār* (the compilers of historical and biographical reports) – a systemization classifying subjects by their geographical affiliations.⁴⁵ While regional division is employed, al-Jūzjānī's innovation is manifest in the organization of *Aḥwāl al-rijāl* by sectarian divisions. Thus, the arrangement of *Aḥwāl al-rijāl* adheres to a two-fold scheme that is oriented by the geographical and sectarian affiliations of the treated subjects. Based on al-Jūzjānī's use of sectional headings and interpolation of comments or apologia, *Aḥwāl al-rijāl* can be divided into the following parts:

- I. Al-Jūzjānī's preface⁴⁶
- II. The Khārijīs⁴⁷
- III. Al-Jūzjānī's citation of the reports concerning the *fitna* as the cause of hadith criticism⁴⁸

⁴⁰ Sayf, *Yaḥyā b. Maʿīn*, 1: 143–57; Melchert, *Aḥmad Ibn Hanbal*, 53–4; Su, "The ambiguity", 495–6.

⁴¹ Shawkat M. Toorawa, *Ibn Abī Ṭāhir Ṭayfūr and Arabic Writerly Culture: A Ninth-Century Bookman in Baghdad* (London, 2005), 9–15; Ahmed El Shamsy, *The Canonization of Islamic Law: A Social and Intellectual History* (Cambridge, 2015), 36–8, 147–66; Gregor Schoeler, *The Oral and the Written in Early Islam*, (ed.) James E. Montgomery, (trans.) Uwe Vagelpohl (London, 2006), 33–6, 116.

⁴² Christopher Melchert, "Bukhārī and early hadith criticism", *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 121/1, 2001, 12.

⁴³ ʿAbd al-ʿAlīm ʿA. al-Bastawī, "al-Muqaddima", in al-ʿIjlī, *Maʿrifat al-thiqāt* (Cairo, n.d.), 32, 70–1.

⁴⁴ Al-Sāmarrāʾī, "Tarjama", 7–9.

⁴⁵ Chase F. Robinson, *Islamic Historiography* (Cambridge, 2003), 66–74; Andersson, *Early Sunni Historiography*, 53–4, 93–9. See also the descriptions of works by al-Dūrī and al-ʿIjlī in Sayf, *Yaḥyā b. Maʿīn*, 1: 151–5; al-Bastawī, "al-Muqaddima", 72–7, 179, 189–90.

⁴⁶ Al-Jūzjānī, *Aḥwāl*, 29–34.

⁴⁷ This section is marked by al-Jūzjānī's statement: "Thus, I will begin by mentioning the Khārijīs [...]"; see al-Jūzjānī, *Aḥwāl*, 34–5 (the quote at 34).

⁴⁸ Al-Jūzjānī, *Aḥwāl*, 35–7. This may be an excursus related to the discussion of the Khārijīs or the Mukhtārīs in the following section. See also Pavel Pavlovitch, "The origin of the *Isnād* and Al-Mukhtār b. Abī ʿUbayd's revolt in Kūfa (66–7/685–7)", *Al-Qanṭara* 39/1, 2018, 17–48, esp. 39. I thank one of the anonymous reviewers for this reference.

- IV. Al-Jūzjānī's description of Shī'ī sects, the Saba'iyya and Mukhtāriyya, with emphasis on the latter's corruption of hadith,⁴⁹ followed by the Kūfan transmitters whose credentials are impugned due to their Shī'ī convictions or their untrustworthiness,⁵⁰ including Abū Ḥanīfa and his followers,⁵¹ and the leading Kūfan hadith scholars, whose hadith are acceptable when provided with full *isnāds*.⁵²
- V. The Baṣran transmitters⁵³
- VI. The Medinans and transmitters based in other regions, including Mecca, Yemen, Ramla, Ayla, Jazīra, Syria and Egypt, among others⁵⁴
- VII. The reliable transmitters professing the Qadarism⁵⁵
- VIII. Al-Jūzjānī's apologia⁵⁶
- IX. A list of blameworthy transmitters whose hadith should be rejected⁵⁷
- X. Al-Jūzjānī's epilogue⁵⁸

Aḥwāl begins, after al-Jūzjānī's preface, with a list of the Khārijīs, and then, after an interval comprising the sayings of earlier hadith scholars concerning the origin and significance of *rijāl* criticism, introduces the "Ghulāt" groups,⁵⁹ the Saba'iyya and Mukhtāriyya, and the hadith transmitters associated with various forms of Shī'ism based in Kūfa, who are interposed with weak Kūfan transmitters without noticeable sectarian tendencies. This is followed by a section on impugnable Baṣran transmitters and one on their counterparts based in Medina and other cities, before moving to those accused of Qadarī belief. Then, al-Jūzjānī presents an apologia for including the transmitters whose credentials are called into question, even if some have repented of their sins, as their errors or forgery of hadith corrupted hadith corpus.⁶⁰ After this, he proceeds to list unreliable transmitters, before ending the book with his passionate epilogue.⁶¹

The organizational structure of *Aḥwāl al-rijāl* well captures al-Jūzjānī's conception of *rijāl* criticism, which is informed by the earlier generation of hadith critics, especially his teachers, but departs from their shared premise by its emphasis on "correct" belief as a key factor in the evaluation of hadith transmitters. The sectional division is primarily sectarian and secondarily geographical, as the proportion of content shows. The Khārijī section is rather short, while that on Shī'ī-Kūfan comprises the lion's share of the work compared with those on Baṣra, Medina and other cities, the Qadarī and the last section.

⁴⁹ Al-Jūzjānī, *Aḥwāl*, 37–40. Both sects are introduced by al-Jūzjānī with *thumma*, probably following his mention of the Khārijīs: al-Jūzjānī, *Aḥwāl*, 37, 39.

⁵⁰ Al-Jūzjānī, *Aḥwāl*, 41–78 (no. 10–101).

⁵¹ Al-Jūzjānī, *Aḥwāl*, 75–7 (no. 95–9).

⁵² Al-Jūzjānī, *Aḥwāl*, 79–95 (no. 102–40). This is marked by al-Jūzjānī's comment in 79.

⁵³ Al-Jūzjānī, *Aḥwāl*, 96–124 (no. 141–204). This is marked by a sectional heading written in a larger script in the manuscript; see ms. 349, the verso of folio 10.

⁵⁴ The Medinans are found in al-Jūzjānī, *Aḥwāl*, 125–45 (no. 205–51); others: 145–81 (no. 252–327). This is marked by a sectional heading written in a larger script in the manuscript; see ms. 349, the recto of folio 13.

⁵⁵ Al-Jūzjānī, *Aḥwāl*, 181–91, no. 328–51 (his sectional remark in 181; see also ms. 349, the verso of folio 17).

⁵⁶ Al-Jūzjānī, *Aḥwāl*, 191–3. This is marked by al-Jūzjānī's remark in 191. See also ms. 349, folios 18–19.

⁵⁷ Al-Jūzjānī, *Aḥwāl*, 193–209 (no. 353–88).

⁵⁸ Al-Jūzjānī, *Aḥwāl*, 209–15.

⁵⁹ The term "Ghulāt" itself does not appear in *Aḥwāl al-rijāl*, but the words derived from the trilateral roots *gh-l-w* are used by al-Jūzjānī to describe the excessive partisanship of the subjects associated with Shī'ī tendencies as well as other beliefs such as *al-irjā'*, as in al-Jūzjānī, *Aḥwāl*, 152 (no. 268). I thank one of the anonymous reviewers for suggesting this caveat.

⁶⁰ I thank one of the anonymous reviewers for suggesting this more sensible reading.

⁶¹ Cf. the tables of contents in the editions by al-Bastawī and al-Sāmarrā'ī in al-Jūzjānī, *al-Shajara*, 472–3; al-Jūzjānī, *Aḥwāl*, 236.

Al-Jūzjānī's methodological concerns and innovations in his approach to the evaluation of hadith transmitters will be explored in the following sections.

III. Al-Jūzjānī's approach to hadith criticism and hadith terminology

While the organizational structure of *Aḥwāl al-rijāl* suggests al-Jūzjānī's departure from his predecessors' approach to hadith criticism by dividing his *rijāl* work on the basis of the subjects' sectarian affiliations in addition to their geographical connections, he does honour the authority of the earlier critics and benefits from their knowledge and evaluations. In his apologia, al-Jūzjānī elucidates his selection of the transmitters treated in his *Aḥwāl*: "All I mentioned [as to the flaws of the transmitters] come from one of the [following] ways: a report I heard (*samāʿ*) with an *isnād*; a report I heard from the imams of the people of knowledge;⁶² and analysis of his [of the subject being evaluated] hadith, but that [the last way] may be few."⁶³ Throughout *Aḥwāl*, it is not uncommon to find him examining, citing or disputing the opinions of earlier hadith authorities.⁶⁴ The most important authority al-Jūzjānī adduces in *Aḥwāl* is Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal, cited 16 times throughout, followed by ʿAlī b. al-Madīnī, cited seven times; and Ibn ʿUyayna (d. 198/814), Shuʿba b. al-Ḥajjāj (d. 160/776?) and Yaḥyā b. Maʿīn, each cited five times.⁶⁵ These five all feature in the lists of prominent hadith critics identified by Lucas.⁶⁶

