# METHODOLOGY OF HADITH CONTENT CRITICISM: A Study on the Thought of Salah al-Din bin Ahmad al-Adlabi

#### **Tasmin Tangngareng**

tasmin.tanggareng64@gmail.com Department of Tafsir Hadith Faculty of Islamic Theology and Philosophy UIN Alauddin Makassar

#### Abstract

This article examines Salah al-Din bin Ahmad al-Adlabi's thought on the subject of methodology of criticism of the Prophet's hadith content (matan). Al-Adlabi is a hadith scholar who has significat influence on the research methodology of hadith content. In his work entitled Manhaj Naqd al-Matn 'Inda 'Ulama al-Hadith al-Nabawiy, al-Adlabi outlines that the background necessitating the importance of the research methodology of hadith content comprises two factors, namely, there have been occurrences of falsification of the Prophet's hadith at the time of transmission, and there has been a spread of al-wahm, that is, some errors or mistakes in the transmission of the Prophet's hadith. To determine the quality of a hadith content, al-Adlabi put forward four standards for the validity of hadith content, they are: a), not contradicting to the instructions of al-Qur`an; b), does not conflict with more authentic hadith; c) does not conflict with a healthy mind, senses and history; d) the composition of its statements does not show the characteristics of prophethood. Al-Adlabi's thought on the methodology of criticism of hadith content obviously worth further discussion. Hence, further study and deeper digging is required in order to give birth to more accurate, constructive, and comprehensive ideas.

#### Abstrak

Kritik hadis merupakan sesuatu yang penting dalam menilai suatu hadis diterima atau ditolaknya. Kajian atas kritik hadis terutama kritik sanad sudah banyak dilakukan oleh ulama, sebaliknya kajian atas matan belum banyak. Artikel ini mengkaji Pemikiran Salah al-Din bin Ahmad al-Adlabi tentang Metodologi Kritik Matan Hadis. Al-Adlabi adalah pakar hadis yang memiliki pengaruh yang sangat besar terhadap metodologi penelitian matan hadis. Dalam karyanya yang berjudul Manhaj Naqd al-Matn 'Inda 'Ulama al-Hadis al-Nabawiy, al-Adlabi menguraikan bahwa latar belakang pentingnya metodologi penelitian matan hadis disebabkan dua faktor yaitu, telah tersebarnya pemalsuan hadis pada masa periwayatan, dan tersebarnya al-wahm yakni berbagai kekeliruan dalam periwayatan hadis.Untuk menentukan kualitas matan suatu hadis, maka al-Adlabi mengemukakan empat tolok ukur kaedah kesahihan matan hadis, yaitu; tidak bertentangan dengan petunjuk al-Qur`an; tidak bertentangan dengan hadis yang lebih kuat; tidak bertentangan dengan akal yang sehat, indera dan sejarah; susunan pernyatannya tidak menunjukkan ciri-ciri sabda kenabian. Pemikiran al-Adlabi tentang metodologi kritik matan hadis, kelihatannya sangat urgen untuk diperbincangkan lebih lanjut. Oleh karenya, masih diperlukan telaah pemikiran dan perbincangan yang lebih dalam, guna melahirkan ide-ide pemikiran yang lebih akurat, konstruktif, dan komprehensip.

Keywords: kritik matan, Salah al-Din bin Ahmad al-Adlabi, metodologi

#### Introduction

According to the instructions of the Qur`an, hadith (the Prophet's tradition), is the second source of the Islamic teachings after the Qur'an.<sup>1</sup> This consequently means that to know the true teachings of Islam, reference to the instructions of the Prophet's hadith is necessarily required in addition to reference to the teachings of the Qur'an.

Although both the Qur'an and the prophet's hadith serve as the main source of the Islamic teachings, they are different in terms of narrations. For the case of the Qur'an, all the verses are transmitted in the mode of *mutawatir*, as for the case of the Prophet's hadith, some are transmitted in the mode of *mutawatir* and some other come to pass in the mode of *ahad.*<sup>2</sup> Accordingly, in terms

<sup>2</sup> The literal meaning of the term *mutawatir* is *tatabu*, which means sequential. As for the meaning of the term as a technical term in the science of hadith is narrated by a number of transmitters at every level of narrators ranging from that of the companions of the Prophet up to the *mukharrij*, and hence implies, considering the law of logic and common habit, it is impossible that they all would agree to lie upon a narration. As for the term *ahad* as the plural form of the word *wahid*, which means one. As for the meaning of the term according to the scholars of hadith is what is reported by individuals who did not reach the level of *mutawatir*. See Muhammad Ajjaj al-Khatib *Ushul al-Hadis* `*Ulumuhu wa Mushtahuhu* (Beirut: Dar al-Fikr, 1409 H/1989 M), pp. 301-302;

of the quality of narration, the Qur'an has the position of *qat*`*iy alwurud*. As for Prophet's hadith, some of them are qualified as *qat*`*iy alwurud* and some are qualified as *dhann alwurud*.<sup>3</sup>

On the other hand, history shows that the official recording of the Prophet's hadith was conducted long after he passed away, that is, at the time of Caliph Umar ibn Abd al-Aziz (d. 101 H). Therefore, among the factors that affect the importance of hadith content criticism are the process of hadith collection into the books of hadith that took quite some time after the Prophet's death, and because there were also transmissions of hadith by content (*riwayat bi alma'na*) that took place. These situations require a conduction of careful assessments of the collected hadith in order to avoid the spread of poor quality hadith in terms of authenticity or validity.

