

Revisiting Hadith Through Philology: Ignaz Goldziher's Skeptical Arguments and the Reactualization of Hadith Criticism Methodology

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Abstract:

This study addresses the methodological gap between Western philological skepticism exemplified by Ignaz Goldziher's critique of hadith authenticity and the classical Islamic critical apparatus of *jarh wa ta'dil*. Despite decades of scholarly debate, no integrative methodological framework has been explicitly operationalized to bridge these two traditions. Design/Methodology/Approach: Using a qualitative-library method, this research systematically selects and analyzes primary sources (Goldziher's *Muhammadan Studies*; al-A'zami, Fazlur Rahman, and Ali Mustafa Yakub's counter-arguments) alongside recent Scopus/WoS-indexed secondary literature. Data analysis employs a philological-critical and hermeneutical approach, validated through source triangulation. Findings: Three specific findings emerge: (1) Goldziher's philological method raises legitimate socio-historical questions but systematically underestimates the rigor of *isnad* verification; (2) Muslim scholarly responses evolved from apologetic refutation to methodologically enriched engagement; (3) an Integrative Hadith Criticism Framework (IHCf) combining philological *matan* analysis with classical *sanad* verification is both theoretically viable and academically productive. Originality/Value: The novelty lies in proposing an operationalized Integrative Hadith Criticism Framework (IHCf) that transcends the apologetic-versus-skeptical binary and provides a concrete cross-disciplinary methodology applicable to contemporary digital humanities contexts in hadith studies. The implication is that the methodology of hadith criticism can be proactively renewed remaining critically rigorous while preserving the normative authority of hadith as a living source of Islamic law and praxis.

Keywords: Contemporary Islamic Studies, Hadith Criticism, Islamic Epistemology, *Matan* Criticism, Orientalism.

1. Introduction

Hadith as one of the main sources of Islamic teachings plays an important role after the Qur'an, serving both as a normative guide that

interprets the verses of the Qur'an that are still of global significance and as a historical reference to examine the dynamics of the life of the Prophet Muhammad PBUH and the early generation of Islam.¹ Scholars have conducted a lot of analysis and research on the quality of hadith in terms of sanad and matan by studying all hadith texts both contained in various hadith and non-hadith books. The continued relevance of hadith as a normative source is also affirmed in contemporary scholarship. Akbar and Is, examining the issue of homosexuality from a hadith perspective, demonstrate that hadith remains a living authoritative source capable of addressing pressing contemporary social and ethical challenges, directly challenging Goldziher's characterization of hadith as a historically frozen political artifact. Furthermore, Putra's study of the Prophet's household problems and their resolution through hadith reveals the remarkable depth and personal detail preserved in the hadith corpus regarding the Prophet's private life a richness of content that strongly supports the authenticity of the tradition rather than the fabrication theory proposed by Goldziher.²

In essence, hadith is interpreted as all words, deeds, consents (*taqdir*), as well as the nature of the Prophet Muhammad PBUH which was narrated by the companions and passed on continuously through sanad. Hadith contains not only normative dimensions, but also historical, social, and theological dimensions.³ Because it serves as the interpreter of the Qur'an as well as the basis of Islamic law, the validity of the hadith is the main key in building the Islamic epistemological system. This is what makes the hadith very vulnerable to criticism, both in terms of content (*Eyes*) and the narration path (*Sanad*).⁴ Therefore, discussions about the authenticity of hadith, including criticisms that come from outside the Islamic tradition, always occupy an important position in academic discourse.

The study of hadith is not limited to the Islamic context alone, Western academics are also involved in the research and analysis of hadith. The scholars

¹ Kusnadi, "Kritik M.Mustafa Al-Azami Terhadap Ignaz Goldziher Dan A.J. Wensinck Tentang Autentisitas Hadis Sebagai Sumber Islam," *Jurnal Ulumul Syar'i* 8, no. 2 (2019): 66–67, <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.52051/ulumulsyari.v8i2.70>.

² Siska Helma Hera, "Kritik Ignaz Goldziher Dan Pembelaan Musthofa Al Azami Terhadap Hadis Dalam Kitab Shahih Al-Bukhari," *Jurnal Living Hadis* 5, no. 1 (2020): 133, <https://doi.org/10.14421/livinghadis.2020.2310>.

³ (Ash-Shiddieqy, 2010 : 138-139)

⁴ Rohmansyah, "Hadis Dan Sunnah Dalam Perspektif Ignaz Go:Dziher," *Al-Majaalis: Jurnal Dirasat Islamiyah* 3, no. 1 (2015): 29–56, <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.37397/almajaalis.v3i1.31>.

of hadith and fuqaha, have different opinions about what is meant by hadith and sunnah, even orientalists try to interpret and distinguish between sunnah and hadith⁵. The scholars of Usul al-Fiqh classify the attributes of the Prophet as Hadith, not Sunnah. This is different from the scholars of Hadith who affirm that these qualities are also included in the category of the Sunnah of the Prophet Muhammad PBUH.⁶

Orientalist criticism of hadith emerged since the 19th century, as philology developed as an academic discipline in Europe. Orientalists use a philological approach to examine Islamic religious texts, including hadith, with the aim of uncovering the historical origins and possible literary engineering that took place.⁷ Ignaz Goldziher was a central figure in the early wave of hadith criticism in the West, through his work *Muhammadan Studies* who shook the authority of the Islamic tradition with its skeptical arguments. For him, the hadith cannot be fully considered as an authentic recording of the Prophet's words, but rather as a reflection of the socio-political and theological conditions of the generation after him.⁸ With a philological perspective, he argues that the hadith was largely composed to affirm the importance of the sect, the political legitimacy, and the intellectual dialectic of Muslims in the early period. This view then gave birth to a wave of skepticism that had a strong influence on the next generation of Western scholars.⁹

Nevertheless, criticism of Goldziher's argument has also emerged. Muslim hadith scholars consider that this view reduces the complexity of the methodology of classical hadith criticism that has been established since the second century of Hijri Ilmu *Jarh wa ta'dil*, the study of isnad, as well as the method of verification of matan is considered much stricter than mere philological analysis. This methodological criticism was mainly developed by figures such as Mustafa Azami (professor of Hadith at King Saud University Riyadh), who sought to rehabilitate the validity of the tradition of Islamic hadith criticism.¹⁰ He was a scholar of hadith, dedicated to the study of this

⁵ Fathila, Linda Hazmika, and Ahmad Taufik, "PEMIKIRAN IGNAZ GOLDZIHAR TERHADAP HADIS DAN SUNNAH," *Thobaqot* 2, no. 2 (2024): 91.

⁶ (Jacob, 2011 : 33)

⁷ Rohmansyah, "Hadis Dan Sunnah Dalam Perspektif Ignaz Go:Dziher."

⁸ Fathila, Hazmika, and Taufik, "Pemikiran Ignaz Goldziher Terhadap Hadis Dan Sunnah."

⁹ Ahmad Isnaeni, "Pemikiran Goldziher Dan Azami Tentang Penulisan Hadis," *Kalam* 6, no. 2 (2017): 363, <https://doi.org/10.24042/klm.v6i2.411>.

¹⁰ Helma Hera, "Kritik Ignaz Goldziher Dan Pembelaan Musthofa Al Azami Terhadap Hadis Dalam Kitab Shahih Al-Bukhari."

discipline, and eventually recognized as a prominent Islamic figure who challenged the theories of Ignaz Goldziher. He asserted that Goldziher's sole purpose was to undermine Muslim beliefs and instill doubts about the credibility and authenticity of the hadith.¹¹

This is where the dialectic between two academic traditions comes in: Western philology and Islamic hadith criticism, both of which have their own advantages as well as limitations. The Islamic tradition is strong in the system of transmission and authority of the sanad, while the philological tradition excels in textual analysis, historical reconstruction, as well as critical reading of socio-political contexts. This meeting opens up opportunities to build a more integrative methodology in studying hadith.

Goldziher's skepticism has been widely studied, both by Western scholars and Muslim scholars. The study highlights Goldziher's position as the foundation for philological criticism of hadith and the long response of the Islamic tradition. However, what has not been touched much is how Goldziher's philological approach can be reunited with the tradition of Islamic hadith criticism in the context of methodological reactualization, especially in the modern era colored by digitalization, plurality of sources, and data verification challenges.