Al-Jūzjānī quotes the views of these towering figures in hadith criticism to form his opinions. Regarding Juwaybir b. Saʿīd, ʿUbayda b. Muʿattib and al-Kalbī, al-Jūzjānī states that he was informed by someone that they heard Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal say, "None should bother themselves with their hadith."⁶⁷ Al-Jūzjānī also cites Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal's description of Qurra b. ʿAbd al-Raḥmān b. Ḥaywaʿīl as being "*munkar al-ḥadīth*".⁶⁸ He notes that Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal rates the hadith of ʿUmar b. Rāshid as "nothing",⁶⁹ whereas Yaḥyā b. Maʿīn does not praise the hadith of ʿUthmān b. Abī al-ʿĀtika.⁷⁰ Asked why he did not write Saʿīd b. Sinān's traditions, Yaḥyā b. Maʿīn retorts, "Who would write those traditions?" When al-Jūzjānī told him that he did write those hadith for corroboration (*iʿtibār*), Yaḥyā b. Maʿīn replied, "Those are not even for corroboration. Those are lies (*bawāṭil*)."⁷¹

Al-Jūzjānī also relies on his predecessors for the reports exposing the mendacity of the subjects treated in his *Aḥwāl*. He was informed that Abū Muqātil al-Samarqandī "created *isnād* for pious sayings (*yunshiʿ li-l-kalām al-ḥasan isnādan*)",⁷² whereas he learnt from ʿAlī b. al-Madīnī of the confession of Abū Ṣāliḥ that all the traditions he narrated were lies.⁷³

⁶² Presumably, the distinction lies in whether al-Jūzjānī receives the information through a continuous chain of transmission or not. An example of a report reaching him through the second way would be al-Jūzjānī hearing "someone inform me from Ibn Ḥanbal (*samiʿtu man ḥaddathani ʿan Ibn Ḥanbal*), who said: 'None is bothered with their hadith.'" See al-Jūzjānī, *Aḥwāl*, 55 (no. 39).

⁶³ Al-Jūzjānī, *Aḥwāl*, 192.

⁶⁴ Al-Bastawī, "al-Imām", 115–16.

⁶⁵ Earlier hadith critics cited less than three times include ʿAbdallāh b. al-Mubārak (d. 181/797; al-Jūzjānī, *Aḥwāl*, no. 35, 247, 385); Abū Mushir (d. 218/833; no. 311, 312, 245); Sufyān al-Thawrī (d. 161/778; no. 150, 208, 351); ʿAbd al-Raḥmān b. Maḥdī (d. 198/814; no. 28, 259); and Yaḥyā b. Saʿīd al-Qaṭṭān (d. 198/813; no. 64).

⁶⁶ Lucas, *Constructive Critics*, 122–3.

⁶⁷ Al-Jūzjānī, *Aḥwāl*, no. 38–9.

⁶⁸ Al-Jūzjānī, *Aḥwāl*, no. 294.

⁶⁹ Al-Jūzjānī, *Aḥwāl*, no. 199.

⁷⁰ Al-Jūzjānī, *Aḥwāl*, no. 279.

⁷¹ Al-Jūzjānī, *Aḥwāl*, no. 301.

⁷² Al-Jūzjānī, *Aḥwāl*, no. 374.

⁷³ Al-Jūzjānī, *Aḥwāl*, no. 64.

Al-Kalbī (d. 146/763–64) used to add things to hadith (*tadhriḥ*), according to al-Aṣmaʿī (d. 213/828?).⁷⁴

Quite often, al-Jūzjānī cites these authorities' judgements to buttress his own evaluations. Al-Jūzjānī considers al-Ḥakam b. ʿAbdallāh b. Saʿd to be an “ignorant liar” and then recounts Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal's order to throw the hadith of al-Ḥakam and that of Iṣḥāq b. Abī Farwa into the Tigris.⁷⁵ Al-Jūzjānī judges Jābir b. Yazīd as a liar and mentions Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal's report that ʿAbd al-Raḥmān b. Maḥdī dropped Jābir's hadith to find peace of mind.⁷⁶ For al-Jūzjānī, the judgement that al-Wāqidi is not satisfactory (*muqniʿ*) is supported by the fact that Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal recycled his books into book covers (*zahāʾir li-l-kutub*).⁷⁷ Abū Dāwūd al-Nakhaʿī, who forged hadith according to al-Jūzjānī, claims to have met and narrated from Yazīd b. Abī Ḥabīb at Derbend (*al-Bāb wa-l-abwāb*),⁷⁸ Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal exclaims, “What was Yazīd doing in Derbend? Look at his audacity, his boldness and his disregard for the sedition he brought about.”⁷⁹ ʿAṣim b. Abdallāh, judged by al-Jūzjānī as weak in hadith, is defamed by Ibn ʿUyayna due to his poor memory.⁸⁰ Al-Jūzjānī describes Ismāʿīl b. Muslim as “very frail in hadith (*wāhī al-ḥadīth jiddan*)”, as ʿAlī b. al-Madīnī confirms, “Our companions agree on dropping his hadith.”⁸¹ Al-Jūzjānī bases his judgement that ʿUthmān b. Miqṣam al-Burrī is a liar on Sufyān al-Thawrī's view, quoted via ʿAlī b. al-Madīnī, and buttresses this view with Yaḥyā b. Maʿīn's discovery that al-Burrī allegedly transmitted from Nāfiʿ a statement by Ibn ʿUmar, of which Nāfiʿ had never heard.⁸² ʿAbdallāh b. Ziyād b. Samʿān is “baseless in hadith” (*dhāhib*), for Abū Mushir heard that he allowed students to add things to his notebooks and he would read the altered notebooks afterwards.⁸³ Al-Ḥasan b. ʿUmāra's hadith is fallen (*sāqit*) for Shuʿba discovered that the seven traditions he claimed to have heard from al-Ḥakam were never uttered by the said source.⁸⁴ The view that Baqiyya b. al-Walīd (d. 197/812–13?) and Ismāʿīl b. ʿAyyāsh (d. 181/797) were only reliable when they narrated from the reliable is based on Abū Mushir.⁸⁵

Less frequently, al-Jūzjānī relies on hadith authorities for biographical information on the transmitters he addresses, especially with regard to their sectarian tendencies. During a session of *mudhākara* (“a memory contest”), ʿAlī b. al-Madīnī names Sālim b. Abī Ḥafṣa as one who became excessive in *rafḍ* (rejection of the caliphs before ʿAlī).⁸⁶ Al-Jūzjānī cites Ibn ʿUyayna's report that Ibn Abī Labīd is a Qadarī.⁸⁷ Khilās b. ʿAmr is identified by Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal as part of ʿAlī's police enforcers.⁸⁸

Rarely, al-Jūzjānī cites earlier critics' views in order to disagree with or refute them. In the entries on ʿAlī b. Ṣāliḥ and al-Ḥasan b. Ṣāliḥ, Ibn ʿUyayna considers the former to be better than the latter, but al-Jūzjānī holds that their reliability is equally poor.⁸⁹ Although Mūsā b. ʿUbayda's hadith was narrated by Sufyān al-Thawrī and Shuʿba, Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal

⁷⁴ Al-Jūzjānī, *Aḥwāl*, no. 37.

⁷⁵ Al-Jūzjānī, *Aḥwāl*, no. 266.

⁷⁶ Al-Jūzjānī, *Aḥwāl*, no. 28.

⁷⁷ Al-Jūzjānī, *Aḥwāl*, no. 228.

⁷⁸ Yāqūt, *Muʿjam al-buldān*, 1: 303.

⁷⁹ Al-Jūzjānī, *Aḥwāl*, no. 354.

⁸⁰ Al-Jūzjānī, *Aḥwāl*, no. 236.

⁸¹ Al-Jūzjānī, *Aḥwāl*, no. 261. This phrasing is typical of ʿAlī b. al-Madīnī's evaluations; see Su, “The ambiguity”, 516.

⁸² Al-Jūzjānī, *Aḥwāl*, no. 150.

⁸³ Al-Jūzjānī, *Aḥwāl*, no. 245.

⁸⁴ Al-Jūzjānī, *Aḥwāl*, no. 35.

⁸⁵ Al-Jūzjānī, *Aḥwāl*, no. 311–12.

⁸⁶ Al-Jūzjānī, *Aḥwāl*, no. 36.

⁸⁷ Al-Jūzjānī, *Aḥwāl*, no. 348.

⁸⁸ Al-Jūzjānī, *Aḥwāl*, no. 188.