In addition, each of the books of hadith compiled by their *mukharrij* contain transmissions of hadith, both that of the *sanad* (chains of transmission) and the *matan* (content). Thus, the

See Subhi al-Saleh, Ulum al-Hadis wa Mustalahuhu (Beirut: Dar al-Ilm li al-Malayin, 1977 M), p. 3; M. Syuhidi Ismail, Kaedah Kesahihan Sanad Hadis, Telaah Kritis dan Tinjauan dengan Pendekatan Ilmu Sejarah (Jakarta: Bulan Bintang, 1988), p. 85-86; See also his Hadis Nabi Menurut Pembela, Pengingkar dan Pemalsunya (Jakarta: Gema Insani Press, 1985), p. 3; Muhammad Shabbaq, al-Hadis al-Nabawiy (Riyadh: Maktabah al-Islamiy, 1392 H/1972 M), p. 1416; Abd. Halim Mahmud, al-Sunnah fi Makanatiha wa fi Tarikhiha (Kairo: Dar al-Katib al-Arabiy, 1967 M), pp. 26-29; Muhammad Abu Syuhbah, Fi Rihab al-Sunnah al-Kutub al-Sihah al-Sittah (Kairo: Majma` al-Buhus al-Islamiyyah, 1389 H/1969 M), p. 9; Jalal al-Din Abd. Al-Rahman ibn Abi Bakar al-Syuyutiy, Miftah al-Jannah fi Ihtijaj bi al-Sunnah (al-Madinah al-Munawwarah: Matba`ah al-Rasyiid, 1399 H/1979 M), p.28. As for the definition of the terms sunnah and hadith with reference to Muslim scholsrs, see, among others, Abu Ishaq Ibrahim al-Syathibiy, al-Muwafaqat fi Ushul al-Syari`ah bi al-Syarh `Abd Allah Darraz (Mesir: al-Maktabah al-Tajirah al-Kubra, t.th), pp. 3-7; Fazlur Rahman, Islamic Methodology in History (Karachi: Central Institut of Islamic Researh, 1965), pp. 1-14, 28

Syihab al-Din Abi Fadhl Ahmad bin Ali bin Hajar al-Asqalaniy, Nuzhat al-Nazar Syarh Nuhbat al-Fikr (Kairo: Matba` ah Istiqamah, 1368H), pp. 5-9; Ahmad bin Muhammad al-Fayyumi, al-Misbah al-Munir Fi Garib al-Syarh al-Kabir, vol II (Beirut: Dar al-Kutub al-`Ilmiyah, 1398 H/1978 M), p. 321; Muhammad al-Sabbaq, op.cit., p. 167-168.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> See M. Syuhudi Ismail, "Kaedah Kesahihan", op.cit., p. 89; Mahmud Abu Rayyah, Adwa `Ala al-Sunnah al-Muhammadiyah aw Difa`an Hadis ( Egypt : Dar al-Ma`arif, n.d), pp. 279-280; Salah al-Din ibn Ahmad al-Adlabiy, Manhaj Naqd al-Matn (Beirut: Dar al-Afaq al-Jadidah, 1403 H/1983 M), p. 239; furthermore, the terms qath`iy and zanniy are used to describe about level of accuracy. In some references, the terms daruriy, obsolut dan mutlak are considered sinonimous the term *qath*`iy, whereas the terms nazariy, relative, nisbi are considered synonymous to the term zanniy. Hence what is meant by the phrase qath`iy al-wurud or qath`iy al-subut is absolute accuracy of the news delivered. As for the phrase zanny al-wurud, it means relatve or the accuracy of the news conveyed is not absolute. M. Syuhudi Ismail, "Hadis Nabi", op.cit., pp. 92-93; Subhi al-Saleh, "Ulum al-Hadis", op.cit., p. 151; Abd al-Wahhab Khallaf, Ilmu Ushul al-Fiqh (Kuwait: Dar al-Qalam,1397 H/1977 M), pp. 34-35; Mahmud Syaltut, Islam Aqidah wa al-Syari`ah (Kairo: Dar al-Kalam, 1966), pp. 65-67; M. Quraish Shihab, Membumikan al-Qur`an (Bandung: Mizan, 1994), p. 137

hadith collected in various books of hadith, in addition to consisting message material, commonly known as the matan of hadith, they also consist of various matters relating to the narrations, in this case its sanad. This implies that the activities of hadith criticism are not only intended for the content of the hadith but for its chains of transmission as well. Therefore, to determine the quality of a hadith and to reassure its validity to prove its coming from the Prophet, it is necessary to have the content and the chains of transmission criticized. This is essentially urgent, provided that the position or the quality of a hadith is closely related to determination of the eligibility of a hadith to be referred to as hujjah or religious postulate.

Therefore, experts the Prophet's hadith normally criticize hadith by focusing on the aspects of its *sanad* and *matan*. These efforts of criticism are conducted with the intention of looking for authentic hadith to be practiced (*al-ma'mul bih*), and to set aside other hadith that cannot be implemented (*gayr al-ma'mul bih*). From this procedure came the categories pertaining to the quality of the Prophet's hadith such as: *al-Sahih*, *al-Hasan*, and *al-Dha'if*.

In studies of the Prophet's hadith, sometimes it is discovered that a hadith is valid in terms of its chains of transmission while at the same time weak in terms of content, or vice versa. Therefore, the validity of a hadith cannot be determined only by the validity of its chains of transmission, rather, its content should also be investigated in order to ascertain that the hadith is not considered *syaz* and does not contain *illah*.

Despite the fact that in a conduction of hadith research, it is relatively difficult to ascertain whether a hadith contains *syaz* and *illah*, but the difficulties can be resolved when the methodology of hadith criticism is well understood. On this basis, the assessment will address and discuss the thought of Salah al-Din bin Ahmad al-Adlabi with regard to the methodology of hadith content criticism in his prominent work *Manhaj Naqd al-Matn 'Inda 'Ulama al-Hadith al-Nabawiy.* 

## Al-Adlabi's Thought on the importance of the Methodology of Hadith Content Criticism

# al-Adlabi and the Influence His Work Manhaj Nagd al-Matn 'Inda 'Ulama al-Hadith al-Nabawiy

The popularity of Salah al-Din bin Ahmad al-Adlabi as an expert in the field of Hadith can clearly be seen through his book Manhaj Naqd al-Matn 'Inda 'Ulama al-Hadith al-Nabawiy, which was first published in 1403 H / 1983 H, and is a work on hadith that has a relatively complete elaboration about the methodology of hadith content criticism. The influence of al-Adlabi is quite significant, as can be seen, among others, in the emergence of works on the same topic in later periods, such as for example by Dr. Musfir Azmullah al-Damini entitled Magayis Nagd al-Mutun al-Sunnah (Criteria of Sunnah Content Criticism), published in 1404 H / 1984 AD; and the work of Dr. Muhammad Tahir al-Jawabi entitled Juhud al-Muhaddisin fi Naqd Matn al-Hadith al-Nabawiy al-Sayrif (the Efforts of hadith scholars in Criticizing Hadith Content), published in 1406 H / 1986 AD).

