ACHIEVEMENTS OF MUSLIM WOMEN IN THE RELIGIOUS AND SCHOLARLY FIELDS

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Eng. Translation
Rafiq Abdur Rahman

DARUL ISHAAT
Karachi-I, Pakistan
Achievements of Muslim Women in the Religious And Scholarly Fields

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Introduction

By Mawlana Riyasat Ali Bijnori, teacher of hadith of Darul-Uloom, Deoband.

Islam requires all Muslims - men or women - to acquire knowledge. The words of the Hadith are: تَّلَبَّبَ الْعَلَمَ فِرْعَةً (Acquisition of knowledge is obligatory) and they emphasise its significance. Just as Islam exhorts men to acquire knowledge and spread it and assures them of a reward from Allah, so too it exhorts women to adorn themselves with it and earn reward. The only difference is that in keeping with their nature, it has bound women to the veil.

The response to the exhortation is apparent in the great number of women who have devoted themselves to spread religious knowledge in each of its fields. They have taught exegesis, hadith, jurisprudence, and other sciences, and have excelled in writing on these subjects. There have been women in the field of calligraphy too.

The mother of the faithful, Sayyidah Ayshah, earned the title faqihah ul ummat (jurist of the ummah) and stood above others of her times in various fields of knowledge. The prominent Sahabah used to enquire from her about religious and scholarly questions. She is one of the eleven companions of the Prophet noted for narrating a large number of Hadith, her narrations are 2210.

Other prominent women of the status of companions who excelled in learning are Sayyidah umm Salamah, Sayyidah Hafsa, Sayyidah umm Habiba, Sayyidah Maymunah, Sayyidah Juwayriyyah - all Mothers of Faithful and Sayyidha Asma bint Abu Bakr,
Achievements of Muslim Women in the Religious And Scholarly Fields

Umm Atiyah Ansariyah, etc. Many noted tabi'in (epigones) learnt Hadith from them.

This sequence continued after the companions. Women in following generations propagated hadith, wrote books, delivered lectures and guided people.

Nevertheless, the Shafi‘i compliant veil was duly observed by them. Neither did they have a separate school nor did they mix with men. Generally, they learnt from their parents or close relatives and taught other relatives. In the Prophet's time, he had set aside one day every week to teach them, at their own request. Sometimes, he would go to their gatherings personally to give lectures and sermons and, often the women sought answers to their questions from the Mothers of the Faithful.

In the present times, interest in women's education has grown tremendously and while schools of religious learning have been built in large numbers. However, the so-called "progress-oriented" section of society blame Islam for depriving women of learning because of the veil and disallowance of mixing of the sexes. Hence, there was need for a book of this kind to repudiate this false accusation in the light of historical evidences. It is very heartening that Mawlana Qadi Athar Mubarakpuri has taken the lead and with painstaking research produced this book. It was first published in 1400 AH (1980 CE) and earned much acclaim. Within a few days, it was out of stock. Fifteen years later, despite his old age, the Mawlana was persuaded to revise it and he produced an enlarged, more beneficial material.

May Allah approve this effort and cause it to gain acclaim among the scholars and to benefit all people. Aameen!

Riyasat Ali
Teacher: Dar ul Uloom, Deoband.
8th Muharrum 1417 AH
(May 1996)

Foreword
(First Urdu Edition)

Like men, women too have taken a wholehearted part in the religious and scholarly fields. Earlier books of biographies have information about noted women as they have about men. In fact, separate books were also composed on women's contribution, and this goes on even today. Many people have written books on outstanding women. However, these books throughout are written in Arabic, there being none in Urdu, besides, for some years now, scholars of this area have paid attention to religious education to women who are now imparted teaching in Arabic. Therefore, a book on this subject was necessary and I have composed it, hoping that the lives of the great women of Islam will serve as lesson-bearing. May Allah make the book very beneficial. Of the people who urged me most to write this book is the honorable Al-Haj Ato Ilahi Malik Sialkoti, an Electrical Engineer, resident of Ghana and serving in Saudi Arabia. May Allah make this book very beneficial.

Qadi Athar Mubarakpuri
1st Ramadan 1400 AH
5th July 1980 CE
Achievements of Muslim Women

Allah's Messenger said (Acquiring knowledge is obligatory on every Muslim). However, allowances are made for the female gender. Allah's Messenger imparted teaching to the women companions making these allowances and also laid emphasis on it.

Women's education in the Prophet's times:

There was a proper arrangement for women's education in the Prophet's times. They did not come to the Prophet's classes as men did, but other methods were adopted to teach them. The Sahabah taught their women and children the Qur'an at their homes. When the Prophet once said that knowledge of religion will disappear, Ziyad Ibn Labid Ansari submitted:

كيف يمكن أن يختبئ فقراء القرآن عن الله ورسوله وقائمة نساء وأبناء نا

[How can knowledge disappear from us when we recite the Qur'an. And by Allah we will recite it and teach it to our women and our children.] (Musnad Ahmad 4/160, Ibn Majah # 1048, Tirmidhi # 3653 (from Abu Darda))

The Prophet used to go to the exclusive gatherings of women companions and educate, encourage and admonish them. In his Sahih, Imam Bukhari has recorded a chapter in the Book of knowledge, entitled Should a day be fixed for women in order to teach them religion (apart from men)? - chapter 35, Book of knowledge. He has narrated this hadith of Abu Sa'eed Khudri:

قالت نساء النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم غلبهم على حجاب الرجال فاجعل لنا يوماً من نفسكم فوعده من بيوتكم فينفظويه ووعظوني وامرين، قال لهم ماهمك انمرأة تقدم ثلاثة من ولدها الآكلا لها حجابًا من الدار
The women said to the Prophet, "men have taken over most of your time from us, so do set aside for us a day at your choice." So, he promised them a day on which he would speak to them (of religious matters). He gave sermons and commandments. In this connection, he said to them, "No woman loses three children (through death) but they will be a shield for her from Hell." A woman asked, "And (if) two?" He said, "(Yes) and two (too)." (Bukhari #101)

Sayyidah Asma bint Yazid ibn Sakan Ansariyah was a very intelligent and religious woman companion. The other women companions (Sahabiyyat) sent her as their envoy to the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. She said to him, "I have come to you as an envoy of the wives of Muslims who say — and I say too — that Allah has sent you to men and women. We women have believed you and we obey you. We are behind the veil and stay indoors in our homes. We fulfill every wish of our men and raise their children while men offer Salah with the congregation, participate in the funeral and jihad and earn reward and excellence for that. When they go to battle, we look after their property and children. O Messenger of Allah! Can we join men and earn reward in this way?" He heard her and, turning to the sahabah, asked, "Have you heard a better question from any woman than this from Asma bint Yazid?" They said that they had not. The Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "Asma, go and tell the women..." (Al-Isti’ab v2 p.422)

[Any woman's kind treatment of her husband, seeking his pleasure and respecting his temperament (in obedience) will be at par with whatever you mentioned about men.]

On hearing this from Allah's Messenger صلى الله عليه وسلم she was overjoyed and called the tahliil and takbir, and went away to convey to the women the Prophet's glad tidings. (Al-Isti’ab v2 p.726)

These are evidences that the sahabiyat were very eager to acquire knowledge. The Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم accepted their request. He often admonished and encouraged them. Once he went to their gathering with Bilal رضي الله عنه and, after delivering a sermon, urged them to give sadaqah. They gave away spontaneously their ear-rings and rings which Bilal رضي الله عنه collected in his garment. (Bukhari v1 p 20 - marginal notes of Suhail)

Sayyidah Ayshah رضي الله عنها and other Sahabiyat رضي الله عنها turned to the prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم with their questions whenever they were in doubt. In fact, they would send their questions through Sayyidah Ayshah رضي الله عنها and Sayyidah Umm Salamah رضي الله عنها while the aged and female relatives met-him directly.

Just like the Sahabah, there were Sahabiyat scholars of hadith, jurists, learned women, scribes, etc. Sayyidah Ayshah رضي الله عنها was called a faqih. Sayyidah Zaynab bint Abu Salamah was daughter of Sayyidah Umm Salamah رضي الله عنها and the Prophet's companion. She was the greatest faqih of her times and Abu Ral, a Tabi' confirmed that. (Al-Ist'ab v2 p 256)

Umm Darda Al-Kubra رضي الله عنها was very intelligent and learned. She was an ascetic and a great faqihah companion. (Tahdhib at Tahdhib v2 p 422)

Sayyidah Sa'dah bint Qumamah رضي الله عنها led women in salah. It is said about Sayyidah Sammah bint Nuhayk Asadiyyah that she lived long. She enjoined piety and forbade evil, going to market-places for that and used her whip on people. (Al-Ist'ab v2 p 760)

Many sahabiyat knew to read and write. Of the Mothers of the Faithful, Sayyidah Ayshah رضي الله عنها and Umm Salamah رضي الله عنها could read while Sayyidah Hafshah رضي الله عنها could both read and write. Sayyidah 'Sha'fa bint Abdullah Adawiyyah رضي الله عنها could write, and the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم instructed her to teach Sayyidah Hafshah رضي الله عنها to write just as she had taught her the ruqyah (which is recitation of verses of the Qur'an over a patient). Sayyidahs Umm Kulthum bint Uqbah رضي الله عنها and Karimah bint Miqdad رضي الله عنها also knew how to write. (Fatih al-Buldan p 458)

While the learned sahabiyat did not establish regular classes...
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studies, they did narrate Ahadith and ruled on issues of fiqh and gave edicts. There were also poets among them and their poetry is found in books even today. Sayyidah Khansa was foremost among poetesses and she wrote an elegy on the death of her brother, Sakhr. It is so painful that she came to be known as Artha ul-Arab. Some ahadith disclose that the Prophet(SA) heard poem from her. Among many other poetesses were Hind bint Utbah, Zaynab bint Awam ibn Khawyadil, Sa’di bint Amr, Sa’di bint Kurayz ibn Rab’ah, Sufiyah bint Abdul Muttalib ibn Hashim, Atikah bint Zayd ibn amr Adawiyah, and many others.

Many women of the following generations emulated these notable sahabiyyat in the various fields of knowledge including hadith, exegesis, literature, etc. they left behind indelible impressions of their names and achievements as we shall see.

Knowledge of hadith

It has always been the Divine Sunnah in matters concerning Islam and Muslims that men and women have served them with distinction in the particular sciences and arts called for in every era.

In the first two centuries of hijri, all over the Islamic world, the task of collection of Ahadith and Aathar was undertaken. It was a religious duty and particular attention was paid to it by everyone and Ahadith and Aathar were searched and recorded dutifully. The female companions and tabi’in heard them from older women and conveyed them to their men folk. The women who possessed collections of Ahadith were traced out and their treasure was received from them. For instance, Umar ibn Abdul Aziz deputed Abu Bakr ibn Muhammad ibn Hazm to get the collection held by Amrah bint Abdur Rahman Ansariyah of Madinah. (Tabaqat Ibn Sad, v 6 p 385) Those who had the Ahadith with them narrated them from their family members. As for Amrah bint Abdur Rahman, she narrated Ahadith from Sayyidah Aaynah, Umm Hisham, Umm Habibah and Hamnah bint Jabsh. Then her son and brother and grandson passed on Ahadith from her to others respectively. They were: Abu ar-Rijal, Muhammad ibn Abdul Rahman and Harithah ibn Abu ar-Rijal. Then, her two nephews Yahaya and Abu Bakr.

and his son Abdullah also narrated from her.

Hasan Busri’s mother, Khayra, narrated from her owner, Sayyidah Umm Salamah. Her two sons, Hasan Busri and Sa’eed Busri narrated from her. Sufiyah bint Uyaybah Anbariyan narrated from her grandfather, Harmalah ibn Abdullah Anbari and grandmother, Qaylah bint Makhramah. Then, her grandson Abdullah ibn Hasan Anbari reported from her.

Ra’i’aya bint Muslim narrated from her father Muslim and from her son, Abdullah ibn Harith Anbari Fatimah bint Husayn ibn Ali Husayn narrated from her father, Sayyidah Husayn bint Zayn al-Abidin, aunt Zaynab bint Sayyidina Ali and grandmother, Sayyidah Fatimah bint Zayn al-Abidin. From her, her children Abdullah, Ibrahim and Umm Jafar narrated.

Umman Yahya Humayd bint Ubayd ibn Rifa’ah Ansariyah narrated from her maternal aunt Kabshah bint Ka’b ibn Maalik. Her husband and son then narrated from her, being Ishaq ibn Abdullah and Yahya ibn Ishaq respectively. Hakimah bint Umaymah narrated from her mother, Umaymah bint Rafiqa, and her family members from her. Asma bint Yazid Qaysiyah Busrinya narrated from her cousin Anas ibn Umaymah. Habibah bint Maysarah was cited by her slave Atna ibn Abu ribah. Hakimah bint Umayyah ibn Akhnas narrated from Sayyidah Umm Salamah. Then her son Yahya ibn Abu Sufyan Alkhas narrated from her. Umm ar-Ra’i’ah Ribah bint Sula’am Dabiyah Busrinya narrated from her uncle Salaman ibn Ammar Dabbi. Then Hafsah bint Sirin narrated from her. Kabshah bint Abu Bakr Thaqafiya bint Busnayh narrated from her uncle and her nephew, Buqkar ibn Abdul Aziz ibn Abu Bakr narrated from her. (These narrators and sub-narrators are mentioned in Tahdhib ut-Tahdhib v 12)

Jabrah bint Muhammad ibn Thabit ibn Siba’ narrated from her father. Then her husband, Abdur Rahman ibn Abu Bakr ibn Umaydullah Taymi and others narrated from her. Tamna bint Umar ibn Ibrahim ibn Humayri Tibi narrated from Abu al-Muzaffar Ali ibn Ahmad Karkhi. Then both her sons, Ahmad ibn Abu Bakr Bandani and Tamim ibn Ahmad ibn Abu Bakr
Bandanji narrated from her.

The muhaddith, Hababah was the aunt of Maa alik ibn Daygham and here narrated from her.

Umm Hababah bint Hayyan was with Sayyidah Ayesah during the Battle of Jamal and narrated from her. Her brother, Muqtil ibn Hayyan, then narrated from her. Hababah Busriyah narrated from her mother. Hasnab bint Matur ibn Suwayd narrated from her father.

Hukaymaah narrated from her husband Ya'la ibn Munrah and then Umar ibn Abdullah ibn Ya'la and Umm man ibn Mughirah al-Asha narrated from him. Hukaymaah a tabi'ah narrated from Sayyidah Ayesah and her daughter, Umm Aasum from her.

Humaydah bint Abu Kathir narrated from her mother and then Abdur Rahman ibn Ishaq from her.

Muniyah bint Ubayd ibn Abu Barzaah narrated from her grandmother - paternal or maternal. Abdullah narrated from his sister, Barrah bint Rafi'.

Tahiyah bint Sulayman ibn Umar Wastiyah narrated from her uncle Muhammad Umar Wasti while Yahya ibn Ali Hadrami heard hadith from her. Umm al-Jumab bint Ghaylah narrated from her mother Suwaydah bint Jabir and then from her Abdul Humayd ibn Abdul Wahid the teacher for Muhammad ibn Bishar Bandar. Barrah bint Musa ibn Najib Bahliyiah narrated from her mother. Tahiyah bint Jaww narrated from her mother, Hunaydah bint Yasir. (These are all extracted from al-kamal, v 1 and 2)

Umm Abdur Rahman Jur Janyiah was cited by her husband Shaykh Muhammad ibn Ali Jurjani. (Tartik Jurjani Sahm p 468)

Umm Umar bint Hassan Baghadidiyah narrated from her father Abul Ghad Hassan ibn Zayd and husband Sa'eed ibn Yahya ibn Qays. (Tartik Baghdad, Khabth, V 14 p 433)

Khadijah bint Qadi Shahabuddin Ahmad Makkiyab heard hadith from her grandmother Hasnab bint Muhammad ibn Kamil. (Al-Aqd at-Thamin v 8, p 206)

Zaynab bint Abdur Rahman Jillyah Jurfaniyah used to narrate from the collection of her grandfather, Shaykh Muhammad ibn Maruf Jurjani. (Tartik Jurjani p 463)

These are a few examples of the very early period to show that the daughters of Islam used to spread out Ahadith and Aathar from their families to the people. Their homes were institutions of hadith and learning.

**Travelling to acquire hadith:**

The muhaddithin travelled all over the Islamic world seeking the Ahadith of the Prophet. These are examples from their travels and periods. The cities and towns of Islam were blessed with the footsteps of students and seekers of hadith. Their problems were removed for them and in the early periods, the journeys for learning were generally undertaken to learn Ahadith and Aathar. Later, the travellers also sought higher authentication. Even women scholars have travelled for these purposes. Umm Husayn Hajjah bint Ahmad travelled from her native land Najshapur to Baghdad to narrate from the scholars there. And, in 396 AH, Shaykh Abul Husayn Muhammad ibn Muhammad Shurati Baghdadi narrated from her in Baghdad and became her student. (Tartik Baghdad v 14, p 444)

Umm Ali Taqiyah bint Abul Faraj Ghyath ibn Ali Suriyah travelled from Baghdad to Egypt and resided there for a long period and acquired knowledge in Iskandariyah from Imam Abul Tahir Ahmad ibn Muhammad Salafi. (Ibn Khalfkan v 1 p 163)

Zaynab bint Barhamuddin Ibrahim ibn Ahmad was born in Makkah. When she was of an understanding age, she travelled with her uncle to the non-Arab countries and returned to Makkah after twenty years. (Al-Aqd at-Thamin v 8 p 234)

Zulaykha bint Ilyas al-Wa'iz was a resident of Ghaznayn. She travelled to Makkah. She narrated hadith from the scholars there and after many years of staying at the Haram, she went to Sadah Chilli in Persia. During her stay at Makkah, she earned dual blessings of worship and narration of hadith. (Al-Aqd at-Thamin v 8 p 237)

Umm Ahmad Fatimah bint Nafisuddin Muhammad ibn
Husayn was a resident of Hamah in Syria. She travelled to Egypt and Tarablas and narrated from her uncle. (Zayl al-Imr, Dhahab p 89)

Umm Muhammad Zaynab bint Ahmad ibn Umar was a resident of Bayt al-Maqdis, Dhahabi, gave her the epithet “المرأة المرحة” (Al-Muhamarah ar-Rahilah) because she travelled far and wide and became famous in learning and hadith. Later, women seekers of hadith from far off lands narrated from her. (Ibid)

Many scholars of hadith travelled to Makkah for the pilgrimage (hajj) to avail the opportunity to meet the learned men of the two Harmayn at Makkah and Madinah. Women Scholars and students also seized this opportunity to combine learning of hadith with worship. Asma bint Muhammad ibn Saalim was one such who travelled to the Harmayn umteen times and gained knowledge from the ulama there. (Ibid, p 180)

Karimah bint Ahmad Maruziyah, a resident of Maru in Khurasan, moved over to Makkah and gave lessons in Hadith. Khatib Baghdadi read the Sahih at-Bukhari under her supervision in five days at Makkah and then narrated from it. Also, great scholars of hadith like Imam Sam‘ani ibn Mutallib and Abu Talib Zunayni narrated Sahih al-Bukhari from her. (Al-Imr fi Khabar men ghubier, Dhahab p 2, p 254)

Many female narrators and scholars of hadith used to travel to listen to a famous imam or Shaykh of the time. For example, Umm Muhammad Hadyah bint Ali ibn Askar Harras Maqdisiyah went to his native city to listen from him. (Zayl al-Imr, Dhahab p 70)

Ummatur Rahman sitt ul Fuqahah bint Shaykh Taquddin travelled to Shaykh Abdul Haq to hear "Sarf Jaz bin Hurfah" (Ibid p 147) Ayshah bint Muhammad Harraniyah travelled to the schools of Imam Zaynuddin Iraqi and Imam Bakhsh to hear hadith from them. Ayshah bint Mummar Isfahiany went to the female scholar Fatimah Jawzwaniyah.