⁸⁹ Al-Jūzjānī, *Aḥwāl*, no. 75–6.

told al-Jūzjānī that if Shu‘ba had known what was obvious to others, he would not have narrated from Mūsā b. ‘Ubayda.⁹⁰ Concerning ‘Amr b. Wāqid, although Muḥammad b. al-Mubārak al-Šūrī believes in his honesty, al-Jūzjānī maintains that his hadith were uncorroborated.⁹¹ Despite Ibn Abī Maryam’s praise for Rishdīn b. Sa‘d’s piety, al-Jūzjānī stresses that the latter’s hadith are unsubstantiated and unknown.⁹² Although Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal narrates from Talīd b. Sulaymān, al-Jūzjānī regards him as a liar.⁹³

Although al-Jūzjānī does not always agree with previous scholars, his engagement with their opinions illustrates the breadth of his knowledge, which he accumulated painstakingly during his journey. In addition to collecting the views of earlier critics who he did not meet in person, al-Jūzjānī further sought the opinions of the authorities to whom he had direct access, such as Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal, by consulting their students⁹⁴ or through correspondence.⁹⁵ That al-Jūzjānī’s pursuit of the study of *rijāl* criticism was a long-term commitment is well illustrated in the following entry:

Regarding Abū al-Mahdī Sa‘īd b. Sinān al-Ḥimsī, I fear that his traditions are forged, as they do not resemble people’s traditions. Abū al-Yamān praised him for his virtue and piety and said: “We prayed for rains through him.” I [al-Jūzjānī] examined his hadith and found his traditions uncorroborated (*mu‘ḍila*). Thus, I informed Abū al-Yamān of that, and he said: “Indeed, Yaḥyā b. Ma‘īn did not write anything from it [Sa‘īd’s hadith].” When I [al-Jūzjānī] returned to Iraq, I mentioned Abū al-Mahdī to Yaḥyā b. Ma‘īn and asked: “O Abū Zakariyyā’ [Yaḥyā b. Ma‘īn’s teknonym], what kept you from writing [his] traditions?” He said: “Who would write those traditions? Where did he find them?”⁹⁶

In order to verify Abū al-Yamān’s remark on Yaḥyā b. Ma‘īn’s evaluation, al-Jūzjānī asked the latter about Sa‘īd b. Sinān when he returned to Iraq. Al-Jūzjānī’s keen and diligent pursuit of such evaluations of hadith transmitters does not entail blind imitation of their appraisal. While well entrenched in *ahl al-ḥadīth*’s scholarly community, al-Jūzjānī’s analytical, critical approach to *rijāl* criticism is unmistakable, as shown in his disagreements with other critics. Furthermore, his critical approach is displayed in his practice of parallel comparison and, more importantly, in his use of the terms of hadith criticism, both discussed below.

Parallel comparison of traditions derived from a narrator (*al-ītibār* or *al-mutāba‘a*), a technique employed by his predecessors and contemporaries, is adopted by al-Jūzjānī, who refers to the term *ītibār* in the entry on Sa‘īd b. Sinān, quoted above.⁹⁷ Whether a transmitter’s reports accord with those of others is indicative of his credibility in al-Jūzjānī’s view, as his expositions of the mendacity of two Shī‘ī transmitters suggest. First, concerning al-Ḥārith b. ‘Abdallāh al-Ḥamdānī, al-Jūzjānī first evokes al-Sha‘bī’s (d. 104/722–23?) judgement that al-Ḥārith is a liar and notes the subject’s claim to have learnt revelation beyond that in the Quran – against the Muslim consensus that

⁹⁰ Al-Jūzjānī, *Aḥwāl*, no. 208.

⁹¹ Al-Jūzjānī, *Aḥwāl*, no. 297.

⁹² Al-Jūzjānī, *Aḥwāl*, no. 275.

⁹³ Al-Jūzjānī, *Aḥwāl*, no. 93. For another example where he disagrees with Mālik b. Anas (d. 179/795), see no. 144.

⁹⁴ Al-Jūzjānī, *Aḥwāl*, no. 38, 39, 266, 303.

⁹⁵ Al-Jūzjānī, *Aḥwāl*, no. 93.

⁹⁶ Al-Jūzjānī, *Aḥwāl*, no. 301.

⁹⁷ Eerik Dickinson, *The Development of Early Sunnite Ḥadīth Criticism: The Taqdimā of Ibn Abī Ḥātim al-Rāzī (240/854–327/938)* (Leiden, 2001), 82–90; Christopher Melchert, “The theory and practice of hadith criticism in the mid-ninth century”, in *Islam at 250: Studies in Memory of G. H. A. Juynboll*, (eds) Petra M. Sijpesteijn and Camilla Adang (Leiden, 2020), 74–102; Melchert, “The life and works of Al-Nasā‘ī”, 394–6. See also al-Bastawī, “al-Imām”, 107–8.

the revelation is *only* to be found between the two covers of the Holy Book. Al-Jūzjānī further stresses the point: “al-Ḥārith’s issue in his hadith is obvious to anyone whose heart is not blinded by God. He narrates from ‘Alī the testimony (*tashahhud*) therein disagreeing with the *umma*.”⁹⁸ Second, on ‘Āṣim b. Ḍamra, whom al-Jūzjānī holds no better than al-Ḥārith, *pace* Sufyān al-Thawrī, on the basis that his traditions about the number of *rak‘a* performed by the Prophet and the number of camels liable to taxation contradict the majority reports.⁹⁹ These two entries are unusually lengthy compared with others in *Aḥwāl*. While al-Jūzjānī’s decision to place al-Ḥārith b. ‘Abdallāh and ‘Āṣim b. Ḍamra in the Shī‘ī category already undermines their credentials, given the critical framework he set out in the prologue (see below), his examination of their traditions highlights his reliance on *ītibār*. Through parallel comparison, al-Jūzjānī confirms Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal’s verdict that Farqad’s hadith is *munkar*, for none of the Kūfan transmitters reports the traditions that he narrated from Abū Bakr via Murra.¹⁰⁰ Likewise, he judges that Sa‘īd b. Sinān’s traditions are frail (*aḥādīthuhu wāhiya*), as they do not resemble the narrations reported by other students of Mālik b. Anas (d. 179/795).¹⁰¹ The reliance on parallel comparison as a means to detect hadith forgery or evaluate one’s reliability also impacts on al-Jūzjānī’s use of the terms of hadith criticism.

Pavlovitch’s study of the technical hadith terms employed by Yaḥyā b. Ma‘īn, Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal, al-Bukhārī, al-‘Ijlī, Abū Zur‘a al-Rāzī, Ibn Abī Ḥātim (d. 327/938) and al-Nasā‘ī highlights that “during the third/ninth century ḥadīth criticism was an emerging science whose representatives used terminology in a subjective and unsystematic manner”.¹⁰² Despite this, there are terms used for positive and negative evaluations that are significantly shared by these hadith critics – *thiqa* (“reliable”), *lā ba’s bihi* (“it is fine”), *ḍa‘īf* (“weak”), *ṣāliḥ al-ḥadīth* (“alright in hadith”), *munkar* (“unknown” or “uncorroborated”) and *laysa bi-(l)-qawī* (“not strong”).¹⁰³ Most of these terms are also found in al-Jūzjānī’s evaluations.¹⁰⁴

Ḍa‘īf is used 44 times throughout *Aḥwāl*, which addresses 388 subjects,¹⁰⁵ whereas the opposite of *thiqa*, *ghayr thiqa* (“not reliable”), is used 33 times. The phrase, *laysa bi-(l)-qawī*, and its equivalents appear ten times. Other negative critical terms, which al-Jūzjānī shares with other ninth-century hadith critics, comprise *munkar* and its derivatives, used ten times in *Aḥwāl*; *matrūk* (“abandoned”) and its derivatives, five times; and *kadhḥāb* (“liar”) and its derivatives, approximately 30 times. It is noteworthy that al-Jūzjānī does not adhere to the one and same term when judging one as a liar or suggesting that one’s hadith be dropped. To *kadhḥāb*, al-Jūzjānī adds *muftarin* (“falsifier”) four times and *Dajjāl* (“false messiah”) twice. Perhaps as alternatives to *matrūk*, *sāqīṭ* (“fallen”) and *saqāṭa fulān/ḥadīth fulān* (“someone/someone’s hadith is fallen”) are found 21 times, whereas *dhāhib*, *dhāhib al-ḥadīth*, or *dahaba ḥadīth fulān* (“baseless”, “baseless in the transmission of hadith” or “someone’s hadith is baseless”) appear seven times.

Curiously, *laysa bi-(l)-shay’* (“nothing”) or its equivalents, often employed by al-Jūzjānī’s teachers, Yaḥyā b. Ma‘īn and Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal, appears only once.¹⁰⁶ In contrast, the

⁹⁸ Al-Jūzjānī, *Aḥwāl*, no. 10.

⁹⁹ Al-Jūzjānī, *Aḥwāl*, no. 11.

¹⁰⁰ Al-Jūzjānī, *Aḥwāl*, no. 153. See another example in no. 296.

¹⁰¹ Al-Jūzjānī, *Aḥwāl*, no. 272.

¹⁰² Pavlovitch, “Ḥadīth criticism”.

¹⁰³ Pavlovitch, “Ḥadīth criticism”; Lucas, *Constructive Critics*, 287–308; Su, “The ambiguity”, 492–3; Dickinson, *Development*, 93–4; Melchert, “Hadīth criticism”, 74–6; Leonard T. Librande, “The supposed homogeneity of technical terms in ḥadīth study”, *The Muslim World* 72/1, 1982, 34–5; J. A. Brown, *Hadīth: Muhammad’s Legacy in the Medieval and Modern World* (Oxford, 2009), 84.

¹⁰⁴ Al-Bastawī, “al-Imām”, 88–103.

¹⁰⁵ This number is based on al-Sāmarrā’ī’s edition; the total number given in al-Bastawī’s edition is 393.

¹⁰⁶ Al-Jūzjānī, *Aḥwāl*, no. 362.

occurrence of *wāhī al-ḥadīth* (“frail in hadith”), rarely used by his teachers, is prominent in *Aḥwāl* (18 times). The only other critic who utilizes this term significantly is Abū Zur‘a al-Rāzī.¹⁰⁷ *Layyin* (“tender”) is used a mere three times in *Aḥwāl*, whereas al-Jūzjānī uses the phrase *lā yushtaghal bi-ḥadīthihi* (“none is bothered with his hadith”), which occurs eight times, more frequently than others.