As a result, a number of authors from among celebrated Indonesian hadith scholars have been making reference to and taking inspiration from the work of al-Adlabi in outlining hadith content. Among these scholars are as follows:

T.M. Hasbi Ash-Shiddieqy, (d. 1975, to be referred to later on in this writing as Hasbi)) in a variety of his works in the field of hadith,<sup>4</sup>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> The works of Hasbi meant here comprise; (1) Beberapa Rangkuman Hadis, Bandung: al-Ma'arif, first edition in 1952; (2) Sejarah dan Pengantar Ilmu Hadi Jakarta: Bulan Bintang, first edition in 1954; (3) 2002 Mutiara Hadis, consist of 8 volumes, Jakarta: Bulan Bintang, first edition in tahun 1954; (4) Pokok-pokok Ilmu Dirayah hadis, two volumes, Jakarta: Bulan Bintang, first edition in 1958; (5) Problematika Hadis-hadis sebagai dasar Pembinaan Hukum

frequently mentions about the importance of a hadith content. To his view, the matan (content), with its plural form mutun is the end of sanad (chains of transmission), that is, the saying of the Prophet (peace be upon him); it is mentioned after the mention of sanad.<sup>5</sup> This definition is almost similar to what is proposed by Adlabi.<sup>6</sup> Hasbi and his formulation of definition of matan are also often cited by later hadith scholars. There are two works of Hasbi that are compiled as lecture materials on sciences of hadith for Islamic higher education (Islamic universities). These works are Sejarah Pengantar Ilmu Hadits (Historical Introduction to Hadith Science), and Pokok-pokok Ilmu Dirayah Hadits (The Principles of Hadith Dirayah Science).

'Abdul Kadir Hasan (d. 1984), is a renowned Indonesian scholar of the Prophet's hadith from Bangil, who studied in Egypt. His work entitled Sciences of Musthalah Hadith, discusses the 144 issues related to the science of hadith. In the seventh discussion, he focused on the discussion about matan, wherein he explains that criticism of content is as essentially necessary as criticism sanad.<sup>7</sup> The importance of the criticism of content as suggested by the Hasan Abdul Kadir, is in line with the assertion of al-Adlabi on the point that criticism of sanad is not sufficient without continuing with criticism of the content of the hadith.<sup>8</sup> There are some strong indications pointing that the above statement of Hasan Abdul Kadir was inspired by al-Adlabi's proposition, as

the only reference relating to criticism of content provided on the bibliography page of his book is the work of al-Adlabi.

H. M. Syuhudi Ismail (d. 1997, to be referred to later on in this writing as Syuhudi), appears as a contemporary scholar on the Prophet's tradition in Indonesia, and therefore he adapts a lot of points from al-Adlabi's thought. This is observable through some assumptions indicating that Syuhudi as hadith scholar, who first introduces and popularizes the term external criticism for the criticism of *sanad* and internal criticism for the criticism of content, shares a lot of corresponding line of thought with al-Adlabi.<sup>9</sup> Furthermore, in explaining the benchmarks for criticism of content, H. M. Syuhudi Ismail frequently quotes view points from al-Adlabi's thought.<sup>10</sup>

Bustamin and M. Isa H. A. Salam, in their work entitled *Metodologi Kritik Hadis* (Methodology of Criticism of Hadith), provide a chapter, more precisely chapter III, that elaborates about "The Criteria for the Validity Hadith Content"<sup>11</sup>. In this chapter, many points from al-Adlabi's opinions about the criteria of validity of content are cited and brought up in the discussion. It follows that Bustamin comes to the conclusion that the benchmarks of the criteria implemented by al-Adlabi are significantly effective to employ as a reference in research for hadith content.

As a final point, it can be asserted here that anyone who writes on the subject of hadith and in so doing presents a discussion about hadith content, it is a natural phenomenon that a lot of influence from al-Adlabi's ideas will take place in the work. Even more, those who are directly involved in research activities on the Prophet's hadith will certainly refer to the thinking of al-

Islam, Jakarta: Bulan Bintang, first edition in 1964. This work was originally a scientific oration he presented at the anniversary of IAIN Yogyakarta, on 4 Desember 1962; (6) *Koleksi Hadis-hadis Hukukm*; Ahkam al-Nabawiyah, consist of 11 volumes, Bandung: al-Ma'arif, first edition in 1970; *Ridjalul Hadis*, Yogyakarta: Matahari Masa, first edition in 1970; (7) Sejarah Perkembangan Hadis, Jakarta: Bulan Bintang, first edition in 1973.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> See T. M. Hasbi Ash-Shiddieqy, "Sejarah Pengantar" *ibid.*, p. 168-169

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> See Salah al-Din bin Ahmad al-Adlab<sup>3</sup>, "Manhaj Naqd al-Matn"op.cit., 'p. 6-7

 <sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> Abd. Kadir Hasan, Ilmu Mushtalah Hadis (Bandung: CV. Diponegoro, 2002), pp. 81-82

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup> al-Adlabi, loc cit.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>9</sup> See H.M. Qadirun Nur and Ahmad Musyafiq, Pengantar Penerjemah in al-Adlabi, Kritik Metodologi Content Hadis (Jakarta: Gaya Media Pratama, 2004), pp.vi-vii.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>10</sup> See H. M. Syuhudi Ismail, "Metodologi" op.cit., pp. 123, 125-130, and 134.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>11</sup> See Bustamin M. Isa H.A. Salam, Metodologi Kritik Hadis (Jakarta: PT. RajaGrafindo Persada, 2004), pp. 63-65

Adlabi when they come to the subject of hadith content. Hence this implies the significance of the influence of al-Adlabi on studies of the Prophet's tradition, particularly with respect to the aspect of methodology of hadith content criticism.

#### Brief Data and Highlights on al-Adlabi's Book.

Brief data on the identity Salah al-Din bin Ahmad al-Adlabi's book that is always used as a reference:

Title of book: Manhaj Naqd al-Matn 'Inda 'Ulama al-Hadith al-Nabawy.