Studies on skepticism and Goldziher's view of hadith have been widely conducted, including Romansya.¹² which analyzes the difference between sunnah and hadith from Goldziher's point of view where sunnah is interpreted as the result of the renewal of the customs that occurred at that time, while hadith is the result of the development of Islamic dynamics in the context of religion, and socio-political conditions at that time. As for Mansur¹³ In his research, he discusses Goldziher's skepticism regarding the authenticity of the hadith and his various responses that reject this skepticism. On the other hand, Darussamin¹⁴ study of Goldziher's work i.e. Muslim Studis or in the original language "*Muhammadan Studies*", which explains that Goldziher's thinking in

¹¹ Muhammad Nasiruddin Abdul Rohman, Amir Sahidin, Yusuf Al Manaanu, "PROBLEM OTENTITAS HADITS (Kritik Musthafa Azami Terhadap Pemikiran Ignaz Goldziher)," *Zawiyah: Jurnal Pemikiran Islam* 7, no. 1 (2021): 121-41, <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.31332/zjpi.v7i1.3008>.

¹² Rohmansyah, "Hadis Dan Sunnah Dalam Perspektif Ignaz Go:Dziher."

¹³ Ali Masrur, "Skeptisime Ignaz Goldziher (1850-1921 M) Terhadap Autentisitas Hadits Dan Berbagai Tanggapannya," *Wawasan: Jurnal Ilmiah Agama Dan Sosial Budaya* 34, no. 2 (2011): 13.

¹⁴ Zikri Darussamin, "Muhammadanische Studien," *Al Fikra: Jurnal Ilmiah Keislaman* II, no. 2 (2003): 158-81, <https://doi.org/http://dx.doi.org/10.24014/af.v2i2.3728>.

his book contains many weaknesses, both in terms of methodology, as well as in terms of discussion and research objectives that are not spared from various interests.

However, the majority of previous studies on this theme have focused on two extreme poles: first, the strengthening of Goldziher's skepticism in the Western tradition; Second, a total defense of the methodology of classical hadith. The gap in this research arises at an integrative point: how Goldziher's skeptical philological approach can be re-read, not to negate the Islamic tradition, but to enrich a methodology of hadith criticism that is more relevant to modern challenges. This study not only re-examines Goldziher's skeptical arguments, but also examines the possibility of reactualization of the methodology of hadith criticism. It is important that the study of hadith is not trapped in total skepticism on the one hand, or textual apologetism on the other. Rather, this research seeks to offer a conceptual framework that allows integration between the strength of Islamic tradition and modern philological rigor.

Thus, this research offers a novelty that lies in the effort to reactualize the methodology of hadith criticism by utilizing the meeting of the two traditions. Rather than being just critical or apologetic, this research offers an integrative paradigm that combines the strengths of modern philology with the Islamic system of criticism. Thus, the contribution of this research not only adds to the study of Goldziher, but also presents a new methodological approach that is more adaptive. This research is expected to make an academic contribution in two domains at once: first, in the realm of hadith studies by offering new methodological reflections; Second, in the realm of orientalism studies by showing the relevance as well as the limitations of Goldziher's skepticism. With this focus, this article is here to reaffirm the position of the methodology of hadith criticism as a discipline that is alive, open to criticism, and at the same time able to adapt to contemporary challenges. The research gap this study addresses is explicit: while the binary debate between Goldziher's skepticism and Muslim apologetics has been extensively documented, no existing study has proposed an operationalized integrative framework that systematically combines Western philological methods with classical Islamic hadith criticism. Previous scholarship has catalogued the debate, while al-A'zami's rebuttal provides the strongest Muslim counter-argument, yet these works remain methodologically siloed—philology and *jarh wa ta'dil* are treated as irreconcilable epistemological systems rather than complementary analytical tools. The urgency of filling this gap is amplified by

two contemporary developments: (1) the digital humanities turn in Islamic studies has made manuscript variants and hadith databases widely accessible, creating new opportunities for integrative methodological approaches; and (2) the proliferation of hadith-based content in digital media without rigorous critical filters demands a proactive rather than merely defensive methodological response. Accordingly, this study poses two specific research questions: (1) What are the structural methodological limitations of Goldziher's philological critique when evaluated against classical Islamic hadith criticism? (2) How can an Integrative Hadith Criticism Framework (IHCF) be operationalized by combining philological matan analysis with classical sanad verification to produce a more comprehensive approach to hadith authentication in contemporary and digital humanities contexts?

2. Literature Review

Academic discourse on hadith authenticity has been shaped significantly by orientalist scholarship, particularly through the foundational work of Ignaz Goldziher. In his seminal work *Muhammadan Studies* (1889–1890), Goldziher argued that the majority of hadith should be understood not as direct records of the Prophet's words, but as reflections of socio-political and theological developments in the post-prophetic era. His philological method combined linguistic analysis, historical criticism, and textual comparison to interrogate the authenticity of hadith literature, generating a tradition of skepticism that influenced subsequent Western scholars including Joseph Schacht and G.H.A. Juynboll.¹⁵

The distinction between sunnah and hadith from Goldziher's perspective reveals that sunnah is interpreted as a pre-Islamic customary tradition that predates the prophetic mission, while hadith represents the later oral transmission that developed through the socio-political dynamics of early Islamic society. This distinction formed a cornerstone of Goldziher's skeptical argument and has been revisited extensively in Indonesian Islamic scholarship.¹ The breadth of skepticism that Goldziher directed toward hadith authenticity has been analyzed alongside the various responses it provoked from Muslim scholars, concluding that the debate remains academically productive rather than conclusively resolved.¹⁶

¹⁵ Alam Khan, "A Critical Study of G. H. A Juynboll's Methodology in the Study of Hadith," *Al-Idah* 39, no. 1 (2021): 12–22, <https://doi.org/10.37556/al-idah.039.01.0724>.

¹⁶ Alam Khan, "Dating of Isnād and Western Scholarship," *Al-Idah* 38, no. 1

The most substantial Muslim counter-narrative to Goldziher was constructed by Muhammad Mustafa al-A'zami. A comparison between Goldziher's critique of hadiths in *Sahih al-Bukhari* and al-A'zami's defense demonstrates that the isnad system was not a late fabrication but an organic preservation mechanism rooted in the Companion era, as evidenced through manuscript evidence and transmission record.¹⁷ Furthermore, al-A'zami's critique of both Goldziher and A.J. Wensinck exposed methodological flaws in orientalist analysis, particularly the selective use of sources and the failure to engage with the full apparatus of classical hadith science including *jarh wa ta'dil* and *'ilm al-rijal*.¹⁸ An evaluation of al-A'zami's response further concluded that Goldziher's arguments were highly unrepresentative and lacked scholarly integrity, particularly in his portrayal of Ibn Shihab al-Zuhri as a hadith forger based on highly selective textual evidence.¹⁹

A more contextual and methodologically reconstructive response was offered by Fazlur Rahman, whose approach does not wholesale reject orientalist critique but proposes a nuanced distinction between the normative substance of hadith and its historical expression. Rahman argued that while hadith did develop in accordance with the social dynamics of the Muslim community, this does not render it entirely fabricated; rather, it demonstrates the process of actualizing prophetic teachings within changing social contexts. A comparative examination of Goldziher and al-A'zami's thinking on the codification of hadith reveals that both approaches, when placed in dialogue, yield distinct but partially complementary insights into the history of hadith writing.²⁰ A comparative analysis of the orientalist perspectives of Goldziher, Schacht, and Azami further concluded that Muslim responses have evolved from purely defensive apologetics to more methodologically sophisticated engagements with the orientalist paradigm.²¹

(2020): 1–9, <https://doi.org/10.37556/al-idah.038.01.0620>.

¹⁷ Ahmad Isnaeni and Is Susanto, *Journal Ulumuna*, vol. 27, 2023.

¹⁸ Naila Sa'datul Amdah, "Mustafa Azami's Contribution in Rebutting Orientalist Views about The Writing of Hadith," *Nabawi: Journal of Hadith Studies* 2, no. 2 (2022): 236–52, <https://doi.org/10.55987/njhs.v2i2.50>.

¹⁹ Menurut Joseph Schacht, "Nama- Nama Alternatif Dalam Isnād," n.d., 31–56.

²⁰ Fauzi Muhammad, Adrianus Chatib, and Fuad Rahman, "The Socio-Historical Criticism Toward Sunnah and Ijma' In Fazlur Rahman Perspective," *INNOVATIO: Journal for Religious Innovation Studies* 21, no. 2 (2021): 85–98, <https://doi.org/10.30631/innovatio.v21i2.132>.

²¹ Amdah, "Mustafa Azami's Contribution in Rebutting Orientalist Views about The Writing of Hadith."