Another term al-Jūzjānī inherits from his teacher ‘Alī b. al-Madīnī is *mu‘ḍil* or its derivatives. Later compilers of encyclopedias on hadith science define *mu‘ḍil* as a hadith which lacks two or more transmitters below the level of the Companions in an *isnād*, in contrast to *mursal*, which refers to a hadith narrated by a Successor without the mediacy of a Companion, based on a statement attributed to ‘Alī b. al-Madīnī.¹⁰⁸ However, ‘Alī b. al-Madīnī applies the term *mu‘ḍil* to any hadith with a broken link.¹⁰⁹ The mismatch between the technical definition of the term *mu‘ḍil* and its (mis)use by early hadith critics is also observed by Ibn Ḥajar al-‘Asqalānī (d. 852/1449) and al-Sakhāwī (d. 902/1497), who found that the term was used to refer to hadith with dubious meanings instead of those with broken *isnāds*.¹¹⁰ It seems that al-Jūzjānī understood the term as equivalent to *munkar*. *Mu‘ḍil* and its derivatives are found in ten subjects, and are more or less employed as an alternative to *munkar*. For example, Mīnā b. Abī Mīnā is condemned by the imams of hadith due to “his profession of vice belief and the obscure traditions he transmitted (*ankara al-a‘imma ḥadīthahu li-sū’ madhhabihī wa-li-mā ḥaddatha min al-‘uḍal*)”, according to al-Jūzjānī.¹¹¹ Mīnā’s credentials are impugned because of his transmission of unknown hadith that cannot be corroborated, such as the hadith in which the Prophet implicitly designated ‘Alī as his successor, used to bolster the Shī‘ī claim.¹¹² Regarding Sa‘īd b. Sinān, al-Jūzjānī suspects that his hadith were fabricated, as they do not resemble those of others, saying, “I examined his hadith. His traditions are *mu‘ḍila*.”¹¹³ Thus, Sa‘īd b. Sinān is evaluated poorly, for his hadith are neither known nor corroborated, despite his piety and virtues.¹¹⁴ That most of the transmitters whose hadith al-Jūzjānī considers *mu‘ḍil* narrated traditions that cannot be corroborated suggests that he used the term synonymously with *munkar*.¹¹⁵ It is even telling that when assessing Rishdīn b. Sa‘d, al-Jūzjānī describes his narrations as *ma‘āḍil* and *manākīr*,¹¹⁶ the plurals of *mu‘ḍil* and *munkar*, indicating an overlap in connotations.¹¹⁷

Much less commonly, al-Jūzjānī evaluates the transmitters in a derisive manner. The hadith of Ḥarām b. ‘Uthmān, as al-Jūzjānī puts in a pun, is prohibited (*al-ḥadīth ‘an*

¹⁰⁷ Pavlovitch, “Hadīth criticism”.

¹⁰⁸ Al-Ḥākim al-Naysābūrī, *Ma‘rifat ‘ulūm al-ḥadīth wa-kamiyyatihi wa-ajnāsīhi*, (ed.) Aḥmad F. al-Sallūm (Beirut, 2003), 193. It is noteworthy that Ibn Ṣalāḥ (d. 643/1245) determines that *mu‘ḍil* is indistinguishable from *mursal* in the usage of earlier hadith scholars: Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ, *Ma‘rifat anwā‘ ‘ilm al-ḥadīth*, (eds) ‘Abd al-Laṭīf al-Hamīm and Māhir Y. al-Faḥl (Beirut, n.d.), 138.

¹⁰⁹ Su, “The ambiguity”, 494, fn. 12.

¹¹⁰ Al-Bastawī, “al-Imām”, 101–2.

¹¹¹ Al-Jūzjānī, *Aḥwāl*, no. 258.

¹¹² Ibn ‘Adī, *al-Kāmil*, 8: 219–20; Ibn Ḥibbān, *Kitāb al-Majrūḥīn min al-muḥaddithīn*, (ed.) Ḥamdī ‘A al-Salāfi (Riyadh, 2000), 2: 356; al-‘Uqaylī, *Kitāb al-Ḍu‘afā’*, (ed.) Ḥamdī ‘A. Ismā‘īl (Riyadh, 2000), 1393.

¹¹³ Al-Jūzjānī, *Aḥwāl*, no. 301.

¹¹⁴ Al-‘Uqaylī, *Kitāb al-Ḍu‘afā’*, 469; Ibn ‘Adī, *al-Kāmil*, 4: 403.

¹¹⁵ See also Rawḥ b. Janāḥ (al-Jūzjānī, *Aḥwāl*, no. 278); Ibn ‘Adī, *al-Kāmil*, 4: 59; al-‘Uqaylī, *Kitāb al-Ḍu‘afā’*, 413; ‘Amr b. Wāqid (al-Jūzjānī, *Aḥwāl*, no. 297); Ibn ‘Adī, *al-Kāmil*, 6: 210; al-Bukhārī, *Kitāb al-Tārīkh al-kabīr*, (ed.) al-Nadawī Ḥāshim (Hyderabad, n.d.), 6: 379–80; Ibn Ḥibbān, *Kitāb al-Majrūḥīn*, 2: 42–3; al-Haytham b. Jammāz (al-Jūzjānī, *Aḥwāl*, no. 198); Ibn ‘Adī, *al-Kāmil*, 8: 395–9; al-Wazīr b. ‘Abdallāh (al-Jūzjānī, *Aḥwāl*, no. 315); Ibn ‘Adī, *al-Kāmil*, 8: 375–6; ‘Abdallāh b. Yazīd al-Dimashqī (al-Jūzjānī, *Aḥwāl*, no. 290); al-Khaṭīb, *Tārīkh*, 11: 449; Ḥammād b. Yaḥyā (al-Jūzjānī, *Aḥwāl*, no. 196); al-‘Uqaylī, *al-Ḍu‘afā’*, 332; Ibn ‘Adī, *al-Kāmil*, 3: 26–7.

¹¹⁶ Al-Jūzjānī, *Aḥwāl*, no. 275.

¹¹⁷ Ibn ‘Adī, *al-Kāmil*, 4: 75, 80, 84.

Ḥarām ḥarām).¹¹⁸ He sarcastically describes ‘Awbad b. Abī ‘Imrān al-Jawnī as “one of the miracles”.¹¹⁹ Noting that Shahr b. Ḥawshab’s traditions are unlike others, al-Jūzjānī first cites Ibn ‘Awn’s judgement that his hadith be dropped and, commenting on Shahr b. Ḥawshab’s narrations about two Companions holding the reins of the Prophet’s she-camel, mockingly writes, “as if he were obsessed with the reins of the Prophet’s she-camel”.¹²⁰ Al-Jūzjānī rates Muqātil b. Sulaymān as a daring Dajjāl, and recounts a story that, when Muqātil b. Sulaymān haughtily invited people to ask him any question to display his erudition, a man asked him where the entrails of an ant are, leaving him speechless.¹²¹ Perhaps the most malicious comment throughout *Aḥwāl* is found in the entry on Abū al-Ṣalt al-Harawī, who, according to an unnamed leading scholar, is “more mendacious than the faeces of al-Dajjāl’s donkey”.¹²²

It is beyond doubt that al-Jūzjānī benefits from and relies on the existing inventory of hadith terminology, but in *rijāl* criticism he also employs a dozen highly idiosyncratic phrases and adjectives, scarcely seen elsewhere, which are informed by his methodological concerns. Al-Jūzjānī’s unusual inventory comprises phrases including the trilateral roots *q-n-‘* and *ḥ-m-d* as well as their derivatives.¹²³ Al-Jūzjānī considered the following to be unworthy of praise (in hadith): Yaḥyā b. ‘Abdallāh al-Jābir, Ismā‘īl b. Mujālid, Bādhām, al-Ḍaḥḥāk b. Ḥumra, Nahshal b. Sa‘īd (*ghayr maḥmūd* or *ghayr maḥmūd al-ḥadīth*),¹²⁴ and Abū al-Jaḥḥāf Dāwūd b. ‘Awf (*min ghayr al-maḥmūdīn fī al-ḥadīth*).¹²⁵ The verb “praise” is in the entry on Yamān b. al-Mughīra, regarding whom al-Jūzjānī states, “People do not praise his hadith (*lā yaḥmad al-nās ḥadīthahu*).”¹²⁶ Evaluations containing terms derived from the root *ḥ-m-d* are found 24 times throughout *Aḥwāl*, more often than *laysa bi-(l)-qawī*. Similarly, al-Jūzjānī describes the unreliable as *ghayr muqni‘* (“not satisfying”), *lā/lam yaqna‘ al-nās bi-ḥadīthihi* (“people are/were not satisfied with his hadith”), or, with its synonym, *ghayr marḍī* (“unsatisfactory”) 20 times in *Aḥwāl*.¹²⁷

The frequency with which al-Jūzjānī employs these extraordinary phrases confirms their terminological status in al-Jūzjānī’s epistemology of hadith criticism. Furthermore, the phrases derived from the trilateral roots *ḥ-m-d* highlight that he conceives of a transmitter’s conformity to a certain moral standard or doctrinal position as essential to *rijāl* criticism, since “being praiseworthy” involves hadith transmission as well as other aspects, such as moral conduct, approach to law, and sectarian convictions. The nature of these terms aligns with al-Jūzjānī’s approach to hadith criticism, which takes into consideration both transmitters’ honesty and their adherence to the correct belief, as explored in the next section.

