

BETWEEN THE CRITICISM OF HADÎTS AND HADÎTS PROBATIVENESS

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Abstrak

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 Hadîts. Ia tidak semuanya ditulis pada masa Nabi. Karenanya, para *ulamâ'* berupaya mengkaji Hadîts berikut rantai transmisinya untuk menentukan validitas (*ke-shahîh-an*) sebuah Hadîts melalui kritik transmisi Hadîts. Artikel ini akan menyoroiti persoalan tersebut, sehingga akan memberikan pemahaman tentang makna dan syarat-syarat kritik Hadîts serta hubungan antara kritik Hadîts dengan validitas dan pengujiannya. Validitas Hadîts tidak hanya bergantung pada Hadîts itu sendiri, tetapi ditentukan melalui investigasi historis dan pendekatan metodologis. Dalam kaitan ini, kemampuan personal dan kualitas intelektual para perawi Hadîts memiliki peran signifikan dalam menentukan apakah sebuah Hadîts itu diterima atau tidak. Untuk itu, kritik Hadîts tidak hanya bertujuan untuk menilai dan mengetahui validitas sebuah Hadîts dan profesionalitas perawinya, tetapi juga untuk mengakomodasi kebergunaannya sebagai sumber hukum Islam kedua.

Abstract

Every Muslims believe that the Qur`an is historically authoritative as it had been gathered and written in prophetic period. It was also transmitted in *mutawâtir* method (handed down from generation to generation). Conversely, Hadîts (a collection of the traditions relating to the sayings and deeds of the Prophet Muhammad) was not completely written in prophetic period. Hence, the *ulamâ'* (Islamic scholars) are in attempts to study Hadîts and its transmission chains to decide its validity through Hadîts

transmission criticism. This article purposes on discussing this matter in order to provide a comprehension on meanings and the requirements of criticism on *Hadîts* and its relation toward its validity test. The validity of *Hadîts* depends not only on its existence but also upon historical investigation and methodological approach. Personal competence and intellectual quality of a *Hadîts* narrator take important role in deciding the acceptance of a *Hadîts*. For this reason, criticism of *Hadîts* not only aims at evaluating and identifying the validity of a *Hadîts* but also accommodates its usefulness as the secondary source of Islamic law.

Keywords

Hadîts, criticism, probativeness, validity

Preliminary

It is said in the Qur'an that Allah preserved and guarded it from any corruptions. In surat 15: 9, Allah said: *We have, without doubt, sent down the message and we will assuredly guard it (from corruption)*. The promise made by Allah 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 Muḥammad -- Allah 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 the cave of Hira located on the Mountain of Light (*Jabal al-Nûr*), which is in the outskirts of Mecca. Eventhough in accordance with its content and substance, the Qur'an is distinct from *hadîts*, which are the sayings of Muhammad and it is agreed that Muhammad -- Allah bless and greet him -- clearly distinguished between his own utterances (*hadîts*) and God's words (the Qur'an),¹ so the Qur'an is always claimed as *al-wahy al-matlu*, which is the recited revelation because its text and essences came

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

from Allah altogether² and the hadîts is claimed as *al-wahy ghayr al-matlu*, that is the unrecited revelation because its essences came from Allah and the text from the Prophet Muḥammad, 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 hadîts of the Prophet Muhammad, because the hadîts 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 hadîts 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 Muḥammad. 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 *mutawâtir*.³

On the contrary, it is not every hadîts was written during the time of Prophet Muhammad. It is a historical fact, accepted by Muslims and non-Muslims alike, that the writing of the hadîts done by Muslim is not for all. Just a few hadîts that had substantially written. The Prophet sometime ordered Muslim (namely his companions/*al-shahâbah*)⁴ to write hadîts and some of them did it to get the blessings of him. In other words, some hadîts were written down during the life of the Prophet, while others were passed on orally and collected later. Scholars study the Prophetic Traditions (hadîts) and their chains of oral transmission to determine which are valid or authoritative. No hadîts

² 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.

³ *Mutawâtir* (consecutive) is a hadîts which is reported by such a large number of people that they cannot be expected to agree upon a lie, all of them together.