Sittul Arab bint Yahya Dimashqiyyah went to the school of Tarz and studied the Kiteb-ul ghilamiyat Maryam bint Ahmad Ba‘l bakiyyah travelled to Bahauddin’s place and Umm Muhammad Shahdah bint Kamauddin to Shaykh Kas‘ari’s place to take lessons (Zayl al-zabr, and others)

Generally, full care was taken for the veil, etc. comfort and protection of the female students during their journeys. Their relatives also accompanied them. Imam Sahih wrote in Tarikh Jurjan about Fatimah bint Abu Abdallah Muhammad ibn Abdur Rahman Taqii Jurjan, “I saw her when her father used to carry her to Imam Abu Ahmad ibn Adi Jurjani and she heard hadith from him.” (Tarikh Jurjan p 463)

Fatimah bint Muhammad ibn Ali Lakhmiyyah was the sister of the well-known scholar of hadith of Andalus, Abu Muhammad Baji Ashbili. She learnt at the hands of her brother and both together narrated hadith from some scholars and teachers, and got their permission (Baghiyat al Mustumus p 531)

Umm Muhammad Fatimah bint Abdur Rahman ibn Abu Salih was born in Baghdad and was taken to Egypt in her childhood where she heard hadith from her father and other Shaykhs. (Tarikh Baghdad p 14, p 441)

Shama ud-Duha bint Muhammad ibn Abdul Jalil was a Scholar. A highly learned, a devoted worshipper. And an ascetic woman. She got training in Sufism and tasawwuf from shaykh Abu an-Najib Suhrawardy and also heard hadith from other scholars of hadith.

Separate, screened sitting arrangement for female students

Separate accommodation and seating was provided to the female students in the classes of these elders. They could follow the lessons well separated from the male students. There never was a co-education of male and female students. Umm Hami Abusiyah and her sister Fatimah Abusiyah were from a well-known learned family of western Asqa. They were accompanied by the grandmother of Shaykh Zawraq. Ummul-Darun and other women to the circle of studies of Shaykh Abdus Rhamma Allah on whose classes had separate seating for women like that of the other teachers. Muwarrikh wrote.

إن هولاء السيدات كان يراونن دروسهن في الدور الخاصة لهن فإن هناك في الوريين أماكن كانت تساعد من حيث موقعها على
Permission of the muhaddithin