IV. Al-Jūzjānī’s epistemological and methodological framework

To understand al-Jūzjānī’s peculiar use of hadith terms in his evaluations, it is imperative to study his methodology in relation to his conception of the function of hadith. In the preface, al-Jūzjānī first cites a hadith in which the Prophet encourages Muslims to speak up when seeing something conflicting with God’s guidance or which would

¹¹⁸ Al-Jūzjānī, *Aḥwāl*, no. 209. He most likely adduced the evaluation of Yaḥyā b. Ma‘īn: Ibn ‘Adī, *al-Kāmil*, 3: 379–80. I thank one of the anonymous reviewers for this reference.

¹¹⁹ Al-Jūzjānī, *Aḥwāl*, no. 167.

¹²⁰ Al-Jūzjānī, *Aḥwāl*, no. 141.

¹²¹ Al-Jūzjānī, *Aḥwāl*, no. 373.

¹²² Al-Jūzjānī, *Aḥwāl*, no. 379.

¹²³ Al-Bastawī’s interpretation of these two terms as being along a scale of reliability is not convincing: al-Bastawī, “al-Imām”, 93–6.

¹²⁴ Al-Jūzjānī, *Aḥwāl*, no. 65, 92, 64, 305, 376.

¹²⁵ Al-Jūzjānī, *Aḥwāl*, no. 124.

¹²⁶ Al-Jūzjānī, *Aḥwāl*, no. 186; other examples are: no. 239, 151, 70, 193, 279.

¹²⁷ The phrase “*ghayr marḍī*” appears only once: al-Jūzjānī, *Aḥwāl*, no. 252.

displease Him: “Let one of you not belittle himself by seeing a matter for which God would say something without speaking up so that God will say to him, when he meets Him: ‘What held you from saying it on such and such day?’”¹²⁸ The hadith justifies al-Jūzjānī’s cause for the work in question. That is, it is in adherence with God’s guidance and truth that al-Jūzjānī can assuredly disregard any animosity by those whom his work targets and whom he identifies as follows: first, who cannot secure the knowledge of hadith; second, accused of or associated with “innovation” (*bid‘a*); and, third, the foolish who, unable to differentiate sound and unsound traditions, collect everything they hear, seeking ease and comfort in their pursuit of hadith.¹²⁹ On these groups, al-Jūzjānī declares

I shall not care who is pleased and who is angered, as God determined that [path] for me, after I sought good from Him, since I am fighting for His religion, defending the sunna of His Prophet, protecting it from the people of deviation, exposing the godless liars who lied about the Prophet, may God bless him, and preferring the obligation of commanding [right] and forbidding [wrong], so that the ignorant will learn and those who seek certainty will refrain [out of discretion from narrating hadith carelessly], having faith in God and relying upon what He delivered through His Prophet.¹³⁰

Seeing himself as defending God’s *dīn* and His Prophet’s sunna, al-Jūzjānī practises *naqd al-rijāl* to fulfil a religious obligation stipulated by God without compunction, although it had been morally contested as it involves speaking negatively of others, which approaches slander (*ghība*).¹³¹

After clarifying his motivation and purpose, al-Jūzjānī proceeds to describe the opponents of his work, who are classified into four types based on their “ranks and sects” (*‘alā marātibihim wa-madhāhibihim*).

First, one who is deviant from truth and mendacious in his hadith (*minhum al-zā’igh ‘an al-ḥaqq kadhdhāb fi ḥadīthihi*).

Second, one who is mendacious in his hadith; I have not heard of an innovation about him, while mendacity itself suffices to be an innovation (*minhum al-kadhdhāb fi ḥadīthihi lam asma‘ ‘anhu bi-bid‘a wa-kafā bi-l-kidhb bid‘atan*).

Third, one who is deviant from truth but honest. His hadith has been circulated by people, as people left out his innovations but trusted his narrations. As to this group, in my opinion, the only remedy is to take what is well known among their hadith, as long as it does not support their innovations and appear suspicious.

Fourth, one who is weak in his hadith. It is not permissible for the pious to use his hadith as evidence alone, unless it is strengthened by the hadith of one who is stronger than him; then, his hadith can be used for corroboration.¹³²

¹²⁸ Al-Jūzjānī, *Aḥwāl*, 30.

¹²⁹ Al-Jūzjānī, *Aḥwāl*, 30–1.

¹³⁰ Al-Jūzjānī, *Aḥwāl*, 31.

¹³¹ Al-Tirmidhī, *al-Jāmi‘ al-Kabīr*, (ed.) Bashshār ‘A. Ma‘rūf (Beirut, 1996), 6: 230–1; Ibn Hibbān, *Kitāb al-Majrūhīn*, 1: 23–7; Ibn Abī Ya‘lā, *Ṭabaqāt*, 1: 248–9; al-‘Uqaylī, *al-Ḍu‘afā’*, 31; Ibn al-Jawzī, *Kitāb al-Ḍu‘afā’ wa-l-matrūkin*, (ed.) Abū al-Fidā’ ‘Abdallāh al-Qāḍī (Beirut, 1986), 6; Abū Nu‘aym al-Iṣfahānī, *Kitāb al-Ḍu‘afā’*, (ed.) Fārūq Ḥamāda (Casablanca, 1984), 53–4; Christopher Melchert, “Early renunciants as ḥadīth transmitters”, *The Muslim World* 92, 2002, 413–14.

¹³² Al-Jūzjānī, *Aḥwāl*, 32–3.

The four categories of opponents he targets illustrate al-Jūzjānī's determination to expose the flaws of the partisans of innovation and his approach to the appraisal of hadith transmitters, which is based on a transmitter's reliability *and* theological/sectarian tendencies. While scepticism towards mendacious transmitters was a given, the concept that weak hadith can only be used for the purpose of *i'tibār* was also not foreign to al-Jūzjānī's predecessors.¹³³ That he equates lying in hadith with innovation also aligns with *ahl al-ḥadīth*'s overall attitude.

However, al-Jūzjānī is original in the extent of his incorporation of "deviation from truth" into the framework of hadith criticism. Admittedly, caution against the sectarians or *ahl al-bid'a* was present in the thought of *ahl al-ḥadīth* before him, but it does not entail rejection of their traditions unless they use hadith to propagate their ideas.¹³⁴ According to this framework, for al-Jūzjānī, the honesty of a transmitter alone is not sufficient to secure the authenticity of his transmission: their "uprightness" in faith is no less important as a guarantor of his reliability. As the narrations of an honest transmitter tarnished by *bid'a* can only be accepted when they agree with well-known traditions by not betraying any partisanship towards the *bid'a* in question, such narrators are essentially downgraded to a rank slightly better than that of the weak ones, whose narrations can be used for corroboration only.

Al-Jūzjānī's solicitude to sectarian deviations pervades the commentary between the sections. When introducing Shī'ī and Khārījī groups, he stresses, by invoking the authority of the Prophet and the earlier hadith scholars such as Muḥammad b. Sīrīn (d. 110/729) and al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī (d. 110/728), how these groups diverged from the consensus of the community and how their "innovations" corrupted the togetherness of the Muslim *umma* and the legacy of the Prophet.¹³⁵ His persistent and consistent application of this innovative approach, which is particularly concerned with the hadith transmitters' adherence to "orthodoxy", is illustrated by how he perceives the leading Kūfan *ahl al-ḥadīth* associated with Shī'ism:

There were a group of *ahl al-Kūfa*, whose beliefs are not praised by people and who were the heads of the Kūfan traditionists, such as Abū Ishāq 'Amr b. 'Abdallāh (d. 127/744–45?), Maṣṣūr b. al-Mu'tamir (d. 133/750–51?), al-A'mash (d. 148/765?), and Zubayd b. al-Ḥārith al-Yāmī, as well as their like in their generation. People tolerated them for the honesty of their tongues, but refrained [from transmitting their narrations] when they omitted *isnāds* (*arsalū*), fearing that their sources [of traditions] were not sound. (*iḥtamalahum al-nās 'alā ṣidq alsinatihim fī al-ḥadīth wa-waqafū 'indamā arsalū lammā khāfū allā takūna makhārijuhā ṣaḥīḥatan*).¹³⁶

¹³³ See footnote 97.

¹³⁴ This is the position of Muslim b. al-Ḥajjāj (d. 261/875) and most likely that of al-Shāfi'ī (d. 204/820): Belal Abu-Alabbas, "The principles of hadith criticism in the writings of Al-Shāfi'ī and Muslim", *Islamic Law and Society* 24/4, 2017, 334. See also the attitude of Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal, Yaḥyā b. Ma'in and 'Alī b. al-Madīnī in Abū al-Ma'āfi al-Nūrī, Maḥmūd M. Khalīl and Aḥmad 'A. 'Īd (eds), *Mawsū'at aqwāl al-imām Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal fī rijāl al-ḥadīth wa-'ilalihi* (Beirut, 1997), 2: 376; Bashshār 'A. Ma'rūf, Maḥmūd M. Khalīl and Jihād M. Khalīl (eds), *Mawsū'at aqwāl Yaḥyā b. Ma'in fī rijāl al-ḥadīth wa-'ilalihi* (Tunis, 2009), 2: 181; al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī, *al-Kifāya fī 'ilm al-riwāya* (Hyderabad, 1938), 127–31.