⁴ The Muslims who lived at the time of the Prophet.

is held true or cited as a proof unless it can be authentically attributed to the Prophet.

This is, may be, the way Allah to preserve the *hadîts* 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 *hadîts*.⁵ But, in other time the Prophet also prohibited Muslims to write the *hadîts*. Many reasons supposed to be the hindrance of writing, such as they were fear if the *hadîts* 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 *hadîts* are authentic from the Prophet, some of them are fabricated especially since Alî Ibn Abî Thâlib period.⁶

To face such condition, as purity of knowledge of the *hadîts* 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 *ulamâ`* (scholars), the companions and those who followed their way. 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 *hadîts*. What they were doing is in accordance with the keeping of its originality through the implementation of critique of *hadîts* transmission.

The methodology of the expert scholars of *hadîts* in assessing the narrations and sorting out the genuine from the mistaken and

⁵The actual collection of *hadîts*, became a systematic science of *hadîts* 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.

⁶See Muḥammad 'Ajjâj al-Khatib, *al-Sunnah qabl al-Tadwîn* (Beirut: Dâr 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-Hadîth wa Mustalahuh* (Beirut: Dâr al-'Ilm li al-Malayin, 1988), hlm. 266, also Muḥammad Muḥammad Abu Zahw, *al-Hadîth wa al-Muhaddithûn* (Beirut: Dâr al-Kutub al-'Arabi, 1984), hlm. 114.

fabricated, for the subject matter of the science of hadits. Therefore, in this article a brief explanation is given of the significance of hadits criticism to its validity and probativeness. Through the explanation, it is hoped that we can understand the meaning and conditions of hadits criticism as well as the significance of principles of criticism, validity, and hadits probativeness.

The Meaning and Conditions of Hadits Criticism

A hadits is a saying of Muhammad or a report about something he did. Hadits also means a report about a saying (*qawl*), doing (*fi'l*), or agreement (*taqrir*) of the Prophet.⁷ In other word, the term hadits refers to reports about the statements or actions of the prophet or about his tacit approval of something said or done in his presence. Hadits might be a report of what the Prophet said, did, or what he approved or disapproved of. M.M. Azami formally defines hadits as follows: "According to *Muhadditsûn* [scholars of hadits] 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 hadits 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."⁸

The hadits regulates the life of a Muslim. The Qur'an contains scant details of many of the duties of the Muslim, and the hadits filled in the gap by providing the details. For example, the *shalat* is described in detail in the hadits but not in the Qur'an. Unfortunately, over time, during the first few centuries of Islam, it became obvious that many so-called hadits 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

⁷ Shalih, *'Ulûm al-Hadits*, hlm. 66

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

and to lead them astray.⁹ Since Islamic legal scholars¹⁰ were utilizing *ḥadīths* as an adjunct to the Qur'an in their development of the Islamic legal system, it became critically important to have reliable collections of *ḥadīths*. While the early collections of *ḥadīths* often contained *ḥadīths* that were of questionable origin, gradually collections of authenticated *ḥadīths* called *shahīh* were compiled.

Such collections were made possible by the development of the science of *ḥadīths* criticism, a science at the basis of which was a critical analysis of the chain of (oral) transmission (*al-isnad*) of the *ḥadīths* going all the way back to Muhammad. The two most highly respected collections of *ḥadīths* are the authenticated collections the *Shahīh* Bukhārī and *Shahīh* Muslim.¹¹ To know the accuracy and validity of *ḥadīths*, it is needed to understand about the science of *ḥadīths* criticism which literally means '*The Science of Ḥadīths 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.¹² It is also a person with 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.

⁹Musthafâ al-Siba'i, *al-Sunnah*, 79, Shalâh al-Dîn ibn Aḥmad al-Adabi, *Manhaj Naqd al-Matn 'Ind 'Ulamâ' al-Ḥadīths al-Nabawi* (Beirut: Dâr al-Aflaq al-Jadidah, 1983), hlm. 30; al-Khatib, *al-Sunnah*, hlm. 189, and John Burton, *An Introduction to the Hadīths* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1985), hlm. 108

¹⁰There are four Islamic legal scholars who were the founding fathers of *madzhab*, namely Abû Ḥanîfah, Mâlik ibn Anas, al-Syâfi'i, and Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal. They were all utilizing *ḥadīths* as an adjunct to the Qur'an in their development of the Islamic legal system even though in different style and methodological concept.

