BOOK REVIEWS

(2) *Tadhkirat al-Muaddithin* by “Mawlānā ‘Allāma Ghulām Rāstl Sa‘īdī” as per the title-page, a teacher at the Jāmi‘a Na‘īmiyya, Lahore; published by the Maktaba Qādiriyya, Lahore 1397/1977, pp. 328, price Rs. 16.50.

A work of the same name as the one reviewed above but much inferior in methodology, presentation, composition and treatment of the traditionists discussed and noticed. Obviously the work of a comparatively ‘younger scholar, with barely ten years’ experience as a teacher in a religious institution, it shows unmistakable signs of immaturity of style and mind.

The scholars noted in the book and included among the *muaddithin* are: Abū Ḥanīfa, Mālik, al-Shāfi‘i, Muḥammad al-Shaybānī, al-Ṭāhāwī, al-Bukhārī, Muslim, al-Tirmidhī, Abū Dā‘ūd, al-Nasā‘i and Ibn Māja—eleven in all. Of these the first five are Stiālīy, primarily and basically jurists (faqīh). The argument that because of the fact that faqīh is based and derived from, the traditions of the Prophet, therefore every faqīh, ipso facto is a traditionist is extremely weak and none but a novice would say so. If that is the definition of a traditionist then all the faqāhīn, both past and present, must be counted among the scholars of the science of tradition and vice-versa. It appears that the writer of the Introduction (*Taqrīb wa Ta‘rīf*, p. 14 ff) another “Mawlānā ‘Allāma Mufī” was also conscious of this fact. He therefore argues that as ‘Ābd ibn Ḥanbal was reputed to be a ḥāfīz (one who remembers by heart) of one million ḥadīths, he must be recognised as a muaddith first and a faqīh later. On the same analogy the author includes the celebrated and venerated compilers of the *Ṣiḥḥah Sittā* (the six canonical collections of Prophetic Traditions) among the *muaddithin*. Technically this may be correct but the author conveniently forgets that every scholar worth the name, is educated in various disciplines but he specializes only in one or two and is consequently known in relation with the same particular discipline.

A telling case in point is that of Qādī ‘Abd Yūsuf Ya‘qūb al-Anṣārī al-Bajjī, the famous disciple of Abū Ḥanīfa, who was a deep scholar of Ḥadīth, Taṣfīr, al-Maghāzi, history, lexicography, belles-lettres and scholastic theology. He possessed a very wide knowledge of *ḥadīth* literature and was included among the ḥuffāẓ of his times inasmuch as traditionists like Yahyā ibn Mu‘īn, ‘Ābd ibn Ḥanbal and ‘Alī ibn al-Madīnī regard him as reliable (thiqa). (cf. Ibn Khallikān, *Wafayāt al-A‘yān*, Cairo ed. v: 422; ‘Abū‘l A‘lā Mawdū‘ī, *Khilāfat-wa Mulūkīyyat*, Lahore 1966, p. 281). In spite of ‘Abū Yūsuf’s being a ḥāfīz of Ḥadīth he has not been included among the *muaddithin* and enjoys his well-earned reputation as a faqīh only. His *Kitāb al-Kharāj*, although based on Ḥadīth, is not counted among the books of that discipline but more as a treatise on political science and system of revenue (Cf. Mawdū‘ī, *op. cit.*, 285-298).

The late ‘Allāma Anwar Shāh al-Kashmīrī was a graduate of the religious seminary at Deoband (Dar al-Uloom) but he earned much fame and reputation as a *muaddith* all over the world of Islam. The late Mufti Muḥammad Shafī’ of Karachi, author of *Ma‘ārif al-Qur‘ān* and other works, specialized in fatāwā-writing and consequently gained fame as a mufti (Jurisconsult) inasmuch as the appellation of ‘mufti’ became a constant prefix of his name and a mark of distinction and identification in his case.

Similarly Abū Ḥanīfa, Mālik, al-Shāfi‘i and ‘Ābd ibn Ḥanbal, though well-versed in *ḥadīth* literature, devoted themselves entirely to fiqḥ and usūl and consequently
came to be better and more systematically known as faqih rather than muhaddith. They may in a sense, be called Magister Artium in *hadith* literature of their times, to use modern terminology.

