

## BETWEEN THE CRITICISM OF HADĪTS AND HADĪTS PROBATIVENESS

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### Abstract:

Setiap Muslim percaya bahwa al-Qur'ân secara *wurûd* bersifat *qath'î*, karena ia dikumpulkan dan ditulis pada masa Nabi serta ditransmisikan secara *mutawâtir*. Namun tidak demikian dengan Hadīts. Ia tidak semuanya ditulis pada masa Nabi. Karenanya, para *ulamâ'* berupaya mengkaji Hadīts berikut rantai transmisinya untuk menentukan validitas (ke-*shahîh*-an) sebuah Hadīts melalui kritik transmisi Hadīts. Artikel ini akan menyoroti persoalan tersebut, sehingga akan memberikan pemahaman tentang makna dan syarat-syarat kritik Hadīts serta hubungan antara kritik Hadīts dengan validitas dan pengujiannya. Validitas Hadīts tidak hanya bergantung pada Hadīts itu sendiri, tetapi ditentukan melalui investigasi historis dan pendekatan metodologis. Dalam kaitan ini, kemampuan personal dan kualitas intelektual para perawi Hadīts memiliki peran signifikan dalam menentukan apakah sebuah Hadīts itu diterima atau tidak. Untuk itu, kritik Hadīts tidak hanya bertujuan untuk menilai dan mengetahui validitas sebuah Hadīts dan profesionalitas perawinya, tetapi juga untuk mengakomodasi kebergunaannya sebagai sumber hukum Islam kedua.

### Keywords:

Hadīts, criticism, probativeness, and validity

### Preface

It is said in the Qur'an that Allâh preserved and guarded it from any corruptions. In surat 15: 9, Allâh said: *We have, without doubt, sent down the message and we will assuredly guard it (from corruption)*. The promise made by Allâh in this verse is obviously fulfilled in the undisputed purity of the Qur'anic text throughout the fourteen centuries since its revelation. Every Muslim believes that the Qur'an consists of the word of God revealed in Arabic by God to the Prophet

Muhammad -- Allāh bless and greet him -- over a twenty-two year period. He received the first revelation in the year 610 CE while engaging in a contemplative retreat in the cave of Hira located on the Mountain of Light (*Jabal al-Nūr*), which is in the outskirts of Mecca. Eventhough in accordance with its content and substance, the Qur'an is distinct from *ḥadīths*, which are the sayings of Muhammad and it is agreed that Muhammad -- Allāh bless and greet him -- clearly distinguished between his own utterances (*ḥadīths*) and God's words (the Qur'an),<sup>1</sup> so the Qur'an is always claimed as *al-wahy al-matlu*, which is the recited revelation because its text and essences came from Allāh altogether<sup>2</sup> and the *ḥadīths* is claimed as *al-wahy ghayr al-matlu*, that is the unrecited revelation because its essences came from Allāh and the text from the Prophet Muhammad, it is believed among muslims that both of them are the main sources of Islamic teaching.

The divine promise mentioned in the verse above also includes, by necessity, the *ḥadīths* of the Prophet Muhammad, because the *ḥadīths* is the practical example of the implementation of the Qur'anic guidance, the wisdom taught to the Prophet along with the scripture, and neither the Qur'an nor the *ḥadīths* can be understood correctly without the other. On the other hand, Muslims and most Western scholars of Islam believe that the Arabic Qur'an that exists today contains substantially the same Arabic that was transmitted by the Prophet Muhammad. The text of the Qur'an was written, memorized, and collected since it was at the time of the Prophet. Therefore, every Muslim believes that all contents of the Qur'an are valid because they were transmitted in the way of *mutawātir*.<sup>3</sup>

On the contrary, it is not every *ḥadīths* was written during the time of Prophet Muhammad. It is a historical fact, accepted by

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<sup>1</sup>Fazlur Rahman, "The Living Sunnah and al-Sunnah wa al-Jama'ah," in P. K. Hoya (ed.), *Ḥadīths and Sunnah: Ideals and Realities* (Kuala Lumpur: Islamic Book Trust, 1996), hlm. 150

<sup>2</sup> Since Muslims believe that words themselves are those revealed by God, the act of reciting or reading the Qur'an is believed to be a means of receiving blessings from God. Hence it is not uncommon that Muslims will learn how to read Arabic and the Qur'an without understanding it. Also, even those who cannot read the Arabic letters of the Qur'an believe that they can nevertheless benefit from hearing the evocative quality and blessedness of the original Arabic.