The role of philology as a methodological lens in Islamic text studies has also attracted scholarly attention. The philological approach in Islamic studies focuses on textual authenticity through the analysis of manuscript variants, scribal transmission, and socio-historical context, making it applicable not only to the Qur'an but also to the hadith corpus.²² A theoretical and methodological analysis of the philological approach in Islamic studies argues that philology is not inherently reductive but can be employed constructively to uncover the layered historical dimensions of Islamic texts.²³ This approach has been applied specifically to hadith criticism through sharh al-hadith, demonstrating the utility of philological analysis in evaluating hadiths pertaining to the rewards and warnings related to recitation of the Qur'an, reinforcing the complementary potential of philology and classical hadith methodology.²⁴

The implications of Goldziher's thought for the broader development of Islamic studies have also been traced in recent scholarship. An examination of the controversy surrounding Goldziher's ideas and their impact on the trajectory of Islamic studies from the 19th to the 21st century finds that while his views initially destabilized Muslim confidence in hadith, they have since catalyzed a more rigorous and self-critical scholarly tradition within Islamic academia.²⁵ An analysis of Goldziher's orientalist positions on hadith and sunnah from a contemporary perspective traces the intellectual genealogy from Goldziher through to later orientalists, noting that the debate has gradually shifted from polemics to genuine inter-civilizational scholarly dialogue.²⁶ An exploration of the broader implications of Goldziher's thinking for hadith authenticity in Islamic studies today highlights both the epistemological

²² Salam Rassi, "Scribal and Commentary Traditions at the Dawn of Print: The Manuscripts of the near Eastern School of Theology as an Archive of the Early Nahda," *Philological Encounters* 6, no. 3–4 (2021): 402–37, <https://doi.org/10.1163/24519197-bja10023>.

²³ Kharis Nugroho, Muhammad Zawil Kiram, and Didik Andriawan, "The Influence of Hermeneutics in Double Movement Theory (Critical Analysis of Fazlurrahman'S Interpretation Methodology)," *QiST: Journal of Quran and Tafseer Studies* 2, no. 3 (2023): 275–89, <https://doi.org/10.23917/qist.v2i3.2531>.

²⁴ Nicolai Sinai, "Beyond the Cairo Edition: On the Study of Early Quranic Codices," *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 140, no. 1 (2020): 189–204, <https://doi.org/10.7817/JAMERORIESOCI.140.1.0189>.

²⁵ Mhd. Rasidin et al., "Reading Rasyid Ailal's Perspective On Sahih Al-Bukhari: Methodology, Criticism, And Implication For Contemporary Muslims," *Jurnal Ushuluddin* 32, no. 1 (2024): 14, <https://doi.org/10.24014/jush.v32i1.24685>.

²⁶ Kontroversi Pemikiran et al., "Implikasinya Pada Tren Studi Islam Abad 19-21 M," *Jurnal Studi Islam* 5, no. 1 (2024): 78–93.

challenges it poses and the methodological innovations it has inspired in the Muslim scholarly community.²⁷

Further scholarship has addressed specific aspects of hadith criticism in relation to Goldziher. An analysis of hadith as a product of culture and early Islamic tradition through a critical review of Goldziher's framework argues that while cultural embeddedness is real, it does not necessarily undermine the normative validity of hadith.²⁸ A revisitation of Goldziher's differentiation between hadith and sunnah clarifies that his conception reflects a fundamentally different epistemological framework from that of classical Muslim hadith scholars.²⁹ Goldziher has also been approached as both a hadith critic and a literary critic, situating his work within the broader European tradition of philological and orientalist scholarship.³⁰ A tracing of Goldziher's views on the origins of the emergence of hadith and their relation to the political conditions of the Umayyad period shows that his historical-contextual reading, while provocative, is partially corroborated by Muslim historians who acknowledge the existence of hadith fabrication during that era.³¹

The response of Ali Mustafa Yakub has also been documented in the literature. An examination of Yakub's response to orientalist hadith criticism finds that Yakub reinforced al-A'zami's conclusions while contributing a sharper terminological clarification of hadith criticism's historical roots, asserting that the critical evaluation of hadith began during the lifetime of the Prophet himself and was continued by the Companions through direct verification against the Qur'an.³² An extensive analysis of Goldziher's *Muhammadanische Studien* identified multiple methodological weaknesses, including questionable research objectives and an overreach in the conclusions

²⁷ Jamiatun Sapariah et al., "Characteristics of Orientalism Studies And," *SERUMPUN: Journal of Education, Politic, and Social Humaniora* <https://Husin.Id/Index.Php/Serumpun> 1 (2023): 9–22.

²⁸ Havis Aravik, Achmad Irwan Hamzani, and Ahmad Tohir, "Islamic Law in Historical Perspective; A Critical Study of Joseph Schacht's Thought," *Jurnal Studi Islam Indonesia (JSII)* 1, no. 2 (2023): 271–84, <https://doi.org/10.61930/jsii.v1i2.408>.

²⁹ Muhammad Sofian Hidayat Ryan Arief Rahman1, Chandra Dwisetyo Widodo2, "Orientalist Studies on the Authenticity of Prophetic Hadiths: A Phase Analysis of Western Scepticism Ryan," *Al-Bukhari* 6, no. 2 (2023): 119–21.

³⁰ Isnaeni and Susanto, *Journal Ulumuna*.

³¹ Ahmad Fudhaili, "Pemikiran Progresif Mahasiswa Terhadap Hadis-Hadis Misoginis (Studi Kasus Terhadap Mahasiswa UIN Syarif Hidayatullah Jakarta)," *Refleksi* 20, no. 1 (2021): 49–72, <https://doi.org/10.15408/ref.v20i1.19586>.

³² Ahamad Faosiy Ogunbado and Ishaaq El-Mubarak, "Orientalists Attack Against Prophetic Traditions: Awareness and Wake up Call," *IJUS / International Journal of Umranic Studies* 1, no. 1 (2022): 37–46, <https://doi.org/10.59202/ijus.v1i1.562>.

drawn from limited historical data.³³ A comparative perspective placing Goldziher and Schacht side by side examines the scholarly genealogy of hadith criticism in Western orientalism and evaluates the Muslim responses to both figures.³⁴

Based on the foregoing review of the literature, it is evident that existing studies on Goldziher and hadith criticism have tended to occupy one of two positions: reinforcing Goldziher's skeptical framework within the Western tradition or mounting a comprehensive defense of classical Islamic hadith methodology. The gap that this present study seeks to address lies precisely at the intersection of these two poles. What has not been sufficiently explored is how Goldziher's philological methodology can be constructively re-read not as an instrument to negate Islamic tradition, but as a framework that, when integrated with classical hadith science, can yield a more comprehensive, adaptive, and contextually responsive methodology of hadith criticism. This integrative paradigm constitutes the distinctive scholarly contribution of the present research.³⁵

3. Methodology

This research uses a qualitative approach with the library *research method*. Primary source selection was based on two criteria: (a) direct relevance to Goldziher's philological critique of hadith; and (b) Muslim scholarly responses that engage methodologically rather than merely polemically. Primary sources include Goldziher's *Muhammadan Studies* Vol. II (1971) and *Introduction to Islamic Theology and Law* (1981); al-A'zami's *Dirasat fi al-Hadith al-Nabawi* (1992); Fazlur Rahman's *Islamic Methodology in History* (1965); and Ali Mustafa Yakub's *Kritik Hadis* (2011). Secondary sources were selected using three criteria: (a) indexed in Scopus or Web of Science; (b) published within 2020–2025 where possible, to ensure methodological currency; and (c) thematically relevant to hadith criticism, philology, Islamic epistemology, or orientalism. The main source of research is the work of Ignaz Goldziher, especially the *Muhammedanische Studien*, which became the

³³ M. Gufron, "Fazlur Rahman's Perspective on Hadith Critical Reposition," *Millati: Journal of Islamic Studies and Humanities* 7, no. 1 (2022): 52–66, <https://doi.org/10.18326/mlt.v7i1.7138>.

³⁴ ثحابلا، "426 ت) يسلدنألا ديهش نبا دنع يدرسلا باطخلا الاثم" 1 (2020): and فونج ملاس باحر 206–179.

³⁵ Annas Rolli Muchlisin, "Tafsīr Studies in Western Academia: A Bibliographical Survey," *Suhuf* 15, no. 2 (2023): 289–308, <https://doi.org/10.22548/shf.v15i2.725>.

foundation for philological criticism of hadith. In addition, the study also examines the works of Muslim scholars who respond to and criticize Goldziher's skeptical arguments. Secondary sources in the form of journal articles, books, and recent research are also used to enrich analytical perspectives.