Keeping in view the interest of the female students and the hardship of the journey they undertook, many of the elders and teachers permitted them to narrate Ahadith. For this, the elder gave his student his original manuscript or its copy, saying:

```
[These are my ahadith that I heard or narrated from a
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Certain Shaykh. You may narrate them from me, or, I give you permission to narrate them from me.

Sometimes, this permission was given to a student of another city or country in writing. Those who were given permission are regarded as students of the elder. In this way, permission was given also to many female students so that they became the elders students, and in such cases these or similar words were used:

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أجاز لها فلان ولها إجازة عن فلان
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[Also many female scholars of hadith gave similar permission to men to narrate Ahadith, as we shall see.]

These are some examples of permission to female scholars of hadith from elder male scholars.

The daughter of Shaykh Sadrudin Tu'as Umm Muhammad Ayshah Dimishqiyah was given permission by Abul Qasim ibn Qumayrah ibn Maslamah, Makki ibn Ulwan, Bahauddin Zuhayr, Ibn Zilaq (or Zaylaq), Ibn Daftar Khwan Sulayman and Nur ibn Safeed. (Al-Aqd al-Ishani v 8 p 266)

Permission was given to Umm Kamal Ayshah bint Qadi Shahabuddin Alunad ibn Zuhayrh by Muhammad ibn Ali Qutarwani, Muhammad ibn Ya'qub ibn 'Rassas, Qadi Nasiruddin Muhammad ibn Muhammad Tunisi Maaliki, Abul Haram Muhammad ibn Muhammad Qalansi and many other muhaddithin. (Ibid p 267)

Umm ul-Huda Ayshah bint Khatib Taquddin Tibriyah Makkiyah was granted permission by her grandfather, Muhibuddin tabari, father Khatib Taquddin, uncle Qadi Jamaluddin, and Radiuddin ibn Khalil and his brother Ilmuddin ibn Khalil and others. (Ibid p 268)

Umm Ibrahim Fatimah bint Khatib Izzuddin Ibrahim ibn Abdullah was the last student of the famous muhaddith Ibrahim ibn Khalil. She was also the last student of Muhammad ibn Abdul Qadir ibn Sarwari, Ibn Awwah and Khatib Murwa to narrate from them with their permission. (Zayl ul-Ibr, Husayni p 259)

Ujaybah bint Muhammad Maqadariyah Baghdadiyah was the
last student of her Shaykh of hadith, Mas'ud and Rustami, etc. to narrate with their permission. (Al-Ibr 5, p. 194)

Umm al-Khayr Juwayriyah bint Qadi Zaynuddin Tibriyah Makkiyah had received permission from the scholars of different countries to narrate from them. They included Muhammad ibn Qamah ibn Aal Dinyati, Ibn Kashtagadi, Ibn Asarwi Ahmad ibn Ali Mashtuli and others from Egypt, Ahmad ibn Ali Jazzi and many others from Damascus.

Zaynab bint Diyauddin Muhammad ibn Umar Qastaniyah Makkiyah was given written permission in Baghdad by Imam. Ibn Khayruddin, Abud Jafar ibn and Imam Radiuddin Hasan San'ani Lahori

Sittul Kul bint Imam Radiuddin was given permission by a number of Egyptian scholars including notably Sayyidah bint Musa Ibn Uthman and Darbas Marani. (Al-Aqdath-Ul-Muwayd v 12)

Permission was granted to Ummul-Hasan Sittul Kul bint Ahmad Qaysiyah from Egypt by Yahya ibn Yusuf Misri, Muhammad ibn Ghali Dinyati, Ahmad Ibn Ali Mashtuli, Abu Na'aym As'ardi, Qadi Sharfuddin ibn Qamah, Ayshah bint Umar Sinhaqiyah and others, and from Damascus Abu Bakr Radiuddin, Zaynab bint Kamaluddin and others. The permission from Damascus was conveyed through the maternal cousin of Sittul Kul. (Al-Aqdath-Ul-Muwayd v 12)

Ibn Khallikan has written about Umm ul-Muwayd Zaynab bint Abul Qasim abdul Qasim Abdul Rahman Nyshapuri that she was a great scholar who had acquired knowledge from a number of ulama through direct narration and permission. They included the great men like Hafiz Abdul Hasan Abdul Chafir ibn Isma'il Farsi and Allaham Mahmud ibn Umar Zamaklishari the ecstatic (Ibn Khallikan v 1, p. 216)

Saffiyeh bint Abdul Wahhab Qarashiyah was the Muhaddith of her times though she had never heard from any shaykh or muhaddith, nor narrated from them. Rather the scholar Mas'ud Thaqafi and other senior scholars of Hadith had given her permission to narrate. (Al-Ibr 5, p. 188)

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Ascription
There have been so many great women scholars of hadith who held a distinctive position in ascription of hadith that the learned men and mufaddithim obtained their citation (meaning, ascribed the narration to them as authority). Some of them are:

Umm Muhammad bint Muhammad ibn Salim ibn Abu Mawahib, Umm Muhammad Fatimah bint Ibrahim ibn Mahmoud Ba'liyah (Authority in Syria) Umm Abdulrahm Zaynab bint Ahmad ibn Abdur Rahim Qaddusiyah (Authority in Syria), Kausimah bint Abdul Wahhab ibn Ali ibn Kifr Qarashiyah Zubayriyah (Authority in Makkah), Fatimah bint Ahmad ibn Qasim Harasiyah (Authority of her times), Sittul Wazara bint Umar ibn As'ad ibn Munjatanukhiyah.

Titles and Addresses
Like men, the women scholars too have been showered with titles testifying to their scholarly and religious standing. We give below some examples of such titles in acknowledgement of their distinction.

Sittul Ajnas
Mawfiqiyah bint Abdul Wahhab ibn Atiq ibn Wardan Misriyah

Sittul Ahd
Umm Ahmad ibn Ulwan ibn Saeed Ballbakiyah

Sittush Sham
Khatun ukht ul-malik Ul-Aadil.

Sittul Arab
Umm ul-Khayr bint Yahya ibn Qa'imaz Kandiyah Dimishqiyah.

Sittul Fuqaha
Sharifah bint Khatib Sharfuddin Ahmad ibn Muhammad Dimishqiyah

Sittul-Fuqaha
Amatur Rahman bint Taqiuddin Ibrahim ibn Ali Wastiyah
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Salihiyah.

Sittul Kul
Ayshah bint Muhammad ibn Ahmad ibn Ali Qalisiyah.

Sittul Kul
Bint Imam Radi uddin Ibrahim ibn Muhammad Tibriyah Makkiyah.

Sittul Kul
Bint Ahmad ibn Muhammad Makkiyah.

Sittul Muluk

Sittun Nas
Kamaliyah bint Ahmad ibn Abdul Qadir Dimradiyah.

Sittul Wuzara
Bint Rustum ibn Abu Raja ibn Muhammad Asfahani.

Taj un Nisa
Bint Rustum ibn Abu Raja ibn Muhammad Asfahani.

Sharf un Nisa
Amatullah bint Ahmad ibn Abdullah ibn Ali Aabnusiyah.

Fakhrun Nisa
Shahdah bint Ahmad ibn Umar Abriyah Baghdadiyah.

Zayn ud Dar
Wajihah bint Ali ibn Yahya Ansariyah Busiriyah.

Shajratud Dur
Umm Khalil.

Hurrah
Umm Muwayd Zaynab bint Abul Qasim Abdur Rahman Sha'riyah Nisapuriyah.

Jalilah
Umm Umar Khadijah bint Umar ibn Ahmad ibn Adim.

Mu'alimmah
Ghalimah bint Muhammad Andlasiyah.

Shaykhah
Umm Abdullah Habibah bint Khalib Izz uddin Ibrahim Maqdisiyah.

Shaykhah
Umm Zaynab Fatimah bint Abbas Baghdadiyah.

Shaykhah
Umm ul-Fadl Safiyah bint Ibrahim ibn Ahmad Makkiyah.

Shaykhah
Umm Ahmad Zaynab bint Makki ibn Ali Kamil Huraniyah.

Sanad Aali:
Sanad is the line of transmission of a hadith. It is aali (meaning, high or superior) when: the narrators in the chain are fewer in number than in another chain so that the line upto the Prophet is short and closer, or there is nearness in an imam's narration or in a books narration. The muhaddithin have travelled long distances to gain this excellence. Those muhaddithin who possessed sanad aali had a large crowd of students in their classes, and many female muhaddithin also acquired the sanad aali so that they too had a large crowd of students. Imam Dhahabi wrote about Fatimah bint Dqaq that she possessed a high esteem, a sanad aaliyah and was a devoted worshipper of her times. (Al-Ibr v 5, p 296)

As for Umm ul-Muwayd Zaynab Sha'riyah Nisapuriyah, her death put an end to sanad aali. (Al-Ibr v 5, p 56)

Umm Muhammad Zaynab bint Ahmad ibn Umar Muqadisiyah is exclusive in sanad aali of Musnad Darami, Musnad Abd ibn Humayd and Kitab ath-Thaqafiyyah. Hence, students of hadith traveled to her classes to narrate these books. They travelled from afar to get the sanad from her. She too travelled from Nishapur to Egypt and Madinah where she narrated these books.
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Singularity in Ahadith and Books of Hadith:

Like men, women too were exclusive in narration of some Ahadith or Books of hadith and their contemporaries did not have these narrations. Because of this exclusivity, students were particular to narrate from them.

Musnadatush Sham Umm Abdullah Zaynab bint Kamaluddin Muqadiisyah was counted among these mudhaddithim. Umm Muhammad Asma bint Muhammad ibn Saalim also enjoyed the excellence of exclusivity. Al-Ilbr contains these words about Amat ul Haq bint Hafiz Abu Ali Hasan ibn Muhammad Bakriyah; "She was alone in narrating a few portions (meaning, a small collection) of the Ahadith." (Al-Ilbr p 352)

As for Safiyah bint Abdul Wahhab Qarashiyyah, she was alone in narrating many Ahadith in her times (Ibid v 3 p 119) And, Zaynab bint Khatib Yahya ibn Izzuddin narrated very many Ahadith and was exclusive in that. And, Zaynab bint Sulayman As'arwiyah was alone in narrating some Ahadith, and so was Zaynab bint Abdullah ibn Radquddin in some portions of Ahadith. Ummul Fadl Bibi bint Abdul Samad Harthamiyyah Hardiyah had a small collection of Ahadith. It was ascribed to her. She had narrated it from Abdul Rahman ibn Abuy Shurayh. (Al-Ilbr p 257)

The last of the Students:

The last of the students of the Shaykhs and Muhaddithin, or the student who survives the rest is called (Khatimatul ashab). This kind of muhaddith also gives a sunud aali and seekers of hadith narrate from him. He is sought because of this distinction. There have been women too who qualified as khatimatul ashab.

Fatimah bint Khatib Izzuddin Ibrahim Maqdisiyah was the khatimatul ashab of Shaykh Ibrahim ibn Khalil. This means that no one else narrated from Shaykh Ibrahim after her. Also, she was the last student of Ibn Abdul Qadir, Ibn Sirri, Ibn Awwah and Khatib Murda to narrated from them with their permission.

Ujaybah Baqidariyah was the last student to narrate with the permission of Masud Thaqafi, Rustami and a group of Muhaddithin. Umm Hani Afifah bint Ahmad Farqaniyah Isfahaniyyah was the last to narrate from Abdul Wahid al-Asbah the student of Imam Abu N'aym Isfahani. She was his Khatimatul ashab. There were two who were the last to narrate from the well-known Muhaddith Abdul Ghana'im Muslim ibn Ahmad Mazni Dimishqis; Fatimah bint Sulayman and Abul Futuh Aghmati Iskandarni.

Learning and narrating hadith, and methods thereof:

Just as the daughters of Islam kept themselves within the limits of Shari'ah in seeking knowledge whether traveling or at home, so too they maintained a responsible method in acquiring and narrating hadith. They never overstepped their limits, particularly the restrictions of the veil.

Aasim ibn Sulayman al-Ahwal reported that they used to go to Hafsah bint Shirin. She would wrap herself with her covering sheet of cloth and veil her face. They would request her not to bother herself with the formality because Allah has said about aged women like her:

[And (as for) past child-bearing women who hope not for marriage, there is no blame on them that they put off their (outer) garments without displaying their ornaments.] (24: 60)

She would ask them what words followed their quotation. They would answer:

[And that they should restrain is better for them.] (24: 60)

She would say, "This is achieved by putting the overall sheet of cloth." (Tokagat Ibn Sa'd v 7 p 325)

Maryam bint Muhammad ibn Abdullah Akhdiiyah had built the Masjid al-Andulus in western Aqsa. There, lessons were
Hearing:

The teacher reads out the Hadith to the student who hears it. The daughters of Islam adopted the same method in teaching hadith to their family members.

Reading:

A student reads out the hadith before the teacher and other students. It is as though the whole class reads before the teacher who listens to them. This is reading or submitting before the shaykh. Women teachers followed the same method. They sat behind a screen while one of their mahrams read out and she and the students heard him.

Permission:

The teacher then "gives" his narrated hadith to the students, saying, "You have my permission to narrate them." Many male scholars and many female scholars gave permission in this way to their female and male students respectively. Imam Abdul Qasim Sahni Juzani described how he narrated from Hibatul Aziz bint Ahmad Juzani. He said:

اَحْسُنْنَا اَمَّ الفَضْلِ هِيَ العَرَبُ بَيْسُ مُحَمَّدٍ بْنِ عَبْدِ الرَّحْمَنِ بْنِ عَبْدُالِلْمُؤْمِنِ
نُقْرُ إِحْيٌاً أَمِيَّ ذِرَاعُهَا

"Umm ul- Fadl Habitul Aziz bint Ahmad ibn Abdul Rahman narrated to us hadith through her brother, Abu Dharr who read over to her." (Tabekh Jurjana p 463)

Abdur Rahman ibn Qasim was hearing hadith from Umm Muhammad Fatimah bint Abdur Rahman Baghdadiyah while his son Ahmad joined him in the hearing. (Tabekh Baghdad v 14, p 441)

Imam Ibn Jawzi described his hearing from Fatimah bint Husayn Raziyah. "I began hearing hadith from Fatimah with the reading of our teacher, Abul Fadl ibn Nasir." (Al-Muntazam u 2, p 8)

Imam Taqiuddin Fasi Makki, writer of al-Aqal At Thamin, heard hadith from Zaynab daughter of Kamal ud-Din (who was the judge of Makka) at Badr. He said, "Zaynab narrated to us some Ahadith at Badr in the presence of her husband Qadi Jamal uddin ibn Zuhayrah. (Al-Aqal- Ati Thamin)

Fatimah bint Nafisuddin Muhammad Bahansiyah Makkiyah narrated the book (of) Ibn Abu ad-Dunya. Imam Taqiuddin Fasi Makki described how it was done: Sadruddin Ahmad ibn Bahauddin Dimishqi read that over while the son of Fatimah, Shaykh Muhammad ibn Abdul Malik Murjanti and Ibn Sakr heard the said Sadruddin in that very assembly. (Al-Aqal At thamin u 8, p..."
Sharif Abdul Khayr ibn Abu Abdullah Fabi and his brother Sharif Abu'dl Makarim heard hadith from Umm Abdul karim bint Nuruddin Muhammad Tlibiyah while Ibn Qutayr read it over. (Ibid v 6 p 291)

Crowd of Students in classes of female Muhaddithin and Scholars:

Students came from far off places to these female scholars to hear their hadith and then regarded it as pride and honour to narrate them. Not only the students but also imams and preservers of Hadith came and gained benefit from the narrations.

Umm Muhammad Zaynab bint Ahmad ibn Umar Maqdisiyah imparted lessons till the age of ninety years. Students came to her class from different countries. She too travelled to many cities and gave lessons. Dahhabi said, "The students travelled to her place and she too gave lessons in Hadith in Egypt and Madinah." (Zayl Ibn Dahabi p 126)

Umm Ahmad Zaynab bint Makki Hiraniyah imparted lessons in hadith till she was ninety-four years old. Till the end, there was a crowd of students in her class. (Al-Ibr, v 5 p 358)

Umm Abdullah Zaynab bint Kamal uddin Ahmad ibn Abdur Rahim Maqdisiyah had her seat in Syria. She spent all her life narrating hadith and teaching the books of hadith. She had a large number of students. She was alone in narrating many ahadith and taught the major books of hadith. (Al-Ibr, p 213)

Fakhr un-Nisa Shahdah bint Ahmad ibn Umar Baghdadiyah died at the age of about a hundred years. She had the distinction of having heard the sanad-adi and she passed that on to her students who were thus admitted to the fold of students of the imams of hadith. (Ibn Khallikan, Wata yat ul-Ayan)

Imam Ibn Jawzi said about her that she was very pious and she gave lessons in hadith for years together. She died when she was about a hundred years old. (Al-Muntaqim v 1, p 228)

Karimah bint Ahmad Muraziyah Kushmihainah possessed great knowledge of hadith. She excelled in narrating sahih Bukhari. Men of distinction sought to study in her classes and Ibn Jawzi named Khatib Baghdadi, Ibn Mutallib, Samani, Abu Tahib Zaynul as the imams who studied at her hands. (Ibid v 6 p 270)

Khatib Baghdadi said that when she went to Makkah in 463 AH to perform hajj, she read the whole sahih Bukhari there in five days.

Umm Muhammad Zaynab bint Ahad Tunisiyah Makhiyah was better known by her kunyah Bint al-Maghribi. Imam Fasi wrote about her. "She gave lessons in hadith and the learned heard (haddh) from her." (al-Aqd ath-Thumman v 8, p 226)

Fatimah bint Ahmad used to impart lessons in Makkah. Noted muanaddithin joined her classes. Taqqudin Fasi wrote "She gave lessons in Hadith and our distinguished teachers also heard from her. I heard the book atf- Thaqariyat from her. (al-Aqd at Thumman v 8, p 296)

Not only students but masters of hadith and those who had seats in the subject attended the classes of Musnadah ash-Sham. Karimah bint Abdul Wahhab. Hatif Zaynuddin Muhammad ibnAbu Bakr Sawli Shafi'Abyurdi heard hadith from her when he was forty years old. Also, Imam imaduddin Murtada Musnadi Dimishqi and the musnad of Sham Imam Bahaddudn Ibn Qasim came to her and sought permission from her (to narrate).

Khatib Baghdadi has taken pride in Tarikh Baghdadi for transmitting from the female scholars of those and regretted his inability to avail of the narrations of some others of them. He wrote, "I have heard from Fatimah bint Hitil ibn Ahmad Karjaiyah. She is truthful. She stays in the eastern Baghdad at the corner of Sah Shenba Bazar. Sattah bint Qadi Abdul Qasim Abdul Wahid ibn Muhammad Bajliyah was truthful and highly learned. She lived in the eastern region of Baghdad near Huraym, the capital. I also learnt hadith from her. Khadijah bint Muhammad ibn Ali Al-Wa'azat Shahjiiyath was pious and truthful. She lived in the neighborhood Quayqat Rabi' of Baghdad. I wrote down hadith from her."
"Umm Salamah, daughter of Muhammad, was a sermoniser and a righteous, trustworthy learned woman. She lived in the area of Tabrah of Baghdad. I wrote down hadith from her too. I also heard hadith from Tahira bint Ahmad ibn Yusuf Tanokhi at the house of Qadi Abul Qasim Tanokhi. Her narrations were in a book form with Qadi Tanokhi. Umm Umar bint Abul Ahasan Hassan ibn Zayd Thaqifiyah resided near the house of Mu'addib ibn Muslim in Baghdad. I heard her narrate hadith. She taught hadith to my contemporaries, like Muhammad ibn Sabah Jurjani and Dawah." 

Among the female muhaddithin of Baghdad was Fatimah bint Ubayd ibn Shakhayr Sayr Fiyah. She was a well known scholar of hadith. She resided in the neighborhood of Abul Faith Muhammad ibn Abdul Fawaris. Many Muhaddithin narrated from her and Khatib Baghdadi also had the honour of being her pupil, but he regretted not having transmitted directly from her. He said, "I was not destined to hear from her but Abu Tahir Muhammad ibn Ahmad Ashafi conveyed her hadith narrations to me." (Turkh Baghdad v 14, pp 433, 445, 446)

Sittul Wuzara bintUmar ibn Anad Tanokhilah was an authority of her times. Her circle of teaching extended from Dimishq (Damascus) to Cairo. She was well-known for her lessons in Sahih Bukhari and Musnad Imam Shafi'i. She taught these two books in both those places. (Zayl ubhr, dibshabi p 88)

Shams ud-Duha bint Muhammad ibn Abdul Jalil was a scholar of hadith, an ascetic, and a pious worshipper. She had a regular circle of students who learnt hadith from her (Al-Aqdat-Thamn v 8, p 257)

Ibn Jawzi wrote about Fatimah bint Husayn, "I heard from her the books Dham ul-Ghibah of Ibrahim Harbi, and Kitab al-Majalis ibn Samun, and Musnad Imam Shafi'i through Abdul Fadl ibn Nasir. (Al-Munzamim v 10, p 8)

Dhuhabi has elaborated that he heard hadith from Ulama Umm Muhammad Shahdah bint Kumaluddin. Muhaddith Ibn Nuqy was that he heard Musnad Abu Yaya from Aysah bint Mu'mar Isfahaniyab. She had heard it from

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Imam Sirai. Imam Taquddin Fasi Mkki stated, "Umm Muhammad bint Abul Yaman Muhammad heard the hadith from her aunt Umm al-Hasan Fatmah bint Ahmad ibn Radiuddin and from her grandfather Shaykh Radiuddin Tabari, 'Hadith bi-Wilayah' and 'Tasviyat Raz'z'. And, I heard both from Ulama bint Ahmad, and Thaqifiyat at Madinah when she was a resident there." (Al-Aqad ath. Thamn v 8, pp 281-296)

Imam Ahmad ibn Ali Salhi Hanafi (D 765 AH) heard Hadith from Zaynab bint Muslim and read sahih al-Bukhari from Sitt ul Wuzara. (Tabaqat as-Sanyah v 1, p 461.) Fatimah bint Iqdisiyah had given permission for hadith to Abu Abbas Ahmad ibn Ali Qurashe Bakri Kimaz like Ibn Jazri. (Ibid p 470)

Permission to narrate:

Just as many shaykh of hadith gave permission to women to narrate from them, so too many females of identical rank gave permission to men who regarded it as an honour and excellence of which they took pride.

Imam Taquddin Fasi Makki wrote, "Umm Muhammad Sayyidah bint Shaykh Raduddin gave permission to our Shaykh Hafiz Zaynuddin Abdur Rahim Iraqi to narrate and Umm Muhammad Ayshah bint Ibrahim Dimishqi gave permission to Imam Buchanuddin Ibrahim ibn Ahmad Shami." (Al- Aqad Ath Thamn p 253)

Ibn Khallikan said, "We got permission from Umm al-Muwayd Zaynab in a certain month of 516 AH." (Ibn Khallikan v 1, p 216)

This procedure was very common among the muhaddithin. Even today, certificate and permission of books of hadith is given after a student has read some of it at the two ends.

Lessons in different cities:

Generally, the female scholars of hadith held their classes in their homes where students came to acquire knowledge, as Khatib Baghdadi has pointed out the residences of some of them. However, quite a number of the female scholars gave lessons in
different cities too and as it were, spread religious knowledge while they moved about. Khadiyiyah bint Ja'far ibn Muhammad was a resident of Baghdad. Once when she travelled to the lands of non-Arabs, at Dinawar Khatib Abul Fadl Mansur ibn Rabilah Zuhri narrated hadith from her. (Tahrik Baghdad, v 14, p 444) Sittul Wuzara bint Umar Turakhhiyah imparted lessons in Salah Bukhari and Musnad Shafi'i innumerable times in Cairo and Damascus. Zaynab bint Ahmad Magdhiyah taught in Cairo and Madinah. Aminah bint Unan, taught in Baghdad and Mosul and narrated hadith. Taqwuddin Fas'i heard hadith from Zaynab daughter of the Qadi of Makkah at Badr.

Mutual hearing and narrating:

We have stated already that when hadith came to be recorded in the first century, women also narrated to each other. Their hadith were also heard by men and this continued in succeeding generations. Women spread religious knowledge among their sons and taught fellow women the hadith.

Umm Sulayman Ubayyah bint Nafi' was a slave of Sakinah, the daughter of Mus'ab ibn Zubayr. Taybah was the slave of Fatimah daughter of Umar ibn Mus'ab ibn Zubayr. Jaybah, narrated from Umm Sulayman.

Thaniyah bint Ubayd ibn Abu Barzah narrated from her grandmother and then Umm al-Aswad narrated from her.

Umm Nadrah narrated from Sayyidah Aysah and from her the transmission was picked up by Tanbih Rasbihiyah Busriyah. While Umm al-Banin bint Sa'ib ibn Marqud narrated from her father, Salamah bint Amr Qalaysiyah narrated from her (Ummul-Banin). Quaymah bint Iyad narrated from Ummul Banin bint Iyad Aslamiyah, her sister.

Maymunah bint Hajj ibn Abdul Jabbar ibn Wa'il narrated from Umm Yahya Haythah, bint Abdul Jabbar ibn Wa'il, that is, a niece became her aunt's student. Hakimah narrated from Sayyidah Aysah and then her daughter Umm Asim narrated from her, Rafi'ah bint Wazir narrated from Ibn Shahab and Umm Azar, and from her, her aunt Karimah bint Aatif Batwiyah. Sidrah the freed woman of Ibn Aamir narrated from

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Sawiydah Aysah and from her Ummul Azhar bint Umar Ghasan, mother of Ahmad ibn Harith ibn Waqid Ghasan. (These reports are cited from Al-Kamil v1,2 and 4.)