<sup>3</sup> *Mutawātir* (consecutive) is a *ḥadīths* which is reported by such a large number of people that they cannot be expected to agree upon a lie, all of them together.

Muslims and non-Muslims alike, that the writing of the *hadīts* done by Muslim is not for all. Just a view *hadīts* that had substantially written. The Prophet sometime ordered Muslim (namely his companions/*al-shahābah*)<sup>4</sup> to write *hadīts* and some of them did it to get the blessings of him. In other words, some *hadīts* were written down during the life of the Prophet, while others were passed on orally and collected later. Scholars study the Prophetic Traditions (*hadīts*) and their chains of oral transmission to determine which are valid or authoritative. No *hadīts* is held true or cited as a proof unless it can be authentically attributed to the Prophet.

This is, may be, the way Allāh to preserve the *hadīts* by enabling the Companions and those after them to memorize, write down and pass on the statements of the Prophet, and the descriptions of his way, as well as to continue the blessings of practicing the *hadīts*.<sup>5</sup> But, in other time the Prophet also prohibited Muslims to write the *hadīts*. Many reasons supposed to be the hindrance of writing, such as they were fear if the *hadīts* writing texts can not be separated from the Qur'an. The result of this is the vast majority of Muslim scholars rest assured that not every *hadīts* are authentic from the Prophet, some of them are fabricated especially since Alī Ibn Abī Thālib period.<sup>6</sup>

To face such condition, as purity of knowledge of the *hadīts* became threatened, the Muslim scholars with exceptional memory skills and analytical expertise, traveled tirelessly to collect thousands of narrations and distinguish the true words of prophetic wisdom from those corrupted by weak memories, from forgeries by unscrupulous liars, and from the statements of the large number of *Ulama* (scholars), the companions and those who followed their way.

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<sup>4</sup> The Muslims who lived at the time of the Prophet.

<sup>5</sup> The actual collection of *hadīts*, became a systematic science of *hadīts* about two centuries after the death of the Prophet Muhammad. Until then, there were stories on Prophet Muhammad's and his followers' lives called *shirah*. To what extent these were used as guidance for Muslims is somewhat difficult to ascertain, but the collecting and systemizing of these stories two centuries later would not have been possible were it not for a system explaining the use of *siras* in the everyday life of Muslims.

<sup>6</sup> See Muḥammad 'Ajjāj al-Khatib, *al-Sunnah qabl al-Tadwin* (Beirut: Dār al-Fikr, 1971), hlm. 128, Mustafa al-Siba'i, *al-Sunnah wa Makanatuha fi al-Tashri' al-Islami* (Beirut: al-Maktab al-Islami, 1985), 75, Subhi al-Shalih, *'Ulûm al-Hadīth wa Mustalahuh* (Beirut: Dār al-'Ilm li al-Malayin, 1988), hlm. 266, also Muḥammad Muḥammad Abu Zahw, *al-Hadīth wa al-Muhaddithûn* (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-'Arabi, 1984), hlm. 114.

All of this was achieved through precise attention to the words narrated, and detailed familiarity with the biographies of the thousands of reporters (narrators) of *hadīts*. What they were doing is in accordance with the keeping of its originality through the implementation of critique of *hadīts* transmission.

The methodology of the expert scholars of *hadīts* in assessing the narrations and sorting out the genuine from the mistaken and fabricated, for the subject matter of the science of *hadīts*. Therefore, in this article a brief explanation is given of the significance of *hadīts* criticism to its validity and probativeness. Through the explanation, it is hoped that we can understand the meaning and conditions of *hadīts* criticism as well as the significance of principles of criticism, validity, and *hadīts* probativeness.