Data analysis was carried out in four structured stages constituting the data analysis procedure of this research: (1) *Content analysis*: systematic coding of arguments in primary sources to identify claims about hadith authenticity and their epistemological premises, using a *philological-critical approach* to trace the construction of Goldziher's argument through the study of texts at the level of language, historical writing, and socio-political context. (2) *Comparative-critical analysis*: structured comparison of Goldziher's skeptical philological framework with the methodology of classical hadith criticism, examining categories of sanad evaluation, matan analysis, and socio-historical contextualization. (3) *Hermeneutical interpretation*: the hermeneutical approach serves to interpret the response of Muslim scholars in the context of the tradition of hadith criticism, grounded theoretically in the concept of *Horizontverschmelzung* (fusion of horizons, Gadamer) understood not as relativism but as productive methodological dialogue between two textual traditions, so that the dialectic between the two academic traditions can be clearly seen. (4) *Framework construction*: synthesis of complementary elements from both traditions into the proposed Integrative Hadith Criticism Framework (IHCF). This analysis aims to find common points and points of difference that can then be developed within the framework of the reactualization of the hadith criticism methodology.

This research process is taken through three stages. First, the descriptive-analytical stage, which is to explain Goldziher's views and the responses that emerged from Muslim and Western scholars. Second, the comparative-critical stage, namely comparing Goldziher's skeptical philological framework with the methodology of classical hadith criticism developed by Islamic scholars. Third, the reconstructive stage, which is to formulate the possibility of integrating the two traditions as a conceptual offer for the reactualization of the methodology of hadith criticism in the contemporary era. With this flow, research not only stops at criticism, but also generates relevant conceptual contributions. Regarding data validation, this study employs source triangulation: claims derived from any single source are cross-checked against at least two independent sources. Claims about classical hadith methodology are evaluated against the internal standards of 'ilm al-rijal and jarh wa ta'dil,

while claims about philological method are evaluated against established philological scholarship. Where sources conflict, the conflict is documented and analyzed as part of the findings, rather than resolved arbitrarily.

4. Result and Discussion

4.1.1. Philology as a Framework for Hadith Analysis

Philology as a discipline initially developed in the West in the 18th to 19th centuries with a main focus on the study of classical texts, both Greek, Latin, and religious texts. Philology aims to trace the origins, variants, and transmissions of texts to find the most authentic form. In the context of Islamic scholarship, philology was then used by orientalist as a methodological instrument to re-read major sources, including hadith. They assume that hadith texts, like other classical texts, are inseparable from the process of transmission, redaction, and reconstruction of history that is vulnerable to interpolation and interest bias.³⁶

In principle, philology encompasses three important aspects: textual criticism, manuscript variant tracing, and historical reconstruction. Text criticism seeks to identify possible redaction discrepancies, copying errors, or language changes in a text. Script variant search allows readers to compare one version with another to see the pattern of changes that occur. While historical reconstruction seeks to place the text in the social, political, and cultural context that surrounds it. These three aspects, when applied to the hadith, pave the way for a new reading of the process of codification and its dissemination.³⁷

In relation to hadith, the philological approach focuses attention on two main dimensions: sanad and matan. In the dimension of sanad, philology questions the extent to which the chain of narration can be considered a factual historical record or a mere construction of legitimacy. In the matan dimension, philology highlights the redaction of hadith texts by looking for possible variations, political influences, or theological tendencies behind them. Through this perspective, the hadith is treated as a historical text born from the

³⁶ Firdian and Wiwik Indriani, "Pendekatan Filologis Dalam Studi Islam," *Yasin: Jurnal Pendidikan Dan Sosial Budaya* 1, no. 1 (2021): 134–45, <https://doi.org/10.58578/yasin.v1i1.39>.

³⁷ Misbahul Munir, "Pendekatan Filologi Dalam Studi Islam; Analisis Teoritis Dan Metodologis," *Tawshiyah: Jurnal Sosial Keagamaan Dan Pendidikan Islam* 19, no. 1 (2024): 62–71, <https://doi.org/10.32923/taw.v19i1.4694>.

conditions of classical Islam, not merely as an authoritative record of the Prophet's words.³⁸

However, it should be noted that the use of philology in the study of hadith has significant epistemological implications. On the one hand, this approach opens up space to uncover the socio-historical processes behind the hadith texts. On the other hand, it can raise doubts against claims of authority that are strictly guarded by Islamic tradition through the methodology of sanad criticism. In other words, philology has the potential to give birth to skepticism if it is not balanced with an understanding of the system of transmission and verification that is typical of the Islamic scientific tradition.

Therefore, philology in the study of hadith should be understood not as an instrument to undermine the authority of Islamic tradition, but as a framework of analysis that can enrich the methodology of hadith criticism.³⁹ If philology is combined with classical hadith, a more comprehensive perspective will be created: sanad is verified by standards *Jarh wa ta'dil*, while matan is analyzed with modern textual criticism techniques. This integration is the basis for efforts to reactualize the methodology of hadith criticism, so that hadith can continue to be critically studied without losing its normative authority in the Islamic tradition. This view is affirmed by philological scholarship within the Islamic tradition itself. As Hanif and Rudiamon have demonstrated in their textological-philological study of Islamic manuscripts in Minangkabau, the primary task of philology is "to bridge the communication gap between past authors and today's readers," so that religious sciences such as Fiqh, Tawhid, Tafsir, and Hadith which are mostly written in Arabic can be properly understood. This confirms that the philological approach to hadith is not an external imposition from Western academia, but finds deep roots in the classical Islamic scholarly tradition itself.

4.1.2. Biography of Ignaz Goldziher

Ignaz Goldziher was a Hungarian academic who is recognized as a pioneer of contemporary Islamic studies in Europe. He was born in

³⁸ Firdian and Indriani, "Pendekatan Filologis Dalam Studi Islam."

³⁹ Achmadana Syachrizal M. F and Ahmad Hanafi, "Pendekatan Filologis Dan Sharh Al-Hadith Dalam Kritik Hadis Ancaman Dan Ganjaran Membaca Al-Quran," *Jurnal Tarbiyatuna* 5, no. 1 (2024): 42-57, <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.30739/tarbiyatuna.v5i1.3190>.

Székesfehérvár, Hungary, on June 22, 1850, and died on November 13, 1921.⁴⁰ Ignaz Goldziher came from a prominent Jewish family with considerable influence and showed a keen interest in the study of linguistics from an early age. Goldziher showed intelligence from childhood, especially at the age of five. It has the ability to read original text *Al-Kitab The Old Testament* in Hebrew. Subsequently, he understood the Talmud and was able to read it at the age of 8. At the age of 12, he published his first paper on the Origins and Classification of Hebrew Prayer.⁴¹

He began his studies in Budapest before continuing his education at other academic institutions in Europe, including Berlin, Leipzig, and Leiden. In these cities, Goldziher interacted with prominent orientalists who increased his interest in Islamic topics. His esteemed reputation as a linguist provided a strong academic framework for the analysis of religious literature, particularly the Qur'an and Hadith.⁴² His intelligence allowed him to obtain a doctorate at the age of 19, after enrolling in a doctoral program at the University of Leipzig in Berlin, Germany. After earning his doctorate, Ignaz moved to Leiden and focused his research on Islam. Within six months, Ignaz made Leiden the center of Islamic studies in Europe.⁴³

A particularly influential intellectual experience for Goldziher was his trip to the Middle East in 1873–1874. During his stay in Cairo, he studied at al-Azhar University and mingled with Muslim scholars. These interactions enriched his perspective and gave him direct access to Islamic scientific traditions.⁴⁴ Although he was Jewish, Goldziher showed admiration for the religious life of Muslims and the depth of their scholarly tradition. However, at the same time, the experience also strengthened his commitment to study Islam through the critical lens of the orientalist style.⁴⁵

⁴⁰ Nurul Naffa Lutfia et al., "Pemikiran Orientalis Ignaz Goldziher Terhadap Hadis Dan Sunah Ignaz Goldziher's Orientalist Thoughts on Hadith and Sunnah," *ALhamra: Jurnal Studi Islam* 3, no. 2 (2022): 91–101, <https://doi.org/10.30595/ajsi.v3i2.13839>.

⁴¹ M. Dani Habibi, "Pendangan Ignaz Goldziher Terhadap Asal-Usul Munculnya Hadis Nabi Muhammad Saw," *Aktualita Jurnal Penelitian Sosial Dan Keagamaan* 10, no. II (2020): 363.