¹¹ *Shahīh* literally means correct, true, valid, or sound.

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

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

The purpose of hadîts criticism is not to reject the authenticity of hadîts and its role in the Muslim society. This is different from the doctrine of *Inkar al-Sunnah* group who have rejected hadîts or *sunnah* as a source of Islamic teachings after the Qur'an. Therefore, the criticism can not reject the authentic hadîts to be unauthentic, as what had been done by some of Western scholars (Orientalists) such as Goldziher, Joseph Schacht, and others. The probable hadîts 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 hadîts or hadîts criticism is one thing and its rejection is something else. Ancient and modern scholars criticized the hadîts in

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

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

¹⁵*Shahîh* or the authentic hadîts is a hadîts 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*.

¹⁶*Da'if* or weak hadîts is a hadîts which fails to reach the status of *shahîh* or *hasan*. Usually, the weakness is: [a] one of discontinuity in the *isnad*, in which case the hadîts 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.

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

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 *hadîts* needs special treatment by which they can assume the rules that should be noticed to do. The ancient and modern *hadîts* scholars (*al-mutaqqaddimun* and *al-mutaakhirun*) had sufficiently given conditions which have to be fulfilled by narrator critics of *hadîts* (*al-jârih 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 *hadîts* studies or the integrity of narrators ('*adala al-ruwâ*'); [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, *hadîts* and the science of *hadîts*, the man whom he criticizes, and the customs ('*urf*') as well as the goodness and badness causes of the narrator.¹⁸

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 *hadîts* scholars in order to keep the objectivity of judgment and to keep honorable etics in *hadîts* 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:

¹⁸See: Ahmad ibn 'Alî ibn Hajar al-'Asqlani, *Nuzhah al-Nazhâr Syarh Nukhbah al-Fikâr* (Semarang: Maktabah al-Munawwar, 1986), hlm. 67-68, 'Alî ibn Sulthân al-Harawi al-Qari, *Syarh Nukhbah al-Fikâr* (Beirut: Dâr al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyah, 1978), hlm. 236-238, Nur al-Dîn 'Itr, *Manhaj al-Naqd fî 'Ulûm al-Hadîth* (Damascus: Dâr al-Fikr, 1979), hlm. 93-94, Muhammad 'Ajjâj al-Khatîb, *Ushûl al-Hadîth 'Ulûmuh wa Mustalahuh*, (Beirut: Dâr al-Fikr, 1989), hlm. 267, and Muhammad 'Abd al-Hayy al-Laknawi, *al-Raf'u wa al-Takmil fî al-Jarh wa al-Ta'dîl* (Halb: Maktab al-Mathbû'ah al-Islâmiyah, 1985), hlm. 67.

- [1] In criticizing and scrutinizing the narrators, the critics (*al-nuqad*) not only express the negative and bad characters of 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 *hadīts* 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 *muru'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.¹⁹

On the light of ethical code above, some *hadīts* 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-Syâfi'î (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 *hadīts* is okay'.²⁰ Even, to the narrator who has been examined as a fabricator so his/her *hadīts*

¹⁹ See: Nūr al-Dīn 'Itr, *Manhâj*, hlm. 95-96, al-Khatib, *Ibid*, hlm. 266-268, Abū 'Amr 'Utmân ibn 'Abd al-Rahmân ibn al-Shalâh, *'Ulûm al-Hadīts* (al-Madīnah al-Munawwarah: al-Maktabah al-'Ilmiyah, 1972), hlm. 96-98, Tâj al-Dīn 'Abd al-Wahhab ibn 'Alī ibn al-Subki, *al-Qâ'idah fī al-Jarh wa al-Ta'dil wa al-Qâ'idah fī al-Mua'arrikhîn* (al-Qâhirah: Maktab al-Mathba'ah al-Islamiyah, 1984), hlm. 23, al-'Asqalani, *Ibid*, hlm. 68.