### **The Meaning and Conditions of *Hadīts* Criticism**

A *hadīts* is a saying of Muhammad or a report about something he did. *Hadīts* also means a report about a saying (*qawl*), doing (*fi'li*), or agreement (*taqrir*) of the Prophet.<sup>7</sup> In other word, the term *hadīts* refers to reports about the statements or actions of the prophet or about his tacit approval of something said or done in his presence. *Hadīts* might be a report of what the Prophet said, did, or what he approved or disapproved of. M.M. Azami formally defines *hadīts* as follows: "According to *Muhaddithun* [scholars of *hadīts*] it stands for what was transmitted on the authority of the Prophet, his deeds, sayings, tacit approval, or description of his features, meaning his physical appearance. However, physical appearance of the Prophet is not included in the definition used by the jurists. Thus *hadīts* literature means the literature which consists of the narrations of the life of the Prophet and the things approved by him. However, the term was used sometimes in much broader sense to cover the narrations about the Companions [of the Prophet] and Successors [to the Companions] as well."<sup>8</sup>

The *hadīts* regulates the life of a Muslim. The Qur'an contains scant details of many of the duties of the Muslim, and the *hadīts* filled

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<sup>7</sup> Shalih, '*Ulūm al-Ḥadīth*, *ibid.*, hlm. 66

<sup>8</sup> M. M. Azami, "Studies in *Hadīth* Methodology and Literature." Quoted in "*Sunnah and Hadīth*," at: <http://www.usc.edu/dept/MSA>.

in the gap by providing the details. For example, the *shalat* is described in detail in the *hadīts* but not in the Qur'an. Unfortunately, over time, during the first few centuries of Islam, it became obvious that many so-called *hadīts* were in fact spurious sayings that had been fabricated for various motives, at best to encourage believers to act righteously and at worse to corrupt believers' understanding of Islam and to lead them astray.<sup>9</sup> Since Islamic legal scholars<sup>10</sup> were utilizing *hadīts* as an adjunct to the Qur'an in their development of the Islamic legal system, it became critically important to have reliable collections of *hadīts*. While the early collections of *hadīts* often contained *hadīts* that were of questionable origin, gradually collections of authenticated *hadīts* called *shahīh* were compiled.

Such collections were made possible by the development of the science of *hadīts* criticism, a science at the basis of which was a critical analysis of the chain of (oral) transmission (*al-isnad*) of the *hadīts* going all the way back to Muhammad. The two most highly respected collections of *hadīts* are the authenticated collections the *Shahīh* Bukhari and *Shahīh* Muslim.<sup>11</sup> To know the accuracy and validity of *hadīts*, it is needed to understand about the science of *hadīts* criticism which literally means 'The Science of *Hadīts* Criticique'. The word criticism derived from criticize which means: [1] to make judgments about the good and bad points of, and [2] to judge with disapproval. Therefore, a critic (*al-naqid*) is: [1] a person who gives judgments about the good and bad qualities of something, and [2] a person who dislikes and expresses strong disapproval of something or someone.<sup>12</sup> It is also a person with a disparaged character, such as due to his telling lies, excessive mistakes, opposition to the narration of more

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<sup>9</sup>Musthafā al-Siba'ī, *al-Sunnah*, 79, Shalāh al-Dīn ibn Aḥmad al-Adabi, *Manhaj Naqd al-Matn 'Ind 'Ulamā' al-Hadīts al-Nabawi* (Beirut: Dār al-Aflaq al-Jadīdah, 1983), hlm. 30; al-Khatib, *al-Sunnah*, hlm. 189, and John Burton, *An Introduction to the Hadīts* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1985), hlm. 108

<sup>10</sup>There are four Islamic legal scholars who were the founding fathers of *madzhab*, namely Abū Ḥanīfah, Mālik ibn Anas, al-Syāfi'ī, and Aḥmad ibn Hanbal. They were all utilizing *hadīts* as an adjunct to the Qur'an in their development of the Islamic legal system even though in different style and methodological concept.

<sup>11</sup> *Shahīh* literally means correct, true, valid, or sound.

<sup>12</sup>Longman, *Dictionary of Contemporary English* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988), hlm. 243

reliable sources, involvement in innovation, or ambiguity surrounding his person.

