



## HISTORICITY OF HADITH STUDIES: PARADIGM OF UNDERSTANDING, TRANSMISSION, AND CONTEMPORARY HADITH STUDIES

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### Abstract

This study aims to examine the historicity of hadith studies by mapping the development of paradigms of hadith understanding, analysing patterns of hadith transmission, and examining the dynamics of contemporary hadith studies. The primary objective of this research is to contextualise classical and modern understandings of hadith within contemporary discourse, particularly regarding how hadith continues to function as a source of Islamic jurisprudence in the face of modern epistemological and socio-cultural challenges. This study employs a qualitative-descriptive approach with a historical-analytical method, analysing primary and secondary sources related to the development of hadith knowledge and Muslim scholars' responses to Orientalist criticism. It also integrates interdisciplinary perspectives from philosophy, sociology, and epistemology to enrich the analytical framework. The results show that the understanding of hadith has undergone a significant shift, from oral transmission and textual literalism in the classical era to a contextual-rationalist and intertextual approach in the modern and contemporary periods. Hadith transmission, despite facing political, social, and Orientalist criticism, has demonstrated resilience through academic rigour in the analysis of sanad and matan. Additionally, contemporary Muslim scholars are increasingly adopting interdisciplinary methods to reinterpret hadith in light of modern realities. This underscores the importance of critically engaging with classical traditions and modern approaches to maintain the relevance and authority of hadith in contemporary Islamic studies.

Keywords: Historicity; Research paradigm; Contemporary hadith.

### Abstrak

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengkaji historisitas studi hadis dengan memetakan perkembangan paradigma pemahaman hadis, menganalisis pola transmisi hadis, dan menelaah dinamika studi hadis kontemporer. Tujuan utama penelitian ini adalah untuk mengkontekstualisasikan pemahaman hadis klasik dan modern ke dalam diskursus kontemporer, terutama terkait bagaimana hadis tetap berfungsi sebagai sumber fiqh Islam di hadapan tantangan epistemologis dan sosiobudaya modern. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif-deskriptif dengan metode historis-analitis, dengan menganalisis sumber primer dan sekunder terkait perkembangan pengetahuan hadis dan respons ulama Muslim terhadap kritik orientalistik. Hal ini juga mengintegrasikan perspektif interdisipliner dari filsafat, sosiologi, dan epistemologi untuk memperkaya kerangka analitis. Hasilnya menunjukkan bahwa pemahaman hadis telah mengalami pergeseran signifikan, dari transmisi lisan dan literalisme teks pada era klasik menjadi pendekatan kontekstual-rasionalis dan intertekstual pada periode modern dan kontemporer. Transmisi hadis, meskipun dihadapkan pada kritik politik, sosial, dan orientalist, telah menunjukkan ketahanan melalui ketelitian akademik dalam analisis sanad dan matan. Selain itu, para cendekiawan Muslim kontemporer semakin mengadopsi metode interdisipliner untuk menafsirkan ulang hadis sesuai dengan realitas modern. Sehingga menegaskan bahwa keterlibatan kritis dengan tradisi klasik dan pendekatan modern esensial untuk mempertahankan relevansi dan otoritas hadis dalam studi Islam kontemporer.

Kata Kunci: Historisitas; Paradigma pengkajian; Hadits kontemporer.

## INTRODUCTION

After the prophetic era, Prophet Muhammad Saw. has left two main guidelines for his people in continuing their lives, and fighting for the religion of Islam, namely the Quran and Hadith. Two primary sources of Islamic law that have strong legitimacy and authority as the main reference for

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Muslims in determining the law of matters or problems that occur in life. The Quran is a text that comes from the revelation of Allah Swt. While the hadith is a text that comes from the Prophet Saw., which is then also understood as one of the explanations of the matters in the verses of the Quran<sup>1</sup>.

Hadith has various elements that are of special concern to Muslims. Some important elements that must be considered in the study of hadith are sanad and matan. These two elements, according to hadith scholars, affect the degree of authenticity and quality of a hadith. Sanad and matan must be studied critically, through a study of its transmission side (*al-naqd al-khariji*), and its matan side (*al-naqd al-dakhili*)<sup>2</sup>. This aims to maintain the quality of hadiths, in order to avoid the efforts of falsifying hadiths carried out by irresponsible groups.

Even in historical studies, during the reign of Caliph Ali bin Abi Thalib, there were many attempts to falsify hadith, which were carried out with the aim of strengthening political legitimacy. Hadith scholars such as Abdullah Ibn Mas'ud, who was assigned to migrate to Kuffah to teach hadith, decided to suspend new hadiths that emerged during Ali bin Abi Thalib's migration to Kuffah, due to the heated political situation after the death of Ustman bin Affan. The transmissions of hadith received at that time were only through the narration of the main family of Ali bin Abi Thalib<sup>3</sup>. Of course, this is a special concern for hadith scholars, to be more careful and selective about the hadith texts circulating among Muslims, by conducting critical research on the quality of the *sanad* and *matan* of the hadith.

In examining the *sanad* or *matan* of the hadith, hadith scholars also consider the situation and conditions that occurred when the hadith appeared (*asbab al-wurud*). So that the full meaning and significance of a hadith spoken by the Prophet Muhammad Saw is known<sup>4</sup>. Not based on mere understanding of reason, which does not pay attention to the historical and socio-cultural aspects of the hadith of the Prophet Saw.

On the other hand, the development of orientalism in viewing and narrating hadith in the early 18th to 19th centuries created a narrative that became a debate. The emergence of various responses from traditionalist Islamic hadith scholars shows an attempt at theoretical and methodological resistance to the formulations that have been initiated by orientalists. In fact, the paradigm of orientalist research seems subjective, and tries to doubt the legitimacy of hadith for Islam<sup>5</sup>. This is due to the influence of colonialism which wants to attack the foundations of the beliefs of Muslims, by criticizing the main sources of Islamic law through scientific and methodological approaches. According to orientalists, hadith is also considered a legal product produced by the third generation, or in the second year of *Hijri*<sup>6</sup>. Not authentic from the Prophet. Thus, important orientalist figures emerged who were very famous, such as Joseph Schacht, Ignaz Goldziher, and Juynboll, which then gave rise to serious debates regarding hadith among Western and Eastern scholars.