Author: Dr. Salah al-Din bin Ahmad al-Adlabi

Publisher: Mansyurat Dar al-Afaq al-Jadidah

Area of Publication: Beirut, Lebanon.

Year of Publication: 1403 H / 1983 AD, Vol. I

Book Cntent: 371 pages

Color of the Book Cover: Yellow

As for the scheme of the discussion of Salah al-Din bin Ahmad al-Adlabi's book, it is divided into two parts, as follows:

## (الأول القسم) Part One

- تمہید (Introduction), consists of five subtopics, namely:
  - A. موضوع نقد المتن (Object of Studies in Hadith Content Criticism)
  - B. أهمية الموضوع (The Urgency of the object of studies in Hadith Content Criticism)
  - C. صعوبة البحث في هذا الموضوع) Difficulties in Conducting Research on the Object of Studies in Hadith Content Criticism).
  - D. ملخص للانتاج الفكر المتعلق بالموضوع (Conclusions on the Framework Relating to the Object of Study of Hadith Content Criticism)

E. تعريف المصطلحات الأساسية في الدراسة (Formulation of Definitions of Technical Terms)

Chapter 1 "الظواهر الموجبة لاعتماد نقد" (the apparent necessity of Criticism of Content), consists of two sub-topics, namely:

- A. انتشار ظاهرة الوضع في عصر الرواية (the spread of apparent falsification of Hadith in the Period of transmission)
- B. انتشار ظاهرة الوهم في عصر الرواية (the spread of apparent error in the Period of transmission)

Chapter 2 "الصحابة وعلماء الحديث ( the tradition of Hadith content Criticism Activities among the companions of the Prophet and the scholars of hadith), consists of two sub-topics, namely:

- A. اعتماد نقد المتن عند الصحابة (Hadith content criticism activities among the Companions of the Prophet)
- B. اعتماد نقد المتن عند علماء الحديث (Hadith content criticism activities among the scholars of hadith)

## (الثانى القسم) Part Two

Chapter 3 "معايير نقد المتن عند علماء" (Benchmark for criticism of hadith content according to hadith scholars), comprises five sub-topics;

A. تمہید (introduction)

- B. نقد المرويات المخالفة للقرآن الكريم (Criticism of narrations of hadith content contrary to the noble Qur`an)
- C. نقد المرويات المخالفة للثابت من الحديث Criticism of narrations of hadith content contradictory to the valid hadith and the valid accounts of the Prophet).
- D. نقد المرويات المخالفة للعقل أو الحس Criticism of narrations) أو التاريخ

contradictive to the intellect, sense perception, and History)

E. نقد المرويات التي لا يشبه كلام النبوة (Criticism of narrations hadith content that do not resemble the words of the Prophet)

#### ."خاتمة الرسالة" Concluding remarks

By re-examining the scheme of the discussions in al-Adlabi's book as has been displayed above, it is clear that the major discussion about the methodology of hadith content criticism is presented in the second part of his book, wherein the subject is exclusively elaborated in one whole chapter, namely chapter three.

# The Significance of Hadith Content Criticism in the Thought of al-Adlabi

The significance of hadith content criticism is inseparable from the importance of research on hadith in terms of both its chains of transmission and content.<sup>12</sup> There are some factors that make studies on the Prophet's hadith essentially important. First, the hadith of the Prophet serves as a source of Islamic teachings, both structurally and functionally.<sup>13</sup> Belief in the tradition of the Prophet (the hadith) as a part of the source of Islamic teachings makes the study of hadith, especially *ahad* hadith, is highly important. Secondly, not all of the hadith were written in the time of the Prophet.<sup>14</sup> Third, there have been occurrences

<sup>13</sup> The position of hadith as a source of Islamic teachings has been agred by almost all Muslims to be one of the sources of the Islamic teachings. Among the Qur'anic verses describing about the position of the Prophet's hadith as a source of the Islamic teachings are as follows; a) QS. Al-Hasyr (59): 7. b) QS.Ali Imran (3): 32. c) QS. Al-Nisa (4): 80. On the other side, ther are also a group of Muslims who deny the position of hadith as a source of Islamic teachings. This group is called inkar al-sunnah (denier of the sunnah). They argue that the Qur'an has comprised anything with regards toreligion, and therefore hadith is no longer needed. The group of ingkar al-sunnah has actually existed since the time of the Prophet, but they made their open appearance in te early period of the Abbasid. Up to the current time, either openly or secretly, those who adopt the belief of the inkar alsunnah still exist in various places. In Egypt, for instance, ther is Taufiq Sidqy; in Malaysia there is Kassim Ahmad; and in Indonesia there is, among others, there is Muhammad Ircham Sutarto. See M. Syuhudi Ismail, Hadis Nabi Menurut Pembela Pengingkarnya dan Pemalsunya (Jakarta: Gema Insani Press, 1995), pp. 14-15. As for the group of ingkar al-sunnah out side of Islam, it includes orientalist figures such as Goldziher (1850 - 1921), who doubts the existence of hadith coming from the Pophet (peace be upon him), and Joseph Schacht (1902-1969) who concludes that there is no singl hadith that authenticly comes from the Prophet, especially hadith pertaining to law. See Ali Mustafa Yaqub, Imam Bukhari dan Metodologi Kritik dalam Ilmu Hadis (Jakarta: Pustaka Firdaus, 1996), p. 14.