In Arabic language, criticism literally means *al-naqd* such as '*naqada al-kalam wa naqada al-shi'r*'.<sup>13</sup> In Arabic, *hadiths* criticism is known as *naqd al-hadiths*. The meaning of *naqd* or *naqada* is to research, to analyze, to check, and to differentiate.<sup>14</sup> Depends on this four meanings, *hadiths* criticism indicates quality of *hadiths* research, critical analysis of the chain of transmission (*al-isnad*) and material aspect (*al-matn*) of the *hadiths*, and differentiation between authentic (*shahih*),<sup>15</sup> weak (*da'if*)<sup>16</sup> and even false *hadiths* (*mawdu'*).<sup>17</sup>

The purpose of *hadiths* criticism is not to reject the authenticity of *hadiths* and its role in the Muslim society. This is different from the doctrine of *Inkar al-Sunnah* group who have rejected *hadiths* or *sunnah* as a source of Islamic teachings after the Qur'an. Therefore, the criticism can not reject the authentic *hadiths* to be unauthentic, as what had been done by some of Western scholars (Orientalists) such as Goldziher, Joseph Schacht, and others. The probable *hadiths* can be accommodated with the authentic one and the Qur'an by many devices: abrogation, particularization, exception, restriction, interpretation, etc. In this case, the critique of the *hadiths* or *hadiths* criticism is one thing and its rejection is something else. Ancient and

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<sup>13</sup>E.W. Lane, *Arabic English Lexicon*, vol. 8 (Edinburgh, 1967), hlm. 2836

<sup>14</sup>Hans Wehr, *A Dictionary of Modern Written Arabic* (London: George Allen & Unwin Ltd., 1970), hlm. 990

<sup>15</sup>*Shahih* or the authentic *hadiths* is a *hadiths* which has connection of the chain of transmission (*ittishal al-sanad*), each of its reporter should be trustworthy in his religion (*'adil*), he should be known to be truthful in his narrating and he understands what he narrates (*dlabit*), the *sanad* and/or the *matn* free from *'illat* or *syadh*.

<sup>16</sup>*Da'if* or weak *hadiths* is a *hadiths* which fails to reach the status of *shahih* or *hasan*. Usually, the weakness is: [a] one of discontinuity in the *isnad*, in which case the *hadiths* could be - according to the nature of the discontinuity - *munqati* (broken), *mu'allaq* (hanging), *mu'dal* (perplexing), or *mursal* (hurried), or [b] one of the reporters having a disparaged character, such as due to his telling lies, excessive mistakes, opposition to the narration of more reliable sources, involvement in innovation, or ambiguity surrounding his person.

<sup>17</sup>*Mawdu'* or fabricated/forged *hadiths* is a *hadiths* which text goes against the established norms of the Prophet's sayings, or its reporters include a liar. Fabricated *hadiths* are also recognized by external evidence related to a discrepancy found in the dates or times of a particular incident.

modern scholars criticized the *hadīts* in order to purify it from the unauthentic narratives. No one, Shi'ite or Sunnite, rejected it as a second source of law.

The critique to narrators of *hadīts* needs special treatment by which they can assume the rules that should be noticed to do. The ancient and modern *hadīts* scholars (*al-mutaqqaddimun* and *al-mutaakhirun*) had sufficiently given conditions which have to be fulfilled by narrator critics of *hadīts* (*al-jārih wa al-mu'addil*). Only ones who have fulfilled such conditions can his saying be recognized. Generally, the conditions could be classified into two groups. *Firstly*, the conditions in accordance with personal attitude, namely: [1] Should be fair in the term of *hadīts* studies or the integrity of narrators ('*adala al-ruwā*'); [2] Having no fanatic attitude to the belief acknowledged; [3] Having no prejudice and dislike performance to the different narrators in belief and school of law or theology; [4] Being honest; [5] Being afraid to God (*taqwa*); and [6] Keeping self from any unsuggested things (*wara'*). *Secondly*, the conditions in accordance with the fulfillment of knowledge, namely the width and depth of understanding in Islamic teachings, Arabic language, *hadīts* and the science of *hadīts*, the man whom he criticizes, and the customs ('*urf*') as well as the goodness and badness causes of the narrator.<sup>18</sup>

Besides the subjective conditions mentioned above, there are some critical norms which have to be followed by the critics of narrators (*nuqad al-ruwah*). Those norms had been determined by *hadīts* scholars in order to keep the objectivity of judgment and to keep honorable etics in *hadīts* critique. Clearly speaking, the critics of narrators who had fulfilled subjective conditions also should fulfill the objective norms to make their judgment accurate and valid. Those norms are:

- [1] In criticizing and scrutinizing the narrators, the critics (*al-nuqad*) not only express the negative and bad characters of