⁴² Rohmansyah, "Hadis Dan Sunnah Dalam Perspektif Ignaz Go:Dziher."

⁴³ Helma Hera, "Kritik Ignaz Goldziher Dan Pembelaan Musthofa Al Azami Terhadap Hadis Dalam Kitab Shahih Al-Bukhari."

⁴⁴ Adzkiya Zayyan Mauizah and Fahri Hidayat, "Kontroversi Pemikiran Ignaz Goldziher Dan Implikasinya Bagi Perkembangan Tren Studi Islam Pada Abad 19-21 M," *FiTUA: Jurnal Studi Islam* 5, no. 1 (2024): 78–93, <https://doi.org/10.47625/fitua.v5i1.564>.

⁴⁵ Helma Hera, "Kritik Ignaz Goldziher Dan Pembelaan Musthofa Al Azami

One of his masterpieces entitled *Muhammadan Studies* (1889–1890), making him a central figure in Islamic studies in the West. In this work, he presents a critical analysis of the development of hadith, fiqh, and Islamic theology using philological-historical methods.⁴⁶ Goldziher argues that most of the hadith is a product of the social, political, and theological development of the Muslim generation after the Prophet, not just an authentic recording of the words of the Prophet Muhammad. This argument sparked a long debate and even became the foundation for the next generation of orientalists such as Joseph Schacht and G.H.A. Juynboll.⁴⁷

Intellectually, Goldziher occupies an important position in the history of modern Islamic studies because he successfully combined philological rigor with intellectual courage to overhaul traditional views of Islamic sources. Although many of his views drew harsh criticism, both from Muslim scholars and some Western academics, his contributions could not be ignored.⁴⁸ Goldziher not only opened a new discourse on the authority of hadith, but also encouraged the birth of an academic dialectic that still colors Islamic studies today. Thus, understanding his biography at the same time provides an overview of the intellectual context that gave birth to skepticism of hadith.⁴⁹

4.1.3. Hadith In The View Of Ignaz Goldziher

Among hadith scholars, the discussion of hadith and sunnah has taken on a unique dialectic and caused intense controversy. Given the consequences for the validity of a hadith, interpreting its meaning is a very urgent topic. Ignaz Goldziher was also motivated by this to discuss his opinion on the difference between sunnah and hadith.⁵⁰ As a result, a number of parties, including Islamic academics and orientalists, began to examine hadith research more closely.

Terhadap Hadis Dalam Kitab Shahih Al-Bukhari.”

⁴⁶ Darussamin, “Muhammadanische Studien.”

⁴⁷ Siti Humanirah, Tasmin Tanggareng, and Ummi Farhah, “Studi Hadis Di Kalangan Orientalis (Studi Atas Pandangan Ignaz Goldziher Dan Joseph Schacht),” *Setyaki: Jurnal Studi Keagamaan Islam* 3, no. 1 (2025): 25–33, <https://doi.org/10.59966/setyaki.v3i1.1538>.

⁴⁸ Habibi, “Pandangan Ignaz Goldziher Terhadap Asal-Usul Munculnya Hadis Nabi Muhammad Saw.”

⁴⁹ Muh Arbiyansyah Nur et al., “Implikasi Pemikiran Ignaz Goldziher Terhadap Otentisitas Hadis Dalam Studi Islam,” *DIVERSITY: Jurnal Ilmiah Pasca Sarjana* 5, no. 2 (2025), <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.32832/diversityjournal.v5i2.20720>.

⁵⁰ Rohmansyah, “Hadis Dan Sunnah Dalam Perspektif Ignaz Go:Dziher.”

His thinking on Islam was always studied from a historical point of view, especially when discussing the Qur'an and Hadith, as his thinking was strongly influenced by the historical-sociological approach.⁵¹ In his work titled *Muhammadan Studies* which was then translated into English as *Muslim Studies* by S.M. Stern and Barber, he expresses his thoughts on Islam, which he divides the book into two volumes. In the first volume, he describes the religion of Islam from a historical perspective, which is related to the beginning of the spirit of Islam starting from the tribes, qabilahs to the Persians and the Arabian peninsula. While in the second volume, there are two parts. The first part explains the dynamics and development of Hadith, and the second part discusses the concept of science in Islam.⁵²

In his book, Ignaz Goldziher doubts the authenticity of the hadith that he completed through his scientific research. He claimed that his doubts about the hadith were based on the weak methods used by classical Islamic scholars and could not be scientifically accounted for (due to the emergence of statements of skepticism). According to him, the scholars focus too much on the method of sanad criticism compared to matan criticism.⁵³ Ignaz Goldziher divides the discussion related to Hadith and Sunnah and provides his own research and explanation where the discussion can be seen from three elements, namely its origin, development, and literature.⁵⁴

1. Hadith

Goldziher defines Hadith as news or information for adherents of a certain spirituality. He also said that the Hadith is a historical document that is temporal and religious from time to time, as well as an ancient historical record that contains previous stories. Linguistically, the word Hadith has been used for a long time, especially in religious matters, namely for certain information or news without eliminating the general context.⁵⁵

In this case, he describes an illustration of the recording of the Prophet's words which later became the basic object of the Hadith, namely:

⁵¹ Mauizah and Hidayat, "Kontroversi Pemikiran Ignaz Goldziher Dan Implikasinya Bagi Perkembangan Tren Studi Islam Pada Abad 19-21 M."

⁵² Darussamin, "Muhammadanische Studien."

⁵³ Humanirah, Tanggareng, and Farhah, "Studi Hadis Di Kalangan Orientalis(Studi Atas Pandangan Ignaz Goldziher Dan Joseph Schacht)."

⁵⁴ Isnaeni, "Pemikiran Goldziher Dan Azami Tentang Penulisan Hadis."

⁵⁵ (Goldziher, 1971 : 18)

" The righteous followers of the Prophet reverently repeat the words of their enlightened role models, and try to keep them as a builder of faith and guidance for the people in all matters which he has said both publicly and privately; on the practices of religious obligations as he has exemplified".⁵⁶

From this statement, Goldziher assessed that most of the Hadith is a product of religious development and socio-political conditions that occurred during the classical Islamic period. In other words, the Hadith is the result of the relics of Muslims after the prophetic era. So he does not believe in Hadith as something that comes directly from the Prophet Muhammad PBUH, because he states that if Hadith is everything that is relied on the Prophet, then it will be difficult to prove scientifically.⁵⁷

In his book, he also again reveals that: *"Hadith does not only function as a historical document of Islam in the early days of growth, but rather as tendencies that emerged among the ummah during its more mature development. It contains invaluable evidence of the evolution of Islam, during the years of its formation into an organized wholeness of solid and conflicting forces."*⁵⁸

Here, Goldziher focuses more on the debate over the definition of the term "matan," which he claims dates back to pre-Islamic times and originally meant "manuscript or writing" rather than "hadith text." As a result, he rejected the notion that the hadith was originally a purely oral narrative and not a written one.⁵⁹

He also firmly challenged the authenticity of the hadiths in Saheeh Al-Bukhari, which is considered the second source of Islamic law, due to Imam Al-Bukhari's methodology of only criticizing the chain of narrators (sanad) without examining the text of the hadith (matan). He concluded that there was a Hadith that was not authentic in Saheeh Al-Bukhari, he claimed that the hadith did not come from the Prophet but from the generation after him, namely the time of the companions and tabi'in.⁶⁰

2. Sunnah

⁵⁶ (Goldziher, 1971 : 18)

⁵⁷ (Goldziher, 1971 : 19)

⁵⁸ (Goldziher, 1971 : 38)

⁵⁹ (Goldziher, 1971 : 38)

⁶⁰ Rohmansyah, "Hadis Dan Sunnah Dalam Perspektif Ignaz Go:Dziher."