The opinions put forward by orientalists regarding hadith are based on at least three main reasons. First, there was an increase in the number of hadith in the 2nd century of *Hijri*, which is

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<sup>1</sup> Aisyatur Rosyidah, Nur Kholis, and Jannatul Husna, "Periodisasi Hadis Dari Masa Ke Masa (Analisis Peran Sahabat Dalam Transmisi Hadis Nabi Saw)," *Islamadina: Jurnal Pemikiran Islam* 22, no. 2 (November 7, 2021): 137, <https://doi.org/10.30595/islamadina.v22i2.9506>.

<sup>2</sup> Ermawati Usman, "Paradigma Pemahaman Hadis," *Rausyan Fikr: Jurnal Studi Ilmu Ushuluddin Dan Filsafat* 17, no. 1 (August 12, 2021): 119–43, <https://doi.org/10.24239/rsy.v17i1.707>.

<sup>3</sup> A. Sonubar, *Minan Nabi Ila Al-Bukhari* (Darul Fattah, 2021).

<sup>4</sup> Usman, "Paradigma Pemahaman Hadis."

<sup>5</sup> Hatib Rachmawan, "Membaca Ulang Asal Usul Hadis Dalam Perspektif Narasi," *Jurnal Media Akademik (JMA)* 2, no. 2 (February 3, 2024), <https://doi.org/10.62281/v2i2.150>.

<sup>6</sup> Harald Motzki, *Hadith*, ed. Harald Motzki (Routledge, 2016), <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315253695>.

interpreted as the occurrence of a massive hadith production process. Second, orientalist understand that there is a branching point, which is then understood as evidence that hadith has developed. Third, the emergence of the isnad system which has the concept of projecting back, as an effort to legitimize the authenticity of hadith by tracing the narrators of hadith, up to the Prophet<sup>7</sup>. The arguments of these orientalist were later criticized by Azami<sup>8</sup>, by putting forward three basic arguments for the misconception of the construction of understanding hadith. First, the tradition of writing hadith has long been carried out by the companions of the Prophet. This is proven by the existence of shahifah, in the form of personal notes from the companions containing the hadiths of the Prophet. Although there was a ban, the policy was later changed by allowing the recording of hadith<sup>9</sup>. Second, the evidence in the first point, became valid and authentic evidence, while also answering the orientalist opinion that hadith originated from the second century of *Hijri*. With this evidence, it is authentic that evidence of the writing of hadith has been found since the companions of the Prophet<sup>10</sup>. Third, the theory of projecting back in Islamic tradition is used to strengthen the legitimacy of the Prophet. In other words, a hadith will be considered authentic if it has a narration path that reaches the Prophet<sup>11</sup>. Thus, its position in Islam can provide legal legitimacy. The isnad method is also one method that guarantees a strong relationship pattern between the teacher (Prophet) and his students (companions, *tabi'in*, *tabi'in tabi'it*, and so on).

Hadith as the second source of Islamic law, has also experienced various developments in authority and legitimacy from time to time. The development of interpretation, research, or critical studies came from among Muslims themselves, or from Western scholars. The study of the hadith cannot be separated from the influence of previous scholars, and the model of transformation of hadith science developed through works, or studies of Islamic scientific discourse<sup>12</sup>. Furthermore, along with the development of science, various methods of interpretation were created to unravel the meaning and intent of the hadith of the Prophet Saw. Various studies were carried out to conduct experiments and critical reviews of the hadith text or its narrators<sup>13</sup>.

In discussions about hadith in the contemporary era, scholars should not only focus on hadith science itself. But rather refer to various disciplines related to hadith. This is because the construction of understanding of hadith in this way will only cause hadith science to become fragile and obsolete<sup>14</sup>. Thus, it is important for scholars to be able to contextualize various disciplines in understanding hadith in the contemporary era. Thus, hadith science continues to develop, and is not obsolete by the progress of human civilization and science.

In this article, the author wants to map in a simple way the understanding of hadith in the classical and modern eras, then contextualize this understanding into a contemporary study perspective by referring to the phase of hadith transmission from generation to generation.

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<sup>7</sup> Joseph Schacht, *The Origins of Muhammadan Jurisprudence* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1959).

<sup>8</sup> Muḥammad Muṣṭafa A'zami, *Studies in Early Hadith Literature : With a Critical Edition of Some Early Text* (Suhail Academy, 2001).

<sup>9</sup> A'zami.

<sup>10</sup> A'zami.

<sup>11</sup> Taufikurrahman Taufikurrahman and Ali Hisyam, "Al-Sunnah Qabla Al-Tadwin Karya Muhammad 'Ajjâj Al-Khatîb," *Al-Dzikra: Jurnal Studi Ilmu Al-Qur'an Dan Al-Hadits* 14, no. 1 (June 30, 2020): 63–78, <https://doi.org/10.24042/al-dzikra.v14i1.4595>.

<sup>12</sup> Rosyidah, Kholis, and Husna, "Periodisasi Hadis Dari Masa Ke Masa (Analisis Peran Sahabat Dalam Transmisi Hadis Nabi Saw)."

<sup>13</sup> Didi Suardi, "Metode Pemahaman Hadist Menurut Muhammad Al-Ghazali," *Al-Bayan: Jurnal Ilmu Al-Qur'an Dan Hadist* 4, no. 1 (December 28, 2020): 105–19, <https://doi.org/10.35132/albayan.v4i1.104>.

<sup>14</sup> Hatib Rachmawan, "Membaca Ulang Asal Usul Hadis Dalam Perspektif Narasi."

Furthermore, the author will also map and analyze the transmission of hadith as an effort to maintain the legitimacy and authority of hadith in Islamic jurisprudence in the contemporary era.

