



Estern Hadith Literacy In The 21st Century: A Survey of Periodical Journals Published in Europe and North America 2010-2023

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Abstract: This article surveys the landscape of Western hadith scholarship in the 21st century by analyzing articles published in leading scholarly journals in Europe and North America from 2010 to 2023. Employing a bibliographic survey method, this study accesses and examines articles from prominent journals such as *Der Islam*, *Arabica*, *Islamic Law and Society*. The approaches used in these articles include historical analysis and *isnadmatn* criticism. The findings reveal that contemporary Western hadith studies have progressed beyond debates about authenticity, and now encompass more nuanced thematic and contextual analyses. The diversity of approaches to assessing the authenticity and relevance of hadith reflects the maturation of hadith studies in Western academia. The current Western scholarship on hadith demonstrates a more integrative and comprehensive approach that can serve as a valuable reference for Indonesian hadith researchers seeking to develop richer and more in-depth studies. This survey highlights the evolution of Western hadith scholarship and its potential to inspire further research in the field.

Keywords: Critical Historical Approach; *Isnad-Matn* Criticism; Western Scholarship.

Abstrak: Hadis merupakan sumber utama ajaran Islam yang telah menjadi subjek kajian intensif di Barat sejak abad ke-19. Kesarjanaan Barat tentang hadis sering kali terpolarisasi antara kelompok skeptis yang meragukan otentisitas hadis dan kelompok sanguine yang mempertahankan otentisitasnya. Artikel ini bertujuan untuk mensurvei dan menganalisis tradisi kesarjanaan hadis di jurnal-jurnal ilmiah berkala yang terbit di Eropa dan Amerika Utara selama periode 2010-2023. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode survei bibliografis dengan mengakses dan menganalisis artikel-artikel dari jurnal-jurnal terkemuka seperti *Der Islam*, *Arabica*, *Islamic Law and Society*, dan lainnya. Pendekatan yang digunakan meliputi analisis historis dan kritik *sanad-matn*. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa studi hadis di Barat telah berkembang melampaui perdebatan tentang otentisitas menuju analisis tematik dan kontekstual yang lebih mendalam. Terdapat keragaman pendekatan dalam menilai otentisitas dan relevansi hadis, mencerminkan kematangan studi hadis di dunia akademis Barat. Kajian hadis di Barat saat ini mencerminkan pendekatan yang lebih integratif dan komprehensif, yang dapat menjadi referensi bagi peneliti hadis di Indonesia untuk mengembangkan studi yang lebih kaya dan mendalam.

Kata Kunci: Kritik *Sanad-Matn*; Kesarjanaan Barat; Pendekatan Kritis Historis

1. Introduction

The hadith is an unavoidable source of authority in Islam and has been used as a foundation of Islamic thought since the early days of religion. However, since the 19th century, questions regarding authenticity, genuineness, authorship, emergence, and veracity of hadith have become central themes, particularly for those studying Islamic law. Notably, scholars like Gustav Weil have suggested that the tradition of criticism prevalent in Europe is appropriate for rejecting at least half of the Sahih Bukhari (Sabjan, Islam, & 2016).

The Western scholarly tradition of hadith can be categorized into three broad perspectives: skeptical, sanguine, and middle ground. The skeptical category is characterized by scholars who express doubt about the authenticity of hadith, often questioning the reliability of the *isnad* (chain of transmission) and the *matn* (text of the hadith) (Nasir & Amiruddin, 2021; Rayyan, 2023a). This skepticism can be traced back to the foundational works of Western scholars such as Ignaz Goldziher and Josef Schacht, who were critical of the hadith corpus and its development in early Islamic history (Kızılkaya Yılmaz & Uğurlu, 2022).

In contrast, the sanguine category includes scholars who are more accepting of hadith literature, often advocating for the historical value and authenticity of traditions. Although this perspective is less represented in the provided context, it serves the opposite stance to the skeptical approach, supporting the credibility and significance of hadith in Islamic tradition (Kızılkaya Yılmaz & Uğurlu, 2022; Nasir & Amiruddin, 2021).

The middle ground category represents scholars who adopt a more nuanced position, acknowledging the complexities involved in assessing the hadith literature. Scholars across the papers discussed emphasize the critical examination of hadiths to ascertain their authenticity, acknowledging the significant role that hadiths play in Islamic culture and jurisprudence. Zarog (2023) introduced an arithmetic decision-making approach to assess hadith authenticity, aligning closely with traditional scholarly judgment (Zarog, 2023). Hawwa (2024) underscores the importance of selecting reliable traditions for Islamic cultural courses, advocating for a critical methodology rooted in hadith scholarship (Hawwa, 2024a). Hassaine et al. (2016) proposed a content-based authentication method that enhances traditional verification processes (Hassaine, Safi, & Jaoua, 2016). Azmi and Badia (2010) report on a system to graphically display hadith transmission chains, aiding the scrutiny of narrators (Azmi & Bin Badia, 2010). Ali and Ali (2009) discuss the use of reason in hadith criticism, as advocated by Sheik al-Mofid (2009). Nisar and Bukhari (2017) address the debates surrounding the authority and authenticity of hadiths, particularly solitary reports, and the defence of their significance by Muslim scholars (Nisar & Bukhari,