<sup>14</sup> There are two versions that seem to be contradicting in terms of the writing down of hadith. On one side the Prophet used to prevent his companions from writing down his words, as he said as follows:

Translation:



Sa'id al-Khudri narrated that the Prophet (peace be upon him) has said: You should not write anything from me, and whoever has written anything besides the Qur'an, he

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>12</sup> In this case the criticism of *sanad* and the criticism of content is as if two sides of a coin, that makes the two sides inseparable in spite of their difference. As a narration is only complete when it consists of sanad dan content. In practice, however, hadith scholars put more emphasis on criticism of the sanad. One of the proofs is that almost all of the existing technical terms are related to the criticism of sanad. Even more, the terms that should be related to criticism of content are in practice more oriented to criticism of sanad. This situation once brought about pros and cons among those who concern about hadith study. On one hand, some observers consider that it is true that hadith scholars put more emphasis or even only put emphasis on criticism of sanad. Such kind of judgement is pointed out by, for instance, Ibnu Khaldun and Ahmad Amin. On the other, there are also some observers who consider that hadith scholars do not only put emphasis on the criticism of sanad but also on the criticism of content equally. This proposition is suggested by Mustafa al-Siba'i, Abu Syuhbah, and Nur al-Din Itr. Therefore, in spite of the pros and cons, one of the undeniable facts is that works on studies of criticism of content is relatively rare compared to works on studies of criticism of sanad. This becomes an additional factor to the difficulties in practicing studies on criticism of content. See H.M. Qadirun Nur and Ahmad Musyafiq, Pengantar

Penerjemah in al-Adlabi, trans. Metodologi Kritik Content Hadis,loc.cit.

of falsification of hadith.<sup>15</sup> Fourth, the process of collection of the Prophet's hadith took quite a long time.<sup>16</sup> This brings about the consequences

#### Terjemahnya:

<sup>15</sup> There is no agreement among the scholars on the first emergence of the falsification of the Prophet Muhammad's hadith. According to Ahmad Amin (w. 1373 H/ 1954 M), falsification of hadith had occurred in the era of the Prophet. The basis of this argument a mutawatir hadith stating that whoever intentionally spread lies in the name of the Prophet, that person should prepare to have his place in hell. Ahmad Amin argues that this hadith implies that it was most possible that there had been occurances of forgery of hadith in the era of the Prophet. According to al-Siba'i, what Ahmad Amin presents as the basis of his argument has nohistory of strong chains of transmission. See Ahmad Amin, Fajr al-Islam (Qairo: Maktabah al-Nahdah, 1975), pp. 210-211; Mustafa al-Siba'i, al-Sunnah wa Makanatuha fi al-Tasyri` al-Islami (Beirut: al-Kutub al-Islami, 1978), p. 234. In al-Adlabi's view, the forgery of hadith about worldly matters had occurred in the time of the Prophet. Lihat Salah al-Din bin Ahmad al-Adlabi, "Manhaj" op.cit.,pp.40-42. According to the majority of Muslim scholars the falsification of hadith started to spread in the era of the Caliph Ali bin Abi Talib. In their view, from the time of the Prophet up to the time before the conflict between Ali bin Abi Talib and Muawiyah bin Abi Sufyan (d. 60 H/680 M) the Prophet's hadith were in their pure condition and free from falsification. See Muhammad Ajjaj al-Khatib, "Us-l "op.cit., pp.415-416; M. Syuhudi Ismail,"Kaedah" op.cit., pp. 92-95.

 $^{16}$  Oficial movement for a mssive recording of hadith was conducter on the instruction of the Caliph Umar bin

that the great number of the Prophet's hadith, which were collected in a wide span of time after he passed away, requires a thorough investigation in order to avoid the employment of unauthentic hadith. Fifth, the great number of hadith books with a diverse method of preparation. <sup>17</sup> Thus, the quality of the Prophet's traditions that have been collected does not vary, and this led to the importance of the study of hadith. Sixth, there has been transmissions by content meanings (*riwayat bi al-ma`na*).<sup>18</sup>

Therefore, if all the Prophet's hadith have been verified to be authentically originating from the Prophet himself, then research on hadith will not be meaningful. However, provided that not all of the Prophet's hadith circulating in the community

<sup>17</sup> There is no certainty on the amount and the variety of the books of hadith in terms of themes and methods that have been composed. This variety in the compositions of the books of hadith occured as the hadith collectors did not put emphasis on the method, but on the collection of the hadith. See *ibid.*, pp. 18-19

<sup>18</sup> The Prophet's companions generally allow narrations of hadith by content. These includes cush as Ali bin Abi Talib, Abdullah ibn Abbas, Abdullah ibn Mas'ud (d.32 H), Abu Hurairah (d.58H), Aisyah (d.58 H). As for the Prophet's disallow the narration of hadith by content are such as Umar bin al-Khattab, Abdullah bin 'Umar, dan Zaid bin Arqam. Furthermore, disputes on the narration of hadith by content also took place in the era of the Muslim scholars after the era of the companions. The scholars that allow the narration by content put emphasis on the importance of fulfilling some strict conditions. On the other hand, although there were strict rules on the narration of hadith by content, the allowance of its pursue indicates that hadith contents that have been narrated through this methos have been exist, or even massively exist. *Ibid.*, p. 20

should erase it. See Abu Husain Muslim bin al-Hajjaj al-Qusyairi, *Sahih Muslim*, (Beirut: D±r al-Hadis al-Qahirah, 1994 M/1415 M), p. 356.

Then in the next period certain companions were given order, as in the Prophet's saying as follows:

Abd Allah bin Amr narrated thet the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: write down (what comes fro me), as I take a vow by my soul in His hand that there is nothing that comes out of me except truth. See Abu Dawud Sulaiman ibn al-Asy'as al-Sijistani, Sunan Abu Dawud (Beirut: Dar al-Fikr, 1999), p. 181.

Abdul  $Az^{3}z$  (d. 101 H). There are three factors that support tha success inthe recording of hadith. First, the needs of the Muslim society for reassurance of the hadith of the Prophet. Second, the contributions of Muslim scholars, both in submitting their individual hadith collections and taking parts in further seeking for unrecorded hadith submitting them on the instructions of the Caliph. Third, the support of the power, wherein tha Caliph sent official letters with instruction to collect and submit hadith to every authority and Muslim scholar in all regions by the end of year 100 H. Then around the  $2^{nd}$  century H, compositions of books of hadith collections took place in big cities such as Mecca, Medina, dan Basrah. The peak of the recording of the Prophet's hadith was around the thierd century H. See M. Syuhudi Ismail, "Metodologi" op.cit., pps. 17-18.

are verified to be original, hence research on the Prophet's hadith is correspondingly significant, in terms of both chains of transmission and content, through the activities of *naqd alhadith*.

In practice, most of the hadith scholars emphasize research on hadith sanad.<sup>19</sup> In other words, criticism of hadith content is rarely conducted by the scholars of hadith compared to criticism hadith sanad. Such actions are not without reason. How can a narration be claimed as a hadith of the Prophet when there is no lineage that connects to the source of hadith (the Prophet himself). A sentence with good wordings carrying a content that is in line with the teachings of Islam cannot be claimed as a hadith of the Prophet as long as it does not provide chains of transmission that reaches the Prophet (peace be upon him). This prompts a problem, that is, how can the chains of transmission be considered good when the validity of the content is not verified.