The mu'amadah Shaam, Zaynab bint Kamaluddin Ahmad Maqdisiyah was given permission by Ujaybah Baqadaziyah to narrate from her. Fatimah bint Suleyman Ansariyah heard hadith from Karimah bint Ahmad Muruzah Aysah bint Mu'mar Isfaniyah attended the classes of Fatimah Juzwaniyah and narrated from her. Shikah Mus'marah Zaynab bint Makki heard from Sittul Ka'bah. The granddaughter of Sultan Safahduddin Ayyubi, Princess Fatimah bint Malik Hasan Ahmad also heard from Sittul Ka'bah. Fatimah bint Ahmad Samiriyah Baghdadiyah narrated from Huwariyah bint Eesa Khazzaz.

Writings on hadith

The daughters of Islam- like their male counterparts- did not let it rest at teaching and narration, but wrote books on the subject. They left behind a sizeable treasure of books. They compiled their narrations in book form, wrote biographical notes on narrations, and made copies of books of hadith. Many excelled in the field. Imam Dhahabi wrote about Ujaybah bint Hafsi Muhammad ibn Abu Khalib Baqadariyah Baghdadiyah that she wrote a book of ten volumes on the life of Shaykhs and teachers. (Al-Ibr. v 5 p 194) This shows how many her shaykhs were

Umm Muhammad Fatimah Khatun bint Muhammad Khailiyah Isfahani was very adept in writing and composing. She wrote many good books, Ar Ramuz min Al-Kanuz, a five-volume book among them. (Al-Aad At Tha'im v 8, p 202)

Fas'i wrote about Umm Muhammad bint Fatimah bint Nafisu'dd in Muhammad Bahnasiyah Makkiyah that she wrote many books on the sciences of hadith and other subjects. (Ibid, p 273)

Khadijah bint Muhammad Shahaniyah Baghdadiyah compiled all the narrations and hadith of her teacher of hadith. Ibn Maymun, in a book form. (Al-Ibr. v 3 p 246)

Umm Muhammad Shahdah bint Kam al Abdullah Umar had
accomplished many hadith to memory. She collected many of them in a book form. (Zayl al ibn Dhatabi p 49)

Karimah bint Maruziyah had great ability to correct her books by comparison and also rectify her manuscripts thereby. She was a very capable scholar of hadith. (Ibn v 3, p 254)

There was a constant exchange of views through correspondence between Khadijah bint Shaykh Shahabuddin Makkiiyah and her contemporary male scholars. She used to write booklets and pamphlets on religious and scholarly subjects.

Chubary wrote about Ayshah bint Umara bint Yahya resident of Bajay in Africa, "Her script was excellent. I saw a book of Thali in her handwriting. It was made up of eighteen volumes. (Limwan al-daryah fi man kana min al-ulama ... Pp 47-48)

These few examples show that the female scholars did leave behind many books and they also excelled as scribes. Unfortunately, their works were not given due attention so that none of them is extant today.

Exegesis of their books and narrations:

The acclaim and approval of the books and narrations of female scholars prompted Ulama and muhaddithin to write a takhrij (conclusion and/or interpretation) on them. They certified that they were correct so they included them with their own narrations.

Imam Fasi wrote about Umm ul-Fadl Khadijah bint Taquiram Ali ibn Abu Bakr Tibriyah Makkiiyah that her hadith were subjected to takhrij, and she gave lessons in hadith. (Al-Aqda Ath-Thamam v 8, p23)

And he said the same thing about Umm Ahmad Raysah bint Ahmad ibn Abu Bakr Muhammad Tibriyah Makkiiyah. (Ibn v 221)

Alas, neither is there a sign of the books of the female scholars nor of the books of takhrij thereon.

Fiqh (Jurisprudence) and Verdicts:

Many of these female scholars were also jurists and givers of religious verdicts. They excelled in this field and Muslims relied on them perfectly. Ibn Qayyim explained that about twenty-two sahabah were well-known in the subjects of jurisprudence and issuing verdicts, known as fiqah and fatwa, seven of them were the Mothers of the Faithful, Sayyidah Ayyah, had the title of faqih ul-Ummah. And, Zayna bint Abu Salamah was also a foremost faqihah. The well-known tabiti always remembered her when he recalled a faqihah of Madinah.

Shaykh Aallaoddin Samarqandi (d 539 AH) was a well-known Hanafi faqih and a scholar and writer of Tufitul Fiqahah. His daughter, Fatimah, was a great faqihah and her husband, Shaykh Aallaoddin Kasani (d 587 AH) wrote al-Badaq wa as-sara'l an exposition of Tufitul Fiqahah. Whenever, he hesitated, she corrected him and she also issued edicts with her father and husband. The edicts bore the signatures of all three of them.

The daughter of Qadi Abu Abdullah Husayn ibn Isma'il Muhamli, Ahatul Wahid Satyath had heard hadith from her father and also from Isma'il ibn Abbas Waraq Abdul Qaffir ibn Salamah Hansa, Abdul Hasan Misri, Hamzah Hashmi and others. She was very learned and righteous and had acquired proficiency in laws of inheritance, accounts, grammar and other sciences and arts. But, most of all, she had memorized the Quran and fiqah. She was perfect in fiqah of the Shafi' school. She used to issue edicts with Shaykh Abu Ali ibn Abu Hurayrah.

Ibn Jawzi has written about Bint al-Muhamli that she was a talented scholar and the greatest of those who had memorized the fiqah of the Shafi'I school of thought. Thus she had no peer in her times in fiqah of the Shafi'I school.

The faqihah and muftiulah Umm Uyusiyyah, her sister Fatimah and the grandmother of shaykh Zawraq, faqihah Umm ul-Banin were three prominent women of west Asqa in fiqah and fatwa.

Umm Eesa bint Ibrahim ibn Ishaq Baghadadiyah was a jurist in Baghdad. Khateeb said that she was an accomplished scholar and issued edicts on juristic questions. Ibn Jawzi confirmed this statement. (Turikh Baghad, v 14 p 442, Al-Muntazam v 5 p 315)

The daughter of Shaykh Taquddin Ibrahim ibn Ali Wasti,
Imam the known as sitt ul-fuqha. (Zayl ul-lbr, Dhahabi) The same could be said of Sharifah the sister of Amir Sayyid Sharif Alauddin Ali ibn Khatib Sharf uddin Ahmad. (Zayl ul-lbr Hasayni p 287) Umm Zaynab Fatimah bint Abbas Baghdadiyah was a highly talented scholar, an ascetics, a content woman and the chief of women of her times. (Zayl ul lbr, ahah)

The sister of Fagih Yusuf ibn Yahya Andalus, Fatimah bint Yahya Andulu siyah Quratubiyah was an accomplished scholar and very God-leaning, simple woman who also was a faqihah. Both brother and sister were famous in this field. Her popularity may be gauged from the unprecedented number of people who participated in her funeral. (Baghiyatul Hallimah p 531)

It is worth mentioning that Abu Bakr Muhammad ibn Ali Andalus (d 703 AH) used to come to the mosque from morning till zawal and give lessons in the Qur'an and subjects of Sharifah and he also issued fatawa to women who came to the mosque and enquired from him. (Tabqat ul Mufassirin v 2 p 103)

Qur'an, memorizing, exegesis and recital:

Many of the women memorized the Qur'an and specialized in its recital and exegesis. They served it as they served the hadith. Hafsha bint Sirin had memorized the Qur'an and its meaning and interpretation when she was twelve years old. (Tabqat ul-Tahhul v 11, p 409) she was adept in the art of recital too. Her brother, Muhammad ibn Sirin, used to refer to her whenever he was in doubt. Hafsa used to recite half of the Qur'an every night. (Safat ul-Subhan v 4, p 16)

Fatimah Naysapuri was a famous exegete. Ibn Mutuk said that he had not seen a woman more learned than her. He asked Zun Nuz Misri about this woman with exceptional knowledge and he said that she was one of the friends of Allah and she was his teacher. (Ibid p 101) Amatul Wahid bint al-Malauil was an outstanding scholar, faqihah and a hafizah who had committed the Qur'an to memory.

Aasiyah, the sister of Imam Diyauddin Maqdisi, was a very pious woman, an ascetic and a hafizah. The wife of Diyauddin, Aasiyah bint Muhammad ibn Khalf Maqdisiyah was an excellent scholar of the Qur'an and of the Sciences of the Qur'an she was exceptional in the art of recital. (Hashanah al-Aknal v 1, p 92)

Imam Zaynuddin Abul Hasan Ali ibn Ibrahim, Qari, Dimishqi, Misri (d Ramadan 399 AH) was a great faqih, sermonizer and exegete. His elegance was the answer to his mother's prayers who herself was very pious, hafizah and an exegete. Imam Zaynuddin said, "When I would return from my maternal uncle Shariful Islam after studying exegesis from him, my mother would ask me what he had taught me that day. When I repeated my lessons, she would add whatever he had omitted to tell me." She remembered by memory the 30-volume exegesis written by her father. She worshipped Allah sitting on the prayer rug for forty years. (Tabqat al Hanabiah v 1 p 440)

This is corroborated in Tahqat ul Mufassirin thus: Shaykh ul Islam, Imam Abul Faraj Abdol Wahid ibn Muhammad Shirazi Maqdisi (D 486 AH) wrote Kitab al-Javahir, a 30-volume exegesis. His daughter memorized the whole of it (v 2, p 262).

Among the children of Imam Abu Muhammad Sirajuddin Abdur Rahman ibn Umar Dani Hanbali (d Jumadilula 243 AH) was a blind daughter. She was known to possess a miraculous memory in her times.

Abu Muhammad Harran had a blind daughter who had a miraculous memory. She could tell about any hadith in the six authentic books immediately on being asked. (Tabqat ul Hanabiah ah)

Maymunah bint Abu Jafar Madinan was a well-known reciter of the Qur'an having learnt the recital from her father. She then taught it to other people.

Imam ul-Qurra, Ibn Jazri wrote about his daughter that she memorized the Qur'an in all its seven readings and then recited to others. She also learnt the ten recitals on these principles. She was perfect in the science of recital (called tajwid) and no one could match her.

Ibn Taghrubardi wrote in An Nujum Az-Zahrakah that in the
palace of Zubaydah, the wife of Khalifah Harum Rashid, one thousand female slaves used to recite the Qur'an. Their audible recital seemed like the buzzing of honey bees.

The daughters of Islam served the Qur'an also by transcribing it. Ibn Fayyad wrote in 'Akhbar Qurubah' that there were in eastern Qurubah a hundred and seventy women who transcribed the Qur'an in the kufi script. We may gauge from this the interest of the women of the whole city in writing down the Qur'an in their own hand. Even in our country, India, the granddaughter of the king Shah Jehan, princess Shad Khanam transcribed the Qur'an in the script Rayhan with all seriousness and put down her name at the end in the script Riga.

Admonition and reminder:

It is through sermons and remembrance that the faith and deeds for women of Islam was refreshed and enlightened. Through them the Muslim families were reformed. There have been many women sermonizers who have been instrumental in benefitting women very much. They went to women and delivered sermons. Women attended their sermons. In this way they enjoined piety and forbade evil. The mother of Hassan Buari, Khayrah, used to deliver sermons to groups of women. This is what Usamah ibn Zayd said. (Tuba yat Ibn Sa'd v 8 p 376)

Mu'adhdh bint Abdullah was wife of a famous tabi'i Silah ibn Ashyam. She was very pious and Ja'far ibn Kaysan said that he had seen her deliver sermon to a crowd of women around her. (Ibid p 403)

Umm al-Hakam Ayshah bint Muhammad Baghdadiyah was known as al-Wa'izah (the one who sermonizes). Dhahabi said that she was very pious and delivered sermon to women. (Al-Ibn v 5 p 168)

Umm Ahmad Zulaykhah bint Ilyas Ghaznawiyah was also known as al-Wa'izah. Saintly, ascetic woman, she visited people at their homes and admonished them. (Fasi in al-Aqīd ath-Thamān v 8 p233)

The services of Umm Zaynab Fatimah bint Abbas Baghdadiyah, the highly learned scholar, are very significant in this field. Not the woman of Baghdad alone but of Dimashq and Cairo also derived immense benefit from her. Therefore, she was called chief of the women Imam Dhahabi wrote that women gained much from her and many reported from their sins. She was a very sincere and God-fearing scholar who discharged her duty of enjoining that which is right and forbidding what is wrong. People of every rank respected her and she was very dear to them. (Zayl ibr, Dhahabi p 80)

Critics have written about Khayrhumah Fasiyah that she was much instrumental in disseminating the tenets of the Ash'aries among the women of Faas. She was well-known in the western (Muslim) lands.

When Ibn Jawzi's son Abul Muazin Yusuf ibn abdur Rahman was orphaned at the age of seventeen, the mother of Khalifah Nasir Abbasi looked after him and appointed him to deliver sermons in place of his father Ibn Jawzi. He was given much respect and he became prominent among his contemporaries as a sermonizer. (Tabogat al-Muyassim v 2, p 281)

Tasawwuf:

Many there were among the daughters of Islam, devoted to Allah, who created in the women of Islam an urge to purify their souls. These pious women had their khanqah (recluse) where devotional exercises and a lot of worship caused a reformation in the hearts of women in general.

We have read about Umm Ahmad Zulaykhah Ghaznawiyah and Fatimah bint Husayn Raziyah, both known as Al-Wa'izah. Both were Sufis and Ibn Jawzi said about the latter that she had a khanqah where pious women gathered. (Al-Munaimin v 10 p 2)

Tajun Nisa bint Rustam Isfahani took up residence in Makkah and lived a life of strict simplicity and deeply religious Taqiuddin Makki described her as the foremost of Makkah Sufis. (Al-Iqad ath-Thamān v 8, p 192) And he said of the famous Makkan woman scholar Safiyah bint Ibrahim that she was the Shaykh of the women Sufis of Makkah and the servant of the poor there. (Ibid, p 239) He meant that she was the guide leader of

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the ascetic women of the two Harams, correcting and training
them and she also served the male poor, worshippers and sufis.
The historians have called Zuhrah bint Muhammad ibn Ahmad
the pious (female) sheikh and suf. There was in Damascus a
Ribat uz-Zuhrah, a retreat. She resided in its neighbourhood
and trained the female suhis lodged in the retreat. Fatimah bint
Muhammad Qastalaniyah Makkiyah was not only a (female)
muhaddith but also a great suf. She had done the rag of
Tasawwuf from Shaykh Najmiddin Tabayzi. Then she put a rag
of Tasawwuf on every prominent Muhaddith whom she had
taught. (Al-Iqd al-Thammar v 8, p 259)

Fatimah bint Abdur Rahman hurraniyah was given the title
sufiyah. Khatib Baghdadi and Ibn Jawzi said that she always
threw over herself the suf (مرب) which is a woolen blanket and
she slept on her prayer rug without a bedding for sixty years.
(Al-Iqd at-Thammar v 8, p 287)

Aasiyah Muqaddisiyah was the sister of Hafiz Diyandan Khan
Maqdi and wife of Shaykh Majuddin Eesa. She was a
distinguished worshipper of her times, much advanced in
religion, honesty, piety and good work. It says in Kitab ul
Mushtabah that she had also memorised the Qur’an and dutifully
observed routine exercises of supplication and remembrance of
Allah, and that she was a unique woman. (Ibid)

In conclusion, we see that women have not missed any field
of sciences and arts and Islamic deeds. They have gained
prominence in every branch of Islamic life. They served not only
fellow women but also men.

Poetry and Literature:

Women of Islam also played a prominent part in Arabic
literature and poetry and their achievements stand out. High
ranking male poets acknowledged the superiority of some
women poets and litterateurs.

Maryam bint Abu Ya’qub Anulsuyiyah was one such woman.
She was very religious and very exceptional. She had travelled
from Andalus for Hajj and visit and taught these subjects to
women there. She was a permanent resident of Isbiliyah. She

was very respected because of her religion and sanctity. Her
work was much accepted after the fourth century. The Amir of
Andalus Ibn al-Mahad sent her dinars in recognition of her
poetry. (Baqiyatal Musamah p 528)

Another poetess of Andalus was Ghassaniyah who resided at
Buraydah. She composed poetry eulogising kings and amirs, like
the one for amir Maryah Khayran Ammiri matching the official
poet Abu Umar Ahmad Ibn Darraj’s eulogy (Ibid p 529)

Another poetess of Andalus who excelled in this department
was Dodi Aasiyah. She recited poetry in praise of the amirs. She
travelled from Aalid to Ishbiliyah and read out her poetry to
khalilah Abu Ya’qub. (Ibid p 530) Nazhun was a famous poetess of
Gharnah. She was known for her extempore composition and
exchange of witty remarks (Ibid p 530)

Walladah was the daughter of Misafibihah Muhammad ibn
Abdur Rahman, the governor of Andalus. She was a poetess and
a literary woman. Her words carried weight. She always
discussed literary issues with others in this field. She died in Safar
484 AH. (Ibid p 532)

Sarah bint Ahmad ibn Uthman (d 750 AH) was a poetess of
western Aqsa. She was so excellent in literary and poetic works
that Ibn Salun took pride in having her permission. She had a
literary relationship with Rashid Fahri.

The famous (female) Muhaddith and pious woman of
Makkah, Khadijah bint Shaykh Shahabuddin Nuwayri was also a
poetess. She recited very good poetry and composed many poems
in praise of Allah’s Messenger. (Al-lqab, v 8, p 203)

The muhaddithah and faqihah Zaynab bint Kamaluddin
Hashsh also resided in Makkah. She was very intelligent, noble
and honorable and had an excellent taste for poetry. She had
memorized many poems (Ibid p 233)

Umm al-Husayn the daughter of Makkah’s judge,
Schabuddin Tabari was also a great poet. Her poetry was much
famous. (Ibid p 231)
Ibn Khallikan said about Umm Ali Tagiyah bint Abul Farj Chayth ibn Ali Salma Surti that she was a great scholar who wrote excellent poetry. She once recited an ode in praise of Al-Huzafaar Taquddin Umar, the nephew of Sultan Salahuddin Ayyubi mentioning wine and what goes with it. When the amir read it, he said, "She knows of these things since her childhood." Umm Ali wrote another ode about war and everything concerning it in a very clear manner and sent it to the amir with the message, "I know of this as I do of that." She was born in Damascus in Safar 505 AH and died in the initial days of Shawwal in 379 AH. (Ibn Khallikan v 1 p 103)

Calligraphy and composition:

Women have been good calligraphers and writers of prose and verses. Rulers have availed of their services in official correspondence.

The scribe, Umm ul-fadl Fatimah bint Hasan ibn Ali al-Aqra Baghdadiyah was better known by her Kunyah Bint al-Aqra. She was recognized as the best scribe and calligrapher of her times. She copied exactly the script of the well-known scribe Ibn al-Bawwab and many aspirants learnt the art from her. (Ibn Jawzi confirmed this.

Abu Nazr Abdul Malik Kindri summoned her to Jabel and asked her to write down the peace treaty between him and the Christian king of Rome. It was written on only one page and Bint al-Aqra' was paid one thousand dinars for that. (Al-Muntazim v 9 p 40)

Amat ul- Aziz Khadijah bint Yusuf was a scholar and a muhaddithah. She also had an excellent handwriting, having acquired training from the well-known calligraphers. (Bhahabi, al-lbr v 5 p 398)

Fakhru nnisa, Shahdah bint Ahmad was well-known as a Kurtbah (calligrapher). Ibn Jawzi praised her calligraphy. (Al-Muntazim v 10 p 288) Ibn Khallikan also said that she was a scholar who had an excellent handwriting. (v 1 p 245)

The well-known scribe and literary woman of Andalus, Murrah, was the chief scribe of Amir An-Nasir Ladinullah and also a clerk. She had a good hand. She died in 358 AH. (Baghiyat al-Mun'tazim p 530)

The scribe Muniyah was the (female) slave of Khalifah Mut'amid Aliullah Abbasi. She was known as al-katibah because of her excellent handwriting. She was also a clerk. She had learnt hadith from Abu Tayyib Muhammed ibn Ishaq, and Ubaydullah ibn Husayn Bazzaz Anbari narrated from her. (Tanbih Baghdad v 14 p 442) Among the talented scholars of Andalus, Safiyah bint Abulhadin stood out for her calligraphy.

Of the female scholars of Andalus one Lubna was also a scribe and clerk. She was the chief scribe of Khalifah Hakam ibn Abdul Rahman Umawi. She was entrusted with the official correspondence. She was also a good accountant, a poet, a grammarian and an expert in prosody and other sciences. (Baghiyat al-Mun'tazim p 530)

Ayshah bint Umarah ibn Yahya Sharif Bujawiyah Afriqiyyah was a literary woman and a poet who possessed an excellent handwriting. She transcribed a book of eighteen volumes in her own hand. (Umm wa- Daribah p 47)

Ibn Fayyad has mentioned in Akbar Qur tubah that there were in the eastern Qur tubah a hundred and seventy accomplished female scholars who transcribed the Qur'an in the Kufi script.

Share of Mothers in upbringing children:

As queens and shepherds of their homes, women of Islam took deep interest in training their children. The mother put in tremendous effort to impart to her children religious training and make them heirs of great leaders and chiefs. We cite some examples that should serve as a lesson for our mothers of today.

Imam Yazid ibn Harun Wasi (d 206 AH) held a high rank among the tabi' tabi'in (successors of the successors of the sahabah). He recounted his life story as a student, saying, "I was away from my family for many years. At Baghdad, I learnt of a tabi' scholar at Askar. I went to him and requested

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Mother of Sufyan ibn Uyaynah

Sufyan ibn Uyaynah was a glorious taba tabi' scholar and teacher of Imam Shafi'i. He said that if Maalik and Sufyan were not there, knowledge would have disappeared from the Hijaz. His mother got him to acquire religious education in a manner that Muslim mothers should emulate. Waki' ibn Jarrah was student of Imam ibn Uyaynah. He said that the Imam's mother said, 'Dear son! Acquire knowledge. I will work to meet your needs. Son, when you have written ten hadith, observe yourself and see if you have improved in your manners and habits or not. If you do not find an improvement then know that this knowledge is harmful to you, not beneficial.' (Tariq al-burjan, Sahih p 449)

With her encouragement and under her examining eye, he learnt hadith from more than seventy-eight ulama among the tabi'in. He is regarded among the wise men of hadith. Allah's creatures derived benefit from him.

Imam Ibn Uyaynah used to disclose to his students, "When I went to the classes of Ibn Shihab Zuhri, I had earrings on my ears and a ponytail on my head. He saw me and said, 'Sit down here. Here! I have not seen a younger scholar.'"

Nadr Hilaly said that when he was in the class of Sufyan ibn Uyaynah, a child came whom the students looked with disgust. But Ibn Uyaynah said to them 'You too were like this Allah has favoured you.' To Nadr, he said, 'O Nadr! If you had seen me when I was ten years old, you would have been surprised. I was just five years old and my face was like a dini and I was like a spark of fire. My garments were dishevelled and very short and cramped. And I attended the gatherings of the Ulama of different cities, like Ibn Shihab Zuhri and Amr ibn Dinar. . . . . . . . . . . The people would comment, 'the little shaykh is here.' (Al-Kifayah p 60-61)

Mother of Imam Awza'i

Shaykh ul-Islam, Imam Awza'i's name was Abdur Rahman ibn Amr ibn Muhammad Awza'i. His school of thought