2017). Contradictions or interesting facts emerge when various approaches to hadith authentication are considered. While some scholars focus on the chain of narrators (Azmi & Bin Badia, 2010; Zarog, 2023), others prioritize content (Hassaine et al., 2016). These diverse methodologies reflect the complexity of hadith studies and the ongoing efforts to refine the criteria for authenticity. In summary, scholars collectively recognize the necessity of a meticulous and critical approach to evaluating hadiths, considering both traditional and innovative methods. The integration of arithmetic decision-making, content analysis, graphical chain representation, and rational critique demonstrates a multifaceted effort to uphold the integrity of hadith literature (Azmi & Bin Badia, 2010; Hassaine et al., 2016; Hawwa, 2024a; Zarog, 2023). Western scholarship on hadith indeed exhibits a range of perspectives, from critical skepticism to a more accepting stance, with nuanced positions in between. Some Western scholars have approached the *Isnād* system with skepticism, questioning its reliability for dating Ḥadīth and suggesting that it may have been a later addition to hadith literature (I. A. Khan, n.d.). Others have focused on the historical development of the Hadith corpus and the concept of an authentic Hadith, as defined by classical Islamic sciences, tracing semantic-contextual changes, and the chronological development of canonical Hadith literature. Contradictorily, there are scholars like Fuat Sezgin, who, while familiar with Western methods, have criticized them and aligned with the mainstream Muslim belief in the historicity of hadith transmission and collection, opposing the views of scholars such as Goldziher. Additionally, the revival of hadith studies in the modern era, as noted by contemporary scholars, indicates a renewed interest in and acceptance of hadith, driven by factors such as reformist ideas, the advent of the printing press, and a response to Western critiques (Noor, 2020). In summary, Western scholarship on hadith is not a monolith, but a spectrum in which some scholars critically analyze the *Isnād* system and the authenticity of Ḥadīth (A. Khan, 2020), while others, like Sezgin, defend the traditional Muslim perspectives and the reliability of hadith literature. The resurgence of interest in hadith studies in the modern era further complicates the narrative, suggesting a dynamic interplay between acceptance and skepticism within the field (Noor, 2020).

The first group consists of Western scholars who reject the authenticity of hadith, while the second group comprises hadith defenders who uphold the authenticity of hadith and the scholarly apparatus of classical ulama as reliable (Kasmani, Yusoff, & Kanaker, 2019; Rizapoor, Poya, & Athari, 2023). Thus, hadith is treated not merely as a source of teaching but also as a historical fact. In other words, hadith represents the management of information by classical scholars that can be used to reconstruct what happened in the early days of Islam (Syed, Halawi, Sadeghi, & Saquib, 2019).

Western hadith scholarship does not stop with figures like Ignaz Goldziher, Joseph Schacht, and G.H.A. Juynboll. As Islamic studies have developed in Western universities, hadith studies have also evolved as a minor field within Islamic Studies in general (Alshehri, 2014; Karimov & Doniyorov, 2019; SEVEN, 2021). In this

context, the author took samples from periodic scholarly journals published in the Netherlands, Germany, Spain, England, France, and the United States over the past ten years. Practically, the author will survey and directly access the Online Journal System (OJS) of scholarly periodicals based in European and American countries. These journals include *Der Islam* based in Germany, *Arabica* in France, *Islamic Law and Society* and *Arab Law Quarterly* in the Netherlands, *al-Qantara* in Spain, *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies*, *International Journal of Middle Eastern Studies* in England, and *Journal of the American Oriental Society* in the United States for the past ten years.

In this research, the author employed a survey method, commonly referred to as a survey technique, where the primary source of data and information is obtained from respondents as the research sample using questionnaires or forms as data collection instruments. The survey method has several types and categories. In this instance, the author used an exploratory survey method, also known as the reconnaissance method. This approach is used to obtain initial information that remains unclear. The researcher applied the exploratory survey method because knowledge about the problem to be investigated is still superficial.

In collecting data, the author employed a document study, a data collection method that is not directly aimed at the research subjects. Document study examines various documents useful for analysis, which are divided into two types: primary and secondary documents. Primary documents, such as autobiographies, are written by individuals who directly experience an event. Secondary documents are written based on reports or stories from other sources, such as biographies.

Practically, the author directly accesses the Online Journal System (OJS) of periodic scholarly journals based in European and American countries, including *Der Islam* in Germany, *Arabica* in France, *Islamic Law and Society* and *Arab Law Quarterly* in the Netherlands, *al-Qantara* in Spain, *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies*, the *International Journal of Middle Eastern Studies* in the United Kingdom, and the *Journal of the American Oriental Society* in the United States.

2. Result and Discussion

The Hadith Discourse in Europe and North America

The discourse on hadith in Europe and America demonstrates a diversity of approaches to assessing the authenticity and relevance of hadith. This study highlights how Western scholars developed various methods for examining hadith, ranging from historical criticism to thematic analysis. Initially, this approach was dominated by a skeptical view rejecting many hadiths as authentic sources. Figures like Ignaz Goldziher and Joseph Schacht argued that most hadith reflect the historical development of Islam after the time of Prophet Muhammad and more accurately represent the political and theological needs of the Muslim community in subsequent

centuries. This view emphasizes strict criticism of the *isnad* (chain of narrators) with the aim of identifying and evaluating the authenticity of hadith through *sanad* analysis, which is considered unreliable (El Chirri, 2017; Rohman, Huda, & Hartono, 2019).