## RESEARCH METHOD

This study uses a qualitative research type, using a library research approach. The researcher conducted a critical review of classical and contemporary literature related to the science of hadith. And, this study is descriptive-analytical with an emphasis on methodological comparisons between orientalist understanding and Muslim scholars' responses to the authenticity of hadith. In addition, the researcher also conducted an analysis of the content, material, and main points of the hadith paradigm in classical and contemporary perspectives.

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

### Paradigms of Understanding Classical and Modern Hadith

Before discussing the paradigm of understanding hadith that developed in the classical and modern eras, it is appropriate to understand a little about the traditions that developed in the early Islamic era, which began from the era of prophecy. History records that in early Islamic society, especially for those who lived during the prophethood of the Messenger of Allah, the hadiths received from the Prophet were not recorded on parchment or manuscripts. The pattern of understanding and transmission model of hadith that developed at that time was by word of mouth, using the memorization method. The teachings of the Prophet were stored in the traditions of society, and became the habitus of early Islamic society, which was then recorded as collective memory<sup>15</sup>. The collective memory in question comes from sensory experiences, from everything seen by society so that it becomes a tradition or habit.

Efforts to verify a hadith do not necessarily refer to documentary evidence, writing, or others. Because in early Islamic society, they developed an understanding of hadith as part of the traditions or habits carried out in everyday life. In this case, Fazlur Rahman calls it living sunnah<sup>16</sup>. Meanwhile, orientalist, Joseph Schacht for example, calls it living of tradition<sup>17</sup>.

The teachings of the Prophet Saw for early Muslim society have become part of their daily lives, because the Prophet Saw directly became a teacher who taught about religion, as well as in solving various problems that occurred in the midst of society. The reference for early Muslim society was the activities and ways of the Prophet Saw in living their daily lives, in a full 24 hours. So, the desire of the community developed to ask the people closest to the Prophet Saw about how the Prophet Saw carried out his activities. However, this shows the transmission of understanding textually, there was no interpretation of the hadiths of the Prophet Saw because early Islamic society lived in the era of prophecy. This pattern of understanding, according to Jonathan A. Brown, is called a pattern of textual understanding<sup>18</sup>.

The paradigm of understanding hadith in the study of Islamic history has various paradigms, which were developed by each scholar in a certain era. For example, the circle of companions who lived at the same time as the prophethood, or after, had a pattern of understanding hadith textually. Meanwhile, the tabi'in group, and so on, have a contextualist rationalist understanding, because the baton of strengthening Islamic legitimacy and jurisprudence has been placed on the next generation. As a result, in understanding new cases or

<sup>15</sup> Jeffrey Barash, *Collective Memory and the Historical Past* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2016).

<sup>16</sup> Fazlur Rahman, *Islamic Methodology in History* (Karachi: Central Institute of Islamic Research, 1995).

<sup>17</sup> Schacht, *The Origins of Muhammadan Jurisprudence*.

<sup>18</sup> Jonathan A.C. Brown, *Hadith Muhammad's Legacy in The Medieval and Modern World* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2017), <https://doi.org/10.2307/40963329>.

problems in Islamic law, it always requires a contextualist and rationalist interpretation to obtain new legal products as a development of old legal products that have been in effect.

As written by Jonathan AC Brown (2017) in his book *Hadith Muhammad's Legacy in The Medieval and Modern World*, it explains that the Sunni group, as the focus of Brown's study in the perspective of theological hadith interpretation, experienced a paradigm shift in interpretation from textualist-dogmatic to rationalist. The shift in the paradigm of interpretation of the conservative Sunni group, which understands theological hadith through the textualist-dogmatic method, has changed to rationalist by adopting the thinking of the *Neo-Mu'tazilah*. Thus, the pattern of thought and interpretation of the new Sunni group became rationalist, prioritizing interpretation according to human reason<sup>19</sup>.

Classical Sunnis who dominated before the 9th century *Hijri*, used a paradigm of understanding hadith that was dogmatic, according to the text obtained from the narrators of hadith. The pattern of understanding is textualist, has absolute trust in the text of hadith, and focuses on the quality of the sanad of hadith. In fact, this condition is still found in the present era. There are still several models of hadith studies that use textual hadith understanding methods, interpretations in the form of commentary, and analyzing them by linking similar hadith themes, or cases that are relevant to the hadith text<sup>20</sup>.

Starting in the 9th century of *Hijri*, the paradigm of interpreting the hadith of the Prophet Saw shifted. The Sunni group began to adopt neo-Mu'tazilah thinking which is characterized by thinking oriented towards human reason and rationality. This also influenced Sunni figures to interpret hadiths, especially those related to theological themes, by interpreting them according to reason and rationality. Since the 12th century, Sunni has experienced a paradigm transformation to become more open. The Sunni group is open to fields of study that come from other sciences, for example Sunni who also adopted the rational methods of Greek logicians and Gnostic Christian thought into the Islamic tradition. This understanding then merged into Ash'ariyah, which combines the concepts of textualist and rationalist meaning<sup>21</sup>.

Thus, the differences in interpretation among Muslims, regarding the occurrence of critical studies of the hadiths of the Prophet Saw, gave birth to new meanings, understandings, and studies of scientific disciplines that construct understanding of hadith, in accordance with the development of human civilization. Adoption of other disciplines to understand hadith, reconstruct a new scientific paradigm, and open up interpretive facts that have the potential to expand the meaning of the text of the Prophet's hadith. So, in her understanding, Ermawati (2021) formulated three basic concepts related to the pattern of understanding hadith, namely (1) textual, which is interpreted as a process of understanding that is oriented towards hadith texts, (2) contextual, namely an understanding that is based not only on a linguistic approach, but also texts that are understood through the situation and conditions when the text appears or is conveyed, and (3) intertextual, namely a network of relationships between one text and another. The relationship in question is not merely a relationship of equality, but also vice versa as a contradiction<sup>22</sup>.

### **Transmission of Hadith; Efforts to Maintain the Legitimacy and Authority of Hadith**

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<sup>19</sup> Brown.