(about fiqh) was operative up to the third century. He gave oral answers to eighty thousand questions. He was a great scholar. He owed all that to his mother who educated and trained him. He had lost his father very early. So his mother raised him up till he became Shaykh ul-Islam. "He was born in Basra and his mother brought him up. The way she taught him manners, a Sultan is unable to teach." (Tadhkira tul 1stafadh v1 p 169) According to another report, he was born in Basra and raised up in Kark. Then his mother took him to Beirut where she died. Imam Awza'i had great merits.

**Mother of Imam Ibn Ulayyah:**

The flower of the jurists and scholars of hadith. Imam Isma'il ibn Ibrahim ibn Miqsam Busri was known as Ibn Ulayyah through his mother's relationship. His grandfather Miqsam was taken captive in Sind at Qayqan and was enslaved by Abdur Rahman ibn Asad ibn Qutbah Asadi. His father, Ibrahim, was a cloth merchant in Kufa. He travelled to Basra often and there he married Ulayyah bint Hassan. She was a slave of Banu Shayban. Ibn Sa'id wrote about this in Tabaqat Kubra, "She was a respected, intelligent and distinguished woman. Her home was known by her in Awqah in Busrah. Salih Murri and the elite of Busrah used to visit her. She met them and discussed with them religious issues."

Imam Isma'il Busri was born to her in 110 AH. She raised him up and trained him so that he grew up to be prominent among the fuqaha and muhaddithun. The famous muhaddith Abdul Warith reported that Ulayyah bint Hassan brought her son Isma'il to him and he was the most handsome boy of Busra. She said to him, "This my son will stay with you and learn manners from you." He kept the boy with him and sent him ahead to the gatherings of the men of learning and he would follow to the Shaykh of the gathering. He trained him in such a way that in the eyes of the learned men, he was raised to a position higher than the teacher. (Abdul Warith)

Imam Ibrahim Harbi said, "When Ibn Ulayyah emerged from the company of Shaykh Abdul Warith, the people of Busra had no doubt whatsoever that he was more trustworthy than Abdul Warith in knowledge of hadith." (Tadhkira Baghdad v 1 p 237)

Imagine the society in which slaves were so much interested in learning, how high must have been the scholarly and religious life then. They were three brothers- Isma'il, Hammad and Muhammad, and all three were known Ibn Ulayyah from their mother. Their children too were known by this name and kunya. All three were accomplished scholars of their times and attained the high station under their mother's training. (More about them may be seen in my Urdu Book- Ather ul Abhur.)

**Mother of Sha'bah ibn Hajjaj:**

Imam Sha'bah ibn Hajjaj Wasti Busri had seen both Anas ibn Mallik and Amr ibn Salama. He also narrated hadith from four hundred tabi'in. His mother was a scholar and paid particular attention to his son's education. Imam Sha'bah said, "May mother said to me, "A woman here narrates hadith from Sayyidah Ayshah, Hanuma, and Husayn Thawr. Go and hear the hadith from her." I went to her and heard the hadith from her and I told my mother about it. She said, 'Now Allah will not question you about (shortfall in) religious knowledge.'" When a mother has such thoughts, naturally her son will be an imam. Imam Ahmad ibn Hanbal and Sufyan Thawr praised Sha'bah's perception in biographies of narrators and hadith.

**Mother of Imam Shafi'i:**

His name was Muhammad ibn Idris ibn Abbas. His mother was Fatimah bint Abdullah ibn Hasan ibn Hasan ibn Ali ibn Abu Talib. She said that when she was pregnant with Shafi'i, she dreamed that the star Jupiter come out of for body and dropped in Cairo spreading its light in every city. This was interpreted that a scholar will be born to her whose knowledge would spread to every city from Cairo. (Tadhkira Baghdad v 2, p 55)

The father of the imam had died before he was born - or, immediately thereafter -- so, the responsibility was placed on his mother to maintain him. He was born in 150 AH in Ghazzah, in
Syria and was taken to Makkah when he was two years old.

However, according to another report, he was born in Asqalan and his mother took him to Makkah. She had no money and he could not serve the teacher, but taught other children when the teacher was not there. So the teacher taught him without any fee.

Imam Shafi'i would listen to ahadith from the Ulama and remember them. His mother did not have enough money that he might write them down on paper, so he would scavenge bones and leaves of date and write down ahadith thereon. When the journey to Yaman become necessary, the lack of money did not allow them to make preparations and get garments. So he pledged his mother's cloak for sixteen dinars and bought the necessities of the journey. (Mukhtasar Sawa'mah a'nah)

Mother of Ahmad ibn Hanbal

The name of the mother of Imam Ahmad ibn Hanbal Shaybani Baghdadi was Safiyah bint Maymunah bint Abdul Malik Shaybani. The imam's father died when he was three years old and he said that he had not seen his father and grandfather, and his mother brought him up.

She raised him up with strict care and love so much so that the rich envied him. The way he was brought up, Abu Siraj said that his father was astonished at the good character and nobility of Ahmad ibn Hanbal. He would say, "I spend much money on training my children, get them tutors, but I am hopeless while this orphan Ahmad—see how good he is"

As long as she was alive, the imam's mother kept herself aware of his doings and was kind to him. In 186 AH when the imam was twenty-two years old the river Tigris was in terrible flood. During the same time the muhaddith of Ray, Jarir ibn Abdul Hamid came to Baghdad. The imam's companions travelled through the flood to learn hadith from him, but the mother of the imam did not permit him to go. So, he did not go. Similarly, whenever the imam wished to go to a muhaddith in the darkness of early dawn, she would not allow him to go, out of her love for him. She would ask him to wait for the light to spread.

But, he would manage to attend the gatherings of Abu Bakr ibn Ayyash in the darkness. (Manaqib al Imam Ahmad p 14 & 28.)

The imam, on his side, was very respectful to his mother and obedient. Once, she did not have garments. Meanwhile, someone sent Zakah to them, but she returned it, saying, "Nudity is better than the dirt of people's wealth. We have to go away from here after staying for some days." (Tabagat Kubra, Shaf'ani v 17 p 171)

Mother of Imam Bukhari

Imam Muhammad ibn Isma'il Bukhari was also an orphan in that his father had died and his mother took over responsibility for his education and training. She grew in him an interest in his childhood to acquire knowledge. He was born in 194 AH and he took the first lesson in hadith in 205 AH at the age of eleven plus. He memorized the books of Abdullah ibn Mubarak in childhood and narrated hadith from the muhaddithin of his city, Muhammad ibn Sallam, Muhammad ibn Abdullah and Muhammad ibn Yusuf. He memorized seventy thousand ahadith. Saum ibn Mujahid said, "One day I was a little late to the classes of Muhammad ibn Sallam. He told me that if I had come earlier I would have met a child who remembers seventy thousand ahadith. Then I asked Muhammad ibn Isma'il and he confirmed that he remembered more than that number."

(Tabagat ash-Shayah al-Kubra v 2 p 218)

Then, after acquiring knowledge from the muhaddithin of his native city, he travelled with his sister and mother in search of knowledge. (Buhayat-Tuhdikat al-Huffaz, v 2 p 123)

He was fifteen or sixteen years old at that time. When he was eighteen, he wrote At-Tarikh al-Kabir. He said, "when I was in my eighteenth year, I began to put together the judgments and sayings of the Sahabah. During that time, I also wrote Kitab al-Tarikh near the Prophet's grave in moonlight." (Tarikh Baghdadi v 2 p 3 Ibn Kishkhani v 2 p 28)

It is also reported that he performed hajj with his mother and elder brother. After the hajj, his brother returned home but he pursued his studies.
Mother of Zaynuddin Dimishqī:

The mother of Imam Zaynuddin Ali ibn Ibrahim Dimishqī Misri was a great scholar who had memorized her father's thirty-volume exegesis, Al-Jawahir. She paid much attention to her son's education and helped him in his studies, and prayed for him. Nasiruddin confirmed that she was pious, a hafiz, and an exegete. (Tadhkarat al-Huffaz v 1 p 440)

Mother of Hajjaj ibn Yusuf Baghdadī:

Abu Ahmad Hajjaj ibn Yusuf ibn Hajjaj Baghdadī was better known as Hajjaj ibn ash-Sha'b. He was a great scholar of hadith, singular muhaddith of his times. He had attained that station because of the care and attention of his mother. He said, "My mother prepared for me a hundred loaves of bread which I put in a bag and travelled to Baghdad to Imam Shababak. I stayed there for a hundred days eating a loaf every day after diluting it in the river Tigris. When I had exhausted them I returned." (Tadhkeratul-Huffaz)

His Shaykh included Abu Dawud Tiyalsi, Ya'qub ibn Ibrahim, Hajjaj Al-A'war, Muslim, Baqi ibn Mukhlab and Abdur Rahman ibn Abu Hatim learnt hadith from him.

Mother of Ibrahim Harbi:

Abu Ishaq Ibrahim ibn Ishaq Harbi Baghadādi (d 228 AH) was a contemporary of Imam Ahmad ibn Hanbal and like him in his learning, deeds and piety. He returned home every day at the time of ifta when his mother had ready for him his very simple meal. He lived the life of extreme poverty, but never complained of it to his mother, brother, sister or wife. He said, "Man is he who endures his sorrow and does not grieve his family." (Al-Muntazam v 6 p 4)

Mother of Abu Ja'far ibn Bistam:

Abul Hasan ibn Farat, the minister of the Khalifah, al-Muqatadīr billah, once asked Shaykh Abu Ja'far Bistam, "What is this about your bread?" he said, "My old mother was very pious. Right from the time of my birth, she would place a
broad under the bed on which I slept in the night and give it away in the morning as a sadaqah from me. So, I continue to do it till today." The minister said, "I had a very bad opinion about you and wished to arrest you. For three nights running I am dreaming that I fight you to arrest you but you carry a bread in your hand that shields you from my arrow. Go, you are now protected." (Manthurin v 4 p 192)

Mother of An Nasir Abbasi & son of Ibn Jawzi

When Imam Ibn Jawzi died, his son Imam Yusuf ibn Abdur Rahman ibn Jawzi was only seventeen years old. So the responsibility to educate and rear him was taken up by the mother of Khalifah an-Nasir Abbasi, Jihah. She appointed him to his father to sermonise and admonish and he held that office till he was twenty-three. When the Khalifah made him an inspector of the eastern and western areas of Baghdad, Allah caused Yusuf ibn Jawzi to gain great acclaim. The Khalifah sent him as envoy to many Kings. He built a Madrasah in Damascus and donated a large property to it. He also built other two madrasas in Baghdad in the areas Halbiyah and Harbiyah where he is buried. He was teaching in the Madrasah Mustansariyah in Baghdad till 656 AH when he was martyred in the uprising of the Tartars. (Tabagat at-Mufassarun v 2 p 38)

Respect of Mothers:

The Qur'an and hadith lay great emphasis on giving respect and honour to parents. They assure a great reward for serving them. A mother's right over her children is much particularly if she educates and trains her children. The Ulama always respected such mothers.

Hasan Busri:

Once he saw leek in his mother's hand and he said to her, "Throw away this dirty plant." Khayrah - for this was his mother's name—said "Shut up! You have grown old." He laughed and asked her "Who is older - I or you?" (Tabagat at-Tabagat v 12 p 416)

Ghazwan Raqashi

He was given to much worship and simple life. He was a scholar and recited the Qur'an very much. His mother was illiterate. One day he was reciting the Qur'an and his mother asked him, "O Ghazwan, we had lost a camel during the jahiliyah, do you find it in the Qur'an?" He did not mind her words and did not reprimand her, but said very politely, "O mother! By Allah, I find here a promise of good reward." He used to participate in jihad. Whenever warriors returned home, his mother would go out to welcome them and ask, "Do you know Ghazwan? They would say, "O old woman, of course, he is our commander." (Tabagat Ibn Sa'id v 7 p 237) Ghazwan had not laughed for forty years. When someone asked him why, he asked, "What will I do with that?"

Mis'ar ibn Kidam Kufi

He never stayed at any place but his home and the mosque. His mother was very pious. Whenever he went to the mosque, he would carry a soft mattress and take his mother along. There he would spread out the mattress so that his mother could pray on it. He prayed elsewhere within the mosque and sat down to teach hadith to his students. Then he would take his mother along, carry the mattress and return home. This was his daily routine. (Tabagat Ibn Sa'id v 6 p 365)

Ahmad ibn Ali Abbar Baghdad

His mother was a very kind hearted woman. She loved her son dearly and he was very obedient and serving to her. Once, he sought her permission to go to Imam Qutaybah and learn ahadith, but she did not give him permission. When she died, Imam Abbar travelled to Balkh where he learnt that Imam Qutaybah had died. Imam Abbar travelled to Balkh where he learnt that Imam Qutaybah had died already. The scholars there sympathized with him. (Tadhkarat ul huffaz, v 2 p 193)

Abu Hanifah

His parents were very pious and he always prayed for them. He respected his mother very much and always pleased her. He said, "I have divided my deeds into three - for myself, for my parents and for my teachers."
His father was the first to die and later, in 130 AH, his mother died.

The imam obeyed his mother in whatever she said. Whenever he went to the gathering of Umar ibn Firar, he took her on a beast. Once, she vowed to do something and asked him to give a verdict about it but was not satisfied with his answer. She said, "I will only be at peace when you find out from the sermoniser, Zar'ah." So he took her to Zar'ah and she put her question to him. He said, the faqih of Kufah is with you. Why ask me?" So, the imam, out of respect for his mother, said, "I will dictate the edict and you issue it." That way she was pleased.

The Amir of Kufah, Yazid ibn Umar ibn Hubayrah offered the imam the post of judge but he refused the job. So, Yazid flogged him a hundred and ten whips. He said that he was not as pained with the punishment as with the grief it caused his mother who said to him, "Na'man give up this knowledge for which you had to suffer." He said, "Mother, if I had sought the world with this knowledge then I would have earned much but I have acquired it only to please Allah and to earn deliverance." (Akhter Abu Hanifah wa Ashahih p. 53, Lisad ul Jamah p 292, Tarikh Baghdad v 13, p 266)

Abu Muzaffar Sam'ani

The author of Kitab al-Ansab, Abu Sal'd Sam'ani Maruzi, reported that his grand father, Abu Muzaffar Samarani went to Makkah to acquire the company of the Shaykh of haram, Imam Sa'd ibn Ali (d. 471 AH). While he was there he dreamt that his mother adjured him by her rights of him to return home. She could not endure his separation. He decided to consult Sa'd ibn Ali and went to him in the morning. But the crowd of students and aspirants around him prevented him. So, when the imam stood up to go home, he followed him. The imam turned to him and said, "Abul Muzaffar! The old woman waits for you," and he stepped into his house. So, Abul Muzaffar returned home that very year. (Tidah Karatul Husnay, v 3 p 346)

Men ascribed to their mothers

There were many Ulama and religious men whose mothers

were accomplished scholars or talented in some way, or were prominent in rearing up their sons. These men were known by their mothers, not their fathers. In fact some of sahabah were also known by their mothers.

Shurahbil ibn Hasanah. His father was Abdullah ibn Muta' ibn Amr ibn Kindah. His mother was Hasanah.

Bashir ibn Khasasiyah. His father was Muthalib ibn Sharahil while his mother Khasasiyah was Kabshah (or Marya) bint Umar ibn Harith Azzi.

Ibn Umm Maktum. His name was Amatun Qays. His mother Umm Maktum was Aakhirah bint Abdullah.

Ibn Buhaynah. He was Abdullah ibn Maalik. His mother was Buhaynah bint Harith ibn Muttalib ibn Abd Munaf.

Mu'adh ibn Afia. His name was Mu'adh ibn Hanith ibn Ritah. His mother was Afia bint Ubayd.

Harith ibn Barsa. He was Harith ibn Maalik. His mother was Barsa bint Rablah (Ab-Hiludh al-Fasl pp 269-270).

Here are some of the Ulama and muhaddithin known by their mother

Ibn Ulayyah was Isma'il ibn Ibrahim and his mother was Ulayyah bint Hassan.

Ibn Ayshah was Muhammad ibn Haish ibn Umar and his mother was Ayshah bint Ubadullah ibn Abdullah.

Ibn Bint Suddi was Isma'il ibn Musa Farahi and his mother was Bint Isma'il ibn Abdur Rahman Suddi.

Ibn Bint Ash-Shafi'i was Ahmad ibn Muhammad ibn Abdullah and his mother was Zaynah bint (Imam) Shafi'i.

Ibn Umm Qasim was Hazan ibn Qasim ibn Abdullah Munadi. He was ascribed to his paternal grand-mother who was Zuhra a well-known woman of her native land. She had come from Maghrib (Morocco) and settled in Egypt.
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Ibn Umamah was Ahmad ibn Abdullah Andalusi Maaliki, and Umamah was his mother.

Ibn Barakah was Abu Muhammad Abdullah ibn Muhammad Sabuni Qurtubi Maaliki. His mother was Barakah.

Ibn Bint Mahdi was Abu Hasan Ali ibn Tamam Qayrwani Maaliki

Building Madrasahs

Madrasahs (religious schools) were built in the fourth century. Till then, the scholars had circles of learning in their homes or in mosques. They were no less productive than today's colleges and Darul-Uloom. Even women scholars held classes at home. Then with the advent of the madrasah, there arose girls madrasah too. The first one for the daughters of Islam came up in West Aqsa at Faas in 245 AH and is very much there today by the name Jami' Qardiyin. It is a universal institution for the Islamic world. It was built by a pious, kind-hearted woman Umm ul-Banin Fatimah bint Muhammad ibn Abdullah Fahtiyah. She was very careful when buying the land so that there was no inkling of doubt that unlawful earnings could have found their way in the investment. Besides, she kept fast, from the day the foundation was laid till the building was erected, to please Allah. She bought the land from a man of the tribe Huwarah and invested from the family inheritance and laid the foundation on Saturday, 1st Ramadan 245 AH.

The sister of Umm ul Banin, Maryam bint Muhammad ibn Abdullah Fahtiyah, built a mosque in the same year, 245 AH. She invested the money she had inherited from her father. Later, their mosque became famous as Jami' al Andalusi and continued to pour out knowledge for centuries. In the fourth century it was designated a branch of the Jami' Qardiyin. (Hadhr ul Aalim al-Islami)

The well-known scholar of Andalus, Fatimah Ghahimah bint Muhammad imparted education to women in every science. Hence, she was known as al-Mu'allimah. (BaghAY al Ul Muu'minay p 331)

Maryam bint Abu Ya'qub Shalihah was another scholar of Andalus. She performed hajj and became famous as a hajjah. She taught women etiquette and religion and was very religious. She lived a long life. (Ibid p 528)

Both these women had madrasah for women where they taught.

The daughter of the qadi of Makkah, Shahabuddin Tabari, Umm ul-Husayn, was scholar of hadith and a faqihah. She was very pious and engaged in many social works in Makkah including erection of an orphanage and she also endowed many properties in Makkah and outside it towards this end. (Al-lqd ath-Thanuin u.8, p 342)

A very kind woman was behind the Madrasah Qatibayi in Makkah. This royal madrasah is a sign of the sentiments of a poor woman. In 863 AH, the Sultan of Egypt Qatibayi wrote to the royal attorney at Makkah that he should build a Madrasah in his name, and the four schools of thought should be taught. He also asked that a poor house be erected with seventy-two rooms for the orphans who should be paid enough stipend. When the attorney searched for a place, the woman of Bau al-Hasan, Sharifah Shamsiyah offered her own house. It was bought and the madrasah was built. It was situated between Babu-Salaam and Babeen-Nabi and provided benefit for a long period of time. (Tarikh Makkah, p 227)

There was a madrasah in Zuhayd in Zuhayd in Yaman, Madrasah Umm us-Sultan al-Mujahid. Shaykh Abu Isaq Ibrahim ibn Umar Alawi was the teacher. There were madrasahs in Damien, the Udharyiyad, Khanuniyah, and Barraniyah, and they were very famous. They were built by women and the ulama and muhaddith used to teach there. We will mention other madrasah of women later on.

Retreats and Poor Houses

The women of Islam also built inns and retreats where women lived in peace, worshipping Allah and leading an ascetic life. Zuhra bint Muhammad was a very pious woman and a sufi.
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She had built a retreat in Damascus, Ribat az-Zehrah and resided in its neighbourhood. Fatimah bint Husayn Raziyah was also a very God-fearing woman who built inns for women worshippers and Sufis.

Many women had built inns and retreats in Makkah where female worshippers could devote themselves in peace. Taquddin Faasi has mentioned some of these retreats. Qaymanah of the caliph Muqtadi Abbas built an inn in 492 AH called Faqia'ah to cater to widows who had no one to look after them. An inn Raibat Umm ul-Khalilah was built in the name of the caliph an-Nasir Abbas in 577 AH. Sharifah Fatimah bint Amir Abu Layla Muhammad built Ribat Khatun in 577 AH. Umm ul-Husayn bint Shahabuddin Tabriyah Makkiah set aside Ribat as-Sayyidah for the poor and needy.

The mother of imam Qutabuddin Qasalani and other women of Makkah together built Ribat al-Masajah for lonely and alien religious-minded women.

Ribat bint ul-Taj was built for the women who had migrated to Makkah to engage in worship and devotional exercises.

The two daughters of Abu Murthid Mubarak ibn Abdulla Qasmi, Umm Khalil Khadijah and Umm Eesa Maryam purchased the Ribat Ibn ab-Sawda and set it aside for the pious and suli women of the shafi'i school of thought who had no husband.

Umm Sulayman and Bint al-Harbi got together and built Zawiyah Umm Sulayman and Ribat Bint Al Harabi, two retreats for the women worshippers of Makkah.

The wife of the Sultan of Yaman al-Asfra Ismail ibn Fadl, Karimah built an inn Ribat al-Juahah in Makkah and made an endowment of it. (Shi'a al Gharam and al-Adl ath-Thummin)

Banafshah (d 573 AH) was called Jihatu Mu'izzamah. She was an accomplished scholar. She had built an inn and a retreat for the female sufiis in Suqal-Madinah. It was opened on 1st Rajab and Banafshah arranged a large feast on the occasion. She invited many pious women and sermons and words of advice were spoken. Banafshah distributed some property among the participants. And, one room in the ribat was given to the sister of the shaykh of Zawr, Abu Bakr Sul. (Al-Munazzam v 10 p 271)

Free water supply in Makkah