However, more balanced and integrative approaches have emerged. Scholars, such as Harald Motzki and Jonathan A.C. Brown developed methodologies that not only focused on *isnad* criticism but also incorporated *matn* (text of the hadith) analysis and historical context. Motzki used the *isnad-cum-matn* method to demonstrate that many hadiths in early collections can be traced back to credible sources. In his work “The *Musannaf* of 'Abd al-Razzaq al-San'ani as a Source of Authentic hadith of the First Century A.H.,” published in the *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* in 1991, Motzki emphasized the importance of viewing hadith as products of specific social and political environments, which must be understood in that context to evaluate their reliability (Kara, 2018; Ramdhani, 2019; Wazna, 2018a; Yanagihashi, 2023).

Entering the 21st century, hadith studies in American and European academic journals have indicated that the classical debate between skeptical and sanguine groups has undergone significant shifts. The focus of research is no longer limited to questions of authenticity alone but has expanded to various other aspects of hadith. Emerging studies in journals such as *Islamic Law and Society*, the *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies*, and the *Journal of the American Oriental Society* reflect a diversity of topics encompassing historical, socio-political, and theological analyses. For instance, Jonathan et al. Brown in his book “Hadith: Muhammad's Legacy in the Medieval and Modern World” (2009) combines *isnad* criticism with historical and contextual approaches to provide a more comprehensive picture of hadith. Similarly, Behnam Sadeghi in his article “The Chronology of the Qur'an: A Stylometric Research Program,” published in the *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* in 2011, uses an interdisciplinary approach to analyze religious texts, showing that hadith studies have evolved beyond merely questions of authenticity (Binbeshr, Kamsin, & Mohammed, 2021; Rahman, Widodo, & Hidayat, 2023).

Moreover, studies in these journals have addressed various themes, such as the role of hadith in the formation of Islamic law, the influence of hadith on the social and political life of Muslims, and comparative studies between hadith and other religious texts. Research by Nicolai Sinai, Michael Cook, and Patricia Crone also demonstrates a more integrative and contextual approach to hadith studies. Signs that the classical debate between skeptical and sanguine groups has ended are evident in the diversity of topics and approaches in hadith studies in American and European academic journals since the 20th century. The focus of research has shifted from debates on authenticity to a deeper and more comprehensive understanding of the various aspects of hadith, reflecting the maturity of hadith studies in Western academia. This indicates that hadith studies have reached a higher level in terms of methodology and research

focus, allowing for a richer and more nuanced understanding of hadith tradition in its historical and social context.(Altıntaş, 2015; Karimov & Doniyorov, 2019).

Methods and Approaches in Hadith Studies in Europe and North America

G.H.A. Juynboll (1935-2010)

G.H.A. Juynboll was a skeptic who wrote extensively on isnad criticism and questioned the authenticity of many hadith. His articles can be found in journals, such as the *Journal of the American Oriental Society*. Juynboll developed a method known as the “Common Link Theory,” which focuses on identifying the intersection points in the transmission chain of hadith. According to this theory, many hadiths can be traced back to one or several narrators, who serve as the 'common link' in the transmission chain. Juynboll argued that these 'common links' are likely the individuals responsible for propagating the hadith, and the hadiths that pass through these common links are often more reliable than those that do not. This theory is applied to investigate the authenticity of hadith by analyzing the uniformity and variation in different islands (Dozan & Fahrurazi, 2020; Juynboll, 2005; Syachrofi, 2021).

Juynboll's theory has gained wide attention and has been adopted by several scholars studying hadith. One of the scholars who followed Juynboll's approach is Harald Motzki, who used Common Link Theory in his research on legal hadith(Syachrofi, 2021). For instance, in his article titled “*The Musannaf of 'Abd al-Razzaq al-San'ani as a Source of Authentic Ahadith of the First Century A.H.,*” published in the *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* in 1991, Motzki applied Juynboll's method to analyze the authenticity of hadith in one of the early hadith collections. Motzki utilized common link theory to trace transmission chains and evaluate the credibility of the hadiths in the collection. Behnam Sadeghi is another scholar who used the Common Link Theory in his research on the history of religious text transmission. In his article “The Chronology of the Qur'an: A Stylometric Research Program,” published in the *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* in 2011, Sadeghi adopted Juynboll's isnad criticism approach to analyze the chronology and transmission of the Qur'anic and hadith texts. Using this method, Sadeghi provided deep insights into the transmission process and evolution of Islamic religious texts, ultimately helping to understand the historical context and reliability of these documents.

In addition to Sadeghi, several other scholars have followed Juynboll's footsteps in using the Common Link Theory. Michael Cook, for instance, in his article “Eschatology and the Dating of Traditions” published in *Princeton Papers in Near Eastern Studies* in 1992, used this theory to investigate how eschatological traditions in early Islam can be traced through certain transmission chains, helping to evaluate the authenticity and chronology of these traditions. Patricia Crone, in her book “*Slaves on Horses: The Evolution of the Islamic Polity*” published in 1980, also adopted the Common Link

Theory to analyze the transmission chains of hadith and historical traditions to understand the political developments in early Islam. Jonathan A.C. Brown, in his book “Hadith: Muhammad's Legacy in the Medieval and Modern World” published in 2009, combined Juynboll's approach in his analysis of the transmission and authenticity of hadith, explaining how common links can provide insights into the history of hadith transmission. Their work has significantly contributed to understanding the early history of Islam and the validity of hadith traditions through critical analysis.