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<sup>18</sup>See: Ahmad ibn 'Alī ibn Hajar al-'Asqlani, *Nuzhah al-Nazhār Syarh Nukhbah al-Fikār* (Semarang: Maktabah al-Munawwar, 1986), hlm. 67-68, 'Alī ibn Sulthān al-Harawī al-Qari, *Syarh Nukhbah al-Fikār* (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyah, 1978), hlm. 236-238, Nur al-Dīn 'Itr, *Manhaj al-Naqd fī 'Ulūm al-Hadīth* (Damascus: Dār al-Fikr, 1979), hlm. 93-94, Muhammad 'Ajjāj al-Khatib, *Ushūl al-Hadīth 'Ulūmuh wa Mustalahuh*, (Beirut: Dār al-Fikr, 1989), hlm. 267, and Muhammad 'Abd al-Hayy al-Laknawi, *al-Raf'u wa al-Takmil fī al-Jarh wa al-Ta'dil* (Halb: Maktab al-Mathbū'ah al-Islāmiyah, 1985), hlm. 67.

them (*al-jarh*) but also the positive and honourable ones (*al-ta'dil*). This means that to make 'equilibrium' or *al-wust* of judgments, one should consider whether his narration can be accepted or not.

[2] The explanation of positive and honourable characters (*al-ta'dil*) occupied by *hadīths* critics must not be detail and specific, one by one but it can be in general and in broad spectrum. The words of the critics can be accepted with general utterances such as *siqa* (trustworthy) to denote the typeset of the '*adalah*' of narrators dealing with their personal capacity and their *dabt* aheading of intellectual quality. The term *tsiqah* indicates specific terms such as being muslim, having devotion (*taqwa*), keeping *murū'ah*, strengthening religious doctrine implementation, being accurate, et cetera.

[3] In exposing the negative characters of narrators, an excessive treatment is not allowed. The expression used should also be clear in accordance with the aspects criticized whether personal capacity, intellectual quality, or both of them.<sup>19</sup>

On the light of ethical code above, some *hadīths* scholars assumed that the critique text should imply moral norms. Al-Sakhawi (w. 902 H./1496 M.), quoted by al-Laknawi (d. 1304 H./1886 M.), said that if it is possible the negative critique (*al-jarh*) must be undertaken by using the most polite words. Al-Syāfi'ī (d. 206 H./820 M.) also suggested that the critics of narrators should widen and improve their utterance and not said 'a liar' instead of 'his *hadīths* is okey'.<sup>20</sup> Even, to the narrator who has been examined as a fabricator so his/her *hadīths* supposed as false, al-Bukhari said that he/she is just a *munkar hadīths*.<sup>21</sup> But, it does not mean that in certain condition, the fabricated *hadīths* will become *shahīh* (valid) if an ulama says that it is authentic.

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<sup>19</sup> See: Nūr al-Dīn 'Itr, *Manhāj*, hlm. 95-96, al-Khatib, *Ibid*, hlm. 266-268, Abū 'Amr 'Utmān ibn 'Abd al-Rahmān ibn al-Shalāh, '*Ulūm al-Hadīths* (al-Madīnah al-Munawwarah: al-Maktabah al-'Ilmiyah, 1972), hlm. 96-98, Tāj al-Dīn 'Abd al-Wahhab ibn 'Alī ibn al-Subki, *al-Qā'idah fi al-Jarh wa al-Ta'dil wa al-Qā'idah fi al-Mua'arrikhīn* (al-Qāhirah: Maktab al-Mathba'ah al-Islamiyah, 1984), hlm. 23, al-'Asqalani, *Ibid*, hlm. 68.

<sup>20</sup> Muḥammad 'Abd al-Hayy al-Laknawi, *al-Ajwibah al-Fādilah li al-As-ilah al-'Asharah al-Kāmilah* (Beirut: Maktabah al-Matbu'at al-Islamiyah, 1993), hlm 57

<sup>21</sup> 'Umar ibn Ḥasan 'Utmān Fallatah, *al-Wad'u fi al-Hadīth*, vol. II (Beirut: Muassasah Manāhil al-'Irfan, 1981/1401), hlm. 214

Actually, the authenticity of *hadīts* does not depend on the argumentation of *hadīts* scholars but depends on the data acquired from the past. The Scholars only had duty to analyze and give comment to the data. Therefore, the quality of a *hadīts* will be as it be unless there are some data indicates the opposite term.