¹³⁵ He describes Khārījism as the first "innovation" in Islam, whose adherents "fell from the togetherness of the community and distorted the uprightness of solidarity". He depicts the eponym of the "Mukhtāriyya", al-Mukhtār b. Abī 'Ubayd, as an audacious liar who, in the presence of numerous companions of 'Alī (r. 35–40/656–61) and 'Abdallāh b. Mas'ūd (d. 32/652–53?), bribed people to spread hadith in support of his movement, and further cites two reports about 'Alī's companions condemning al-Mukhtār's corruption of hadith and two other reports, directly from Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal and Shabbāba b. Sawwār (d. bet. 204 and 206/819–22), discrediting the majority of the hadith attributed to 'Alī as baseless. See al-Jūzjānī, *Aḥwāl*, 33–40.

¹³⁶ Al-Jūzjānī, *Aḥwāl*, 79–82.

This uncompromising attitude towards all forms of innovation and deviation stems from al-Jūzjānī's conception of a believer's accountability for the hadith he takes as guidance. Thus, hadith offering religious and legal guidance, which determine one's final destination on the Day of Judgement, must be transmitted through a continuous chain of the reliable and "orthodox", as al-Jūzjānī opines:

I do not reckon that when one day, we are scrutinized and inquired at the site before God about the evidence in support of our endeavours in the matter of religion, an *isnād* involving a dubious man deviant from truth or one involving a man unknown to the people of knowledge is equal to a glowing *isnād* without any man whose standing in religion is blemished and whose sincerity in following sunna attacked, although that [kind of *isnād*] is paltry. God the exalted says, "Say: 'Not equal are things that are bad and things that are good even though the abundance of the bad may dazzle thee.'" (5:100)¹³⁷

As people acting on traditions will be called upon by God to identify their sources of information, al-Jūzjānī asserts in the epilogue that "This matter is serious, not a jest, as one will come closer to heaven or hell, between which there is no station. Let any of you know that he is responsible for his religion and what he learnt as lawful and unlawful acts."¹³⁸ Based on al-Jūzjānī's own words throughout *Aḥwāl*, it can be argued that his epistemological conception of hadith is infused with his methodological framework. This fusion is reflected by al-Jūzjānī's use of hadith technical terms and his persistent identification of hadith transmitters' sectarian tendencies, which are judged with a moralistic tenor.

In 15 instances, al-Jūzjānī qualifies his subjects professing an extreme form of Shī'ism as *ghālin* or its derivatives.¹³⁹ *Ghālin* is also used with other qualifiers: Yahyā b. al-Jazzār is *ghālin mufriṭ* ("excessive extreme"),¹⁴⁰ whereas 'Uthmān b. 'Umayr is *ghālī al-madhhab* ("extreme in belief") and *munkar al-ḥadīth* ("uncorroborated in hadith").¹⁴¹ Husayn b. Ḥasan al-Ashqar is *ghālin* and *shattām*, one who anathematized the Companions.¹⁴² In reference to Shī'ī belief, the verbal form of *ghālin*, *ghalā* is used: "Sālim b. Abī al-Ḥafṣa, according to 'Alī b. al-Madīnī, is one of those who become extreme in *rafḍ* (*man yaḡhlū fī al-rafḍ*)."¹⁴³ Less commonly, *ghālin* is connected with *zā'igh* and *sū' al-madhhab*, each used twice.¹⁴⁴ Likewise, *zā'igh*, or its synonyms, feature prominently in al-Jūzjānī's critical terminology, phrased as being deviant (*zā'igh*, *mā'il*, or, rarely, *ḥā'id*) or as being deviant from the truth, the right path, or the way.¹⁴⁵ More often than not, the judgement of the

¹³⁷ Al-Jūzjānī, *Aḥwāl*, 211–12. The translation of the Quranic verse is Yusuf Ali's.

¹³⁸ Al-Jūzjānī, *Aḥwāl*, 211. This appears as implicit polemic against the Mu'tazilī doctrine.

¹³⁹ Al-Jūzjānī, *Aḥwāl*, no. 178, 13, 23, 67, 71, 85, 88, 89, 178, 75, 80, 107. While al-Jūzjānī uses it to describe extreme partisans of Qadarī (no. 336) and Murji'ī (no. 268, 269) doctrines, the term is used mostly in connection with various forms of Shī'ism.

¹⁴⁰ Al-Jūzjānī, *Aḥwāl*, no. 13.

¹⁴¹ Al-Jūzjānī, *Aḥwāl*, no. 23.

¹⁴² Al-Jūzjānī, *Aḥwāl*, no. 85.

¹⁴³ Al-Jūzjānī, *Aḥwāl*, no. 36.

¹⁴⁴ Al-Jūzjānī, *Aḥwāl*, no. 67, 71, 88, 89.

¹⁴⁵ *Mā'il* used alone or in conjunction with 'an *al-ṭariq*, *al-qaṣd*, *al-maqṣid* or *al-ḥaqq* appears ten times (al-Jūzjānī, *Aḥwāl*, no. 379, 41, 42, 52, 53, 109, 114, 116, 134, 175). *Zā'igh* used alone or in conjunction with 'an *al-ḥaqq* or with other qualifiers occurs 13 times (no. 366, 15, 16, 24, 27, 31, 34, 44, 46, 67, 71, 72, 74); its verbal noun, *zaygh*, is used in al-Jūzjānī's appraisal of the Banū Aslam, all of whom are "weak in hadith, [but] without a hole in their faith nor deviation from the truth due to innovation known about them (*du'afā' fī al-ḥadīth min ḡhayr khirba fī dīnihim wa-lā zaygh 'an al-ḥaqq fī bid'a dhukirat 'anhum*)". See al-Jūzjānī, *Aḥwāl*, no. 219–21.

transmitters' belief is issued without any reference to their credentials as hadith transmitters.¹⁴⁶

Given al-Jūzjānī's antagonism towards "innovations", as emphatically reiterated in his preface and epilogue, it is not surprising that he mentions subjects' associations with or practice of *bid'ā*. Ibrāhīm b. Abī Yaḥyā practises "different kinds of innovations. Thus, none should be bothered with his hadith. He is not satisfactory nor [does he provide reliable] evidence (*fīhi ḍurūb min al-bida' fa-lā yushtaghal bi-ḥadīthihi fa-innahu ghayr muqni' wa-lā ḥujja*).” Muḥammad b. Ishāq is “accused of more than one innovation”.¹⁴⁷ However, the type of innovations these subjects are associated with is never defined.

On the basis of al-Jūzjānī's propensity to evaluate the transmitters by noting their sectarian or theological tendencies *only*, it can be argued that such moralistically judgemental terms as *zā'igh*, among others, are chosen by him in accordance with his methodological principle, which downgrades the “innovators” to the lower rank in terms of reliability, regardless of their honesty and accuracy in transmission. Al-Jūzjānī's methodical incorporation of the religious uprightness of hadith transmitters into the edifice of *naqd al-rijāl* through the fourfold framework, which he set up in the prologue to *Aḥwāl*, is remarkably innovative in both the theoretical and the practical sense. His teachers, Yaḥyā b. Ma'īn, Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal and 'Alī b. al-Madīnī, identify and analyse hadith transmitters case by case. By engaging with a huge number of hadith narrators and their narrations, they attempt, to varying degrees, to organize such data in a way that facilitates the practice of hadith criticism, but they hardly articulate a systematic framework in the appraisal of *rijāl*.¹⁴⁸ Conversely, al-Jūzjānī first sets up a methodological framework and then he imposes it upon the subjects he treats. It is thus imperative for him to alert his readers and fellow hadith scholars to a transmitter being associated with a “deviation” or “innovation” of some sort, without judgement as to their (un-)reliability.

This does not mean that there was no attempt to theorize the qualities of reliable and unreliable transmitters before al-Jūzjānī. Al-Shāfi'ī (d. 204/820), addressing the evidentiary validity (*al-ḥujja*) of the hadith transmitted by one narrator only at every level, stipulates the following:

The proof for such a report is not established unless it possesses certain qualifications. He who narrates it should merit confidence in his religion, be known for his truthfulness in his speech, aware of what he reports and knowledgeable about how different wordings can result in distortion of the meaning of the hadith-report (*an yakūn man ḥaddatha bihi thiqatan fī dīnihi ma'rūfan bi-l-ṣidq fī ḥadīthihi 'āqilan limā yuḥaddithu bihi 'āliman bi-mā yuḥīl ma'ānī al-ḥadīth min al-lafz*). He should transmit the hadith-report verbatim as he heard it and not in his own words; because if he transmits it paraphrastically and is unaware of what might alter its meaning, he would not know whether or not he has naively made the lawful unlawful. But if he narrates it verbatim, there is no ground for fearing a change of the meaning of the hadith-report. [The transmitter] should be a good memoriser if he transmits from his memory, and he should preserve his notes carefully if he narrates from his notes. If he possesses the same hadith-report as [do] eminent transmitters, his hadith-report should be in agreement with theirs. He should be above suspicion of

¹⁴⁶ Only in al-Jūzjānī, *Aḥwāl*, no. 23, is *ghālin* employed with an evaluation of the transmitter's credentials; only in seven of the deviant cases does al-Jūzjānī offer the appraisal of the subjects' reliability: no. 366, 31, 44, 72, 114, 116, 134.

¹⁴⁷ Al-Jūzjānī, *Aḥwāl*, no. 212, 230.