<sup>20</sup> Muhammad Ari Rustianto, Guntur Pribadi, and Lilik Andaryuni, "Metode Dan Paradigma Pemahaman Hadis Di Indonesia," *Attractive: Innovative Education Journal* 6, no. 1 (2024), <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.51278/aj.v6i1.1022>.

<sup>21</sup> Brown, *Hadith Muhammad's Legacy in The Medieval and Modern World*.

<sup>22</sup> Usman, "Paradigma Pemahaman Hadis."

Unlike the text of the Qur'an which is final, the variation of hadith texts that reaches thousands, and is transmitted across generations, requires a critical effort in maintaining the quality of the hadith of the Prophet. The existence of a large difference in years, the lack of efforts to record the hadith of the Prophet, the emergence of various attempts to falsify hadith, to the political turmoil experienced by Muslims, makes the quality of hadith have its own risks in its position to provide legal legitimacy and authority of Islamic law. In the literature of rijal al-hadith, the study of sanad and matan is the main focus of hadith scholars. The study of *sanad* and *matan* are two important elements that cannot be separated, because they contain key information from the quality of hadith that has been understood so far, and transmitted from the group of friends, to Muslims today. Therefore, in the literature of rijal-al hadith, specific discussions and investigations are carried out on the biographies of hadith narrators, starting from the time of the companions, ending with the mukharrij of hadith itself, such as the work of *al-Tarikh al-Akbar* by Imam Al-Bukhari (d. 256 H), *al-Tabaqat al-Kubra* written by Ibn Sa'ad (d. 230 H), and so on<sup>23</sup>.

Since the 19th century, the definition of the authority of the Prophet Saw has become an important discussion among contemporary Islamic thinkers. The weak political position of Muslims, the strong influence of Western domination, and the efforts to revive the legitimacy and authority of Islam, have become strong impetus for the creation of Islamic legal and social institutions<sup>24</sup>. The strong urge to re-examine the authority of authority in Islam has led to efforts to re-examine the hadiths of the Prophet Saw. And at that time, the main focus of the study was on the hadiths of the Prophet Saw, to rediscover the power of authority from the hadith texts. On the other hand, the emergence of hadith orientalis in the late 19th century, with their critical style of hadith texts, again questioned the position of the authenticity of the hadith<sup>25</sup>.

From a historical perspective, critical study of hadith has long been carried out by Muslims, even since the time of the companions. One of the companions, who was also the wife of the Prophet Saw, Sayyidah Aisyah ra., as an early generation of companions, and the main source of hadith references by hadith collectors, criticized the hadith texts that had been transmitted at that time<sup>26</sup>. The model of hadith transmission that developed at that time was through open reading by a recipient of hadith, obtained from a hadith narrator, in order to gain legitimacy for the hadith obtained. One of the events that shows criticism of hadith, both from the sanad and matan, is when Aisyah ra. criticized the wording of the hadith read by one of the *Qadhi* in Medina, and she did it openly in public<sup>27</sup>. Of course, this event shows a strong tradition in maintaining the authenticity of hadith texts, and refining the level of understanding of hadith that has been transmitted.

In its development, there was a fierce debate between Western and Eastern scholars in understanding the transmission of hadith. Many orientalis believe that the authenticity of the hadith of the Prophet Saw is very doubtful. Because it does not show any authenticity and trustworthiness of the sanad line. As stated by Josep Schacht with his common link theory. Common link is based on the argument that the more transmission lines that connect to a narrator, the greater the historical or authentic claim that the narrator has. Therefore, transmission lines with many branches are the most reliable, while hadith with only one transmission line (single stand) cannot be trusted. Schacht criticized the hadith using three basic theories - common link, projecting

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<sup>23</sup> Muhammad Anshori, "Objek Dan Ruang Lingkup Kajian Hadis Masa Klasik Dan Kontemporer," *Journal Al Irfani: Ilmu Al Qur'an Dan Tafsir* 2, no. 2 (December 25, 2021): 1–23, <https://doi.org/10.51700/irfani.v2i2.312>.

<sup>24</sup> Abdul Karim, "Pergulatan Hadis Di Era Modern," *Riwayah: Jurnal Studi Hadis* 3, no. 2 (April 5, 2019): 171, <https://doi.org/10.21043/riwayah.v3i2.3720>.

<sup>25</sup> Brown, *Hadith Muhammad's Legacy in The Medieval and Modern World*.

<sup>26</sup> Sonubar, *Minan Nabi Ila Al-Bukhari*.

<sup>27</sup> Sonubar.

back, and *argumentum e silentio*<sup>28</sup>. This theory was constructed to criticize the hadith, as well as to reject the hadiths of the Prophet Saw, which then became a reference for Western scholars to carry out the same criticism of the existence of the legitimacy of the hadith of the Prophet Saw.

Schacht's work then gave birth to many critics, who disagreed with the theories proposed by Schacht. Schacht's theory was considered too focused on claims regarding the authentication of hadith and the transmission method accepted by many traditional hadith scholars. Until now, the study of the sanad and matan of hadith remains the main focus for Muslims in maintaining the authenticity of hadith texts. Various works with models of classification of the quality of hadith and its transmission, increasingly enrich the scientific treasury of Muslims and emphasize that hadith from a scientific perspective continues to develop, both in interpretation and the sciences of its study. Thus, by being open to the development of science, in contemporary reading, it can further strengthen the position of legitimacy and authority of hadith texts for Muslims.

### **Contemporary Studies of Hadith; Positioning Orientalist Criticism of Hadith Studies**

The discussion and study of hadith in historical readings have their own different characteristics. The discussion of hadith in the early Muslim era, the hadith of the Prophet Saw, has an emphasis on discussions related to the life and personality of the Prophet Saw, including the teachings conveyed by him<sup>29</sup>. This is also because the Muslim community at that time still interacted directly with the Prophet Saw, so that they received detailed explanations from his hadiths<sup>30</sup>. Meanwhile, in the current contemporary era, understanding hadith is not only in the doctrinal scope, but also through the study of hadith texts, the model of hadith transmission tradition, to remapping the quality of hadith narrators, which is considered by the majority of hadith scholars to be the most important orientation for studying hadith in determining the validity and authenticity of a hadith text.