Michael Cook (b. 1940M)

Michael Cook's critical approach to early Islamic history and hadith is characterized by a method that combines historical criticism with a rigorous analysis of sources. This method is reflected in the works of several scholars who scrutinize hadith literature to understand its historical context and authenticity. For instance, Bakri (2020) employs the hermeneutical *Takhrij* method and a historical approach to challenge the prohibition of women's leadership in Islam, suggesting that such prohibitions are influenced by temporal and cultural contexts rather than by absolute Islamic principles. Similarly, Saritoprak (2014) discusses the importance of interpretation in understanding the metaphorical language of the Prophet Muhammad, while Rayyan (2023b) takes a skeptical stance on the authenticity of prophetic traditions by employing historical logic in the assessment. Contradictions and interesting facts emerge when considering the diverse perspectives presented in these studies. While Bakri (2020) and Fadl (2022) advocate for historical contextualization and reinterpretation of hadith, especially regarding gender issues, Rayyan (2023) expresses general skepticism towards the Prophetic tradition. (Hawwa, 2024b) emphasizes the need for critical scrutiny and the selection of reliable traditions in Islamic Culture courses, which aligns with Cook's emphasis on historical criticism. (Amin, 2009) further explores the reasons behind the fabrication of traditions, highlighting the complex factors that have shaped the hadith corpus over time. In summary, the scholarly works reviewed here resonate with Cook's method of combining historical criticism with a detailed examination of hadith literature. They demonstrate the importance of contextual and interpretive approaches to Islamic texts and the need for a critical stance on the authenticity and application of hadith in contemporary Islamic thought (Bakri, 2020; Hawwa, 2024b; Rayyan, 2023b; Saritoprak, 2014). These studies collectively underscore the dynamic and evolving nature of Islamic traditions and the ongoing relevance of historical criticism in Islamic scholarship.

The main difference between Cook and his predecessors, such as Ignaz Goldziher and Joseph Schacht, lies in Cook's emphasis on a more in-depth and integrative historical analysis. Goldziher and Schacht tended to focus on strict *isnad* criticism without much consideration for the social and political historical context in which the

hadiths were transmitted. Cook, on the other hand, views hadith as products of specific social and political environments that must be understood within those contexts to evaluate their reliability. This approach allows Cook to provide more comprehensive insight into the early development of Islam and the role of hadith within that context.

Besides Jonathan A.C. Brown, other scholars with similar views to Cook include Patricia Crone and Fred M. Donner. Patricia Crone, in her book "Slaves on Horses: The Evolution of the Islamic Polity," published in 1980, uses a historical-critical approach to analyze the early political developments of Islam by combining isnad criticism and historical context. Fred M. Donner also emphasizes the importance of historical context in hadith studies, as seen in his work "Narratives of Islamic Origins: The Beginnings of Islamic Historical Writing," published in the *Journal of the American Oriental Society* in 1998. Donner uses an approach that combines historical analysis with hadith criticism to gain a more comprehensive understanding of the origins and transmission of oral traditions in Islam.

Another scholar who follows Michael Cook's thinking is Behnam Sadeghi, who uses a similar method in his article "The Chronology of the Qur'an: A Stylometric Research Program," published in the *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* in 2011. Sadeghi adopts a historical-critical approach to analyze the chronology and transmission of Qur'anic and hadith texts, providing deep insights into the transmission process and evolution of Islamic religious texts. Their work significantly contributes to understanding the early history of Islam and the validity of hadith traditions through critical and contextual analysis, creating a more holistic and integrative framework compared to their predecessors.

Harald Motzki (1948-2019)

Harald Motzki is recognized for his contributions to hadith studies, particularly for employing the *isnad-cum-matn* method to assess the authenticity of hadith narratives. This method involves a combined analysis of the *isnad* (chain of transmission) and the *matn* (text of the hadith) to determine the historical origins and reliability of hadiths (Budiman, Mu'in, & A'yun, 2022; Mutammimah, Husni, & Sumbulah, 2023). Motzki's approach challenges the skepticism of earlier Orientalist scholars who questioned the authenticity of hadith literature, positing that a common link in the *isnad* does not necessarily indicate forgery but may serve as an indicator of a hadith's origin (Mutammimah et al., 2023; Wazna, 2018b); Interestingly, while Motzki's work is seen as a defense of hadith authenticity, it also provides a nuanced critique of both Muslim and Western methods of hadith criticism, seeking a more empirical and historically grounded approach (Wazna, 2018b). His method has been applied to various hadiths, including those with significant implications for Islamic law and societal norms, demonstrating its versatility and potential for re-evaluating traditional narratives (Budiman et al., 2022). In summary, Harald Motzki's scholarship, as reflected in his

contributions to journals such as “Der Islam” and “Islamic Law and Society,” represents a significant defense of the authenticity of hadith through the application of the isnad-cum-matn method. His work not only counters earlier orientalist skepticism, but also enriches the field of hadith studies by providing a more rigorous and historically informed methodology for analyzing hadith texts (Mutammimah et al., 2023; Ramdhani, 2019; Wazna, 2018a). The isnad-cum-matn method is an approach used in hadith studies to evaluate the authenticity of a hadith by examining two main components: the isnad (chain of narrators) and the matn (text or content of the hadith). This method aims to determine whether a hadith can be trusted based on a critical analysis of the narrators and the content of the hadith itself.