According to Hadith scholars, Imam Muhammad Ajjaj al-Khatib in his book *Ushul al-Hadith Ulumuhu wa mustalahuhu* interprets the Sunnah as all visible aspects of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), both before and after his apostleship, including his speech, deeds, decrees, attributes, and life journey.⁶¹ The Sunnah, according to Goldziher, is interpreted as the traditions and customs that existed when Islam first appeared and before its appearance. These customs are preserved by the community and are considered an important legacy that lasts throughout the next generation.⁶²

From the statement that the Hadith is the result of the relics of Muslims after the prophetic era, Goldziher concludes that in this context there is only the Sunnah, not the Hadith. So in this case, Goldziher interprets "sunnah" literally, as a lifestyle followed by a person or society.⁶³ According to him, sunnah is understood as provisions that are considered real and that regulate the lifestyle of a certain community. The Sunnah is already a collection of ancestral traditions and customs that form the basis of daily routines in pre-Islamic culture. Goldziher further emphasizes that the term sunnah is also used in Islam to refer to something with the same meaning. Sunnah was initially interpreted as a collection of social values embraced by a particular society, but eventually developed into a universal habit and way of life.⁶⁴

In understanding the Sunnah as a custom, where the custom is not always related to what the Prophet did and does not even have the support of the Hadith, Goldziher describes it in a statement: *"Not only laws and customs, but political doctrine and theology also take their form in the hadith, anything produced by Islam itself or borrowed from outside is given a place in the hadith. Parts of the Old and New testaments, words from the Rabbi, Gospel quotations, Greek doctrines, even our prayers exist. For all of this, the door was opened by Islam and appeared again as the words of the Prophet"*⁶⁵

This statement clearly illustrates that for Goldziher, hadith has no authenticity at all even though it has a strong position as one of the sources of Islamic teachings. Where the hadith is not something that the Prophet really said, but a borrowed sentence that is relied upon by the Prophet so that it looks

⁶¹ (Al-Khatīb, 2008: 19)

⁶² (Goldziher, 1971 : 17-24)

⁶³ (Goldziher, 1971: 19)

⁶⁴ (Goldziher, 1971: 26-28)

⁶⁵ (Goldziher, 1971: 44)

like the words of the Prophet.⁶⁶ From the explanation above, it can be understood that Goldziher distinguishes between Hadith and Sunnah, where hadith is an oral transmission that comes from the Prophet. The emphasis here is on the existence of the hadith as oral information, not on the Prophet as the source. While in the context of classical Islam, the Sunnah deals with legal or theological issues, regardless of the oral transmission of those issues.⁶⁷

He also explained that during the two generations after the Prophet, especially in the period of the followers of the Companions (tâbi'ûn) and the followers of the Companions (tâbi' al-tâbi'în), many hadiths (traditions) appeared. These hadiths were mainly fabricated by religious sects and political factions to reinforce their ideology about the Prophet.⁶⁸ Thus, Goldziher explains that tradition (sunnah) does not come from the collection of hadith. On the contrary, the existence of hadith legitimizes the evolution of religious rituals or traditions. In other words, the hadith appears later, after the sunnah already exists.⁶⁹

4.1.4. Method of Philology Hadith Ignaz Goldziher

The method of hadith philology used by Ignaz Goldziher is based on a critical approach to texts and history. Goldziher places philology as the main tool in the study of hadith, where he views that the text of hadith cannot be accepted raw without going through in-depth critical analysis. This approach is reflected in his efforts to examine the linguistic, editorial, and historical context aspects of hadith texts, in order to objectively find their authenticity and authenticity. With this method, Goldziher tried to distinguish between hadith that came from the Prophet Muhammad and those that were fabricated or engineered by certain people after the death of the Prophet.⁷⁰

Goldziher also used the approach of historical criticism as part of his philological method. He emphasizes the context of the time and culture when the hadith was compiled, so as to be able to reveal the socio-political background that influenced the redaction of certain hadiths. This approach views hadith as a product of culture and interpretation of certain social conditions, rather than merely a revelation that comes directly from the

⁶⁶ Lalu Turjiman Ahmad, "Ignaz Goldziher: Kritikus Hadis Dan Kritikus Sastra," *Jurnal Holistic Al-Hadis* 1, no. 1 (2015).

⁶⁷ (Goldziher, 1971: 24-25)

⁶⁸ (Goldziher, 1981: 41)

⁶⁹ Ahmad, "Ignaz Goldziher: Kritikus Hadis Dan Kritikus Sastra."

⁷⁰ Fathila, Hazmika, and Taufik, "PEMIKIRAN IGNAZ GOLDZIHAR TERHADAP HADIS DAN SUNNAH."

Prophet. Thus, historical criticism helps Goldziher to trace whether the hadith was really born from an original source or simply a reinterpretation of a society at a certain time.⁷¹

One of the important aspects of Goldziher's method is the criticism of sanad and matan hadith. He assessed that sanad criticism is often carried out formally and does not pay attention to the accuracy of the semantic and sociocultural context of the hadith. Therefore, Goldziher introduced matan criticism as an integral part of the process of evaluating the authenticity of the hadith, where he assessed the linguistic aspects, ideology, and even messages contained in the hadith. According to him, this matan criticism must involve the analysis of various social, political, and cultural aspects in order to assess the validity of the text as a whole.⁷²

Goldziher's research methods also include textual analysis and comparison of original sources. He believed that primary sources in Arabic were essential to understanding the original context of the hadith, so he conducted a direct analysis of the text in the original language, not the translation. This approach allowed Goldziher to identify possible errors, fabrications, and reinterpretations that arose from the process of copying and disseminating hadith over the centuries. He also pays attention to the aspects of editorial and writing patterns in hadith texts as part of the process of tracing authenticity.⁷³

Goldziher emphasized that the process of codifying hadith took place long after the death of the Prophet Muhammad. He argues that the systematic collection and writing of hadith only occurred in the second century of the Hijri, which indicates that these hadiths were not directly mutawatir from the Prophet, but rather a product of culture and tradition that developed later. His philological method is used to show that many of the hadiths in the major books may have undergone a process of fabrication and modification since the beginning of their compilation.⁷⁴

In addition, Goldziher applies an interdisciplinary approach that includes the social sciences and humanities. He considered that in order to understand hadith critically, it is necessary to pay attention to the social,

⁷¹ Zubaidi and Nuriyah Safitri, "Hadis Sebagai Produk Budaya Dan Tradisi Islam Awal(Studi Kritik Atas Pemikiran Ignaz Goldhizer," *Journal of Indonesian Hadist Studies* 4, no. 1 (2023): 118–26.

⁷² Rohmansyah, "Hadis Dan Sunnah Dalam Perspektif Ignaz Go:Dziher."

⁷³ Habibi, "Pandangan Ignaz Goldziher Terhadap Asal-Usul Munculnya Hadis Nabi Muhammad Saw."

⁷⁴ Lutfia et al., "Pemikiran Orientalis Ignaz Goldziher Terhadap Hadis Dan Sunah Ignaz Goldziher's Orientalist Thoughts on Hadith and Sunnah."

political, and cultural aspects that affect its redaction and dissemination. Thus, Goldziher's philological method focuses not only on the text alone, but also on contextual and cultural aspects, in order to obtain a more complete picture of the origin and applicability of the hadith.⁷⁵

In conclusion, the method of hadith philology developed by Ignaz Goldziher is very critical and multidimensional. The approach involves linguistic analysis, historical criticism, eye criticism, as well as in-depth socio-cultural studies. Through this method, Goldziher was able to show that many hadiths are likely to be the result of later human engineering and fabrication, so his theory becomes an important basis in modern hadith criticism and orientalist studies of religious texts.

4.1.5. Ignaz Goldziher's Skeptical Argument Against Hadith

From Goldziher's view regarding the hadith and sunnah above, it can be explained what is the background for expressing his argument of skepticism about the authenticity of the hadith so that it raises doubts that the hadith is really an authentic recording of the words of the Prophet. The following is his argument of skepticism about the authenticity of the hadith:

1. Hadith as a Reflection of the Historical Development of Islam

Goldziher argues that the majority of hadith cannot be seen as the direct words of the Prophet, but rather as a reflection of the needs, problems, and debates of Muslims after the death of the Prophet. He said that the hadith reflects the reality of the second and third centuries of the Hijri more than the first century. According to him, hadith is often born to answer political, legal, and theological problems that arise in the future. In other words, the hadith serves more as the legitimacy of the authority of a particular group than as a historical document of the original Prophet.⁷⁶ He viewed the hadith as a 'product' or invention of later Muslims, as its codification occurred centuries after the lifetime of the Prophet Muhammad, especially during the Umayyad Dynasty, especially under the leadership of Caliph Umar bin Abdul Aziz.⁷⁷ Therefore, he argues that the hadith does not only come from the

⁷⁵ Zubaidi and Safitri, "Hadis Sebagai Produk Budaya Dan Tradisi Islam Awal(Studi Kritik Atas Pemikiran Ignaz Goldhizer."

⁷⁶ Masrur, "Skeptisime Ignaz Goldziher (1850-1921 M) Terhadap Autentisitas Hadits Dan Berbagai Tanggapannya."