The emergence of a group of Western orientalist who studied hadith texts, created various new perceptions among Muslims, and generally on the pattern of understanding hadith in the current contemporary era. Orientalism itself is interpreted as a study of Islamic studies conducted by Western nations, related to sharia, culture, history, law, and so on<sup>31</sup>. The study of hadith in the orientalist era began to be developed in the 19th century, with the emergence of figures such as Ignaz Goldziher, Joseph Schacht, GHA Juynboll, and so on. The role of these orientalist figures became the starting point for the discourse on hadith, which gave birth to various responses from Muslim scholars, which then created discussions, thoughts, and rebuttals put forward by Muslim scholars against orientalists. Several famous names emerged, such as Edward Said, Muhammad Mustafa 'Azami, Tariq Ramadhan, and so on, who then sparked scientific rebuttals against orientalist thoughts.

As stated by Edward Said (1979), he emphasized that orientalists do not only refer to Western nations subjectively, but also include all research behaviors that examine the East, whether in the form of studies on anthropology, sociology, or historians of various forms<sup>32</sup>. The study of hadith studies conducted by orientalists in the 18th to 20th centuries was carried out by paying attention to the critical context. Orientalists succeeded in developing a new method in

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<sup>28</sup> Nurlaila Indah, M. Albi Albana, and Umi Sumbulah, "Joseph Schacht, Teori Skeptisme Hadis Dan Bantahan-Bantahannya," *Diya Al-Afkar: Jurnal Studi Al-Quran Dan Al-Hadis* 9, no. 01 (July 24, 2021): 110, <https://doi.org/10.24235/diyyaafkar.v9i01.7753>.

<sup>29</sup> Rustianto, Pribadi, and Andaryuni, "Metode Dan Paradigma Pemahaman Hadis Di Indonesia."

<sup>30</sup> Usman, "Paradigma Pemahaman Hadis."

<sup>31</sup> Joesoef Sou'yb, *Orientalism and Islam* (Jakarta: Bulan Bintang, 1985).

<sup>32</sup> Edward W. Said, *Orientalisme* (Yogyakarta: Pustaka Pelajar, 2010).

understanding hadith, namely through the method of criticizing hadith texts<sup>33</sup>. Such as the common link theory initiated by Ignaz Goldziher, and *isnad-cum-matan* initiated by Harald Motzki. Research conducted by Orientalists on Islam does not necessarily damage the image of Islam, but encourages a critical attitude and makes a significant contribution to Islamic thinkers in analyzing information.

Ignaz Goldziher in the reading of the history of orientalist hadith studies, became one of the earliest figures to apply historical criticism, and had a special interest in Islamic issues<sup>34</sup>. Based on the reading of Nur Ahsan in his research journal, it is understood that Goldziher, and the academic problems that emerged in the prophetic era, and the phase after, also became the basis for scientific research by Schacht (1969), which focused on the history of Islamic jurisprudence referring to prophetic reports<sup>35</sup>. Schacht's research was then continued by Juynboll, Michael Cook, and Harald Motzki.

As a form of resistance to orientalism, the term occidentalism emerged, popularized by Hasan Hanafi, one of the Islamic reformist figures from Egypt. Occidentalism itself is interpreted as the understanding, knowledge, or worldview of the East about the West, and is interpreted specifically as the Islamic worldview towards the West<sup>36</sup>. As an antithetical concept of orientalism, the occidentalism concept initiated by Hasan Hanafi focuses on the view of Islam and the Eastern world in understanding the history of the ego, and orientalist, and their weaknesses and strengths<sup>37</sup>.

In addition, Muslim scholars, such as Mustafa al-Syibai, and Muhammad Mustafa 'Azami, also criticized the Orientalists that their opinion stating that many hadiths were written a century after the death of the Prophet Saw. is not true. Al-Azami's opinion, for example, explains that the companions used the method of writing down the hadiths of the Prophet Saw. This writing is called *shahifah*<sup>38</sup>. Some of the friends who had *shahifah*, according to Imam Tirmidhi's opinion, were Ibnu Saad bin Ubadah al-Ansary, Abdullah bin Abi Aufa, and Samrah bin Zundar. Meanwhile, the first person to write a book of hadith was Ibn Syihab az-Zuhri<sup>39</sup>.

'Azami's criticism also targets Goldziher's opinion that the hadith was made in collusion between the hadith maker and the ruler. According to 'Azami, this political motive is not true. History records that the birth of al-Zuhri is still a matter of debate among Muslim scholars, whether he was born in 50 AH, or 58 AH. On the other hand, al-Zuhri had never met Abd al-Malik bin Marwan before 81 AH, and the construction of the Dome of the Rock took place in 68 AH<sup>40</sup>. Of course, it is impossible to understand if al-Zuhri made or falsified the hadith, assuming that at that time al-Zuhri was around 10-18 years old.

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<sup>33</sup> Siti Zahra and A.A Artoy, "Konsep Kajian Orientalis Terhadap Hadis (Jurnal Studi Alquran Dan Hadis)," *Jurnal Al-Munir : Studi Ilmu Al Quran Dan Tafsir* 5, no. 1 (2023), <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.24239/al-munir.v5i1.955>.

<sup>34</sup> Brown, *Hadith Muhammad's Legacy in The Medieval and Modern World*.

<sup>35</sup> Mohammad Nur Ahsan, "Dari Autentisitas Ke Otoritas: Metode Dan Pendekatan Sejarah Intelektual Dalam Kajian Kanonisasi Hadis Jonathan A.C. Brown," *Mutawatir : Jurnal Keilmuan Tafsir Hadith* 14, no. 1 (June 27, 2024): 141–62, <https://doi.org/10.15642/mutawatir.2024.14.1.141-162>.

<sup>36</sup> Y.P Izza, "Oksidentalisme : Membuka Kedok Imperialisme Barat (Studi Politik Imperialisme Belanda Abad 19 Dan Awal Abad 20 Di Jawa Melalui Kajian Sejarah)," *Jurnal Keislaman* 5, no. 9 (2016).