### **The Principles of Criticism**

When early Muslim scholars collected the *hadīts*, they used two methods. The first method weighed authenticity by testing the chain of the story's transmitters (*al-isnad*). Scholars would analyze how far back in time it was possible to trace the transmission, and whether the transmitters were reported to be honest people, etc. The other method testing the text of *hadīts* (*al-matn*) either by checking its contents or its text. The more a content or text indicates validity, the more reliable they were considered to be. The accuracy of Muhammad's sayings was confirmed by his contemporaries -- generally his companions; i.e. his immediate followers. Some Muslims regard all of the the *hadīts* as being valid, but the other not. The last needs *hadīts* criticism.

The *hadīts* criticism can be undertaken internally, according to the same rules put forward by ancient scholars applying the rules of the *hadīts* to scrutinize the narratives of its contents. For example, the condition of the multilateral report, *mutawâtir*, is sufficient to guarantee the concordance of the report with reason and sensory evidence, called by the logic, history and science. The *hadīts* scholars could have readjusted the old rules of criticism making them more rigorous rather than rejecting the *hadīts*. No critics were more scrupulous than the ancient scholars. What they offered in criticism is much less than what the ancient scholars created in laying the ground for modern criticism.

If one tries to apply the rules of the *hadīts* whether to scrutinize the narrative or to guarantee the report with reason and sensory evidence, he will find that the science of *hadīts* has many aspects and rules which can be used as methodological approach to differ between the authentic and the forged. We can look for and then analyze the chain of narrators (*al-sanad*) as well as the contains of *hadīts* (*al-matn*) through research to the 'historical actors' who had involved in transforming *hadīts* to their next generations. We can also analyze its contents with reason and sensory evidence relating to science, logic,

the law of nature, environmental cases, and of course, moreover, the utterances of the Qur'an, the hadits it self as well as the consensus of *ulamâ'*.

The hadits scholars had been developed the basic principles of hadits critique (*dirayah al-hadits*) which can be classified into two categories: [1] the critique relating to the *isnad* system, and [2] the critique concerning with the *matn* (text) of hadits. The most prominent objects implemented in *isnad* system concerning with hadits literatures is biographical problems and the evaluation to the hadits narrators (*asmâ' al-rijâl*) that is: [1] time chronology, [2] biography, [3] evaluation to the quality and capacity of hadits narrators, [4] their rank as narrators (*al-thabaqat*), [5] the aspects of their life which could support to identify their identity, truthfulness, and validity, [6] the evidences of their narrations as well as the commentary of hadits critics,<sup>22</sup> and [7] the method in transmitting and receiving hadits (*tahammul wa ada' al-hadits*).

The evaluation of *isnad* system, its original, and its implementation to hadits, the origin and development of biographic literatures, the qualification of its narrators et cetera, become the object of hadits studies through *sanad* perspective. The hadits scholars tend to recognize the *sanad* as external parts as well as the proof of the authenticity of hadits. As a chain of narrators who connect to the text of hadits,<sup>23</sup> or the way to *matan*,<sup>24</sup> *sanad* has important role in providing the validity and authenticity of *matn* because by it the hadits historically can be provided as long as the research and evaluation done.

In general, the principles of *sanad* criticism can be explained as follows: [1] Every hadits should be able to be connected from the first to the end of *sanad* clearly identity, unquestionable character, the best

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<sup>22</sup>See Abu Hatim al-Razi, *Kitâb al-Jarh wa al-Ta'dîl* (Hyderabad: Majlis Dâirah al-Ma'ârif, 1952), al-Dhahabi, *Tadhkirah al-Huffâzh*, vol. I (Heiderabad: The Dâirat al-Ma'ârif el-Othmaniya, 1955), the same author, *Mizân al-'itidâl fi Naqd al-Rijâl*, vol. I (Beirut: Dâr al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyyah, 1995 M.), Ahmad bin Hajar al-'Asqalani, *Tahdhîb al-Tahdhîb* (Beirut: Dâr al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyyah, 1987), the same author, *Lisân al-Mizân* (Beirut: Dâr al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyyah, 1416/1996).