⁷⁷ Mauizah and Hidayat, "Kontroversi Pemikiran Ignaz Goldziher Dan Implikasinya Bagi Perkembangan Tren Studi Islam Pada Abad 19-21 M."

Prophet, but is also strongly influenced by the desires that exist in Muslim society in their daily lives.⁷⁸

In addition, he asserts that the spread of the hadith was facilitated by the early recognition of Muslims that the Prophet's words and deeds served as a guide, encouraging them to spread this information to everyone they met, especially after the conquest of new territories. Due to the limitations of human memory, especially early Muslims, and the constant need to disseminate information about the Prophet, some modifications were made. This situation also triggered the birth of falsification of hadith in the early days of Islam.⁷⁹

Goldziher argues that the origins of the hadith as a biased representation of the next Muslims stem from disputes between leaders and intellectuals during the Umayyad Dynasty. The two factions put pressure on each other, resulting in the marginalization of the clerics. This condition forced the scholars to engage in religious affairs by producing certain hadiths to validate their movements. At the same time, the ruling authorities did not remain silent in monitoring the activities of the clerics; By involving certain intellectuals, they aim to strengthen their political agenda and fight against those who oppose the government.⁸⁰

He noted that a similar phenomenon also emerged in the Abbasid era, between classical jurists and hadith scholars. Each side asserts that their methodology is correct while the other party is wrong. Hadith appears as a justification for their views and is then used to support the actions of teachers as well as those who agree with them. In such conditions, falsification of hadith is becoming more and more common, so that hadiths that have political implications also increase.⁸¹ In essence, Goldziher concludes that the hadith is simply the writings of earlier scholars, created after the death of the Prophet Muhammad, which aims to deal with certain problems and social phenomena common at that time.

2. The Weakness of Matan Criticism Method

Goldziher argues that the research on Hadith conducted by hadith scholars in the classical period of Islam lacks scientific justification due to the weak methodology of matan criticism. Goldziher

⁷⁸ (Goldziher, 1971 : 19)

⁷⁹ (Goldziher, 1971: 18)

⁸⁰ (Goldziher, 1971: 40-43)

⁸¹ (Goldziher, 1981: 40-43)

thinks that this is because scholars use more of Sanad's method of criticism while less use of Matan criticism.⁸² As a result, he believed that many hadiths that were once considered valid turned out to be false. He believes that criticism of matan hadith is important. Therefore, criticism of matan hadith basically involves various dimensions, including political, socio-cultural, and scientific issues.⁸³

In addition to concentrating mainly on criticism of the chain of narration (sanad), it is also formal, while the material aspect remains unexamined. Many scholars give a valid assessment of a hadith based solely on its sanad, often ignoring a critical analysis of the text (matan) of the hadith.⁸⁴ This complicates efforts to achieve impartiality among scholars in their judgments, as evaluations can be influenced by personal biases against narrators.⁸⁵

He firmly questioned the veracity of the hadiths in Sahih al-Bukhari, which is considered the second source of Islamic law, because of Imam Al-Bukhari's methodology which only used the examination of the chain of narration (isnad) without assessing the content of the hadith (matan). After his research, Ignaz Goldziher concluded that there were false hadiths in the collection of Sahih Bukhari. Ignaz stated that the hadiths in Sahih Bukhari do not come from the Prophet Muhammad PBUH, but from subsequent generations.⁸⁶

As a step to strengthen his argument, Goldziher gave the example of the hadith of the Prophet PBUH narrated in the Book of Sahih Al-Bukhari, which reads:

حَدَّثَنَا عَلِيُّ ، حَدَّثَنَا سُفْيَانُ ، عَنِ الزُّهْرِيِّ ، عَنْ سَعِيدٍ ، عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ ، رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ ، عَنِ النَّبِيِّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ قَالَ : لَا تُسَافِرُ الرِّجَالُ إِلَّا إِلَى ثَلَاثَةِ مَسَاجِدَ الْمَسْجِدِ الْحَرَامِ وَمَسْجِدِ الرَّسُولِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ وَمَسْجِدِ الْأَقْصَى

"Do not travel except in three mosques, namely the Grand Mosque, the Prophet's Mosque, and the Aqsa Mosque." H.R. Al-Bukhârî, hadith no: 1139).

Goldziher argues that Malik bin Marwan, a Caliph of the Umayyad dynasty in Damascus, had concerns about Abdullah bin Zubair, the self-proclaimed governor of Mecca, potentially taking

⁸² (Goldziher, 1971: 168)

⁸³ (Azami, 1994: 15)

⁸⁴ (Goldziher, 1971: 123-130)

⁸⁵ (Goldziher, 1971: 130-144)

⁸⁶ Abdul Rohman, Amir Sahidin, Yusuf Al Manaanu, "PROBLEM OTENTITAS HADITS (Kritik Musthafa Azami Terhadap Pemikiran Ignaz Goldziher)."

advantage of the opportunity to gain the loyalty of the Syrian people who were participating in the Hajj. Therefore, he sought to facilitate the opportunity for individuals to perform Hajj at Qubbah al-Shakhrah in al-Quds (Jerusalem) in lieu of a trip to Mecca. In addition, he issued a decree stating that the reward associated with tawaf around al-Shakhrah is equivalent to tawaf around the Kaaba.⁸⁷

Goldziher argues that in order to fulfill his political ambitions, Abd Al-Malik bin Marwan ordered the scholars of hadith al-Zuhri to falsify a hadith attributed to the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH).⁸⁸

3. As a Reflection of the Development of Fiqh

Goldziher saw that many actual legal hadiths were born later, after fiqh developed. According to him, hadith in the realm of law is nothing but a reflection of the fuqaha debate which is then projected to the time of the Prophet in order to have a stronger authority. Thus, hadith is not a source of fiqh, but on the contrary, fiqh gives birth to hadith to strengthen itself. This is strengthened by the research on the manuscripts sourced from the Companions called Sahifah.⁸⁹

The Goldziher consensus lies in the recognition of the existence of manuscripts containing hadiths attributed to the Prophet. However, the authenticity of the manuscript is doubtful, raising the question of whether it was the Companions who wrote it or whether it was later individuals who claimed authorship to give legitimacy to the texts. It is undeniable, as Goldziher notes, that the early generations of Islam effectively preserved the legacy of the Prophet, both the Qur'an and the Sunnah of the Prophet. However, these preservation is purely oral; Any written evidence that contains hadith is likely the result of individuals who lived after those early figures.⁹⁰

Goldziher argues that the preparation of hadith within the framework of fiqh is in line with social demands, which anticipate the existence of a text that summarizes the Prophet's directions regarding legal and religious issues. As a result, Malik bin Anas tried to compile Muwatta' in response to the challenges and expectations of the people at that time ⁹¹. He argues that the methodology of collecting hadith in

⁸⁷ (Azami, 1994: 609)

⁸⁸ (Goldziher, 1971: 35)

⁸⁹ (Goldziher, 1971: 82)

⁹⁰ (Goldziher, 1971:82)

⁹¹ (Goldziher, 1971: 97)

this era uses two different approaches: musnad, which is a collection of hadith arranged based on the name of the narrator, and musannaf, a collection arranged according to a specific topic or theme. Of the two methods used, it seems that the musannaf approach is more preferred by scholars, especially in the context of the Polar al-Sittah.⁹²

Goldziher acknowledged the achievements of Muslims in the compilation of Hadith literature, which arose from the rigorous critical analysis carried out by scholars, which ultimately led to the formation of the Pole of al-Sittah. The same is true of Malik bin Anas and his work *Muwatta'*, who systematically presents fiqh hadiths. Goldziher argues that the material in Malik bin Anas's work is simply a reflection of the established customs among the people of Medina, the birthplace of the Sunnah.⁹³

4.2. Discussion

Goldziher's views sparked widespread debate. Among Muslims, the main criticism is directed at his assumption of underestimating the methodology of hadith science. Hadith scholars have since the beginning developed the disciplines of *'ilm al-rijal*, *jarh wa ta'dil*, as well as the criticism of sanad and matan with a precision not found in Western traditions.