<sup>37</sup> Mohammad Refi Omar Ar-Razy, Kunto Sofianto, and Gani Ahmad Jaelani, "Visi Orientalisme Hoesein Djajadiningrat Dalam Ilmu Pengetahuan Dan Pemajuan Identitas Kebudayaan," *Jurnal Historia* 5, no. 2 (2022), <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.17509/historia.v5i2.50830>.

<sup>38</sup> Ali Mustofa Yaqub, *Kritik Hadis* (Jakarta: Pustaka Firdaus, 1996).

<sup>39</sup> Zaimah Zaimah, "Orientalis Versus Ulama (Studi Kritik Terhadap Hadis Nabi)," *RUSYDIAH: Jurnal Pemikiran Islam* 2, no. 1 (June 14, 2021): 1–11, <https://doi.org/10.35961/rsd.v2i1.229>.

<sup>40</sup> Zaimah.



Various theories that emerged from orientalism, which were later criticized again by Muslim scholars, are evidence of the development and progress of Islamic studies that have come back to life. Based on historical understanding, Islamic studies that tend to be textualist only focus on monodisciplinary readings, so that Muslims—and Muslim scholars—are not actively involved in discussions on scientific development. Orientalist criticism and studies ultimately create critical understanding and narratives built by Muslim scholars, so that they are able to provide scientific rebuttals. On the other hand, the theories initiated by orientalists indicate the existence of new method patterns that can be contextualized to the study of Islamic legal sources.

The reconstruction of the understanding of hadith in the contemporary era currently opens up opportunities for hadith research related to texts, using different perspectives. The adoption of disciplines of knowledge from developing sciences, gives birth to a new understanding of the understanding of classical hadith that has been developed by Muslims. As with the textual understanding of hadith that is oriented in a historical, socio-cultural, or political perspective. This study reveals interesting facts, while also expanding the understanding of hadith that has been developing so far.

The orientalist research pattern that focuses on criticism of sanad and matan, constructs new study opportunities for Muslims, referring to the way orientalists work, at least there are several study opportunities that can be carried out, which are seen in the following:

1. Methodology; the methodological innovation of research conducted by Western nations, inspired Muslim scholars in developing the objectivity of the hadith research they built. Such as the historical approach taken to analyze manuscripts, as well as studying the hadith texts contained therein.
2. Language; orientalists in studying Islam generally also study Arabic, but not in depth. So that various perspectives emerge that deviate from orientalist studies of the Quran or Hadith. As a result, the conclusions obtained are limited to problematic subjectivity.
3. Socio-Geographic; orientalists also conduct hadith research by looking at the socio-geographical situation in which the hadith developed, such as the context of Muslim society, including social conditions, involvement of the hadith chain, language, norms, socio-politics, and practices in everyday life.
4. World View; the products of orientalist thought gave rise to a strong impetus for Muslim scholars to conduct research using a more critical framework of thought. Orientalist works are used as the main reference material in developing Islamic studies, especially in the two main sources of Islamic law. Currently, orientalist studies are of great interest to Muslim scholars, to further examine the background and thoughts of orientalists when criticizing Islam<sup>41</sup>.

Thus, Muslim scholars must have an open attitude towards the scientific traditions that are currently developing. A skeptical and egotistical attitude towards one's own understanding will only lead to a decline in the quality of Islamic studies, personal fanaticism, and being closed to the novelty of Islamic studies. In fact, human civilization and problems are always changing. And the interpretation of authoritative religious texts must be expanded through various scientific disciplines, to reconstruct the understanding of the interpretations that have been made, in order to be contextualized with the conditions of civilization in the current era.

### **Contemporary Paradigms in the Study of Hadith**

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<sup>41</sup> Zahra and Artoy, "Konsep Kajian Orientalis Terhadap Hadis (Jurnal Studi Alquran Dan Hadis)."

Islamic studies in the contemporary era are currently experiencing various challenges that have never been faced at all during the prophetic era. Various social problems, problems of community life, are constantly developing, so that they require up-to-date solutions in solving these problems. The development of these problems is often not enough to be reviewed in one scientific discipline. But also involves other scientific disciplines, which can provide new perspectives in viewing a problem. In this case, Ebrhami Moosa in *Rethinking of Islamic Studies* emphasizes that contemporary reading in Islamic studies must involve aspects of piety, history, and epistemology<sup>42</sup>.

Quoting the opinion of Abdolkarim Soroush, at least the Islamic community today must be able to distinguish the essence and nature of religion and religious knowledge. The old assumptions that are still believed by the majority of society have led to discursive debates about the relationship between religion and science. Religion begins with doctrinal beliefs, while science starts with doubts, which then gives birth to scientific and comprehensive research methodologies to prove a truth<sup>43</sup>. However, the increasingly striking independence of religion and science has resulted in science no longer humanizing humans. So that many products of science are far from human rights and the essence of humanity. Soroush emphasized that in the understanding of Islamic conservatives, there has not been a relevant and clear typology of interpretation between religion as belief and religion as science.

“...the missing link in the endeavors of the revivalist and reformers of the past is the disintinction between religion and religious knowledge. The fails to recognize religious knowledge as a variety of human knowledge. This neglect caused significant inconsistencies in their judgments and allowed the desired solution to slip through their fingers”<sup>44</sup>

Soroush asserts that only religion will not change while religious understanding, religious interpretation, and religious knowledge will change according to time. The nature of "change" that cannot be avoided by religious understanding and interpretation is what Soroush directs to prevent the birth of claims of authority of truth among existing religious understandings and interpretations. Only religion has the authority of absolute truth, while religious understanding and interpretation do not have absolute and absolute truth<sup>45</sup>. This means that religious doctrine remains authoritative, while the variety of interpretations and understandings, which contribute to the use of human reason, are always developing and changing according to the progress and civilization of mankind.