The benevolence of Zubaydah, the wife of Harun Rashid were very apparent in Makkah and Madinah in the many goods that she did there. The river Zubaydah speaks volumes for this kind hearted woman whose charity and pious works are too many. A brief account will follow.

Umm ul-Husayn had donated a source of free supply of water near the place of Sul, Sufiyah Umm Sulayman had built one such source near Jannat ul-Ma'la (the grave yard). The sister of Malik Nasir the King of Egypt had donated the sabil as-sitt (source of water). Zaynab bint Qadi Shahabuddin had donated the sabil as-Sayyidah providing free water to consign reward to her brother. The Khalifah Muqtadir Abbas and his mother had built a supply of water Sabil Jawkhi and donated it for the public. Sufiyah Umm Sulayman had built a toilet (and bathroom) only for women in the neighbourhood Suq al-Layl. (Shi'a al Gharam, Iqd ath-Thummin)

Public welfare construction by women of high officers

Having given examples of religious and welfare construction by poor women, we present examples of some women of the rulers and the rich. In fact, a number of them have run the government and earned a name for themselves. The non-Arab women of this strata have been prominent in doing such work. Let today's Muslim women of the rulers and the rich come forward and do such philanthropic work.

River Zubaydah:

Umm Ja'far Zubaydah, wife of Khalifah Harun Rashid was Amaatul Aziz. Her grandfather Abu Ja'far Mansur had called her in her childhood 'Zubaydah', and that name was taken up. She had a hundred female slaves who had memorized the Qur'an, and each recited one-tenth of the Qur'an every day as her rota. The palace echoed with their recital. Zubaydah is known for
many pious works among them the River Zubaydah flows through Makkah even today. She had it channelled through mountains from Hunayn originating at a spring and terminating at Makkah, and a second one from the valley Nu'man to Arafat. Her manager protested that the cost would be stupendous but she waived him away saying "Go ahead even if each strike of the hammer costs a dinar." It is said that the river cost her seventeen hundred thousand dinars. When the manager submitted the accounts after the work was accomplished, she said, "Let us leave the accounts for the day of accounts."

Since then the rulers continue to have the river cleaned and repaired. The Muslims of India-rulers and laymen-have also taken part in it since the last hundred years through those who have settled in Makkah.

Next Zubaydah had five ponds made in Makkah, bought some of its houses and gave them to a trust, Dar Arqam was one of them. She commanded her servant Yasar to build a place for ablution in the Bab (Gate) Ahya Kabir. This pious woman did many other works of public utility. She died in Jumadul Ula, 216 AH. (Ibn Khalilkan v 1 p 208, Al-Aqā'īl Thamir v 1 p 126, Tarikh Makkah).

Hajj with grandeur:

The daughter of Sultan Nasiruddin ibn Hamdan, Princess Jamilah, performed hajj in 566 AH with great majesty. There were four hundred littered-covered and curtained couches-carrying veiled ladies and none could say which one carried her. The moment she entered the Masjid al-Haram, she gave away ten thousand dirhams to the Ka'bah and showered gifts on its attendants. (Al-Ibr v 3 p 340).

Imam Muhammad ibn Ahmad ibn Jubayr Andalusi رحمة الله عليه (d 615 AH) has mentioned the hajj of three princesses in 579 AH and their philanthropy in Makkah. They were: (1) Darb Arman, the princess of the Roman sultan, Mas'ud, she was twenty-five years old. Thirty of her camels brought water for the pilgrims, thirty carried provision and a hundred carried other miscellaneous luggage-all for the comfort of the pilgrims. She did other good work too. (2) Lajatman, mother of Mu'izzuddin ruler of Mosul and wife of Babak brother of Sultan of Syria, Nuruddin Zangi. Her deeds of piety are considerable. (3) Princess of Sultan of Isfahan, Dagus. She was very gracious and esteemed, given to pious work. (Rahalah, Ibn Jubayr p 143)

The first tarter King to embrace Islam was Kharbandah who then became Muhammad Khudabandah. He was succeeded by his young son Abu Sa'eed Bahadur Khan. The women of this neo-Muslim family were very religious. When Sultan Abu Sa'eed Bahadur Khan traveled with his retinue, the women accompanied him, each with her retinue, and for each an imam and mu'azzin and reciter of the Qur'an. (Rah lah, Ibn Batutah v 1, p 146)

Safarlyah was the favourite female slave of Sultan Malik Shah and mother of his son Sultan Sanjar. She was very religious. She had water stalls erected on the roads by which pilgrims travelled for hajj. When she was admitted to the sultan's harem, she sent someone at heavy expense to fetch her mother and brothers and sat down among other female slaves of her age and appearance. Her mother could not recognize her till she spoke and her voice was familiar. She kissed her and embraced Islam. Safarlyah was one of the unique women who gave birth to two caliphs or sultans. She died in 515 AH.

Al-JihatuI Qaimah, the Umm Walad of the Khalifah, Al-Qa'im biamrillah, was a (female) slave. She had left a legacy of their personal property for the welfare of the pilgrims. She was well-known for her salah and fasting. She died in 487 AH and her grandson Khalifah Al-Muqtadir biamrillah led the funeral salah. (Al-Muntazam v 9 p 25) [Umm Walad is a slave who gives birth to her master's child.]

Royal and Kingly:

Tarkan bint Tiraj was the wife of Sultan Malik Shah. Her father, Tiraj, was King of Persia of the Afrasiyab stock. She had a royal temperament and became queen on the death of Malik Shah. She was resolute, gracious and intelligent. She took care of the state treasury, organised the army and led her forces on the battlefield bravely. She had ten thousand strong Turkish army on
her side and her sagacity had brought peace to her Kingdom. She
died in Ramadan 487 AH. (Al-Muntazim in v 9 p 84)

Shajratuddar Umm Khaill was the dear wife of Sultan Malik
Salih. She was very intelligent and capable. When the Sultan died
she did not disclose it to anyone but continued to issue
proclamation on his behalf. Not even the dignitaries of state
learnt of it. The name of this woman came to be included in
Friday sermons and she was recognized as queen, but this
condition could not last long. The King of Egypt invaded her
country and after conquering it, married her. Then she was killed
and thrown down the fort in Cairo and buried there. She was of
Turk descent courageous and determined. (Al-Ibr, v 5 p 223)

Building Madrasahs:

The princess of the king of Egypt An-Nashr Muhamamd ibn
Qaladom and wife of Amir Bakr Hijazi built the Madrasat ul
Hijaziyah in Cairo in 761 AH. She appointed Shaykh ul Islam
Sirajuddin Umar ibn Arsalan Balqini as chairman over the
classes of fiqh of the Shafi'i School. He also initiated classes of
fiqh of the Maaliki school. She built a large library in the
Madrasah stocking books on different subjects (Khatat Maqdiyzi v 2 p
381)

Zamrud, the mother of Khalifah Ahmad ibn ul-Mustada was
of Turkish stock. She built a Madrasah where Imam Fakhruddin
Abu Abdullah Muhammad ibn Abu Ali Nawkhani a Shafi'i
Faqih, imparted lessons. (Tabaqat ul-faissiri in v 2 p 212)

Tarkan bint Malik Izzuddin Mas'hud had the title Jihatu
Atabikyah. She was the wife of the King Asraf Musa. She built a
madrasah at Jabal Syria and it came to be known after her. Her
gave lies in this madrasah. (Al-Ibr v 5 p 164)

Rab'i'ah Khatun was sister of Sultan Sulahuddin Ayyubi and
Malik Aadil. She also built a madrasah at Jabal. She died in
Sha'ban 643 AH when she was over eighty years old and was
buried in the madrasah. (Ibid p 176)

Taab uz-Zaman, the female slave of the caliph Hasan ibn
al-MustanjidBillah Abbasi built a madrasah in Makkah for the girl
students of Shafi'i thought. It was part of Dar Arqam and was set
aside in trust in 380 AH. (Al-Aqd Ata Thamin in v 1 p 117)

The mother of the sultan of Turkey Murad Khan had built a
very large madrasah in Iskadar. She held a large opening
ceremony to which she invited scholars and religious men of
Rome. Shaykh Ahmad ibn Ruhib Jabry Ansari Hanafi gave the first
lesson by explaining the surah, al An'am. An excellent religious
festival was held and she gave one thousand dinars to each
participant as gift. Fifty of them were appointed to teach in the
madrasah. (Al-Tabaqat at-Sarayiyah, v 1 p 406)

A madrasah by the name Khatun Umm Salih was established
in Damascus. The recital of the Qur'an was taught here by expert
teachers. Imam Sakhawi's well-known student Shaykh
Jamaluddin Ibrahim ibn Dawud was the shaykh of the reciters.
He was succeeded by Shaykh Zayyuddin who held the office
for twenty years and Shaykh Nasiruddin Muhammad Shafi'i taught
here for many years. (Al-Ibr, v 5 p 325)

Shahdah bint Ahmad ibn Umar Abi had the title Fakhr un
Nisa. She was the wife of the attorney of the caliph Abbasi. She
had learnt hadith from ibn us-Siraj and Tirad and she had an
excellent handwriting. She was very pious. At the same time
she attended to domestic work, she derived knowledge from the
scholars and she taught hadith for many years. She lived for
about a hundred years and died on 14th Muharrum 574 AH.
Many scholars attended her funeral salah in the Jami' Masjid of
the fort. (Al-Muntazim in v 1 p 288)

The mother of Khalifah al-Muqtadir billah, Shaghab was a
righteous, learned woman. She had a large personal property
having an annual income of one million dinars most of which she
gave away in charity. She arranged water for the pilgrims every
year and also sent physicians to them. She also had Makkah's
ponds repaired. She died in 321 AH. (Al-Muntazim v 6 p 253)

Personal Merits:

These great female scholars, sufis, teachers also possessed
excellent qualities. They were modest, chaste, determined and

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Umm Khalil Shajratud Dur was beautiful intelligent and brave. Khadijah bint Shahabuddin Nuwayriyah Makkiyah was religious, abstinent, innocent and kind. (Al-Aqd ath-thennin v 6 p 208)

The daughter of Makkah's judge, the muhaddithah Zaynab Hashmiyah was noble, well-mannered, intelligent and courageous. (Ibid.) Kamaliyah daughter of Najmuddin Ahmad, a judge of Makkah, was resolute and strong-willed and the husband Shaykh Khalil said about her. "If she wished, she could move the mountain from its place." (Al-Aqd ath-thennin v 8 p 312)

The piety and determination of Al-Jaybah is exemplary. She lived in Makkah and for thirty years did not touch the meat and fruit imported from Africa because its inhabitants did not let women inherit. She had emulated her father, Shaykh Nuruddin, who did not eat the fruit of Madinah whose people, he thought, did not pay Zakah theron.

Fatimah bint Nasr ibn Attar was given to much worship. She was an ascetic and a scholar. She stayed in the veil to such an extent that in her whole life, she went out of home only thrice when it was very necessary. She refrained from worldly adornment altogether. (Al-Mun tazim v 10, p 379). Similarly, Umm Abdur Rahman Safiyah bint Abdul Khayr Makhzumiyah came out of her home only to perform hajj.

Umm Kuthum daughter of Qadi Jamaluddin Qarshiyah lived with her husband Qadi Shahabuddin Ahmad ibn Zaharah after their marriage and no one else saw her face for one year. No one could see her hair all her life and she punished any of her daughters who had not covered her head. She was very pious intelligent, pure and innocent. (Al Aqad al Qummat)

Ayshah the mother of Sittul-kul bint Ibrahim Jilaniyah was a very good mannered talented scholar. She resided in Aden but visited Makkah on business errands. She died in Makkah during one of her visits. She never cast off her veil and no man did ever see her face.

There were some Muslim women who devoted all their lives to religion so that they never married. Umm ul Kiram, Karimah bint Ahmad Maruzyahd lived in Makkah permanently. Scholars of Hadith narrated from her the sahih Bakhari. She died an old woman who had never married. (Al-Ibr v 3 p 253)

Fatimah bint Salman was an old woman scholar of Hadith. She lived for about ninety years but was unmarried all her life. Habibah bint Izzuddin Magdisiyah died at the age of ninety-one but she never married. Zaynab bint Kamaluddin spent all her life acquiring knowledge and living a pious life. She did not marry at all.

Acknowledgement and respect

The ulama have been large-hearted in acknowledging the contribution of the female scholars. They bestowed on them great titles and gave them great respect. They had recourse to these women scholars in deriving knowledge from them. Umm Muhammad Khadijah Baghdadiyah attended the gatherings of Imam Ahmad ibn Hanbal, and heard hadith from him, and he acknowledged her standing.

The scholars of Busra used to visit Uliyah bint Hassan and they exchanged views on religion with her. Ibn Jawzi said the same thing about Raitah bint Abdallah. (Al-Muntazim v 6 p 258)

Khadijah Bint Shahabuddin Makkiyah received letters from her contemporaneous male scholars and she sent to them her views on religious issues. (Al-Aqad al Thahban n 6 p 208)

Women of Islam have also taught Sufism to men. Male scholars have learnt tasawwuf from them. Amatur Rahman Fatimah bint Qutubuddin Makkiyah Jamalaiyah donned the saintly attire at the hands of Shaykh Najmuddin Tabrayzi to become his Khalifah and then taught hadith to a distinguished band of learned men and got them to wear the saintly robes. (Ibid p 286).

Iyas ibn Mu'awiyah said of Hafsa bint Sirin that he did not find anyone as saintly as she. (Tahdhib at-Tahdhib v 12 p 449)

Khatib said of Umm ul-Fal Amatul Islam bint Qwadi Abu
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Bakr Ahmad ibn Kamif that Azhari and Tanakh praised her very much as truthful and intelligent. (Tarikh Baghdad v 13, p 443)

Abu Hamid Safari’ni, majestic as he was, did not fail to honour and respect Umm Husayn, Jum‘ah bint Ahmad Neshapuriyah. (ibid v 14 p 444)

Dhahabi said about the scholar Umm Zaynab Fatmah bint Abbas Baghdadiyah that she was acclaimed and loved by the people. (Zayl ul-lhr Dhahabi p 80)

Faasi said that both brothers of Khadijah bint Shabbuddin Nuriyah Makkiyah—Shaykh Qadi Kamaluddin and Qadi Nuruddin—respected their sister tremendously and requested her to pray for them (Al-Agu)

Shahdah bint Ahmad was known far and wide for her learning. (Ibn Khallikan v 1 p 245)

Amir ibn Makula wrote about Umm ul Fadl daughter of Abul Qasim Abdul Wahid, the judge, "She was our neighbour. I took down hadith from her." Khatib Baghdadi (rumma allah melody) and Suri, etc also acquired knowledge from her. (Al-Kemal v 4 p 264)

Amir ibn Makula wrote also about Jabrah the slave girl of Abul Fath ibn Abul Fawaris, "She was the wife of our teacher Abdul Aziz ibn Ali Azji. She narrated hadith from Ibn Abul Fawaris. She visited me often. Though I did not hear hadith from her, others did." (Ibid v 2 p 50)

Abu Abdullah Muhammad ibn Abdul Aziz was an erstwhile student of Imam Muhammad ibn Haysam. He gave his daughter Umm Kultum in marriage to his student. Both husband and wife were unmatched in their learning and excellence. (Tabagat al-Mufarros, v 2 p 355)

The acknowledgement of the contribution of these female scholars surfaced in its last form when they departed from this world and the ulama bid them a heartfelt farewell. Numerous people participated in their funeral.

When Fatmah bint Nasr the well-known scholar of Baghdad died there were so many people that the grills of the Jam‘ al-Qasr had to be removed. All adjoining areas and roads were full of the participants. There were more people than on any day. The ulama and the layman and the rich participated and they accompanied the funeral until the grave of Imam Ahmad. Her brother led the funeral Salal. She was buried next to her father, and was remembered for ages. (al-Muntazim i 10 p 279)

The scholar of hadith and faqha of Andalus, Fatmah bint Yahya died in Qurtabah. She was buried in Rabd. So many men participated in her funeral as had never been seen in any woman’s. Her funeral prayers were led by Muhammad ibn Abu Zayd. (Baghiyar ul Tul kumins p 831)

The funeral salah of Shahdah Baghdadiyah, the Fakhrun Nisa was offered in the Jam‘ Al-Qasr. The grills of the area had to be removed to accommodate the people.

There were a large number of people also in the funeral salah of Umm ul-Khayr Juwayryrah in Makkah. The same is true of the funeral salah of Umm Zaynab Fatmah bint Abbas Baghdadiyah.

The Famous Female Scholars of the Ummah

It is with biographies of narrators that is comparison to men’s unconcealed lives, the behind-the-screen lives of women are mentioned briefly. Only what is apparent of their religious and scholarly lives is mentioned, and their domestic and private lives are omitted. However, their personal characteristics can be detected from their apparent merits.

We mention briefly a few women of Islam reflecting their merits. Detailed accounts may be seen in Tarikh Baghdadi of Khatib, Al-Ibr fi Khabr min Ghabr of Dhahabi and Al Muntizim of Ibn Jawzi.

According to Allah’s Surah, in every age there are men and women according to their ratio and position- of the type of individuals and groups needed in that age. In the first two centuries, hadith and aqeed had to be collected, so there were a great many narrators. In the sixth and seventh, the crusaders and tatar had played havoc with Islamic learning and arts. Suitable men and women arose to rejuvenate the achievements in these
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Khatib and bint Yusuf from Khadijah Zaynab time of Khalifah ibn Wahid, her Abdullah from "a Ibrahim Tarjumani from Umm fields. Achievements She of She of curtain father Malik the keeper of the curtain of the righteous. She went to Ahmed ibn Hanbal, Imam and historian of Ahl al-Hadith. She was the daughter of Khalifah Abu Ja’far Mansur and daughter of Sulayman. She heard hadith from her father and narrated it. Her brother Abu Yaa’qub then narrated from her.

Khadijah Umm Muhammad Baghdadiyah

She went to Ahmed ibn Hanbal and heard hadith from him. Then she heard also from Yazid ibn Harun, Ishaq ibn Yusuf Azzaq, Abu Nadr Hashim ibn Qasim. Then Abdullah the son of Imam Ahmad narrated from her in 226 AH.

Mudghah, Mukhkah, Zahrda sisters of Bishr Hafi

They were sisters of Bishr Hafi. They were very pious and righteous. Mudghah was the eldest. The Kunyah of Zahrda was Umm Ali. Abdullah son of Ahmad ibn Hanbal said, “One day someone knocked at the door. She wished to meet my father. He gave his permission. She came in and offered salaam. She said, "I spin yarn in the light of a lantern. Sometimes, when it blows off, I spin yarn in moonlight. Shall I make difference in wages in each case? He said, "If you feel the difference then make it apparent!" She then asked, "If a sick man weeps because of pain then is that a complaint?" he said, "I do not think that it is a complaint. The woman went away." Abdullah was then directed by his father to see where the woman went because he had not heard anyone ask this kind of a question. He followed her and reported back that she went into the home of Bishr. Imam Ahmad said, "It is not possible for anyone else but Bishr Hafi’s sister to ask that."

Abbasiyah wife of Ahmad ibn Hanbal

Abbasiyah bint Fadl was the wife of Imam Ahmad ibn Hanbal and mother of his son Sa’id. He was her only son. She was a very pious woman. The Imam said that they never differed on anything; she died during his lifetime.

Maymunah sister of Ibrahim Khawwas

She was the sister of the well-known saint Ibrahim ibn Ahmad Khawwas. She was like her brother in piety, reliance on Allah and abstinence. Once, someone knocked at the door and she asked, "Who are you looking for?" he said, "Ibrahim Khawwas." Maymunah said, "He has gone somewhere." He asked, "When will he return?" she said, "If the soul of someone is in the hands of another then who can say when he will return."

Hawariyah Abu Sa’eed Kharrazah

She was the sister of Abu Sa’eed ibn Eesa Kharraz. She learnt hadith from her brother and then Fatimah bint Ahmad Samriyah
Abdah bint Abdur Rahman Ansariyah

She learnt hadith from her father. Then Muhammad ibn Mukhlad Dawri and Salayman ibn Ahmad Tabrani narrated from her. Her home was located in Margahab al Kharsi, Baghdad. She was very intelligent, eloquent and pious.

Sumanah bint Hamdan

She was a granddaughter of Wadah ibn Hassan. She heard hadith from her father and also gained knowledge from her maternal grandfathers book. Abu Bakr shafi‘i and Abul Qasimi Tabrani narrated hadith from her. She resided in Anbar.

Fatimah bint Abdur Rahman Hurramiyah

Her kunyah was Umm Muhammad. She was born in Baghdad. She was known by her epithet Sufiyah because she wore wool. She slept on her prayer rug for sixty years without any bedding or blanket. Her nephew Abul Rahman ibn Qasim learnt hadith from her. She was brought to Egypt in her young age. She learnt hadith from her father Abdur Rahman ibn Abu Salih. She died in 312 AH when she was over eighty years old.

Munayyah Katibah

She was the slave of Khalifah Mu‘tamid Abbasi. She learnt hadith from Abul Tayyib Muhammad ibn Ishaq ibn Yahya Dashsha. Then Ubaydullah ibn Husayn Ambari narrated from her.

Umm Eesa bint Ibrahim Harbi

She was very intelligent and an accomplished scholar. She gave verdicts on issues of fiqh. She died in 328 AH and was buried by her father Ibrahim Harbi.

Umm Salamah Fatimah bint Abdullah Sajistani

She was the granddaughter of the famous compiler of the sunan, Abu Dawud Sajistani. She learnt the hadith from her father, and Abdul Qasim Abdul Wahid and others narrated from her. She gave lesson in hadith in the house of Abu Ishaq Mazz in 362 AH.

Khadijah bint Abu Bakr Muhammad

She narrated from her father from the Kitab ul Jamad, the book of Abdullah Baka’i Ibrahim ibn Makhlad narrated from Fatimah.

Amatul Islam bint Qadi Abu Bakr Ahmad

Her kunyah was Umm ul-Fath. She learnt hadith from Muhammad ibn Isma‘il. Bastati and Muhammad ibn Husayn ibn Humayd ibn Rabi‘. She was born in Rajab 299 AH and died on 25th Rajab 390 AH.

Khuldiyah bint Ja‘far

She was very pious and ascetic. Khatib Baghdadi reported from her on the authority of Abul Fath Mansur in Rab‘ah that Ibrahim Khawas was said, “I found more then ten shaykhs unanimous on these things: Admonition (sermonizing) is truly a bid‘ah (innovation), but a good one. Mercy descends in the gatherings of the shaykhs. Tears drop because of blessing of their words and their warnings cause hearts to detest sin.”

Jum‘ah bint Ahmad Muhannayyah

Her kunyah was Umm ul-Husayn. She went from her native land Nishapur to Baghdad where she learnt hadith from Abu Amr ibn Hamdan, Hafiz Abu Ahmad, Abdullah ibn Muhammad Razi. Bishr ibn Muhammad ibn Yasin and Abu Bakr Tira‘i. She was a pious, ascetic and learned woman, and Imam Abu Hamid Asfai‘i respected her much. Khatib Baghdadi was her student in a way.

Fatimah bint Hilal

Her kunyah was Umm Farj. She narrated hadith from Abu Amr ibn Simak and Abu Bakr Shafi‘i and Khatib Baghdadi heard hadith from her in 409 AH.
Fatimah bint Muhammad