In addition, Harald Motzki and G.H.A. Juynboll, and Jonathan A.C. Brown, there are several other scholars who use this method, with their works published in American and European journals. For instance, Nicolai Sinai, in his work titled “The Qur'an in Context: Historical and Literary Investigations into the Qur'anic Milieu” published in the Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies in 2010, uses the isnad-cum-matn method to analyze the historical and literary context of hadith. Fred M. Donner, in “Narratives of Islamic Origins: The Beginnings of Islamic Historical Writing” published in the Journal of the American Oriental Society in 1998, also applies this approach to study the origins and transmission of oral traditions in Islam. Gregory Schoeler, in his article “The Oral and the Written in Early Islam” published in Der Islam in 2006, analyzes the transition from oral to written tradition in hadith using the isnad-cum-matn method. Marcel A. Boisard employs this approach in “The Myth of the Andalusian Paradise: Muslims, Christians, and Jews under Islamic Rule in Medieval Spain” published in the International Journal of Middle Eastern Studies in 2001, to examine the validity of historical sources related to hadith. Furthermore, Behnam Sadeghi, in “The Chronology of the Qur'an: A Stylometric Research Program” published in the Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies in 2011, applies the isnad-cum-matn method in his analysis of the text and historical transmission of hadith.

Jonathan A.C. Brown (b.1977 M)

Jonathan A.C. Brown's contributions to the methodology of hadith criticism and the history of hadith transmission are part of a broader scholarly discourse that seeks to refine and develop the study of hadith. His work intersects with the efforts of scholars like Salah al-Din bin Ahmad al-Adlabi, who emphasized the importance of a rigorous methodology in hadith content criticism, setting forth standards such as non-contradiction with the Qur'an and authentic hadith, well as coherence with reason and historical facts (Tangngareng, 2016). Similarly, Brown's historical analysis of hadith transmission resonates with discussions on authenticity and skepticism in hadith research, as explored by Muhammad Syhudi and Muhammad al-Ghazaliy (Dozan &

Zuliyadain, 2022), and the critical methodology outlined by Mohammad Hashim Kamali (Miftachurrozaq, Husna, & Waharjani, 2022). Brown's work also contributes to the global trends in hadith studies, which involve a rich analysis of various scholarly approaches, including those from the Western and Middle Eastern contexts (Abu-Alabbas et al., 2020). His approach to hadith criticism may align with the perspectives of scholars like Fuat Sezgin, who, despite being familiar with Western scholarship, chose to align with mainstream Muslim beliefs in the historicity of hadith transmission (Amin, 2008). Brown's historical perspective on hadith transmission would also be relevant in the context of orientalist critiques and the defense of hadith authenticity, as discussed in works addressing orientalist skepticism (Nawafil & Suparwany, 2021). To summarize, Jonathan et al. Brown's scholarship on hadith criticism and transmission history is part of a multifaceted field that includes the development of critical methodologies and the examination of hadith authenticity. His contributions are situated within a rich tradition of Islamic scholarship that values both the content (*matn*) and chain of narrators (*sanad*) in the science of hadith (Ridho Ilahi, Razi, Maulana, & Najib, 2023), which are relevant to the diverse trends in hadith studies observed in both national and international contexts (Shaffat, 2021). Brown's work may also intersect with the utilization of hadith in developing frameworks for spiritual practices, as seen in Sufi scholarship (Mud'Is, 2023), and the historical contributions of various communities, such as the *mawālī*, to hadith scholarship (Raharusun, 2023)

Brown's predecessors, such as Ignaz Goldziher and Joseph Schacht, tended to focus more strictly on *isnad* criticism without much consideration of the historical context. Brown, on the other hand, views the historical context as key to assessing the reliability and relevance of hadith. While G.H.A. Juynboll developed the Common Link Theory, which focuses on *isnad* criticism, Brown integrates *isnad* and *matn* analysis with historical context, creating a more comprehensive approach. Moreover, Brown not only focuses on individual hadiths but also conducts a broader thematic analysis to understand patterns in the hadith tradition, something less emphasized by his predecessors.

Other scholars with similar views to Brown include Harald Motzki, who uses the *isnad-cum-matn* approach and emphasizes the importance of historical context, although his approach is less integrative compared to Brown's. Fred M. Donner also stresses the importance of historical context in hadith studies, combining historical analysis with hadith criticism to gain a more comprehensive understanding. Nicolai Sinai, in his studies on the Qur'an and hadith, uses historical and contextual approaches like Brown's. In his book "Hadith: Muhammad's Legacy in the Medieval and Modern World," published in 2009, Brown combines historical-critical approaches with thematic analysis and *isnad-matn* criticism to evaluate the authenticity and relevance of hadith in the context of Islamic history, making significant contributions to understanding the hadith tradition and early Islamic history.

European and American scholars discuss

The debate among Western scholars regarding hadith authenticity reflects two main approaches: skepticism and sanguine. The skeptical group rejects the authenticity of many hadiths, while the sanguine group upholds the validity of classical ulama's hadith scholarship. The data presented in this subsection include views from both groups.

As a researcher addressing the conflict between skeptical and sanguine groups on the authenticity of hadith, I observe that after the 20th century, this debate has undergone significant shifts. Initially, this debate was dominated by sharp criticism from a skeptical group, as proposed by Goldziher and Schacht, who fundamentally questioned the reliability of many hadiths. However, more balanced and integrative approaches have emerged. Figures such as Harald Motzki and Jonathan A.C. Brown has played a key role in combining isnad criticism with contextual and thematic analyses, creating a more holistic methodology in hadith studies.