¹⁴⁸ G. H. A. Juynboll, “Muslim's introduction to his *Ṣaḥīḥ*, translated and annotated with an excursus on the chronology of Fitna and Bid'a”, *Jerusalem Studies in Arabic and Islam* 5, 1984, 263; Melchert, “Hadith criticism”, 76.

tadlīs (false ascription), that is, reporting on the authority of those whom he has met that which he has not heard from them, or reporting on the authority of the Prophet something that differs from that which trusted reporters transmit.¹⁴⁹

Although al-Shāfi‘ī’s first condition concerns a narrator’s religious uprightness, it is clear that his emphasis is on one’s accuracy (that is, in one’s ability to deliver the tradition verbatim) and honesty in the identification of one’s sources.¹⁵⁰ His “confidence in religion” would seem to be an unsubstantiated statement in comparison with al-Jūzjānī’s indictment of *ahl al-ahwā’* and *ahl al-bid‘a*. Moreover, al-Shāfi‘ī addresses hadith criticism as part of his jurisprudential project without being a practitioner himself, and his knowledge and authority in this discipline are not recognized.¹⁵¹

Al-Jūzjānī’s contemporary Muslim b. al-Ḥajjāj (d. 261/875) presents a systematic description of hadith transmitters classified into three categories. The first rank comprises people whose reports are “purified and free from the defects found in others”, who are “people of integrity in hadith with mastery in what they narrated (*ahl istiḳāma fī al-ḥadīth wa-itqān limā naqalū*)” and whose “narrations are not too inconsistent or overly confusing (*lam yūjad fī riwāyatihim ikhtilāf shadīd wa-lā takhlīṭ fāḥish*)”.¹⁵² In the second rank are people “who are not qualified by retentive memory and mastery (*al-ḥifẓ wa-l-itqān*)”, like those in the first rank, but they are shielded [from grave sins?], honest and devoted to knowledge (*fa-inna ism al-satr wa-l-ṣidq wa-ta‘āṭī al-‘ilm yashmuluhum*).¹⁵³ Finally, the lowest rank, whose hadith Muslim excludes from his *Ṣaḥīḥ*, comprises people accused by *ahl al-ḥadīth* of “forgery of traditions and fabrications of reports (*man uttuhima bi-waḍ‘ al-aḥādīth wa-tawliḍ al-akḥbār*)”, and those whose hadith are mostly uncorroborated or erroneous (*man al-ghālib ‘alā ḥadīthihi al-munkar wa-l-ghalaṭ*).¹⁵⁴ Muslim also makes it obligatory for everyone to distinguish between sound and unsound narrations, with calls to refrain from traditions derived from those of questionable credentials and the obstinate among the “innovators” (*‘an ahl al-tuham wa-l-mu‘ānidīn min ahl al-bida’*).¹⁵⁵

Similar to al-Shāfi‘ī, Muslim warns against the hadith of “the people of innovations”, but only to the degree that agrees with the earlier generation of *ahl al-ḥadīth*, since, as Abu-Alabbas suggests:

there is little disagreement among commentators on the *Ṣaḥīḥ* that Muslim himself related material from sectaries who advocated their doctrines, yet did not transmit hadith-reports in support of their dogma. It is likely that “obstinate innovators” refer to those who *did* relate information supportive of their thought.¹⁵⁶

This seems to quite literally tally with al-Jūzjānī’s description: “As to this group, in my opinion, the only remedy is to take what is well known among their hadith, as long as it does not support their innovations and appear suspicious.” Nevertheless, the

¹⁴⁹ Muḥammad b. Idrīs al-Shāfi‘ī, *al-Risāla*, (ed.) Aḥmad M. Shākir (Cairo, 1940), 370–1. The translation is Abu-Alabbas, “The principles of hadith criticism”, 314. See also Muḥammad ibn Idrīs Shāfi‘ī and Joseph E. Lowry, *The Epistle on Legal Theory* (New York, 2015), 157 (no. 449).

¹⁵⁰ Melchert, “The theory and practice of hadith criticism”, 76–7.

¹⁵¹ Lucas, *Constructive Critics*, 151–4; Melchert, “The theory and practice of hadith criticism”, 77; Christopher Melchert, “Traditionist-jurisprudents and the framing of Islamic law”, *Islamic Law and Society* 8/3, 2001, 383–406; Abu-Alabbas, “The principles of hadith criticism”, 313.

¹⁵² Muslim b. al-Ḥajjāj, *al-Jāmi‘ al-ṣaḥīḥ*, (ed.) Muḥammad F. ‘Abd al-Bāqī (Cairo, 1955), 1: 5.

¹⁵³ Muslim, *al-Ṣaḥīḥ*, 1: 5.

¹⁵⁴ Muslim, *al-Ṣaḥīḥ*, 1: 7.

¹⁵⁵ Muslim, *al-Ṣaḥīḥ*, 1: 8.

¹⁵⁶ Abu-Alabbas, “The principles of hadith criticism”, 327.

implications of the different approaches to the *ahl al-bida'* taken by Muslim and al-Jūzjānī are epitomized by their respective treatment of the leading Kūfan traditionists, al-A'mash and Maṣūir b. al-Mu'tamir. They are both given in the highest rank by Muslim, whereas al-Jūzjānī counts them among those whose "beliefs people do not praise (*lā yaḥmad al-nās madhāhibahum*)": "People tolerated them for the honesty of their tongues, but refrained [from transmitting their narrations] when they omitted *isnāds* (*arsalū*), fearing that their sources [of traditions] were not sound."¹⁵⁷ By extension, both al-A'mash and Maṣūir b. al-Mu'tamir are assigned to the third rank of al-Jūzjānī's four-fold framework, that is, those who are deviant from truth but honest.¹⁵⁸ Hadith of this rank, according to al-Jūzjānī's final remarks cited above, cannot serve as evidence upon which legal and ritual prescriptions and proscriptions are carried out.

By exercising *rijāl* criticism based on the theoretical framework he puts forward, al-Jūzjānī thus presents a step beyond his teachers in the disciplinary development of hadith criticism. However, his approach inevitably parted ways from that of his predecessors, who did not consistently consider theological, legal and sectarian tendencies.¹⁵⁹ Furthermore, he implicitly questions hadith authorities who were previously unanimously recognized as *thiqa*. It comes as no surprise that al-Jūzjānī's approach exerts little impact on the succeeding generation of hadith critics in their formulation of the concept of "uprightness" (*ʿadāla*) – a term never used by al-Jūzjānī, although it is conceptually relevant to and compatible with his four-fold critical framework.

The term *ʿadāla* and its derivatives, *ʿadl* and *ʿudūl*,¹⁶⁰ are defined by Ibn Abī Ḥātim as predominantly conditioned by one's reliability, accuracy and retentive memory in transmission: "what the condition of uprightness entails in transmission and narration of hadith is [for narrators] to be trustworthy themselves, knowledgeable in their religion, and be pious, God-fearing men with retentive memory, masterful and accurate in hadith transmission". Thus, upright transmitters "are not blemished by negligence, overwhelmed by baseless claims over what they memorized and understood, nor confused by unintentional mistakes".¹⁶¹ Ibn Abī Ḥātim's phrasing, with its emphasis on a transmitter's discretion, accuracy and trustworthiness, set in contrast to poor memory, negligence and mendacity, highlights an inherent difference from al-Jūzjānī's conception of reliability. In this regard, Ibn Abī Ḥātim is conventional, as his definition of *ʿadāla* parallels Muslim's description and aligns with al-Jūzjānī's teachers' disregard of a transmitter's sectarian affiliations as a crucial factor in forming an evaluation.

¹⁵⁷ Al-Jūzjānī, *Aḥwāl*, 79–80. See also Pavel Pavlovitch, *Muslim al-Naysābūrī (d. 261/875): The Sceptical Traditionalist* (Leiden, 2023), 136–40.

¹⁵⁸ The same can be said of his evaluation of Qatāda b. Dīʿāma and his students, who were associated with Qadarism. Al-Jūzjānī's list of the Qadarī transmitters is very likely borrowed from that of his teacher, ʿAlī b. al-Madīnī, but he does not give them the same degree of credence as ʿAlī b. al-Madīnī: al-Jūzjānī, *Aḥwāl*, 181–3 (no. 328–34); ʿAlī b. al-Madīnī, *Suʿālāt ʿUthmān b. Muḥammad b. Abī Shayba li-l-Imām ʿAlī b. al-Madīnī*, (ed.) Muḥammad ʿA al-Azharī (Cairo, n.d.), 31 (no. 1).

¹⁵⁹ Ikramallāh Imdād al-Ḥaqq, *al-Imām ʿAlī b. al-Madīnī wa-minhajuhu fi naqd al-rijāl* (Beirut, n.d.), 425–30, 646–7; Pavlovitch, "Hadith criticism"; Lucas, *Constructive Critics*, 320–6; Dickinson, *Development*, 90–2; Brown, *Hadith*, 82–4; Abu-Alabbas, "The principles of hadith criticism", 312.

¹⁶⁰ *ʿAdl* and *ʿudūl* are used by al-Shāfiʿī, possibly drawing from the concept of legal testimony: al-Shāfiʿī, *al-Risāla*, 378; Abu-Alabbas, "The principles of hadith criticism", 328. It is likely that Ibn Abī Ḥātim, who compiled *ʿAdāb al-Shāfiʿī wa-manāqibuhu*, picked up the term from al-Shāfiʿī: Dickinson, *Development*, 39; El Shamsy, *The Canonization of Islamic Law*, 157–9, 170.