²⁰ Muhammad 'Abd al-Hayy al-Laknawi, *al-Ajwibah al-Fâdilah li al-As-ilah al-'Asharah al-Kâmilah* (Beirut: Maktabah al-Matbu'at al-Islamiyah, 1993), hlm 57

supposed as false, al-Bukhari said that he/she is just a *munkar hadîts*.²¹ But, it does not mean that in certain condition, the fabricated *hadîts* will become *shahîh* (valid) if an ulama says that it is authentic. Actually, the authenticity of *hadîts* does not depend on the argumentation of *hadîts* 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 *hadîts* will be as it be unless there are some data indicates the opposite term.

The Principles of Criticism

When early Muslim scholars collected the *hadîts*, 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 *hadîts* (*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 *hadîts* as being valid, but the other not. The last needs *hadîts* criticism.

The *hadîts* criticism can be undertaken internally, according to the same rules put forward by ancient scholars applying the rules of the *hadîts* 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 *hadîts* scholars could have readjusted the old rules of criticism making them more rigorous rather than rejecting the *hadîts*. 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 *hadîts* whether to scrutinize the narrative or to guarantee the report with reason and sensory evidence, he will find that the science of *hadîts* has many aspects and

²¹Umar ibn Hasan 'Utsmân Fallatah, *al-Wad'u fi al-Hadîth*, vol. II (Beirut: Muassasah Manâhil al-'Irfan, 1981/1401), hlm. 214

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 contents of hadîts (*al-matn*) through research to the 'historical actors' who had involved in transforming hadîts 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 hadîts it self as well as the consensus of *ulamâ'*.

The hadîts scholars had been developed the basic principles of hadîts critique (*dirayah al-hadîts*) 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 hadîts. The most prominent objects implemented in *isnad* system concerning with hadîts literatures is biographical problems and the evaluation to the hadîts narrators (*asmâ' al-rijâl*) that is: [1] time chronology, [2] biography, [3] evaluation to the quality and capacity of hadîts 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 hadîts critics,²² and [7] the method in transmitting and receiving hadîts (*tahammul wa ada' al-hadîts*).

The evaluation of *isnad* system, its original, and its implementation to hadîts, the origin and development of biographic literatures, the qualification of its narrators et cetera, become the object of hadîts studies through *sanad* perspective. The hadîts scholars tend to recognize the *sanad* as external parts as well as the proof of the authenticity of hadîts. As a chain of narrators who connect to the text of hadîts,²³ or the way to *matan*,²⁴ *sanad* has important role in

²²See 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 fî 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-'Ilmiyah, 1416/1996).

²³Mahmud al-Tahhan, *Taysîr Mustalah al-Hadîts* (Beirut: Dâr al-Qur'ân al-Karîm, 1979), hlm. 16

providing the validity and authenticity of *matn* because by it the *hadîts* 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 *hadîts* should be able to be connected from the first to the end of *sanad* clearly identity, unquestionable character, the best intelligence quality, and highly established '*adalah* (justice); [2] Every *hadîts* which records an accident with many people should be transformed as what be from many reporters.²⁵ [3] Every *hadîts* should free from any verbatim destroys its validity whether that is '*illat*²⁶ or *shadhah*²⁷ 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 *hadîts* text and its contents. The critique from the perspective of *matn* deals with text or the meaning of its contains which indicates that it doesn't involve in telling lies to the Prophet's speaking or his doing.²⁸ Despite of *sanad* criticism, the application of *matn* critique is more difficult because the *sanad* appraisal depends on the five criteria of *hadîts sahih*. Therefore, to know the validity and authenticity of the *matn* of *hadîts*, according to Ibn al-Qayyim al-Jawziyyah (d. 751./1350), one should have the following qualifications: [1] understanding the biography of the Prophet, [2]

²⁴ al-Khatib, *Usûl al-Hadîts*, hlm. 32.

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

²⁶ *Illat* (defective) *hadîts* is one which appears to be sound, but thorough research reveals a disparaging factor. Such factors can be: [1] declaring a *hadîts musnad* 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 *hadîts* to one Companion when it in fact comes through another.