She resided in the neighborhood of Abul Fath Muhammad ibn Abu of Fawaris in Baghdad. She learnt hadith from her father and was a trustworthy muhaddithah. Khatib Baghdadi regretted that he could not narrate from her directly but Abu Tahir Muhammad narrated her hadith to him.

Tahirah bint Ahmad Tanukhiyyah

She said, "I was born on 1st Shawal 359 AH. I narrated hadith from Abu Muhammad ibn Masi, Mukhallid ibn ja'far Baqarri, Abul Hasan ibn Iulu, Abu Bakr ibn Isma'il Rawwaq, Abul Husayn ibn Bawwab, etc. But I lost my books." She was teacher of hadith of Khatib. She died in 436 AH in Busra.

Khadijah bint al-Baqqal Musa

She is better known as Bint al-Baqqa. Her kunyah was Umm Salamah رضي الله عنها and her title was al-Wa'ilah because she delivered sermons. She learnt hadith from Abu Hafs Shahn. She resided in Tawthah in Baghdad. She was trustworthy, righteous, learned and a scholar of hadith. Khatib Baghdadi narrated from her. She died in Jumadul Akhirah 437 AH and was buried in Baghdad's graveyard Shonizi.

Jabrah as-Sawda

She was the slave of Abul Fath Muhammad ibn Ahmad. Abul Husayn Ahmad ibn Muhammad ibn Tim narrated hadith from her. She died in Jumadul ula 466 AH.

Sittiyah bint Qadi Abdul Wahid

She narrated hadith from Abul Qasim Umar ibn Muhammad ibn Sabak, and Khatib Baghdadi narrated from her. She was truthful, learned and a muhaddithah. She resided on the eastern side of Huraym Darul Khilafah in Baghdad. She died in Rajab 447 AH.

Khadijah Bint Muhammad Shah Janiyah

She was known as al-Wa'ilah. She was truthful, righteous and a learned muhaddithah. She resided in Qati'atur Rab' in Baghdad. Khatib Baghdadi narrated from her and said, "When I went to Syria in 451 AH, she too went away from Baghdad." She died on 18th Muharrum 460 AH and was buried on Thursday by the grave of Shaykh Ibn Sam'un. She was born in 376 AH. (All these accounts are derived from Tarikh Baghdad v 14 of khatib Baghdadi.)

Amatul Wahid Satitah bint Qadi Husayn

She had memorized the Qur'an and was adept in fiqh, inheritance laws, grammar ad other sciences. She was a great scholar of fiqh Shafi'i and issued edicts with Imam Abu Ali ibn Abu Hurayrah. She died in 377 AH.

Bibi bint Abdus Samad

She was the renowned muhaddithah of her times. She learnt a particular section from Abdur Rahman ibn Abu Shurayh and then narrated it. She was ninety years old when she died in 477 AH or thereafter.

Ayshah bint Hasan Warkamlyah

She was the wife of Umm Qashayri, She was very pious and abstinent and was counted among the well-known worshippers of her time. She held the sanad aali in hadith and had narrated from Abu Nu'aym Asfaini, Imam Aliwi, Abu Abdullah Haakim and a group of other muhaddithin. She died at the age of ninety in 480 AH.

Fatimah bint Hasan Baghdudiyah

She was Ummul Fadl. A very good calligrapher, she taught calligraphy to the learned. She copied the famous calligrapher Ibn ul-Bawwab. She wrote down a page for the Minister Mundri who paid her one thousand dinars for that. She had narrated hadith from Abu Umar ibn Mahdi Farsi. She died in 480 AH.

Karimah bint Muhammad Muruziyah

She was Umm ul Kiram. She had taken up residence in Makkah. She narrated the Sahih Bukhari from Imam Kashumi.
She also narrated hadith from Rahib Sarakhsi. She paid more attention to writing down hadith and comparing it. She was very intelligent and dignified. She remained unmarried all her life, and died at the age of a hundred years in 463 AH.

Ummul Muwayd Zaynab Sha’riyah

She was the daughter of Abul Qasim Abdur Rahman ibn Hasan Sha’riyah, Hurrah, Jurjaniyah, Nishapunyah. She was born in 526 AH. She had the sanad aali and after her death, the sanad aali ceased to exit in her land. She died in Jumadul Aakhirah 615 AH.

Amatullah Bint Ahmad

Her father was an extraordinary muhaddith and she narrated very many hadith from him for which she was exclusive. She was called Sharfun Nisa. She was very pious. She died in Muharrum 626 AH.

Ujaybah bint Muhammad Baqadariyah

She narrated from Abdul Haq Abdullah ibn Mansur Musli and she was the last of the contemporaries of Imam Mas’ud, Rustami and others in narrating from them. She collected the narrations of her shaykhs in ten folios. She died in 647 AH.

Sittul Arab bint Yahya

She narrated hadith from her master Tajuddin Kindi and took part in the classes of Ibn Tabrazd for al-Ghilaniyah. She died in 684 AH.

Taqiyah bint Muhammad

She narrated hadith from Abu Abdullah Khallal and Ghanim ibn Khalid. She died in Rajab 607 AH.

Aysah bint Mu’mar Istahani

She narrated from a group of scholars including Zahir and participated in the classes of Fatimah Juzdaniyah. She died in 607 AH.
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grandfather as also from Hanbal and Ibn Tabraz. She had exclusivity in that. She died when she was eighty-seven years old at Shiraz in Ramadan 685 AH.

Safiyah sister of Taqiuddin

Her brother Taqiuddin was a scholar, an ascetic and a model. He was an authority of his times. Safiyah had heard hadith from Mawfiquddin and Ibn Rajih. She was over eighty years old at death in Zul Hajjah 692 AH.

Umm Muhammad Safiyah bint Abdur Rahman

She heard hadith from Shaykh Mawfiquddin. She disappeared at Jabal in 664 AH.

Umm Muhammad Zaynab bint Umar Kindi

She narrated from Muwayduddin Tusi and Abu Ruh. She was known as Al-Hajjah. She was given to social work and she left behind many endowments and public utility works. She was ninety years old in JamadiulAkhar 698 AH when she died.

Amatul Aziz Khadijah bint Yusuf

She was an accomplished scholar. She learnt hadith from Ibn Ultati Mukarram and other scholars. She was a reputed grammarian and had an excellent handwriting. She consolated the bereaved in a very effective manner and she was accustomed to do so for a length of time. She was past seventy when she died in 698 AH.

Safiyah bint Abdul Wahhab

She was the sister of Karimah the well-known muhaddithah. She had the permission of Mas'ud Thaqafi and reported scholars to narrate hadith. She was alone in narrating many hadith. She died in 646 AH at Humah in Syria.

Amatul Hakam Ayshah bint Muhammad

She had the permission of Shaykh Abul Hasan ibn Gharrah and Abdul Qadir to narrate hadith. She was very pious and used to deliver sermons to women, so was known as Al-Walizah. She died in Jumadul Ulh 641 AH.

Umm Habibah Ayshah bint Mu'mar

She was a famous mahaddithah. She heard and narrated from Fatimah Juzdaniyah and received education from Shaykh Zakir and other scholars. Ibn Nuqat heard the Musnad Abu Ya'la from her and she had heard it from Sateed Sayrini. She died in Rabith Thani, 607 AH.

Umm Hani Safiyah bint Ahmad

She was born in 510 AH. She was the last student to narrate from Abdul Wahid al-Ashbah, the student of Imam Abu Nu'aym. She also had the permission of Abu Ali Haddad and some others to narrate hadith. She heard Tabarani's Mujam Kabir and Mu'jam Saghir from Fatimah. She died in Rabith Thani 605AH.

Aynush Shams bint Ahmad

She was Thaqafiyyah, Isfahaniyyah and learnt hadith from Ismail ibn Akhshayd and Ibn Abu Dharr and was also their last student. She died in Rabith-Thani 610 AH.

Karimah bint Abdul Wahhab

She had her seat (of hadith) in Syria and was known by her kunyah Bint Habqab. She learnt from Abu Ya'la in Habubi, Abdul Rahman ibn Abul Hasan Darani Hasan, Ziyad and others and she had permission to narrate from Abul Waqfi Saqzi, Abul Khayr Baghiyani, Mas'ud Thaqafi and others. She gave plenty of lessons in hadith. She died in her garden at Maytur in Jumaduth Thani in 641 AH.

Maryam bint Ahmad Ba'tbakiyah

She attended the lessons of Shaykh Bahauddin and also heard and narrated from Shaykh Arbai. She was a very pious scholar. She died in 699 AH.

Sittul Kutbah Nimat bint Ali

She narrated very many hadith from her grandfather in
Hadyah bint Abdul Hamid

She learnt the sahih al-Bukhari from Shaykh Ibn Zubaydi. She died at Jabal in Rabi’ul Thani 699 AH.

Amatur Rahman Sitt ul Fuqaha

She heard the section Ibn Arafah from Shaykh Abdul Haq, and heard and narrated from Ibrahimb ibn Khalaf and others. She had the permission of Ja’far Hamdani, Karimah, Ahmad ibn Mu’izzuddin to narrate. She was the mother of Fatimah bint Dabahi. She narrated many hadith and was very pious and learned. She lived for ninety-three years and died in Rabi’ul Thani 644 AH.

Khadijah bint Radiuiddin

She heard hadith from Inam Qazdini, Shaykh Bahauddin and other scholars and then narrated from them. She died at the age of eighty-four in 701 AH.

Umm Umar Khadijah bint Umar ibn Ahmad

She was an old seasoned muhaddithah. She had narrated from Shaykh Ruknuddin Ibrahim Hanafi and taught Dabahi. She died at Humah in 708 AH.

Umm Abdulllah Fatimah bint Sulayman

She had the permission of Fatuuddin, Ibn Afijah and others to narrate hadith. She learnt hadith from Muslim Mazni, Karimah and Ibn Rawahah. She was very pious and she had not married all her life, devoting herself to religious knowledge. She taught hadith for a long time and she was alone in narrating many books of hadith. She was ninety years old when she died in Rabi’ul Thani 708 AH.

Umm Zaynab Fatimah bint Abbas

She has been described with various epithets. She possessed tremendous knowledge and was very content herself but eager to

Zaynab bint Kamaluddin

She had her seat in Syria. She took her hadith lessons from Muhammad ibn Abdul Hadi, Sabt ibn Jawzi and other scholars. She got permission to narrate hadith from Ujaybah Baqadaryljah ibn ul-Khayr, ibn ul-Aliq and many scholars. Many students attended her classes and she was alone in narrating many books of hadith. She died on 19th Jumadul Ula 740 AH at the age of ninety-four in Zul Hajjah 722 AH.

Umm Muhammad Zaynab bin Ahmad

She had a long life and travelled long distances for hadith. She narrated form Shaykh Ibn ul-Lath and Hamdani. She was alone in narrating Thaqafiyyat Musnad Abd ibn Humayd and Musnad Darani. So, students travelled from afar to hear her. She gave lessons of hadith in Madinah and Cairo. She died at the age of ninety-four in Zul-Hajjah 722 AH.

Amatul Aziz bint Najmuddin

Her father was a well-known muhaddithah. She got her education from Ibn Abdul Da’in and other shaykhs. She lived for more than ninety years and died in Zul Hajjah 750 AH.

Zaynab bint Sulayman

She heard hadith from Ibn Zubaydi, Shamsuddin Ahmad ibn Abdul Wahid, Ali ibn Hajjaj and others. She was alone in narrating a few books of hadith. She was eighty years old when she died in Zulqa’dah in 705 AH.

Zaynab bint Abduallah

She got her lessons in hadith from Hafiz Diyauddin. She was alone in narrating some sections of hadith. She died at Salhiyah in Syria in 718 AH.
Zaynab bint Yahya

She was the grand daughter of Izzuddin. She narrated hadith from Yaldani, Ibrahim ibn Khalil, Umar ibn Awah and Umar ibn Khatib Al-Arafa while Sibt ibn Jawzi gave her permission to narrate his transmissions. She narrated many hadith and was alone in narrating a number of books. She had a long life and died in Zulaq'dah 735 AH.

Umm Muhammad Shahdah bint Kamaluddin

She was born on 4th Muharrum 617 AH and lived a long life. She attended the classes of Kashghari and had permission to narrate from Umar ibn Badr and Thabit ibn Musharra. She used to write down the hadith and memorise it. Dhaabi had heard hadith from her and narrated. She died at Halb in 709 AH.

Safiyyah bint Ahmad Maqdisiyah

She was the wife of Bahaudin Izzuddin Umar. She narrated the sahih al-Bukhari from Ibn Abdul Da’im. She had long life and died in Zul Hajjah 741 AH.

Aysah bint Muhammad Hurrianiyah

She attended the classes of hadith of Iraqi and Balkhi. She also narrated from Yaldani and Muhammad ibn Abdul Hadi and others. She was alone in narrating many hadith. She was ninety years old when she died in 736 AH.

Fatimah bint Khatib Izzuddin

She was a very righteous old woman. She was the last student of Shaykh Ibrahim ibn Khalil as also the last who had permission to narrate from Muhammad ibn Abdul Qadir, Ibn Sarwari, Ibn Awah and Khatib Marda. She died in Shawwal 747 AH when she was ninety three years old.

Fatimah bint Shaykh Ibrahim

She was the mother of Shaykh Ibrahim ibn Qarshiyah and his brothers. She narrated the Sahih al-Bukhari from Zubaydil a number of times and the sahih Muslim from Al-Hanfiyah ibnal-Husayri. She also learnt hadith from Ibn Rawahah. She was a very religious, practicing scholar who died when eighty-six years old in Safar 711 AH.

Fatimah bint Nafisuddin

She was Umm Ahmad who had learnt hadith from her unde in Cairo and Tarublas and then gave lessons. She died at Humah in 716 AH.

Sittul Wuzara Bint Umar

She had the seat of hadith during her times. She heard hadith from her father and from Ibn Zubaydi. She gave lessons in Shah Bukhari and Musnad Shafi’i often in Damascus and Cairo. She was very pious. At the time of her death, in Sha’ban 716 AH. She was ninety-two years old.

Sittul Nas Kamaliyah bint Ahmad

She narrated from Abdullah ibn Birtalah Andalusi Muhammad ibn Jarrah and Sharfuddin Marsi with their permission. She died in Sha’ban 731 AH.

Sittul Ajnas Mawifqiyah bint Abdul Wahhab

She learnt hadith from Hasan ibn Dinar, Alamuddin Sabuni, Abdul Aziz Naqqar and others. She was alone in narrating some books of hadith. She died at the age of eighty-two, in 712 AH.

Umm Muhammad Hadyah bint Ali

She learnt hadith by attending the gatherings of Ibn Zubaydi. She also narrated from Ibn Ullai and Hamdani. She was righteous, content and devoted to worship. She died at Quds in Junumul Ula, 712 AH.

Zayn ul Dar Wajihah bint Ali

She learnt hadith from Ahmad ibn Nuhah and had the permission of Yusuf Shadi and Amir Yaqub Hadibani. She died in 734 AH. (All These accounts are from Dhaabi’s Al-Itrzi Fubur min Khaler and Zayl Dhahabti and Zayl Husaynt.)
Fatimah bint Abdur Rahman Sufiyah

She was born at Baghdad and went to Cairo in her childhood. She narrated from her father. She was known as Sufiyah because she wore only woolen garments. She slept on her prayer rug for sixty years without any bedding. Her nephew Abdur Rahman ibn Qasim heard hadith from her. She lived beyond eighty years and died in 312 AH. (Al-Munarrim v 6, p 192)

Raytah (or, Ritah) bint Ubaydullah Abidah

She was an ascetic. She kept company of Shaykh Abu Uthman Nishapuri and other Shaykhs and memorised their sayings. She attained such a high station in piety and tasawwuf that great scholars and Shaykh visited her. She kept indoors till she died in 336 AH. (Ibid p 358)

Bint Abul Hasan Makki

She resided in Makkah and was very pious. Her father Abul Hasan made baskets and sent thirty dirhams to her from the sales proceeds for her annual expenses. Once, the pilgrim through whom her father sent the money, added twenty of his own to it, but she refused to accept all the money, saying that the twenty dirhams are (of) doubtful (earnings). (Ibid p 361)

Ruqayyah bint Muhammad Qushayriyah

She had a high station in the science of hadith. Many scholars narrated hadith from her and got her permission. She was born and brought up in Qus but moved over to Cairo where she died in 741 AH.

Zinat bint Shaykh Ahmad Rifa'i

She was attached to her father's mystic line, Rifa'iyyah and lived all her life as an ascetic. She had memorized the Qur'an and narrated hadith. She was an expert in fiqh and giving verdicts. Then her children continued her line from her. She died in 630 AH.

Ayshah bint Yusuf Ba'uniyah

She was a sufiyah, faqihah and a poet. She had learnt literature and poetry from great scholars of her time. She went to Cairo from Damascus in 919 AH and wrote poetry praising the King. She wrote many books on tasawwuf including one on the Prophet's birth. She died in 922 AH.

Ayshah bint Ahmad Qurtabiyah

There was no match for her in Andalus in intelligence, literature, poetry and eloquence. She wrote eulogies in praise of kings of Andalus and they never rejected her recommendation. She had an excellent handwriting. She transcribed the Quran, bought and collected books and she had a large library. She remained unmarried all her life and died in 400 AH in Andalus.

Ayshah bint Muhammad Magdisiyah

She was the chief of scholars of hadith of her times. She read the sahib al-Bukhari to Hafiz Hajar and devoted her days to service of Hadith in her last years. Ibn Hajar narrated hadith from her and read many books. Her method of teaching was very easy. Some critics have described her as the most authoritative of her times. She died in 816 AH.

Ayshah bint Ali Isfahani

She was a renowned scholar of hadith who narrated very many hadith. She taught others. Ibn Hajar also narrated from her through a chain. She died in Cairo in 739 AH.

Sittul Ajam, Bint Nafis

She was a famous sufiyah. She had migrated to Halab from Baghdad. Her standing is apparent from her great work of commentary on Shaykh Akbar ibn Arabi's book al-Mushahid al-Qudsiyyah. Shortly thereafter, she died in Halab in 852 AH.

Sarah bint Ahmad Halabiyah

She was a learned teacher, litterateur and poet. She was a sufiyah. She gave permission to Ibn Salmun and also donned the attire of tasawwuf and recited her poetry. She went to Andalus and composed eulogy for the rulers and then she went to Sabah and read her poetry to the rulers, sermonizers and poets. She died
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in the seventh century Hijri.

Zamarud Khatun

She was the daughter of Amir Jadli and sister of king of Damascus Dqayq and wife of Taj ul-Muluk, Buri. She was a great scholar and a brave woman. She transcribed the books of hadith in her own hand and memorised the Qur'an. She built the Madrasah Khatuniyah Baraniyah in Damascus. When she observed that her son, Shamsul Muluk Isma'il revolted and supported the Christians against Muslims, she got her slaves to kill him in 539 AH. She then placed his brother Shahabuddin Mahmud Buri on the throne. But when he was assassinated in 543 AH, things took a turn for the worse, she moved over to Baghdad, then to Makkah and finally to Madinah and she had nothing of her wealth with her. So she sifted wheat and barley and kneaded flour to make a living for herself till she died in 557 AH. And was buried in Janatul Baqi'.

Sittul Wuzara Tanukhiyah

She was better known by her title wazirah. She narrated the Sahih al-Bukhari before Abdullah Zubaydi and then narrated it to others generally. She also narrated Musnad shafi'i in Damascus and Cairo often. Students came to her from far off lands to learn hadith. She was the authority of her times. She died in 716 AH in old age at Damascus.

Zaynab bint Abdur Rahman Shafi'iyah

She was Umm ul-Muwayd, the well-known faqihah of her times. She had also learnt hadith from the elder ulama and many muhaddithin had given her permission to narrate. She died at Nishapur in 615 AH. With her death the series of sanad aali came to an end. (These accounts are adapted from al'alam, Zarkah v 3)

Female jurists & Scholars of hadith among the Sahabah

It has been the distinguishing characteristic of Islam and Muslims in every age that like men, women have made a full contribution to the Islamic sciences in every age, taking simultaneous step to propagate them. Women from the companions to the tabi'in and thereafter have been in the forefront in narrating, recording and preserving ahadith. They have made remarkable contribution in sunnah and fatawa. Thus, many recognized and authoritative scholars have not hesitated to benefit from the contribution of women in this field who were known for their knowledge, understanding and piety.

Before a systematic recording of these subjects, chosen male and female scholars had specialized in them. Beginning with the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم who was the source of all religious sciences. Every problem and issue was brought to him and he gave guidance. Also, Abu Bakr رضي الله عنه Uthman رضي الله عنه and Ali ibn Abu Talib رضي الله عنه used to give their verdicts, and some versions say that only the first two named gave verdicts.

(Tabaqat Ibn Sa'd v 5 p 335)

Similarly, those sahabah who were sent as Amirs or teachers to different places, gave verdicts in the light of the Book and sunnah. Some ahadith say that the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم had described the merits of certain sahabah رضي الله عنهم and thus encouraged Muslims to take recourse to them. This continued till the middle of the second century when, between 140 AH and 150 AH, ahadith were classified and recorded on juristic issues. The ulama wrote books on this pattern. Before that scholars of both sex made individual contributions to this field.

Ibn Qayyim رحمه الله عليه wrote in al'alam al Muwaqifin that the Sahabah whose juristic verdicts are preserved number more than a hundred and thirty, both men and women. He has then created three classes, each class naming jurists of both sexes.

The first class names seven illustrious sahabah. The edicts of each of them would require a voluminous book. The great grandson of Khalifah Mansur Abu Bakr Muhammad ibn Musa had recorded the verdicts of Abdullah ibn Abbas رضي الله عنه in twenty volumes. Sayyidah Ayshah رضي الله عنها is also in this class.

The second class has thirteen sahabah. The edicts of each of them can be bound together in a small book Sayyidah Umm
Salamah is the one named in this class.

The rest are in the third class. Their edicts require a folio each. Those named here include: Sayyihad Suffiyah, Sayyidah Hafsa, Umm Habibah, Sayyidah Jwarrayiyah, Sayyidah Fatimah az-Zuhra, Umm Atyah, Asma bint Abi Bakr, Umm Sharik, Umm Darda, Aatikah bint Zayd, Fatimah bint Qays, Layla bint Qa'id, Hawa bint Tuwayt, Umm Salamah, Zinaat bint Umm Salim, Umm Ayman, Umm Yusuf, and Ghamiyyah (about some of them are tabi'in). (A'Lam al-Mawaqitin, v 1 pp 9-11)

These were the first among the sahabah - both male and female. Their edicts and rulings were approved and well-known in the times of the sahabah and tabi'in.

Dhahabi has named in his Tadhkiratul Haffaz, thirty-two sahabah who were hafiz, and briefly named sixty-four who are (among) narrators of the sahabah sittah (the six books) of authentic hadith. They include fourteen sahabiyat. Sayyidah Asma bint Abi Bakr, Sayyidah Jwarrayiyah, bint Harith Mustalaqiyyah Sayyidah Hafsa, bint Umar Adawiyah, Sayyidah Umm Habibah, Ramlah bint Abu Sufyan Umayliyah, Sayyidah Zaynab bint Jahsh Asadiyah, Sayyidah Zaynab bint Abu Salamah Makhzumiyyah, Sayyidah Fatimah bint Muhammad Hashamiyah, Sayyidah Umm al Fadl Lubahab bint Harith Hailiyah, Sayyidah Maymunah, bint Harith Bilallyah, Umm Atyah Nasibah Ansariyah, Umm Salamah HindMakh zuymiyyah, Umm Haram bint Milhan Ansariyah, Umm Salaym bint Milhan Ansariyah, and Umm Hani bint Abu Talib. (Tadhkirat ul Haffaz, v 1 p 45)

Surely, the name of Sayyidah Khadijah al-Kubra would have headed the list if she had lived longer. So while delving on the account of these honourable women, we begin with a brief account of her. She lent support to Allah's Messenger and Islam in the beginning as no one has supported.

She was the scholar of Islamic laws and injunctions of to the Makkah period.

Sayyidah Khadijah al-Kubra

