

The Place of Isnad in Islamic Education: Demystifying “Tradition”	
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Traditional Islam	<p>Represented by adherence to Ashari/Maturidi theology, the adoption of one of the 4 schools of jurisprudence, and the acceptance of law-based Sufism</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - It is argued that this is how Muslims have practiced Islam for more than a millennium
Ijāzah as qualification	Over time, a person who did not possess a written ijazah from a qualified teacher to teach the subject one was teaching came to be seen as unworthy
Ahl al-Sunnah	<p>Sunnism is incomplete without the contributions of both Traditionalists (Ahl al-hadith) and Rationalists (Ahl al-ra'y)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Neither sees any essential contradiction between reason and revelation - Traditionalists focus on “isnad” criticism, and Rationalists focus on both “isnad” and “textual” criticism
Origin of isnād	<p>Ibn Sīrīn: “People did not ask for the isnad until political strife (fitnah) erupted. After that the isnad of a hadith was demanded to discover who was a proponent of the prophetic way so that his hadith could be taken and who was a proponent of heresy so that his hadith could be eschewed”</p> <p>لم يكونوا يسألون عن الإسناد فلما وقعت الفتنة قالوا: سَمُّوا لنا رجالكم ، فيُنظر إلى أهل السنة فيؤخذ حديثهم ، ويُنظر إلى أهل البدعة فلا يؤخذ حديثهم</p>
Ijāzah versus isnād	Isnad is the chain of transmission by which the content of Islam is preserved; ijazah is one of a number of means for establishing isnad
8 ways of transmitting hadith/establishing isnad	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Direct transmission from teacher to student (samā') - Reading a compiler's work to him while he listens ('ard, sard, or qirā'ah) - Surrendering a copy of one's compiled hadiths to another (munāwalah) - Author of the book gives permission to the reader or student to transmit the book's contents to others (ijāzah) - Hand-written hadiths given or mailed to another (mukātabah) - Discovering a hadith written in a book or hearing one ascribed to a contemporary transmitter and visiting the person to confirm (i'lām) - Owner of hadith manuscripts bequeaths it to a person upon his demise (waṣiyyah) - Discovering works attributed to a known scholar (wijādah)
Original function of ijāzah	To ensure that the books being transmitted were authentic copies of the originals

Al-Suyūṭī	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Copies of books were written by hand before the printing press <p>Later, it was used to make those who received formal training in the Islamic sciences more easily identifiable to the laity</p> <p>اصطلى الناس على الإجازة لأن أهلية الشخص لا يعلمها غالبا من يريد الأخذ عنه من المبتدئين ونحوهم لقصور مقامهم عن ذلك</p>
Sanad in today's time	<p>There is no benefit beyond taking blessing (tabarruk) from the shortness ('uluw) of the isnad during these times</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Some say that the lengthiness (nuzūl) of the isnad has greater blessing due to the numerousness of the scholars
Need for ijazah	<p>Neither the isnad nor ijazah are pedagogical tools for learning or methods intended to ensure that students have mastered the historical teachings of Islam</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Mastery can be achieved without an ijazah, and scholars did not consider the ijazah to be an absolute necessity <p>الإجازة من الشيخ غير شرط في جواز التصدي للإقراء والإفادة</p>

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