²⁷ A *syadhah* (irregular) *hadîts* 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 *hadîts* which is unique in its contents and is not narrated by someone else.

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

under-standing 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.²⁹ According to M. Syuhudi Ismail, someone who wants to be a critic of *hadîts matn* ought to have the following qualifications: [1] having connoisseur in *hadîts* discipline, [2] having deep and wide knowledge about Islamic teachings, [3] having been undertaken a seriously and deeply analysis, [4] having clever thinking, and [5] having high tradition of knowledge capacity.³⁰

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

According to Muhammad Zubayr Shiddiqî, *hadîts* authenticity can be known through the application of *matn* critique standards, namely: [1] A *hadîts* should not contradict with other *hadîts* in the same case, acknowledged as an authentic by other competent narrators. It also should not be contrary to the text of the Qur'an or the accepted basic principles of Islamic teaching [2] It doesn't oppose to the reason, law of nature, and human experiences. [3] The *hadîts* which explain highly and unproportionally rewards to a good doing or heavy and unproportionally punishments to an ordinary mistake also should be

²⁹Ibn al-Qayyim al-Jawziyah, *al-Manâr al-Munîf fi al-Shahîh wa al-Da'îf* (Beirut: Dâr al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyah, 1988.), hlm. 37

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

³¹Shalâh al-Dîn ibn Ahmad al-Adabi, *Manhaj Naqd al-Matn 'Ind 'Ulamâ' al-Hadîts al-Nabawî* (Beirut: Dâr al-Aflaq al-Jadidah, 1983), hlm. 197-288

rejected. [4] The *ḥadīths* which contain extraordinary values of the Qur'anic chapters should not be accepted in general. [5] The *ḥadīths* that express positiveness and greatness of certain person, tribe or place should be rejected. [6] It is also not accepted the *ḥadīths* containing prediction of any accident in the future. [7] It is also should be rejected the *ḥadīths* of Prophet expressions (speaking, doings, or agreements) that can be prohibition of his prophetic position or every expressions that are not relevant with him.³²

Hadīths Probativeness

Through the principles of *ḥadīths* criticism, we can decide the validity of *ḥadīths* and then differ between the true (valid) and the false ones. We use a valid *ḥadīth* (*al-ḥadīth 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 *ḥadīth* is one of the proofs and foundations of legislation (*tasyrī*). *Secondly*, establishment that such a *ḥadīth* actually issued from the Prophet -- Allah 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'ān, which cannot be described as Allah's word when one unconditionally rejects the probativeness of the *ḥadīths* since the fact that the Qur'an is Allah's word was not established by other than the Prophet's -- Allah bless and greet him -- explicit statement that this was Allah's Word and His Book. That statement is obviously part of the *ḥadīths*. Therefore, to say that the *ḥadīth* 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 *ḥadīths* 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 Allah's textual stipulations and committed apostasy. The second type of *ḥadīths* 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

³² Siddiqi, "The Sciences", hlm. 96

and practice obligatory. Consequently, while the hadîts as the proofs and foundations of Islamic legislation, every muslim should except it and practice everything thought and no one is allowed to deny the probativeness of every valid (*shahîh*) hadîts, moreover the *mutawâtir* ones. The probativeness of the last is the same with that of the Qur'an.

Conclusion

It is obviously understood that there are some corelations between hadîts criticism with its validity and its probativeness. Hadîts criticism is usually undertaken to differenciate between the valid, the weak, and the false ones. To know the validity and accuracy of hadîts, one should master and involve himself in the conditions of becoming a good and profesional critic. So that, all of his critique argumentations will be held and used as the proof of hadîts validity. In other words, the validity and accuracy of hadîts not only depends on the hadîts itself but through historical investigation and methodological approach, the personal capacity and intelectual quality of it's narrators have significance role on wether its contents could be accepted or not. The porpuse of hadîts research and analitical points of view is not only to investigate and know its validity and accuracy as well as the professionalism 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 hadîts probativeness by searching its validity and authenticity.

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