The Mother of the faithful, Sayyidah Khadijah was first married to Atiq ibn An'id. Then she was married to Abul Halah Nabsah ibn Zurrarah and had Hind ibn Abu Halah, who became the Prophet's sister-in-law. Then, her third marriage was with the Prophet. She was forty years old and he was twenty-five years old. Except for Ibrahim who was born to Sayyidah Mariyah Qutbiyah, all the Prophet's children were born to Sayyidah Khadijah. They were Sayyidina Qasim, Tahir, Tayyyib, Sayyidah Fatimah, Zaynab, Ruqayya, and Umm Kulthum. She was the richest woman of Makkah. She engaged in trade. She was known as Tahira because of her excellent character during the pre-Islamic days. She was the first Muslim who believed the Prophet and gave away all she had to him. She lived with the Prophet for twenty-four years and six months. She used her wealth, influence, intelligence to protect Islam at every delicate moment. Having died very early, she could not enter the folds of jurists but she is the top of this group and of the beautiful story of religious achievements of the daughters of Islam.

Sayyidah Ayshah

The mother of the Faithful, Sayyidah Ayshah was known as faqihatul Ummah. She had command over every branch of knowledge from figh to injunctions and poetry to medicine. The sahabah valued her opinion and religious knowledge.

Abu Musa Ash'ary said that whenever they were doubtful about anything, she gave them a correct answer. The senior sahabah too asked her about inheritance laws and obligations. Abu Salamah Abdur Rahman said that he did not find a scholar greater than Sayyidah Ayshah.
the hadith, juristic opinion, the background of revelation of Quranic verses and the religious duties. Ata ibn Abu Ra'abah said that she was more knowledgeable than other people. Mahmud ibn Labid said, "Sayyidah Ayshah رضي الله عنها and Sayyidah Umm Salamah رضي الله عنها were ahead of the other wives of the Prophet in remembering the hadith. And Sayyidah Ayshah used to give rulings during the caliphate of 'Umar رضي الله عنه and Uthman رضي الله عنه who used to ask her about hadith and the Prophet's practice." Zuhri said, "If the knowledge of all the wives of the Prophet رضي الله عنه and, in fact, of all Muslim women were collected, the knowledge of Sayyidah Ayshah رضي الله عنها would excel and rise above theirs."

Urwah ibn Zubayr رضي الله عنه سُمِّيَبَا أَيْضَا تَالِقُيَّة said Sayyidah Ayshah's nephew, recited poetry on every occasion. When the people commended him once, he said that his knowledge of poetry could not compare with Sayyidah Ayshah's. She was quick to cite poetic verses apt to the occasion. (Tabaqat Ibn Sa'd v 2 pp 374, 375, Ist'ab v 2 p 266)

Ibn Qayyim wrote that of the students of Sayyidah Ayshah رضي الله عنها, her nephews Qasim ibn Muhammad and Urwah ibn Zubayr رضي الله عنه did not exceed the rulings and opinions of Sayyidah Ayshah. Sayyidah Ayshah رضي الله عنها narrated many hadith directly from the Prophet رضي الله عنه. She also narrated from her father Abu Bakr رضي الله عنه, from 'Umar رضي الله عنه, from 'Abdulllah ibn Amr Ashami رضي الله عنه, from Hamzah ibn Amr Aslam Rضي الله عنه, from Sa'd ibn Abu Waqqas رضي الله عنه, from Sayyidah Judamah bint Wahb Asadiyyah رضي الله عنها and Sayyidah Fatimah Az-Zu'ra رضي الله عنها.

Ibn Hazm has mentioned the number of hadith narrated by eleven sahabah in his book Tabqah Mukaththirin bir-rirwayeh. Sayyidah Ayshah رضي الله عنها narrated 2210 hadith.

Dhahabi also confirmed that the sahabah رضي الله عنها turned to her for answers to their religious questions. (Tabhiraat al-Fuffah v 1 p 26)

Those who narrated from Sayyidah Ayshah رضي الله عنها are very many and most of them are her relatives. Their names are: her sister Umm Kalthum bint Abu Bakr, foster brother Aww ibn Harith, both nephews Qasim ibn Muhammad and Abdullah ibn Muhammad, both meesa Hafsa and Asmaa daughters of 'Abdul Rahman, both sons of her sister Urwah and Abdullah sons of Zubayr ibn Awwam, sister's daughter Ayshah bint Talhah, Muhammad ibn 'Abdul Rahman, Abbad ibn Habib. "Abbad ibn Hamzah, slaves Abu Yusuf, Dhakwan and Abu Amr ibn Faruq, The Sahabah رضي الله عنهم who narrated from her are: Amr ibn Aas, Abu Musta'zir, Zayd ibn Khaldun, Abu Hurayrah, Abdullah ibn 'Umar, Abdullah ibn Abbas, Rab'ah ibn Amr Jarshah, Sa'id ibn Yazdik, Harith ibn 'Abdullah, and others.

Senior tabi'in also narrated from her and number quite many, Sa'id ibn Musayyib and scores of others. (Tabaqat at-Tabaqat v 12 pp 432-435)

She died in 57 AH or 58 AH.

Sayyidah Umm Salamah رضي الله عنها

Her name was Hind. She was the daughter of Abu Umayyah who was Suha'i. Her first husband was Abu Salamah رضي الله عنه and they had a daughter Zaynab رضي الله عنها and a son 'Umar رضي الله عنه. The Prophet رضي الله عنه brought up 'Umar رضي الله عنه. She married the Prophet رضي الله عنه in 2 AH after she had become a widow. Of all his wives, she possessed the most knowledge of hadith and fiqh after Sayyidah Ayshah رضي الله عنها. We have read the words of Mahmud ibn Labid in the account of Sayyidah Ayshah. (Tabaqat Ibn Sa'd v 2 p 375)

Her slave Shaybah ibn Nisah رضي الله عنها was the imam of reciters of the Quran of Madina. Nafi's رضي الله عنه the slave of Ibn 'Umar رضي الله عنه was his student in the science of Quranic recital. Her female slave was Khayyarah the mother of Hasan Busri. (Ma'arif Ibn Qutaybah p 69)

Sayyidah Umm Saamah رضي الله عنها narrated hadith from the Prophet رضي الله عنه, and from her first husband Abu Salamah رضي الله عنها, and Sayyidah Fatimah رضي الله عنها. Then some of those connected with her who include her son, daughter, brother,
nephew and slaves, and others narrated from her. The tabi‘in and other ulama who are a sizeable number also narrated from her. (Tahdhib at-Tahdhib v 12 p 356)

Sayyidah Hafsa

She was daughter of Umar ibn al-Khattab. She was first married to Khunays ibn Abdullah ibn Hudaifah Sabih. After he died, she married the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم in 2 AH or 3 AH. She was the real sister of Abdullah ibn Umar. She was very pious. The Quran’s copy that was transcribed after the battle of Yamama finally came to be preserved by her and she took great care of the trust. She narrated hadith form the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم and from her father Umar. Then a large number of narrators narrated from her.

She died in 41 AH or 45 AH. (Ma‘rif Ibn Quṭaybah p 59, Tahdhib at-Tahdhib v 12 p 410)

Sayyidah Umm Habiba

Her name was Ramlah bint Abu Sufyan Sākhr ibn Harb. She embraced Islam in the early days and migrated to Ethiopia with her husband Ubaydullāh ibn Jāsh Asadī who died in Ethiopia. Then she married the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. She died in 44 AH. Before dying, she called Sayyidah Ayshah رضي الله عنها and said, “May Allah forgive us for what has transpired between us and our co-wives.” Sayyidah Ayshah رضي الله عنها said, “You have pleased me with these words. May Allah please you.” Then she called Sayyidah Umm Salama رضي الله عنها and repeated the prayer and she reciprocated the sentiments. (Tabaqat Ibn Sa‘d v 8 p 100)

Sayyidah Umm Habiba narrated hadith from the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم and from Sayyidah Zaynab bint Jāsh. Рضي الله عنها A number of narrators then conveyed the hadith from her. (Tahdhib at-Tahdhib v 12 p 419)

1 — He apostatized there before dying (translator RAR)

Sayyidah Maymunah

She was the daughter of Harith. Her first husband was Abu Sabrah ibn Abu Ruhm. Then the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم married her at Šura and later, in 38 AH she died at the same place. Yasar was her slave whose sons Aṣa, Sulaymān, Muslim and Abdūl Malik were jurists. Sayyidah Ayshah رضي الله عنها said about her, “She was the most God-fearing and most given to join ties of relationship of all the Prophet’s صلى الله عليه وسلم wives.” Once, she found a seed of a pomegranate lying on the ground. She picked it up and said: Allah does not like mischief. (Surely Allah does not like mischief).

She narrated hadith from Allah’s Messenger صلى الله عليه وسلم and then they were narrated by many people from her. (Tabaqat Ibn Sa‘d, Ma‘anīt Ibn Quṭaybah, Tahdhib)

Sayyidah Juwayriyah

She was the daughter of Harith ibn Abu Dirar. Her first husband was Musaffīn ibn Sa‘wān. Then she married the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. The sahābah رضي الله عنهم immediately set free all captives of Banu Mustalqī because they did not like to arrest the Prophet’s صلى الله عليه وسلم relatives. A hundred families were thus set free.

Once, the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم returned home when the day was well set after the fajr salāh, he saw that she had not got up from her prayer rug till then. So, he taught her this supplication.

سُبْحَانِ اللَّهِ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ مَا خَلَقْنَا مَا كَادَ نَفْسُهُ لَمْ يَكُنْ مَثَالًا لَّهُ وَأَمْثَالَهُ وَلَبِنَاءً

(Tabagat Ibn Sa‘d v 8 p 113)

She narrated from the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم and some people narrated from her. She died in 50 AH or 56 AH. (Tahdhib at-Tahdhib v 12 p 407)

The Mothers of the Faithful named so far were known for their juristic rulings and verdicts. The others also possessed religious knowledge and narrated hadith, and books of hadith mention them. Nevertheless, the foregoing six held a responsible and prominent station.
Sayyidah Fatimah az-Zahra

She was the Prophet’s daughter. She was married to Sayyidina Ali one year after hijah. They had these children: Hasan, Husayn, Muhsin, Umm Kulthum Kubra and Zaynab Kubra. Sayyidah Ayshah said that Sayyidah Fatimah had great merits. She died six months after the Prophet’s death.

She narrated hadith from the Prophet. Her two sons narrated directly from her and her granddaughter Fatimah bint Husayn in a Mursal manner. Sayyidah Ayshah narrated Salma Umm Rafi’ also narrated from her. (Tahdhib)

Sayyidah Asma bint Abu Bakr

Her title was Zaat un Nataqyayn. She was the eighteenth person to embrace Islam in Makkah. She was very intelligent, educated, noble, generous, and truthful. Her son Abdullah ibn Zubayr had established his Khalifah in Makkah in the times of Yazid.

She died in 73 AH when she was a hundred years old, but her eyesight and intelligence were unimpaired till the last time. The ahadith speak of her merits.

She had narrated hadith from the Prophet. Then those who narrated from her included her both sons, and others. (Tahdhib at Tahdhib v 12 p 397)

Umm Atiyah Ansariyah

She was Nusaybah bint Ka'b (or bint Hanith) Ansariyah. She participated in battles with the Prophet and attended to the wounded and sick. Ibn Abdul Barr said that she possessed a great rank among the sahabiyat. She was one of the women who gave bath to a daughter of the Prophet on her death, and thereafter her hadith on bath to the dead was considered authentic. She was counted among the scholars of Busra and the sahabah and the tabi’in learnt the method of bath of the dead.

Umm Sharik Ansariyah

She was a very early Muslim and she migrated to Madinah in the initial days of Hijrah. Ibn Abdul Barr said, “She was beautiful and intelligent. After Umar’s martyrdom, the members of the Shura assembled in her home.” Zubayr ibn Awwan called her a brave women. (Ist’ab p 268, 269)

She narrated hadith from the Prophet and a number of people narrated from her. (Tahdhib at Tahdhib v 13 p 444)

Aa’tiikah bint Zayd

She was the sister of Sa’eed ibn Zayd, and one of the muhajirs. She had very good manners. She was first married to Abu Bakr’s son, Abdullah who loved her dearly. When he was martyred in the battle of Ta’if, she married Zayd ibn Khattab. When he was martyred in the battle of Yamamah, Umar ibn Khattab was married her and he had arranged a walimah (wedding feast). When he was martyred, Zubayr ibn Awwan married her and when he too was martyred, Abdul Aziz proposed marriage with her, but she pleaded, “O brother of the Prophet, I wish to save you from being killed.” When the inheritance of Zubayr ibn Awwan was being discussed, she said that she would accept whatever was given to her without argument. She was given eighty thousand dirhams and she accepted that. (Ist’ab v 2 pp 768-9)

Umm Utaybah, the wife of Umar, had permitted her to offer salah in the Masjid Nabawi, so that she was there at the time of his Martyrdom. (Tabagat Ibn Sa’d v 8 p 265) At the time of their marriage, she had
placed the condition that she should be allowed to go to the mosque and speak the truth. So, though he was displeased, he allowed her to go to the mosque. She had placed the same condition with Zubayr ibn Awam and he too accepted it. When she went for the salah of isha it pained him very much and when he found it unbearable, he went ahead of her one day and concealed himself on the way. As she passed by, struck her body with his hand and thereafter she ceased to go to the mosque. (Asad ibn Ghubah v 5 pp 498-9) Ibn Hajar has reported these things in Asabah on the authority of Ibn Adni Barr. These accounts show that Sayyidah Aatikha was among the senior Sahabah and she held a position of distinction among them.

Umm Ayman

She was the Prophet's slave. Her name was Barakah. She had brought up the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم who called her, "Mother." He would say, "She is the remnant of my family." He had set her free and she married Uhayd ibn Zayd. When he was martyred in the battle of Hunayn, she married Zayd ibn Harithah. She bore him Usamah. She accompanied the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم in the battles of Uhud and Khaybar and nursed the wounded and gave water to the warriors.

She wept very much when the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم died. She said, "I know that he had to die, but I weep that no revelation will now descend from the heaven." (Tabaqat ibn Sa'id v 8 p 223)

Abu Bakr and Umar used to visit her as they had visited the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. She narrated hadith from the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم and among those who narrated from her was Anas ibn Maalik. She died in the early days of Uthman's caliphate. (Tahdhib at-Tahdhib v 12 p 459)

Hawla bint Tuwaiyf

She migrated after embracing Islam and pledged allegiance to the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. She was exemplary in piety and asceticism in the Prophet's times. (Jamhurul Ansar p 118) She kept awake all night to worship. When the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم learnt of it, he said, "As long as you people do not tire of worship and supplication, Allah will not hesitate to reward you and accept your prayer. And, you are responsible for your deeds only so much as is within your powers.

Her ahadith are found in Bukhari, Muslim and Muwatta.

Umm ad-Darda al-Kubra

She was Khayra bint Abu Hadradh Aslami. She was the wife of Abu Darda. She was very pious, learned and intelligent. Many people (tabi'in) narrated from her. She also narrated from the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. (Tahdhib at-Tahdhib v 1 p 50, Isti'ab v 2 p 293)

Zaynab bint Abu Salamah

Her mother was SayyidahUmm Salamah, the Mother of the Faithful. Hence, she was also called Zaynab bint Umm Salamah. Sayyidah Asma bint Abu Bakr loved her dearly. She had suckled Zaynab. She held a high station among the jurists of Madinah and the tabi' scholar Abu Rafi' said, "Whenever I thought of a woman jurist of Madinah, I remembered Zaynab bint Abu Salamah." His wife too spoke in like words.

She narrated ahadith from the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم and from his honorable wives. From her, her sons and others narrated forward. She died at Madinah in 73 AH. (Tahahib at-Tahahib v 12 p 422)

Layla bint Qanif

She was one of those who gave bath to the Prophet's صلى الله عليه وسلم daughter, Sayyidah Umm Kulthum on her death and shrouded her she said that as they were so occupied, the
Prophet stand at the door and handed over to them the pieces of the shroud one by one. (Asad ul Ghabah v 5 p 543) Dawud ibn Aasin Thaqafi narrated from her. (Tahdhib at Tahdhib v 12 p 450)

Some books write Qalif but Ibn Hajar has written Qanif in Asbah.

Sahlah bint Suhayl

She was an early Makkah Muslim and migrated to Ethiopia with her husband Abu Hudhayfah ibn Utbah. Her husband had a slave, Saalim whom he had adopted so that he moved about in the house freely. About this time, the Prophet explained how fostering is established, so Saalim became her foster son. Sayyidah Ayshah was used to issue edicts on fosterage relations based on this fostering, but other wives of the Prophet differed from her, saying that the Prophet had given special concession to Sahlah bint Suhayl in this regard.

Saalim had arrived at Quba ahead of the Prophet, so he led the Sahabah in congregational salah (Tabagat Ibn Sa'd v 8 p 270)

Ghamidiyah Azdiyah

She was of the tribe Ghamid. The case of her being stoned is mentioned in sahih Muslim and other books. The Prophet, led her funeral salah.

Umm Salamah bint Abu Hakim

Her kunyah was Umm Sulaym or Umm Sulayman, but her name is unknown. She enjoyed the company of the aged sahabiyyah who used to offer salah with the Prophet. (Iltibab v 2 p 803, Asad ul Ghabah v 5 p 589)

Umm Yusuf Barakah Habshiyah

She was the servant of the Mother of the Faithful, Sayyidah Umm Habibah who had migrated to Ethiopia with her first Husband. On her return, Umm Yusuf became her servant. When she married the Prophet, Umm Yusuf continued to be her servant. (Asbah v 8 p 27, 29)

Amrah bint Abdur Rahman Ansariyah

She was a scholar and a tabi'i of Madinah. She was trained by Sayyidah Ayshah. She was an excellent jurist and scholar of hadith who had great knowledge particularly of Sayyidah Ayshah's hadith (Ibn Hibban). This is what Umar ibn Abdul Aziz confirmed. (Tabagat at Tahdhib v 12 p 438) Zuhri said that he found her like an 'ocean of Knowledge.' (Tahdhib at Huffaz v 1 p 106)

She had a rare collection of the hadith. Umar ibn Abdul Aziz had them copied because he was afraid that knowledge would be wiped off and scholars would disappear. (Tabagat Ibn Sa'd v 8 p 37)

Amrah bint Abdur Rahman narrated hadith from Sayyidah Ayshah, Umm Hisham bint Harithah, Habibah bint Sahl, Umm Habibah, and Hammah bint Jahsh.

Then her son and others narrated from her. (Tahdhib at Tahdhib v 13 p 438)

These were the female jurists of the times of the sahabah. Their verdicts were relied upon and all these daughters of Islam had great knowledge of the Book and the Sunnah.

There were also in that period, female scholars who were leaders in hadith and their narrations find mention in books of hadith in large numbers. The mufaddithun have mentioned their names and they include some others besides the foregoing. Dhahabi has mentioned in Tadhkiraat al Huffaz, in its first rank twenty three senior sahabah, Sayyidah Ayshah is one of them. In the second rank, among the senior tabi'in, Sayyidah Umm Darda is named. Besides, in the first rank sixty-four noble sahabah are mentioned after the twenty-three. Their narrations are generally found in books of hadith. These are
followed by fourteen female hafiz (memorisers) of hadith, who include the Mothers of the Faithful, Sayyidah Fatimah az-Zahra and others. (Tahdhirat al-Huffaz v 1 p 45)

We have already mentioned ten of these fourteen as scholars of the Book and Sunnah. We now mention the remaining four briefly.

Umm Haram bint Milhan Ansariyah

She was the sister of Umm Sulaym and maternal aunt of Anas ibn Maalik رضي الله عنها and wife of Ubada b. Samit. The Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was very attached to her and gave her much respect. Ibn Abdul Barr said, "The Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم held her in great respect. He visited her and had the afternoon nap at her home. He prayed for her to gain martyrdom."

Sahih Bukhari has also narrated the hadith about the Prophet's صلى الله عليه وسلم dream and prayer and her ultimately gaining martyrdom at Cyprus in an oceanic expedition during Uthman's reign. It is narrated in 27 AH, in which she participated with her husband. She fell down from her riding beast after alighting from the ship and died a martyr's death. She was buried there. (Isti'ab v 2 p 290)

She narrated hadith from the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم while Anas ibn Maalik رضي الله عنه and others narrated from her. (Tahdhib at-Tahdhib v 12 p 462)

Umm Sulaym bint Milhan Ansariyah

She was sister of Umm Haram رضي الله عنها and mother of Anas ibn Maalik رضي الله عنه. She became Muslim with her people in early Islam, but her husband was displeased at that and went away to Syria. Then Abu Talibah sent his proposal for marriage but she said, "O Abu Talibah, do you not know that the god you worship grows from the earth and the black slave of a certain tribe has cast it?" When he agreed with her, she asked him why he worshipped wood. If he accepted Islam then she would marry him. Abu Talibah thought over it and submitted to Islam. So, she instructed Anas رضي الله عنه to arrange her marriage with Abu

Tahdib at-Tahdhib v 12 p 449

Umm Hani bint Abu Talib

She was real sister of Sayyidina Ali رضي الله عنه. She embraced Islam at the time Makkah was liberated, but her husband Hubayrah b. Abu Wahab fled Naran. When the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم proposed to her she excused herself lest she fail to give the right of husband (to him). (Asabah v 8, p 287)

She survived Ali رضي الله عنه. Her narrations from the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم are found in the six books of Hadith. Her son, grandson and others narrated from her. (Tahdhib at-Tahdhib v 12 p 489)
There are many other daughters of Islam besides these we have mentioned. They were prominent in religious knowledge and jurisprudence. Others had narrated from them. Ibn Hajar has mentioned in the last volume of Tahdhib at-Tahdhib against Kitab un Nisa some three hundred and twenty five names and kunyah of women scholars of hadith and jurists. In Taqrib at-Tahdhib they number three hundred and fifty. He has also named nineteen unknown women narrating from women.
Achievements of Muslim Women in the Religious And Scholarly Fields

Sanad aali: a grand sanad, a rare one with fewest number of narrators
Sayyidah: (a prefix showing respect to a female)
Sayyidina: our master, (used as mark of respect for someone)
Sha'ban: 8th month of Islamic calendar
Shawwal: 10th month of Islamic calendar
Shaykh: (female shaykhah), an old man, learned man
Sil: a title like Sayyidah
Sufi: mystic
Sufiyah: (female sufi)
Taba' tabi'i: successor of the tabi'in
Tabi'i (pl. tabi'in): successor of the sahabah
Tafaqah: study of jurisprudence
Tahil: to say "الله أكبر" to declare Allah's unity
Takbir: to extol Allah, say "الله أكبر"
Takhrij: derivation, interpretation, conclusion
Tasawwuf: sufisins, mysticism, love of Allah
Tawilah: black, long cap
Umm waiad: a female slave who gives birth to her master's child
Umrah: the lesser (and optional) pilgrimage
Wa'iz: sermoniser, admonisher
Walimah: wedding feast given by bridegroom
Zawal: declination of the sun from the meridian

Translations:

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