¹⁶¹ The transliteration of the original: *mimmā yaqtaḍihi ḥukm al-ʿadāla fi naql al-ḥadīth wa-riwāyatihi bi-an yakūnū amanāʾ fi anfusihim ʿulamāʾ bi-dīnihim ahl waraʾ wa-taqwā wa-ḥifẓ li-l-ḥadīth wa-itqān bihi wa-tathabbut fihi wa-an yakūnū ahl tamyiz wa-taḥsīl lā yashūbuhum kathīr min al-ghafalāt wa-lā taghlibu ʿalayhim al-awḥām fimā qad ḥafizūhu wa-waʿawhu wa-lā yushbihu ʿalayhim bi-l-ughlūtāt*. See Ibn Abī Ḥātim, *al-Jarḥ*, 1: 5.

Similarly, the compilers of the encyclopedias of hadith science, aligning with Muslim's attitude towards the *ahl al-bida'*, only *notionally* consider transmitters' adherence to "orthodox" doctrines but in practice lean towards latitudinarianism.¹⁶² In the chapter on "the characteristic of those whose transmission is accepted", Ibn Ṣalāḥ enumerates the conditions for a transmitter to be considered upright (*ʿadl*): "Specifically, he must be Muslim; adult; of sound mind; free of tendencies toward impiety and defects of character; alert, careful; retentive, if he transmits from memory; and accurate in handling his text, if he transmits from it."¹⁶³ Yet, the consideration of whether a transmitter is free from tendencies is toned down when he endorses the view that "the sectarian's transmission is to be accepted if he is not a proselytizer (*tuqbalu riwāyatuhu idhā lam yakun dāʿiyatan ilā bidʿatihi*)" as the doctrine embraced by the majority, arguing that the works of hadith authorities such as *Ṣaḥīḥayn* contain many traditions of the *ahl al-bida'*.¹⁶⁴ His verdict on the people of innovation is more or less followed by commentators on his work.¹⁶⁵

Because of his epistemological and methodological premises, which depart from those of the earlier and later generations of hadith critics, al-Jūzjānī's four-fold framework did not seem to have appealed to later hadith critics.¹⁶⁶ Consequently, al-Jūzjānī's appraisals are often considered to be immoderate, and he is considered to be among the harshest critics.¹⁶⁷ His negative evaluations of the Kūfan Shīʿī traditionists came to be translated as antagonism towards ʿAlī b. Abī Ṭālib. Rejecting al-Jūzjānī's evaluation of Ismāʿīl b. Abān, a Kūfan traditionist professing *tashayyu'*, Ibn ʿAdī describes al-Jūzjānī as "extremely inclined to the way of Damascenes in wronging ʿAlī (*kāna shadīd al-mayl ilā madhhab ahl Dimashq fī al-taḥammul ʿalā ʿAlī*)".¹⁶⁸ Although his individual views on reliable transmitters of Shīʿī, Qadarī and other tendencies are not uncontested, al-Jūzjānī's authority as a hadith critic is recognized and his evaluations are cited by later compilers of *rijāl* works. He is one of the most oft-quoted sources by Ibn ʿAdī in his *al-Kāmil*,¹⁶⁹ and among later scholars who cite and adduce his views and opinions one can count Abū Zurʿa al-Rāzī, al-Dūlābī (d. 310/923), al-ʿUqaylī (d. 322/933–34), Ibn Abī Ḥātim, al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī, Ibn ʿAsākir, al-Mizzī, al-Dhahabī and Ibn Ḥajar al-ʿAsqalānī.¹⁷⁰

Conclusion

This article addressed a much neglected ninth-century hadith scholar and critic, Ibrāhīm b. Yaʿqūb al-Jūzjānī, with regard to his work *Aḥwāl al-rijāl*, his approach to *naqd al-rijāl* and his overall contributions to the science of hadith criticism. In the first section, this article outlined his life and works, presenting the first biography about him in English. It then introduced *Aḥwāl al-rijāl* emphasizing its organizational structure, which is informed by

¹⁶² Although al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī finds the objection to the transmission of the *ahl al-bida'* valid, he extensively quotes the opposing views of earlier scholars: al-Khaṭīb, *al-Kifāya*, 120–32, esp. 124.

¹⁶³ Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ, *Maʿrifā*, 104–5. The translation is Dickinson's: Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ, *An Introduction to the Science of the Ḥadīth (Kitāb Maʿrifat anwāʿ ʿilm al-ḥadīth)*, (trans.) Eerik Dickinson (Reading, 2006), 81.

¹⁶⁴ Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ, *Maʿrifā*, 114–15; Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ, *An Introduction*, 87.

¹⁶⁵ Abū al-Fidāʾ Ismāʿīl b. Kathīr al-Dimashqī, *Ikhtisār ʿulūm al-ḥadīth*, (ed.) Māhir Y. al-Faḥl (Riyadh, 2013), 191, 197–8; Muḥyī al-Dīn al-Nawawī, *al-Taqrīb wa-l-taysīr li-maʿrifat sunan al-bashīr al-nadhīr*, (ed.) Muḥammad b. ʿUthmān al-Khusht (Beirut, 1985), 48, 50–1; Zayn al-Dīn al-ʿIrāqī, *Sharḥ al-tabṣira wa-l-tadhkira*, (ed.) ʿAbd al-Laṭīf al-Hamīm and Māhir Y. al-Faḥl, 2 vols (Beirut, 2002), 1: 326–8, 357–60.

¹⁶⁶ Al-Suyūṭī, *Tadrib al-rāwī fī sharḥ taqrīb al-nawāwī*, (ed.) Abū Qutayba N. M. al-Fāryābī, 2 vols (Riyadh, 1994), 1: 385.

¹⁶⁷ Al-Dhahabī, *Dhikr man yuʿtamad qawluhu fī al-jarḥ wa-l-taʿdīl*, (ed.) ʿAbd al-Fattāḥ Abū Ghudda (Aleppo, n.d.), 171–2.

¹⁶⁸ Ibn ʿAdī, *al-Kāmil*, 1: 504. See also footnote 26 above.

¹⁶⁹ See footnote 4 above.

¹⁷⁰ Al-Bastawī, "al-Imām", 149–56; al-Sāmarrāʿī, "Tarjama", 21.

the Iraqi compilatory convention prevalent among *ahl al-ḥadīth*, and marked its importance as the first *Syngramma* solely dedicated to the genre *al-jarḥ wa-l-ta'dīl*.

Al-Jūzjānī's conception of desirable and undesirable qualities of hadith transmitters and formation of opinions concerning their credentials are manifest in his remarks, his use of technical terms and his reliance upon the views of earlier hadith authorities, treated in the third and fourth sections. A close reading of *Aḥwāl al-rijāl* reveals his indebtedness to earlier hadith scholars and his reliance on the repertoire of the hadith terms they created and employed. However, al-Jūzjānī's approach marks a significant departure from his predecessors in his systematic integration of the moral or doctrinal uprightness of hadith transmitters into the framework of *rijāl* criticism. This constitutes a methodological advance in the discipline of hadith criticism, but al-Jūzjānī's approach, which disproportionately scrutinizes the transmitters' conformity to "correct" beliefs and doctrines and harshly appraises the hadith authorities with Shī'ī or Qadarī leanings,¹⁷¹ was too innovative and too extreme to be compatible with the established convention among *ahl al-ḥadīth*. Thus, it failed to appeal to succeeding contributors to hadith criticism, who, following Muslim b. al-Ḥajjāj's principle, accepted sectaries' traditions as long as they did not propagate their ideas.

In addition to noting the lack of success of al-Jūzjānī's approach in influencing later hadith scholarship, this detailed study of al-Jūzjānī's epistemological and methodological framework allows for the following conclusions, which may complement the current understanding of early hadith criticism. First, Muslim b. al-Ḥajjāj's introduction to his *Ṣaḥīḥ* and *Kitāb al-Tamyīz* have been taken as the first systematic description of hadith criticism.¹⁷² However, al-Jūzjānī's *Aḥwāl al-rijāl*, with his exposition of the reasons why a transmitter's traditions are rejected, is at least as early as Muslim's works. Second, it has been established that extrinsic factors, such as sectarian tendencies, were not consistently considered by early hadith critics, as they judged transmitters' (un)reliability more upon the parallel comparison of their narrations.¹⁷³ Although this may well have been true for most early hadith critics, al-Jūzjānī is an exception. Third, analysis of al-Jūzjānī's inventory of the terms of hadith criticism suggests that some of his idiosyncratic phrasings and descriptions are likely to have been devised in accordance with his methodological concerns. While early hadith critics had yet to agree on hadith terminology, this does not imply that they employed such terms in an arbitrary manner. Finally, Melchert concludes that the approaches to hadith criticism in the ninth century cannot be reduced to the binary of *ahl al-ḥadīth's isnād* comparison versus the Mu'tazilī/rationalist evaluation of the personal probity of informants. Rather, for each camp, there existed a spectrum of opinions.¹⁷⁴ Ardently identifying with *ahl al-ḥadīth*,¹⁷⁵ al-Jūzjānī, with his fusion of these two approaches, presents an insightful lens to explore the spectrum of opinions among ninth-century hadith critics.

¹⁷¹ See footnote 158 above.

¹⁷² See also footnote 148 above.

¹⁷³ See footnotes 134, 158 and 159 above.

¹⁷⁴ Melchert, "The theory and practice of hadith criticism", 74.

¹⁷⁵ He calls *ahl al-ḥadīth* "my brothers" in the epilogue: al-Jūzjānī, *Aḥwāl*, 214.