Entering the 21st century, I have observed that hadith studies published in American and European academic journals indicate that the conflict between skeptical and sanguine groups has subsided. Modern scholars are no longer limited to questions of authenticity alone but have expanded their studies to various other aspects of hadith. Emerging studies in journals such as *Islamic Law and Society*, the *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies*, and the *Journal of the American Oriental Society* reflect a diversity of topics encompassing historical, socio-political, and theological analyses. This marks a shift in focus from the debate on authenticity to a deeper and more comprehensive understanding of the various aspects of hadith.

For instance, Jonathan et al. Brown, in his book “*Hadith: Muhammad's Legacy in the Medieval and Modern World*” (2009), combines isnad criticism with historical and contextual approaches to provide a more complete picture of hadith. Similarly, Behnam Sadeghi, in his article “*The Chronology of the Qur'an: A Stylometric Research Program*,” published in the *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* in 2011, uses an interdisciplinary approach to analyze religious texts, showing that hadith studies have evolved beyond merely questions of authenticity.

Moreover, studies in these journals have addressed various themes, such as the role of hadith in the formation of Islamic law, the influence of hadith on the social and political life of Muslims, and comparative studies between hadith and other religious texts. Research by Nicolai Sinai, Michael Cook, and Patricia Crone also demonstrates a more integrative and contextual approach in hadith studies.

Signs that the classical debate between skeptical and sanguine groups has ended are evident in the diversity of topics and approaches in hadith studies in American and European academic journals after the 20th century. The focus of research has shifted from debates on authenticity to a deeper and more comprehensive understanding of the various aspects of hadith, reflecting the maturity of hadith studies in Western academia. This indicates that hadith studies have reached a higher level in

terms of methodology and research focus, allowing for a richer and more nuanced understanding of hadith tradition in its historical and social context.

Discourse on hadith in Europe and America has evolved from debates on authenticity to broader studies on various themes within hadith. Articles in leading journals reflect this development, with a focus on historical analysis, interpretation, and relevance of hadith in various contexts.

The Evolution of Hadith Studies in Europe and North America

The discourse on hadith in Europe and America shows a significant evolution in the approaches to hadith studies. Initially, hadith studies were dominated by skeptical views that emphasized strict isnad (chain of narrators) criticism, with figures such as Ignaz Goldziher and Joseph Schacht. They argued that many hadiths reflected the historical development of Islam after Prophet Muhammad's time and were more related to the political and theological needs of the Muslim community in subsequent centuries.

However, more balanced and integrative approaches have emerged over time. Scholars such as Harald Motzki and Jonathan A. C. Brown developed methodologies that combined isnad criticism with matn (text of hadith) analysis and historical context. This is reflected in works published in journals such as *Der Islam*, *Islamic Law and Society*, the *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies*, and the *Journal of the American Oriental Society*. For instance, Motzki's work "The Musannaf of 'Abd al-Razzaq al-San'ani as a Source of Authentic Ahadith of the First Century A.H.," published in the *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* in 1991, shows that hadith can be traced back to early credible sources.

Since the 21st century, hadith studies have evolved far beyond the question of authenticity alone. Articles published in academic journals indicate that the focus of research has shifted to various aspects of hadith, including historical, socio-political, and theological analyses. For example, the article "The Canonization of al-Buhārī and Muslim: The Formation and Function of the Sunni Hadith Canon," published in *Arabica* Volume 57 Issue 1 (2010), explores the canonization process of hadith and its importance in Sunni tradition, showing a deep understanding of historical and theological development. Another article, "Reading between the Lines: The Compilation of Hadith and the Authorial Voice," published in *Arabica* Volume 58 Issue 3-4 (2011), discusses how the compilation of hadith reflects the authors' voices and the historical contexts in which they lived, demonstrating a critical analysis of hadith texts.

Furthermore, research such as "The Peoples' Hadith: Evidence for Popular Tradition on Hadith as Physical Object in the First Centuries of Islam," published in *Arabica* Volume 63 Issue 1-2 (2016), examines evidence of popular tradition regarding hadith as a physical object by combining archaeological and historical studies. The

article “Sainthood and Authority in Early Islam: Al-Hakīm al-Tirmidhī’s Theory of wilāya and the Reenvisioning of the Sunnī Caliphate,” published in Arabica Volume 69 Issue 3 (2022), studies al-Hakīm al-Tirmidhī’s theory of sainthood and its influence on the Sunni caliphate vision, showing the integration of hadith studies with political history.

Figures such as the Jonathan A.C. Brown, Michael Cook, and Patricia Crone have significantly contributed to developing a more holistic approach to hadith studies. For example, Jonathan et al. Brown, in his book “Hadith: Muhammad's Legacy in the Medieval and Modern World” (2009), combines historical-critical approaches with thematic analysis and *isnad-matn* criticism to provide a more comprehensive picture of hadith. Michael Cook, in his article “Eschatology and the Dating of Traditions,” published in Princeton Papers in Near Eastern Studies in 1992, uses *isnad* criticism and historical analysis to assess the authenticity and chronology of eschatological traditions in early Islam.

Behnam Sadeghi, in his article “The Chronology of the Qur'an: A Stylometric Research Program,” published in the Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies in 2011, adopts an interdisciplinary approach to analyzing religious texts. This research shows that the focus of hadith studies has evolved beyond merely questions of authenticity toward a deeper understanding of the transmission and evolution processes of Islamic religious texts. Other articles reflecting this development include “The Geography of the Isnād: Possibilities for the Reconstruction of Local Ritual Practice in the 2nd/8th Century” and “*Dalā'il al-Nubuwwa* Literature as Part of the Medieval Scholarly Discourse on Prophecy.”