On the other hand, a narration can be called hadith when it has content. Therefore, criticism of *sanad* and criticism of content are like two sides of a coin, which cannot be separated in any hadith research activities. In other words, research on *sanad* and on content should be positioned in a balanced manner. By tracing the thoughts of al-Adlabi, it will be understood that criticism of content is highly significance, as significance as that of the criticism of content.

In this regard, and in accordance with the title of al-Adlabi's book which has been repeatedly mentioned, it is also understood that this book specifically discusses about the methodology of criticism of content. Therefore, it is necessary to provide a comprehensive background for the importance of the methodology of criticism of content.

In terms of the object, the critical study of content is necessarily urgent when viewed from several aspects. First, to avoid enthusiasm and excessive attitudes in narrating a hadith that cannot be verified, as there are certain measures in the methodology of criticism of content. Second, to face the possibility of an error in the individual of the narrator. Third, to face the enemies of Islam who falsity hadith by using valid sanad whereas the content is invalid. Fourth, to face the possibility of contradictions in some narrations.<sup>20</sup> With regard to the importance of the research on hadith content, al-Adlabi further confirmed that there some primary factors that serve as the background for the necessity of the criticism of content. First, it is apparent that there had been occurrences of hadith forgery at the time of transmission. Second, it is apparent that there had been a spread of alwahm at the time of transmission.<sup>21</sup>

#### The Spread of Falsification of Hadith

As mentioned earlier, the falsification of the Prophet's hadith began to emerge and develop in the days of the Caliph Ali bin Talib r.a. In al-Adlabi's view, however, the falsification of the Prophet's hadith had already taken place at the time of the Prophet. Therefore he argues that in discussing the practice of hadith forgery at the time of the Prophet the subject should be limited into certain points, they are, early occurrence of the forgery, and the warnings of God and His Apostles about the falsification of hadith.<sup>22</sup> Related to this, al-Adlabi argues that the term hadith forgery is sometimes equated in meaning to lie to the Prophet, and sometimes to various efforts to make the Prophet's hadith mixed with some falsehood. When the first meaning is highlighted, it shows that falsification of hadith have occurred

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>19</sup> A sound proof to the argument that a great number of scholars give emphasis on the studies of *sanad* is the fact that they have more works on studies on criticism of *sanad* than on studies on *content*.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>20</sup> al-Adlabi, *op. cit.*, pp. 15-18.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>21</sup> Ibid ., p. 35

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>22</sup> al-Adlabi, op. cit., p. 40

since the time of the Prophet.<sup>23</sup> Furthermore, If the second meaning is brought to light, it indicates that falsification of the Prophet's hadith started taking place in the time of *al-fitnah al-kubra*, that is, by the time of the conflict between Ali and Mua'wiyah.<sup>24</sup>

Provided with al-Adlabi's analysis as mentioned above, the proposition of the hadith scholars that the falsification of hadith occurred in the time of Caliph Ali, more precisely by the time of *al-fitnah al-kubra*, is acceptable. So is also the proposition that the falsification of hadith content in the sense of inserting falsehood in the wordings of hadith started taking place around the end of the caliphate of Ali ra.

With the occurrence of hadith forgery at that time, it was difficult for the Muslims (especially subsequent to the case of *fitnah alkubra* and the time afterward) to recognize authentic and original hadith that really come from the Prophet (peace be upon him). Hence research on hadith from the aspect of content (and also *sanad*) became highly important. Without conductions of research, the Prophet's hadith would mix up with the nonhadith, and thus teachings of Islam will be filled with some issues that can mislead the Muslin society.

As for the warnings from Allah and the Prophet related to the efforts of falsifying the Prophet's hadith, al-Adlabi mentions two verses from the Qur'an, namely QS. al-An'am (6): 21 and QS. al-Zumar (39): 32 as follows:

Translation:

21. And who is more unjust than he who forges a lie against Allah or (he who) gives the lie to His communications; surely the unjust will not be successful.

Translation:

32. Who is then unjust than he who utters a lie against Allah and (he who) gives the lie to truth when it comes to him; is there not in the hell an abode for the unbelievers?

From the above verses it can be understood that lying against Allah comprises lying against His Apostle (the prophet), as the Prophet delivers messages from Him. Therefore, disbelief in the Prophet resembles disbelief in Allah the Most High. By referring to verses cited by al-Adlabi, it is clear that the Prophet's hadith serves as a source of Islamic teachings after the Holy Qur'an, and hence research on hadith, especially on hadith content, is very urgent to perform. The research is conducted in order to avoid employment of potulates that are derived from unauthentic hadith.

#### The spread of al-Wahm

The occurrence of *al-wahm* at the time of transmission of hadith is among the reasons that make investigations on *sanad* necessary. The term *al-wahm* is rooted from word of , وهم, عهم, مهم, مهم, word of , وهم, عهم, wrong judgment about something, to forget, to err, to doubt, to suspect, accusation, allegation.<sup>25</sup> The use of this term is meant for hadith narrators with regards to occurrence of any error the transmission. For example, when a narrator is found to lie, he is called *muttahamun bi al-kazib* (متهم بالكذب).<sup>26</sup> Thus, *al-wahm* terminologically means forms of mistakes in narrating hadith, which the author describes as the crucial issues in the hadith.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>23</sup> See *ibid*.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>24</sup> See ibid., p. 41

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>25</sup> Luwis Ma'luf, *al-Munjid fi al-Lugah* (Bairut: Dar al-Masyriq, 1978), h. 921.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>26</sup> Subhi al-Salih, op. cit., p. 421.