<sup>23</sup>Mahmud al-Tahhan, *Taysîr Mustalah al-Hadits* (Beirut: Dâr al-Qur'ân al-Karîm, 1979), hlm. 16

<sup>24</sup> al-Khatib, *Usûl al-Hadits*, hlm. 32.

intelligence quality, and highly established '*adalah* (justice); [2] Every *hadīts* which records an accident with many people should be transformed as what be from many reporters.<sup>25</sup> [3] Every *hadīts* should free from any verbatim destroys its validity whether that is '*illat*<sup>26</sup> or *shadhdh*<sup>27</sup> on it that is known through a deep research and investigation.

Basically, the object of *matn* study deals with two aspects, namely the form of *hadīts* text and its contents. The critique from the perspective of *matn* deals with text or the meaning of its contents which indicates that it doesn't involve in telling lies to the Prophet's speaking or his doing.<sup>28</sup> Despite of *sanad* criticism, the application of *matn* critique is more difficult because the *sanad* appraisal depends on the five criteria of *hadīts sahih*. Therefore, to know the validity and authenticity of the *matn* of *hadīts*, according to Ibn al-Qayyim al-Jawziyyah (d. 751./1350), one should have the following qualifications: [1] understanding the biography of the Prophet, [2] understanding the teaching of the Prophet, [3] understanding every commandment or prohibition of the Prophet, [4] understanding everything loved or hated by the Prophet, and [5] understanding every *sharia* thought by the Prophet as if he were living with him for along time like his companions.<sup>29</sup> According to M. Syuhudi Ismail, someone who wants to be a critic of *hadīts matn* ought to have the following qualifications: [1] having connoisseur in *hadīts* discipline, [2] having deep and wide knowledge about Islamic teachings, [3] having

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<sup>25</sup>Muhammad Zubayr Siddiqi, "The Sciences and Critique of Hadith", in P.K. Koya (ed.), *Hadīts and Sunnah: Ideals and Realities* (Kuala Lumpur: Islamic Book Trust, 1996 M.), hlm. 95

<sup>26</sup>'*Illat* (defective) *hadīts* is one which appears to be sound, but thorough research reveals a disparaging factor. Such factors can be: [1] declaring a *hadīts mushad* when it is in fact *mursal*, or *marfu'* when it is in fact *mawquf*; [2] showing a reporter to narrate from his *syaiikh* when in fact he did not meet the latter; or attributing a *hadīts* to one Companion when it in fact comes through another.

<sup>27</sup> A *syadhdh* (irregular) *hadīts* is one which is reported by a trustworthy person but goes against the narration of a person more reliable than him. It does not include a *hadīts* which is unique in its contents and is not narrated by someone else.

<sup>28</sup>Umar ibn *Hasan* 'Utsmân Fallatah, *al-Wad'u fī al-Hadīts*, vol I (Beirut: Muassasah Manâhil al-'Irfân, 1981 M/1401 H.), hlm. 300

<sup>29</sup>Ibn al-Qayyim al-Jawziyyah, *al-Manâr al-Munîf fī al-Shahih wa al-Da'if* (Beirut: Dâr al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyah, 1988.), hlm. 37

been undertaken a seriously and deeply analysis, [4] having clever thinking, and [5] having high tradition of knowledge capacity.<sup>30</sup>

Due to the above qualifications in addition to the knowledge of *ḥadīts matn* critique principles, a critic (*naqid al-ruwah*) can analyze the validity and accuracy of *ḥadīts* texts (*matn*). Generally speaking, according to Shalah ibn Ahmad al-Dīn al-Adabi, the principles for the criticism of the texts of the traditions are as follows: [1] The *ḥadīts* doesn't contradict with the Qur'ān, [2] It doesn't oppose to the valid *ḥadīts*, [3] It corresponds to the *shirah nabawiyyah*, [4] It doesn't disagree with the reason, [5] It doesn't contradict with the senses, [6] It doesn't oppose to the history, [7] The *ḥadīts* indicates the saying of the Prophet, [8] It does not contain some indecisive, [9] It does not enclose meaningless texts, [10] The *ḥadīts* is not more likely the words of *khalaf* scholars.<sup>31</sup>