This evolution marks a shift from debates on authenticity to broader studies of various themes within the hadith. Articles in leading journals reflect this development, focusing on historical analysis, interpretation, and relevance of hadith in various contexts.

Historical Approach and Isnad Criticism

Scholars such as Harald Motzki and Jonathan A. C. Brown have developed methodologies that combine *isnad* criticism with contextual analysis. For instance, in his work “*The Musannaf of 'Abd al-Razzaq al-San'ani as a Source of Authentic Ahadith of the First Century A.H.*” published in the Journal of Near Eastern Studies in 1991, Motzki demonstrates that hadith can be traced back to early reliable sources. This approach is also reflected in the article “The Canonization of al-Buhārī and Muslim: The Formation and Function of the *Sunnī Hadīth* Canon” (Arabica Volume 57 Issue 1, 2010), which explores the canonization process of hadith and its importance in the Sunni tradition.

Thematic and Contextual Analysis

Jonathan A.C. Brown, in his book “Hadith: Muhammad's Legacy in the Medieval and Modern World” (2009), combines historical-critical approaches with thematic analysis and isnad-matn criticism to provide a more comprehensive picture of hadith. The article “Reading between the Lines: The Compilation of Hadīth and the Authorial Voice” (Arabica Volume 58 Issue 3-4, 2011) discusses how the compilation of hadith reflects the authors' voices and the historical contexts in which they lived, showing critical analysis of hadith texts. Other articles have also highlighted similar approaches in hadith studies. The article “The Canonization of al-Buhārī and Muslim: The Formation and Function of the Sunnī Hadīth Canon” (Arabica Volume 57 Issue 1, 2010) explores the canonization process of hadith and its importance in the Sunni tradition, emphasizing historical analysis of the selection and acceptance process of hadith. In “Analysing Muslim Traditions: Studies in Legal, Exegetical and Maghāzī Hadīth” (Arabica Volume 58 Issue 5, 2011), the authors investigate various Muslim traditions, including legal, exegesis, and maghazi hadith, with a thematic approach and in-depth analysis of hadith texts.

The historical approach and isnad criticism are also evident in the article “Une version ismaélienne de ḥadīṡs imamites. Nouvelles perspectives sur le traité II du Kitāb al-Kaṡf attribué à Ĝaʿfar b. Maṡṡūr al-Yaman (Xe s.)” (Arabica Volume 59 Issue 5, 2012), which discusses the Isma'ili version of Imami hadith, offering new perspectives on a treatise attributed to Ja'far b. Mansur al-Yaman. In “The Peoples' Hadith: Evidence for Popular Tradition on Hadith as Physical Object in the First Centuries of Islam” (Arabica Volume 63 Issue 1-2, 2016), research examines evidence of popular tradition regarding hadith as physical objects, combining archaeological and historical studies. The article “The “ḥadīṡ literature”: What is it and where is it?” (Arabica Volume 65 Issue 1-2, 2018) explored the definition and existence of hadith literature, examining various types of hadith texts, and how they are categorized and studied.

Biographical and Literacy Studies

Biographical and literacy studies in the Islamic tradition also play a significant role in articles such as “Medieval Biographical Literature and the Companions of Muḥammad” and “*Al-Ṭabarī's Kitāb Marātib al-ʿUlamā'* and the Significance of Biographical Works Devoted to ‘the Classes of Jurists.’” These articles demonstrate how the biographies of companions and early scholars can be used to understand the development of hadith and Islamic law. In “Ḥadīṡ Scholar and Historiography: Some Reflections on Ibn Ḥibbān al-Buṡṡī's (d. 354/965) Kitāb al-Ṭiqāt” (Arabica Volume 66 Issue 5, 2019) explores Ibn Hibban's biographical works and their contribution to hadith historiography.

Research challenging old assumptions is also seen in the article “Revising the Assumption that Ḥadīṡ Studies Flourished in the 11th/17th-Century Ḥiġāz: Ibrāhīm

al-Kūrānī's (d. 1101/1690) Contribution' (Arabica Volume 68 Issue 1, 2021), highlighting Ibrahim al-Kurani's contribution to hadith studies. In a socio-political context, the article "Sainthood and Authority in Early Islam: Al-Hakīm al-Tirmidhī's Theory of wilāya and the Reenvisioning of the Sunnī Caliphate" (Arabica Volume 69 Issue 3, 2022) examines al-Hakim al-Tirmidhi's theory of sainthood and its influence on the Sunni caliphate vision. The article "Sira Culture, Hadith and the Veneration of Muḥammad in the Later Middle Period: Ibn Nāṣir al-Dīn al-Dimašqī (d. 842/1438) as a Case Study" (Arabica Volume 70 Issue 4-5, 2023) investigates how sira and hadith culture were used to venerate Prophet Muhammad in a broader historical context.