According to al-Adlabi, errors in the transmission of hadith have occurred since the time of the companions, and this is because the individuals of the companions are of ordinary human beings who are not free from error, although in general they have pure soul and strong memorizing capability. Therefore, there are chances that the companions committed errors or made mistakes in narrating some of the hadith.<sup>27</sup>

Ibn Umar was one of the Prophet's companions who once made a mistake in narrating. He narrated the details as follows:

حَدَّثَنَا خَلَفُ بْنُ هِشَامٍ وَأَبُو الرَّبِيعِ الزَّهْرَانِيُّ جَمِيعًا عَنْ حَمَّادٍ قَالَ عَنْ هِشَامٍ بْنِ عُرْوَةَ عَنْ أَبِيهِ قَالَ ذُكِرَ عِنْدَ عَائِشَةَ قَوْلُ ابْنِ عُمَرَ الْمَيِّتُ يُعَذَّبُ بِبُكَاءِ أَهْلِهِ عَلَيْهِ فَقَالَتْ أَنَّهُ وَهْمٌ فِيْ رِوَايَةِ هَذَا الْحَدِيْثِ إِذْ مَاتَ جَارُ يَهُوْدِيُ وَأَهْلُهُ يَبْكُوْنَ عَلَيْهِ فَأَخْبَرَ النَّبِيُّ أَنَّهُ يُعَذِّبُ وَأَنَّ أَهْلَهُ يَبْكُوْنَ عَلَيْهِ.<sup>82</sup>

#### Translation:

Khalaf bin Hisyim and Ab al-Rabi' al-Zahraniy narrated to us, from Hammad, from Hisyam ibn' Urwah, from his father, he said; This hadith was mentioned in the presence of Aisha from the words of Ibn 'Umar that "a dead person will be tortured because of his family's crying". Then Aisyah that he (Ibn 'Umar) narrated mistaken in this, and the true narration (according to Aisha) was that when a Jewish neighbor died and his family wept, then the Prophet notified (said) that the man was tortured because of such attitude of his family.

From the above case, it is clear that Aisha has performed a criticism of hadith content once narrated by Ibn Umar, as Aisha assumed that Ibn Umar was mistaken. In relation to the above, al-Adlabi furthermore explains that the companions, upon hearing a narration that is not in accordance with what they knew of the Prophet, would immediately respond to explain the errors occurring in the narration.<sup>29</sup> Additionally, al-Adlabi explains that there is no doubt on the preposition that at the post companion era more mistakes took place, as by this time carefulness has been weakened.<sup>30</sup> With reference to al-Adlabi's explanation, it can be understood that research on hadith content is necessary in order to avoid errors that occurred during the transmission of hadith.

# Benchmarks of the Methodology of Criticism of Hadith Content in determining Hadith Quality

Most scholars agree, including al-Adlabi, that the research on content should be conducted subsequent to research on *sanad*, but they disagree on the benchmarks for the validity of content itself. In other words, standard criteria for the validity of hadith content according hadith scholars are varied. Such differences may be caused by differences in background, the tools employed, the issues, as well as the community existing at that time.

According to al-Bagdadi (d. 1072 CE), as quoted by al-Adlabi, a content of a hadith can only be considered *maqbul* (that is, accepted to be valid) when it fulfills certain conditions: It is not contrary to reason, It is not against the law of the Qur'anic, It does not conflict with the prophet's hadith that have been agreed upon, It is not contrary to the practice that has been agreed upon by Salaf Scholars, It does not contradict with the laws that have been certain; and It does not contradict with *ahad* hadith of stronger validity.<sup>31</sup>

With regard to the benchmarks to examine invalid hadith content, scholars suggest different

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>27</sup> Al-Adlabi, op. cit., p. 68

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>28</sup> Abu Husayn Muslim Ibn Hajjaj al-Qusyayri Al-Naisaburi, Sahih Muslim (CD. Room), kitab al-janaiz, hadith number 1546

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>29</sup> al-Adlabi, op. cit., p. 69

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>30</sup> For further elaboration, see *ibid.*, p. 75

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>31</sup> Ibid., p. 236

opinions. Ibn al-Jawzi (d. 597 AH / 1210 AD), for example; argues with a fairly short statement that any hadith contrary to reason or contrary to the principal provisions of the Islam, then it should be known that the hadith is false (*mawdhu'*),<sup>32</sup> because the Prophet Muhammad would never determine any points contrary to common sense, and this applies as well on the provisions of the religion, such as regarding faith and worship.

Some other scholars say about this subject in more details. Judging from their level of accuracy, certain details of the benchmarks need to be questioned. However, for general reference materials, al-Adalbi suggests the criteria for weak hadith content, namely; containing excessive repayment and threats, which are impossible to come from the Prophet. Containing aspects contradictory to the sense perception, Not firm in terms of wordings and seems to be "intoxicating" Obviously contradictive with an authentic hadith and Indicating that the Prophet performed a conduct in front of his companions and they agree to conceal it in the sense not narrate it. A hadith would fail by itself as it does not indicate the Prophet's saying, The formulation of the wordings is nothing like those pronounced by the Prophets, whereas sayings of the Prophet is also revelation, consisting of unclear historical data and Identical to the information obtained from (the wordings of) a doctor. The wordings are contradictive to a lot of evidence, Contrary to the Qur'anic verses and consisting of a number of signs that indicate its invalidity. 33

The 12 general standards of *ma'ayir naqd alcontent* in al-Adlabi's description as stated above are furthermore classified into four main points, they are: 1) it does not conflict with the instructions of the Qur'an; 2) it does not conflict with more authentic hadith; 3)

it does not conflict with common sense and history; 4) the composition of its wording does not show the characteristics of prophetic words.<sup>34</sup> From this point it is understood that al-Adlabi takes proportionate attitude in determining the benchmarks for the validity of hadith content. He set out only four criteria, but these four criteria cover a wide range of criteria established by other scholars such as al-Bagdadi and Ibn al-Jawziy as mentioned previously. For more details, the four criteria for standards of hadith content criticism will be outlined as follows:

# Not contradictive with the instructions of the Qur'an

Apparently, the critics of hadith content agree that being non-contradictive to the instructions of al-Qur'an should make the first standard in determining the validity of a hadith content. Hence to determine the quality of hadith content, it should be in accordance with the principles of al-Qur`an.