Dialogue about religion and religious knowledge is an interpretation of religious doctrine in human change and civilization. Dialogue between religious scholars—be they interpreters in the fields of fiqh, theology, or researchers in other fields—with the approaches used such as history, philosophy, science, or other humanities, is the result of the study of religious knowledge, not the study of religion dogmatically. Understanding religion, through interpretation in the realm of epistemology, confirms the position of religion as a source of reference for scientific interpretation,

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<sup>42</sup> Nailil Huda and Ade Pahrudin, “Orientasi Kajian Hadis Kontemporer Indonesia (Studi Artikel E-Jurnal Dalam Portal Moraref 2015-2017),” *Refleksi* 17, no. 2 (December 27, 2018): 169–92, <https://doi.org/10.15408/ref.v17i2.10204>; Stephen R. Burge, “Rethinking Islamic Studies: From Orientalism to Cosmopolitanism,” *British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies* 40, no. 2 (April 2013): 219–22, <https://doi.org/10.1080/13530194.2013.777657>.

<sup>43</sup> Waston Waston, “Pemikiran Epistemologi Amin Abdullah Dan Relevansinya Bagi Pendidikan Tinggi Di Indonesia,” *Profetika: Jurnal Studi Islam* 17, no. 01 (June 19, 2016): 80–89, <https://doi.org/10.23917/profetika.v17i01.2102>.

<sup>44</sup> Abdolkarim Soroush, *Reason, Freedom, and Democracy in Islam: Essential Writings of Abdolkarim Soroush* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000).

<sup>45</sup> Badarussyamsi Badarussyamsi, “Pemikiran Abdulkarim Soroush Tentang Persoalan Otoritas Kebenaran Agama,” *ISLAMICA: Jurnal Studi Keislaman* 10, no. 1 (August 29, 2016): 56, <https://doi.org/10.15642/islamica.2015.10.1.56-81>.

and religious knowledge as a product of the results of this interpretation. Religious texts are seen as having strong authority in providing legal legitimacy to the problems of religious communities<sup>46</sup>. Thus, the strength of this authority needs to be interpreted through a structuralist and systematic epistemological interpretation pattern.

Thus, Muslims must be open to studies of the Qur'an and hadith which are increasingly developing into cross-disciplinary studies. In this case, Amin Abdullah explained that understanding the pattern of rapid changes in the era and civilization demands a transformation of the relevant paradigm of religious studies, so that Islamic studies can adapt to the development and changes in world science<sup>47</sup>. Muslims must provide a quick response, addressing various contemporary problems responsively and clearly. So that there is no gap in interpretation that results in a decline in the standard of living of religious communities, such as cases of normalization of errors, or others.

The understanding of Islam in the classical era contained many anomalies (some exceptions to the work of some scholars). As emphasized by Amin Abdullah, the study of Islam, and the sources of Islamic law, is too thick with nuances of believe (theological), and normative (deductive), so that it tends to ignore studies that are more historical and empirical<sup>48</sup>. In this reading, Islam in the era of stagnation is only repetitive, lacks creativity, and avoids scientific revolution<sup>49</sup>.

Fazlur Rahman in his theory emphasizes that religious studies, especially Islam, must be carried out on a scientific intellectual understanding. Not constructed on the basis of hostility and prejudice against open objects of study<sup>50</sup>. Therefore, what must be of concern to Muslims in general is eliminating the reluctance to conduct critical readings of the products of theology, fiqh, tasawuf, tafsir, and other sciences as works born from the products of the classical-scholastic era.

In order to respond to studies in the Western world that are experiencing a very rapid revolution, where science has reached a culmination point. Previously lost Islamic cultures—such as curiosity and discoveries—emerged massively in the culture of scientific traditions in the Western world. If the historical-sociological studies initiated by Ibn Khaldun were rejected and defeated only by theological-deductive disciplines, in the West these studies were well received and open to scientific discussions that discussed the theme<sup>51</sup>.

Referring to the integrative-interconnective paradigm of Amin Abdullah, he emphasized that there is a principle of mutual openness between one scientific group and another<sup>52</sup>. Openness related to the study, methodology, and epistemology of science. So, it can create a scientific development that is integrative and interconnective, while still paying attention to the Qur'an and Sunnah as the main sources of reference for science. On the other hand, if there is a conflict between scientific disciplines, then the alternative solution that can be taken is to return the basis of thought

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<sup>46</sup> Cahya Edi Setyawan, "Kritik Abdul Karim Soroush Atas Sistem Al-Faqih: Teks Agama, Interpretasi Dan Demokrasi," *FIKRAH* 5, no. 1 (June 22, 2017): 151, <https://doi.org/10.21043/fikrah.v5i1.2258>.

<sup>47</sup> M. Amin Abdullah, *Islamic Studies Di Perguruan Tinggi; Pendekatan Integratif Interkoneksi*, ed. M. Adib Abdushomad (Yogyakarta: Pustaka Pelajar, 2012).

<sup>48</sup> Fuadi Anwar, *Pendidikan Agama Islam Di Perguruan Tinggi Umum; Untuk Pengembangan Kepribadian* (Padang: UNP Press, 2008).

<sup>49</sup> Muhammad Rofiq, "Gelombang Baru Studi Islam Dan Masyarakat Muslim Pasca Orientalisme," *Afkaruna* 8, no. 1 (2012): 25–34, <https://doi.org/10.18196/aiijis.2012.0003.25-34>.

<sup>50</sup> Rahman, *Islamic Methodology in History*.

<sup>51</sup> Rofiq, "Gelombang Baru Studi Islam Dan Masyarakat Muslim Pasca Orientalisme."

<sup>52</sup> Atika - Yulanda, "Epistemologi Keilmuan Integratif-Interkoneksi M. Amin Abdullah Dan Implementasinya Dalam Keilmuan Islam," *TAJDID: Jurnal Ilmu Ushuluddin* 18, no. 1 (June 30, 2020): 79–104, <https://doi.org/10.30631/tjd.v18i1.87>.

and understanding to the Qur'an and Sunnah. So that the understanding and development of science remains in line with the guidelines of Islamic dogmatism that are believed.