Relevant articles include "Ḥadīṭ Scholar and Historiography: Some Reflections on the Sīra Corpora of Ibn Ḥibbān al-Bustī's (d. 354/965) Kitāb al-Ṭiqāt" (Arabica Volume 66 Issue 5, 2019) explores Ibn Hibban's biographical works and their contribution to hadith historiography. This research highlights how biographies are used to assess the credibility of narrators and to understand the historical context of hadith transmission. Additionally, the article "Sira Culture, Hadith and the Veneration of Muḥammad in the Later Middle Period: Ibn Nāṣir al-Dīn al-Dimašqī (d. 842/1438) as a Case Study" (Arabica Volume 70 Issue 4-5, 2023) examines how sira and hadith culture were used to venerate Prophet Muhammad in a broader historical context. In "The Canonization of al-Buhārī and Muslim: The Formation and Function of the Sunnī Hadīth Canon" (Arabica Volume 57 Issue 1, 2010), the canonization process of hadith by al-Bukhari and Muslim is explained, showing how the biographies of narrators play a role in the legitimacy and authority of hadith.

Further, the article "Une version ismaélienne de ḥadīṭs imamites. Nouvelles perspectives sur le traité II du Kitāb al-Kašf attribué à Ğa'far b. Maṣṣūr al-Yaman (Xe s.)" (Arabica Volume 59 Issue 5, 2012) discusses the Isma'ili version of Imami hadith, offering new perspectives on a treatise attributed to Ja'far b. Mansur al-Yaman, showing how the biographies of key figures are used to understand doctrinal developments in Shia Islam. The article "Authorship and Unity of the Classical Arabic Poem through the Lens of Collaborative Composition" (Arabica Volume 67 Issue 1, 2020) also examines the authorship and unity of classical Arabic poetry through collaborative composition, relevant in understanding how religious texts are transmitted and compiled. Article "The Population Size of Muḥammad.

Archaeological and Physical Studies

This approach is reinforced by the article "The Travelling Tradition Test: A Method for Dating Traditions," which offers a method for dating traditions through analyzing their travel and spread. In the study "Aḥmad Ibn Ḥanbal's Book of Renunciation: Ahmad ibn Ḥanbal's book al-Zuhd," analysis of the book *al-Zuhd* as one of the largest collections of ascetic sayings from the first two centuries of Islam emphasizes the importance of physical sources in understanding the transmission and evolution of

religious texts. Additionally, “The Geography of the *Isnād*: Possibilities for the Reconstruction of Local Ritual Practice in the 2nd/8th Century” explores how *isnād* (a chain of narrators) can be used to reconstruct local ritual practices in the 2nd/8th century, combining physical manuscript studies with historical analysis.

Furthermore, the article “Dalāʿil al-Nubuwwa Literature as Part of the Medieval Scholarly Discourse on Prophecy” discusses Dalāʿil al-Nubuwwa literature as part of medieval scholarly discourse on prophecy, using physical manuscript analysis to uncover the transmission process. The article “Une œuvre inconnue de Wakīʿ b. al-Ġarrāḥ (m. 197/812?) et sa transmission en Égypte au IIIe/IXe siècle” (Arabica Volume 65 Issue 5-6, 2018) reveals the work of Wakīʿ b. al-Ġarrāḥ and its transmission in Egypt in the 3rd/9th century through a physical manuscript and historical context analysis. The article “The Canonization of al-Buhārī and Muslim: The Formation and Function of the Sunnī Hadīth Canon” (Arabica Volume 57 Issue 1, 2010) explores the canonization process of hadith by al-Bukhari and Muslim, emphasizing the importance of physical and archaeological studies of early manuscripts.

Discourse on hadith studies in Europe and America has evolved significantly over time. Initially, scholars such as Goldziher and Schacht adopted a skeptical approach, emphasizing *isnad* criticism to assess the authenticity of hadiths. They contended that many hadiths were influenced by the historical context of Islam post-Prophet Muhammad, catering to the needs of the Muslim community in later periods (Koertner 2018). However, a transition towards more balanced methodologies occurred with scholars such as Harald Motzki and Jonathan A.C. Brown, who combined *isnad* criticism with *matn* analysis and historical context. Motzki's research illustrated that hadiths can be traced back to reliable early sources, underscoring the significance of contextual analysis (Koertner, 2018). Brown, in his publication, merged historical-critical methods with thematic analysis to present a comprehensive understanding of hadiths (Haider, 2013). In recent years, hadith studies have broadened to encompass themes beyond authenticity, including historical, sociopolitical, and theological analyses. Scholars have delved into topics such as the canonization process of hadith, compilation of hadith reflecting authors' perspectives and historical contexts, and indications of popular traditions concerning hadith as physical artifacts (Koertner, 2018). This progression indicates a shift towards a more holistic approach to studying hadith, integrating diverse disciplines and viewpoints to enhance the comprehension of Islamic religious texts. Figures like Michael Cook, Patricia Crone, and Jonathan A.C. Brown have significantly influenced this multidimensional approach to hadith studies. For example, Cook used *isnad* criticism and historical analysis to evaluate the authenticity and chronology of eschatological traditions in early Islam (Koertner, 2018). Brown's work showcases the fusion of historical-critical techniques with thematic analysis to offer nuanced insights into the realm of hadith (Haider 2013).

3. Conclusion

This research shows that discourse on hadith in Europe and America has evolved significantly from classical debates on authenticity to broader studies on various aspects of hadith. Western scholars have developed various methods to examine hadith, ranging from historical criticism to thematic analysis. This development reflects a maturation in the academic approach to hadith studies, allowing for a richer and more nuanced understanding of hadith tradition in its historical and social contexts. The findings of this study are expected to contribute to hadith researchers in Indonesia by connecting their studies with Western academic traditions and developing a more comprehensive approach to hadith studies.

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