In its application, if a hadith that seems to conflict with al-Qur'an is found, it can be highlighted in two aspects. First, from the aspect of *wurud*. The Qur'an is counted *qat'iy al-wurud*, while the Prophet's tradition is *zanniy al-wurud*, except the *mutawatir* hadith. In this means, the *zanny* must be rejected. Second, from the aspect of *dalalah*. Both the Qur'an and hadith are sometimes counted *qat'iy al-dalalah* and sometimes *zanniy al-dalalah*. In such cases, where the two texts contradict each other, then both equally must not contain the possibility of *takwil*. If both are possible to be combine (*al-jam*), then both are acceptable.

With the method of criticism of content as mentioned above, it does allow differences of opinion among the scholars, which then brings about a diversity of *ijtihad*. In this case, it is possible that certain scholars or certain schools reject particular hadith, as they count it contradicting the

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>32</sup> Such is the opinion of Ibn al-Jawzi cited byal-Adlabi, *ibid.*, p. 237. See also Ab- Fajr `Abd al-Rahman bin Ali bin al-Jawzi, *Kitab al-Mawduat*, vol I (Beirut: Dar al-Fikr, 1403H/1983 M), p. 106

<sup>33</sup> Ibid., pp. 237-238

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>34</sup> Ibid.

verses of the Qur'an, whereas other scholars accept it on the basis of their *ijtihad*, by means of *aljam*.

#### Not contradictive with more authentic hadith

If a narration that is *marfu*' to the Prophet needs to be rejected, because it is contradictive to a more authentic hadith, the criteria that must be fulfilled comprise: First, there is no possibility to combine them, but when this method is applicable, then there is no need to reject any of them. Furthermore, when there is still a contradiction between the two, then the method employed is to make *tarjih*. Second, the hadith to be applied as basis for rejecting another hadith should be *mutawatir*. It is quite logical if the *zanniy* is rejected, for it is contradictive to the *qat'iy*.

# Not contradictive with common sense and history

What is meant by common sense here is to be in line with the teachings of the Qur'an and authentic hadith. With reason or common sense scholars have rooms for *ijtihad*. It is possible that certain scholars determine the quality of a hadith to be authentic, and some other refuse a hadith as they judge it contradictory to reason. In such cases, the standards and conditions for the validity of a hadith should be clarified in terms of narration, and preferably reason should not be applied to quickly reject a hadith merely because there is a light syubhat. This is also because the words of the Apostle are not difficult to be understood by reason. Furthermore, when a narration is found contrary to the senses, practically narration is not valid, and if there is a narration that is at odds with the history, and if in fact the history is supported by strong evidence, then the narration can be confronted with ahad hadith, because ahad hadith is usually relative.

## The composition of the wording does not show the characteristics of prophetic words.

Sometimes a story comes from the Prophet, not in contradiction with the text of the Qur'an or authentic hadith, reason, senses, and history, but its narration does not comprise characteristics of prophetic wordings. A narration of such case is not acceptable. To determine the characteristics of the wordings that do not come from the Prophet, there are three criteria proposed, namely; there is an overlap in the language; it contains inappropriate choice of words; or it resembles words of scholars of Khalaf.

# Analysis of al-Adlabi's Methodology of Hadith Content Criticism.

Al-Adlabi has successfully established standards for assessment for validity of hadith content, thus it can be affirmed that implementation of the four standards for hadith content criticism proposed by al-Adlabi will help researchers in determining the quality of the hadith investigated. Since studies on hadith content is of complex pursue, then in addition to implementing the standards mentioned above, a researcher should also meet certain conditions which, to the author's view comprise aspects such as: to have an expertise in the field of hadith; to have a broad knowledge about the teachings of Islam; to have an enlightened mind (intelligent) so as to comprehend knowledge accurately; and to have a high scientific tradition in accordance with the guidance of the Qur'an and hadith

These requirements are not to exaggerate, provided that research on hadith content is an activity that involves quite a lot of references and requires adequate insight. On the other hand, in conducting research on the Prophet's hadith, a researcher bears heavy burden and responsibility. This is due to the fact that a hadith is only qualified valid, in this case the quality of validity *li zatih*, when both the chains of transmission (*sanad*) and the content (*matan*) of the hadith are equally qualified valid.

Therefore, a hadith that has a valid *sanad* but invalid content, or otherwise a weak *sanad* but a valid content, cannot be qualified as an authentic hadith. This implies that the criticism of hadith content is considered essential after the quality of the *sanad* of the content has been verified to be authentic. For the *sanad* of severe weakness, its content does not need to be investigated for the reason that it will not give benefit on the validity if the hadith.

In this manner, in conducting an activity of criticism of content (*naqd al-matn*), the researcher should have a clear mind and sincerity to perform it in the mane of Allah in order that the determination of the quality of the hadith is not to benefit certain personal or group interests, but rather for the sake of religion. In addition, researcher should refer to the standards of validity of hadith content, which have been established by the hadith scholars, including Salah al-Din bin Ahmad al-Adlabi.

#### Conclusion

From the above description, some points of conclusions are pointed as follows al-Adlabi is a hadith scholar who had a lot of influence on the research methodology for hadith *content*. In his work entitled *Manhaj Naqd al-Matn 'Inda 'Ulama al-Hadith al-Nabawiy*, al-Adlabi outlines that background for the urgency of research methodology for hadith content comprises two factors, namely, the spread of falsification of hadith at the time of transmission, and the spread of *al-wahm*, that is, mistakes that take place in the transmission of hadith. To determine the quality of a hadith content, al-Adlabi proposes four standards for measurement of hadith content validity, they are; a) it does not conflict with the instructions of the Qur'an; d) it does not conflict with more authentic hadith; c) it does not conflict with common sense and history; d) the composition of its wording does not show the characteristics of prophetic words. Al-Adlabi's thought on methodology of hadith content criticism, seems to be urgent to discuss further. Correspondingly, further study and further elaboration of his thought is necessary in order to provide more accurate, constructive, and comprehensive thoughts. A discussion of the methodology of hadith content criticism put forward by al-Adlabi is very useful in for researchers in determining the quality of the hadith. Therefore, the activity of hadith content criticism has a quite urgent and essential position, given that the quality of a hadith is closely related to its accuracy, whereas the accuracy of the hadith consisted in hadith books is partly acceptable and partly rejected. This implies that research on hadith is essentially necessary to prevent implementations of hadith that is attributed to the Prophet (peace be upon him) whereas in fact it does not come from the Prophet and its validity cannot be verified.

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