If Muslims are able to use various perspectives in understanding the hadith, surely the studies of hadith in the contemporary Islamic world will continue to develop. The development in question is not to weaken the authority of the revelation and sunnah of the Prophet. Rather, it provides a new direction of understanding and development in the understanding of Islam so that contemporary problems that arise today can be resolved with contextual products from understanding the Qur'an and hadith.

Although in its journey, Muslims face various challenges in the effort to develop studies on Islam. Such as the development of a monodisciplinary paradigm, which causes a lack of understanding of other disciplines. Or, the growing concern about the lag of Muslims in responding to the development of the times is the main reason for the need to adjust Islamic studies. The meaning of contemporary challenges is not to reinterpret the texts of Allah's revelations or the Sunnah of the Prophet, but rather a transformation of the modernist paradigm of thinking as a response to the development of civilization of the times and the world<sup>53</sup>. Especially in the study of hadith, currently it is not only developing in the realm of text or isnad science. But it is increasingly developing in the context of socio-historical studies, political upheavals, to situations that develop at the time of the emergence of certain hadiths.

These studies create opportunities for new things, which can strengthen the legitimacy of the law that arises on the basis of the text of the hadith. In the development of the paradigm of hadith studies in Indonesia, for example, currently new sciences are developing in viewing hadith, such as hermeneutics, which emerged on the basis of developments in philosophical, social, and linguistic sciences<sup>54</sup>. This development opens the way for a new paradigm in interpreting the hadiths of the Prophet Saw. For example, in the context of philosophy, the study of hadith develops following philosophical science with a discussion of epistemological legitimacy. In social studies of society, researchers can also examine the socio-political situation and conditions that developed at the time a hadith emerged. Of course, understanding in this context creates opportunities for new sciences in the study of hadith which have so far only been carried out in a monodisciplinary scientific perspective.

Quoting Yusuf Qardhawi's opinion, in understanding the hadith, it is actually not enough to just study the texts, but it is necessary to have another perspective of knowledge about the context in which the hadith was revealed<sup>55</sup>. This context includes the socio-cultural and socio-political understanding that occurred at that time. Also oriented towards the orientation of the message, or what interests are behind a hadith appearing.

In the case that occurred during the time of the caliph Ali bin Abi Thalib, for example. The turmoil of the political situation at that time, and his move from Medina to Kufa. Sonubar explains that Ali's move from Medina to Kufa was not in the interests of spreading knowledge or hadith. But in a situation of war and politics. Even in this situation, hadith forgers emerged who aimed to use the power of hadith legitimacy in order to gain political power.

Al-Mughira, for example, argued that the hadiths that emerged during Ali's migration to Kufah were not reliable in their narration, except those from narrator Abdullah Ibn Mas'ud. On the other hand, Ibn Abbas, when he saw a book containing Ali's fatwas, commented "by Allah, Ali

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<sup>53</sup> R. Abd. Rahman, "Turki Dalam Pencarian Bentuk Pemerintahan (Sebuah Catatan Sejarah," *Jurnal Rihlah* 2, no. 1 (2014), <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.24252/rihlah.v2i01.1344>.

<sup>54</sup> Huda and Pahrudin, "Orientasi Kajian Hadis Kontemporer Indonesia (Studi Artikel E-Jurnal Dalam Portal Moraref 2015-2017)."

<sup>55</sup> Yusuf Al-Qardhawi, *Pengantar Studi Hadis* (Bandung: Pustaka Setia, 2008).

never issued a law like this unless he had gone astray"<sup>56</sup>. The very critical political situation caused the scholars of hadith to agree to reject all hadiths that emerged with the narration of Ali bin Abi Thalib. They were more selective in viewing a hadith, and ensured that the narration was through Ali's core relatives, or from scholars who were already known to be tsiqah. This shows that the turbulent socio-political conditions, as well as the emergence of hadith forgers in that era, indicated that the political turmoil in society could reduce the credibility of a hadith. So scholars must also be more selective and careful in examining a hadith that originates from such a political situation. Just imagine, what if Muslims do not have a perspective of knowledge in other disciplines. Of course, the understanding of the people towards hadith in the current era will be increasingly confused, and the people will no longer be able to distinguish between authentic and weak hadith. Thus, understanding the hadith using the perspective of knowledge in other scientific disciplines is increasingly important in the current contemporary era, because the challenges faced by Muslims are increasingly great, and the problems that arise also include new problems that—often—their resolution requires the development of interpretations from Islamic jurisprudence sources. Thus, Muslims, and the contextualization of their legal sources, can always respond to the flow of development of human civilization.

## CONCLUSION

The paradigm of understanding hadith has undergone a complex epistemological evolution. In the era of the prophethood and the generation of companions, hadith was better understood as a living sunnah—an oral tradition embedded in the daily lives of Muslims. This understanding was textual and dogmatic because of the direct authority of the Prophet Muhammad. However, along with the development of Islamic society and the emergence of new problems, the pattern of understanding hadith began to shift to being contextual and rational. The generation of tabi'in and classical scholars began to develop interpretation methods that took into account the *asbab al-wurud*, the social, political, and cultural backgrounds of the emergence of hadith. Since the beginning, Muslims have developed a very strict transmission mechanism, including open criticism such as that carried out by Sayyidah Aisyah against texts that did not conform to the collective memory of prophecy. This effort was continued with the formation of a strict *isnad* system, which emphasized that the validity of hadith depends on the clarity of the chain of transmission and the authenticity of its narrators. In the contemporary era, hadith studies are no longer monodisciplinary. Understanding the hadith now requires the involvement of various disciplines such as sociology, anthropology, philosophy, linguistics, and hermeneutics. Contemporary thinkers such as Amin Abdullah, Abdulkarim Soroush, and Ebrahim Moosa emphasize the importance of an integrative-interconnective approach in understanding religion, and in distinguishing between religion as revelation and religious knowledge as a product of human thought.

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<sup>56</sup> Sonubar, *Minan Nabi Ila Al-Bukhari*.

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