In the words of the writer of the foreword “this book deals at length with the four founders of the schools, of fiqh, besides Muhammad ibn al-Hasan al-Shaybani, Ahmad al-Taawi, and the compilers of the *Sihah Sitta*, and their works”. (p. 19). Their biographies have been dealt with under the following heads; early life, education, teachers, pupils, character, their excellences, works and death. (ibid.). Their main works, on which their fame and reputation rest, have been treated fairly at length so that “the teachers will be facilitated in the teaching of *hadith* in religious institutions, the students will gain guidance, and those with a literary bent of mind will be able to gather a mine of information” (p. 19) about the top-ranking traditionists and their contribution to the sacred and vital discipline of *hadith*.

The text is preceded by a lengthy *muqaddama*, which deals with the different branches of the science of *hadith* (pp. 22-45). It will be found useful for the beginners and those interested in *hadith* literature.

While trying to prove that Abu Hanifa also narrates *hadiths* from the Companions he cites a passage from the *Sirat al-Nu'man* by ‘Allama Shibli Nu'mani (English translation by M. Hadi Husain, Lahore 1972) in which the celebrated historian of Islam and well-known scholar has denied that Abu Hanifa ever transmitted traditions from some of the Companions, and he accuses Badr al-Din 'Ayni, the famous commentator of the *Hidaya*, of having committed the same mistake. (p. 71). So far so good. Every one has the right of criticizing others but the manner in which 'Allama Shibli Nu'mani has been addressed (p. 71) without the commonplace honorific of 'Mawlana' before his name clearly shows that this self-styled "Allima" does not consider him worthy of any respect not to speak of Shibli's worth and esteem as a trained religious scholar. No one has denied the fact of Shibli's being one of the 'ulamâ' of the Sub-continent.

As against the chronological treatment of the *muhaddithun* rightly adopted by the author of the *Tadhkirat al-Muwaddithin* published by the Dar al-Mu'annifin, the learned author from Lahore has not done so. His notice of Abu Ja'far al-Taawi (d. 321/933) precedes that of Abu Hanifa (d. 256/870). A partial comparison of the notice of al-Taawi will give an idea of the relative merits of the two works.

Writing on the change of al-Taawi's madhhab from Shafi'ite to that of Hanafite, Diya' al-Din al-Ishâhi says:

In the beginning of his educational career al-Taawi used to attend the lectures of his maternal uncle Ismâ'il ibn Yahyâ al-Mizinni. One day his uncle explained a certain problem which al-Taawi could not follow in spite of several repetitions from the teacher. Feeling flustered and jittery Ismâ'il rebuked his nephew calling him a dunce and a dunderhead. Al-Taawi felt extremely piqued at this insult and consequently gave up attending the lectures of his uncle. Ibn Khallikân gives yet another reason for his changing his *maslak*. He says that when asked by some one as to why did he give up attending the lectures of his own uncle, al-Taawi replied that he saw Ismâ'il his teacher, himself often studying books written by the Hanafites and referring to them. It was why he abandoned the *maslak* of al-Shâfi'i in favour of that of Abu Hanifa. (op. cit, vol. 1: 415).
Here is what M. Ghulām Rasūl Sa'īdi has got to say on the subject:

‘Allāma ‘Abd al-‘Azīz al-Parhārwi (?) throws light in his work, al-Nibrās on the real reason behind al-Ṭahāwī’s change of maslak. He writes: In the beginning al-Ṭahāwī professed the Shāfi‘ī persuasion. One day he read in one of the books of al-Shawāfi that when a pregnant woman dies and the foetus in her womb is alive, her belly would not be ripped open for taking out the baby, as against the ruling of the Ḥanafites. (It so happened) that al-Ṭahāwī, according to the madhhab of Abū Ḥanīfa, had himself been born after a Caesarian operation. On reading the Shāfi‘īte decision al-Ṭahāwī said that he was not in favour of a madhhab which favoured his destruction. He thereafter abandoned the Shāfi‘īte madhhab and adopted that of one of the greatest mujtahids of the Ḥanafi school of thought. (pp. 156-7).

It may be noted that the work of Dār al-Muṣannifin was published in 1387/1968 while the one from Lahore appeared in 1397/1977, i.e., after a decade.

Its certain aberrations, lapses and imbalances apart the book may be considered useful for students and the layman.


city

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