According to Muḥammad Zubayr Shiddiqī, *ḥadīts* authenticity can be known through the application of *matn* critique standards, namely: [1] A *ḥadīts* should not contradict with other *ḥadīts* in the same case, acknowledged as an authentic by other competent narrators. It also should not be contrary to the text of the Qur'ān or the accepted basic principles of Islamic teaching [2] It doesn't oppose to the reason, law of nature, and human experiences. [3] The *ḥadīts* which explain highly and unproportionally rewards to a good doing or heavy and unproportionally punishments to an ordinary mistake also should be rejected. [4] The *ḥadīts* which contain extraordinary values of the Qur'ānic chapters should not be accepted in general. [5] The *ḥadīts* that express positiveness and greatness of certain person, tribe or place should be rejected. [6] It is also not accepted the *ḥadīts* containing prediction of any accident in the future. [7] It is also should be rejected the *ḥadīts* of Prophet expressions (speaking, doings, or agreements) that can be prohibition of his prophetic position or every expressions that are not relevant with him.<sup>32</sup>

### **Hadīts Probateness**

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<sup>30</sup>M. Syuhudi Ismail, *Metodologi Penelitian Hadis Nabi* (Jakarta: Bulan Bintang, 1992 M.), hlm. 130

<sup>31</sup>Shalāh al-Dīn ibn Ahmad al-Adabi, *Manhaj Naqd al-Matn 'Ind 'Ulamā' al-Ḥadīts al-Nabawī* (Beirut: Dār al-Aflaq al-Jadidah, 1983), hlm. 197-288

<sup>32</sup>Siddiqi, "The Sciences", hlm. 96

Through the principles of *hadīts* criticism, we can decide the validity of *hadīts* and then differ between the true (valid) and the false ones. We use a valid *hadīts* (*al-hadīts al-shahīh*) as proof for either doctrine or legal rulings. At least, we need two conditions for this: *Firstly*, establishment of the principle that the *hadīts* is one of the proofs and foundations of legislation (*tasyrī*). *Secondly*, establishment that such a *hadīts* actually issued from the Prophet -- Allāh bless and greet him -- through a reliable narrative chain. This condition does not apply to the Prophet companions who actually heard him say it. For the foundation of Islam is the Qur'an, which cannot be described as Allāh's word when one unconditionally rejects the probativeness of the *hadīts* since the fact that the Qur'an is Allāh's word was not established by other than the Prophet's -- Allāh bless and greet him -- explicit statement that this was Allāh's Word and His Book. That statement is obviously part of the *hadīts*. Therefore, to say that the *hadīts* is no proof is no different than a denial of an integral part of the Islamic religion and an attempt to undermine the basis of the religion. There are two types of *hadīts* that are the proofs and foundations of legislation (*tasyrī*). The first is the consensus transmitted from the masses to the masses. This is one of the proofs that leave no excuse for denial and there is no disagreement concerning them. Whoever rejects this consensus has rejected one of Allāh's textual stipulations and committed apostasy. The second type of *hadīts* consists in the reports of established, trustworthy lone narrators with uninterrupted chains. The congregation of the ulama have said that this second type makes practice obligatory. Some of them said that it makes both knowledge and practice obligatory. Consequently, while the *hadīts* as the proofs and foundations of Islamic legislation, every muslim should accept it and practice everything thought and no one is allowed to deny the probativeness of every valid (*shahīh*) *hadīts*, moreover the *mutawātir* ones. The probativeness of the last is the same with that of the Qur'an.

### **Conclusion**

It is obviously understood that there are some correlations between *hadīts* criticism with its validity and its probativeness. *Hadīts* criticism is usually undertaken to differentiate between the valid, the weak, and the false ones. To know the validity and accuracy of *hadīts*, one should master and involve himself in the conditions of becoming

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a good and profesional critic. So that, all of his critique argumentations will be held and used as the proof of hadīts validity. In other words, the validity and accuracy of hadīts not only depends on the hadīts itself but through historical investigation and methodological approach, the personal capacity and intelektual quality of it's narrators have signifcance role on wether its contents could be accepted or not. The porpuse of hadīts research and analitical points of view is not only to investigate and know its validity and accuracy as well as the profesionalism of the narrators, but for practical use is also to accommodate the usefullness as the second sources of Islam. In this case, it is absolutely needed to understand hadīts probativeness by searching its validity and authenticity.

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