A major criticism was put forward by Muhammad Mustafa al-A'zami. In his writing, Azami argued that Goldziher's claim about isnad engineering had no solid basis. He presents historical evidence through manuscripts, transmission records, and the writings of early scholars who carefully document hadith from the era of the Companions and Tabi'in. For Azami, the isnad system is not a later development, but rather a tradition inherent in the Muslim community, which has existed since the time of the Prophet and serves as a protective mechanism for the transmission of hadith.⁹⁴

Muhammad Musthofa al-Azami argues that the arguments presented by Ignaz Goldziher are highly unrepresentative, lack integrity, and appear to be largely fabricated. He modified historical documents and showed a condescending attitude towards the hadith scholars. Among the hadith scholars who became the subject of ridicule for Ignaz was Ibn Shihab al-Zuhri, who

⁹² (Goldziher, 1971: 214)

⁹³ (Goldziher, 1981: 39)

⁹⁴ Inama Anusantari, "Perspektif Orientalis Dalam Mengkaji Hadis Dan Bantaan Kaum Muslim: Perspektif Ignaz Goldziher, Joseph Franz Schacht Dan Mustafa Azami," *Riwayah: Jurnal Studi Hadis* 6, no. 1 (2020): 103, <https://doi.org/10.21043/riwayah.v6i1.6749>.

fostered the idea that al-Zuhri was a hadith forger, which was based on a single hadith recorded in Sahih al-Bukhari.⁹⁵

The hadiths found in Sahih al-Bukhari have indeed faced scrutiny from hadith scholars, but it is noteworthy that consensus among the majority of scholars has emerged regarding the authenticity of these hadiths. Azami noted that previous hadith scholars conducted a critical examination of the hadiths, judging them not only based on their chain of narration (sanad) but also on their content (matan). Criticism of the matan hadith arises, among others, when the hadith is contrary to the Qur'an, logical reason, mutawatir narration, and ijma'; So in this case the hadith is firmly rejected by the hadith scholars.⁹⁶

In addition to Azami, another figure who also responded to criticism of orientalist, namely Fazlur Rahman, gave a different response. It does not completely reject orientalist criticism, but offers a contextual approach. According to Rahman, hadith has indeed developed according to the dynamics of the Muslim community, but that does not mean that all hadith are fabricated. On the contrary, these developments show the process of actualizing the teachings of the Prophet in a new social context. Rahman emphasizes the need to distinguish between the normative substance of hadith and its historical expression, so that orientalist criticism can be responded to with a more constructive methodological framework.⁹⁷

Fazlur Rahman also expresses his scientific principles on the criticism of isnad, he argues that the isnad of a hadith, as a criterion for judging the hadith, cannot currently be used as a definite and conclusive argument. If the isnad system establishes that A interacts with B and is considered trustworthy (ṣiqah), it will be quite difficult to ascertain the veracity of such a claim.⁹⁸

Meanwhile, Ali Mustafa Yakub responded to the orientalist criticism by strengthening the opinion of his teacher Mustafa Azami by concluding the term hadith criticism. Where the criticism of the hadith has existed since the era of the Prophet and the decision on the authenticity of the hadith is in the hands of the Prophet himself. Criticism of the hadith is also carried out by comparing it with the Quran, in checking the hadith, the companions are also involved in confirming that the hadith is really sourced from the Prophet.⁹⁹

⁹⁵ (Azami, 1992: 457)

⁹⁶ Helma Hera, "Kritik Ignaz Goldziher Dan Pembelaan Musthofa Al Azami Terhadap Hadis Dalam Kitab Shahih Al-Bukhari."

⁹⁷ (Rahman, 1965: 30)

⁹⁸ (Rahman, 1965: 72)

⁹⁹ Impala Kurnia, "Pandangan Ali Mustafa Yakub Tentang Kritik Orientalis Terhadap Hadis," *Riwayah: Jurnal Studi Hadis* 5, no. 2 (2019), <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.21043/riwayah.v5i2.6140>.

This tradition of rigorous sanad and matan analysis continues to thrive in contemporary Islamic scholarship, as demonstrated by Siregar and Akbar in their analysis of a hadith on marrying a righteous woman, which carefully examines the chain of narrators and the textual content of the hadith to verify its authenticity. Their work reflects the ongoing vitality of classical hadith methodology and counters the orientalist claim that the Islamic tradition lacks the capacity for systematic self-criticism.¹⁰⁰ Similarly, Akbar, Muhid, Nurita, and Muthaharoh have demonstrated in their study of the contextualization of the talkin hadith in Ahmad Hassan's *Tarjamah Bulugul Maram* that Muslim scholars actively engage in reinterpreting hadith in accordance with local contexts proving that the Islamic tradition does not merely transmit hadith passively, but critically contextualizes it in response to the needs of time and place. This practice of informed contextualization is precisely what Goldziher failed to adequately recognize in his assessment of the Islamic hadith tradition.¹⁰¹

From these various responses, it can be concluded that Muslim criticism of Goldziher emphasizes two things: first, the defense of the classical methodology of hadith which is considered to have met scientific standards; Second, efforts to develop new methodologies that can answer the challenges of modern skepticism. Thus, the dialogue between Goldziher's skeptical views and the response of Muslim scholars not only reflects paradigm differences, but also opens up a space for methodological integration that is the foundation for efforts to reactualize hadith criticism in the contemporary era.¹⁰²

Goldziher's discourse of skepticism and the response of Muslim scholars show that the main problem in the study of hadith concerns not only the authenticity of the text, but also the methodology used to assess it. Goldziher's philological critique has opened up a new awareness that hadith cannot be separated from the socio-political context, while Islamic tradition emphasizes the importance of the isnad and matan systems as guardians of textual authority. The meeting of these two traditions gave birth to the

¹⁰⁰ Kamel Gaanoun and Mohammed Alsuhaibani, "Fabricated Hadith Detection: A Novel Matn-Based Approach With Transformer Language Models," *IEEE Access* 10, no. October (2022): 113330–42, <https://doi.org/10.1109/ACCESS.2022.3217457>.

¹⁰¹ Riko Akbar et al., "Contextualization of The Talkin Hadith in The Book *Tarjamah Bulugul Maram* by Ahmad Hassan," *AJIS: Academic Journal of Islamic Studies* 9, no. 2 (2024): 355–72, <https://doi.org/10.29240/ajis.v9i2.10346>.

¹⁰² La Ode Ismail Ahmad, Ansharullah Ansharullah, and Abustani Ilyas, "Study of Paradigma 'Baru Memahami Hadis Nabi' By Arifuddin Ahmad," *Ihyaussunnah: Journal of Ulumul Hadith and Living Sunnah* 2, no. 2 (2022): 61–72, <https://doi.org/10.24252/ihyaussunnah.v2i2.29448>.

challenge of reformulating the methodology of hadith criticism in order to remain critical while maintaining its authoritative value.¹⁰³

The first challenge is how to integrate the philological approach with classical Islamic methodology. So far, the two have often been positioned dichotomically: philology is considered skeptical, while classical hadith is considered apologetic. In fact, if collaborated, philology can strengthen the criticism of matan through tracing of variants of the text and historical context, while the science of classical hadith remains the basis of authority in the verification of sanad. This integration allows for the creation of a more comprehensive approach to hadith. In this regard, it is worth noting that contemporary hadith scholarship has already demonstrated the viability of such integration.¹⁰⁴ Fahmi, Ulfianti, Muttaqin, and Hannase, in their analysis of takhrij hadith in the DSN-MUI Fatwa on Halal Tourism, show that a rigorous critical examination of both sanad and matan identifying conditions such as ittisal sanad (continuity of the chain), 'adalah al-rawi (narrator integrity), and dhabt al-rawi (narrator accuracy) remains a productive and academically valid enterprise. Their work further underscores that contemporary hadith studies must ideally encompass not only technical takhrij, but also what Ali Mustafa Yaqub has called Difa' 'an al-Hadis: the scholarly effort to defend the existence of hadith from the criticisms of orientalists and those who deny it.¹⁰⁵

The second challenge is the changing landscape of hadith studies in the digital era. The digitization of manuscripts, the dissemination of hadith in digital terms, and the use of big data opens up new opportunities as well as problems. On the one hand, access to variants of hadith texts is getting easier, but on the other hand, the authority of the sanad and the credibility of the source are increasingly difficult to maintain. This requires a methodology of hadith criticism that not only relies on classical principles, but also utilizes modern technology as an instrument of analysis. In parallel with this, Muslim scholars have also been developing contextual approaches to hadith understanding that are particularly relevant to the digital age.¹⁰⁶ Syukri,

¹⁰³ Article History et al., "Hadith Authentication Method: Concept, Application and Critique of Orientalist Skepticism," *Jurnal Ilmu Ilmu Keislaman* 75 (2023): 58–75.

¹⁰⁴ Sani Asrofil Hidayah and Hilyati Aulia, "Metode Kritik Matn Hadis Menurut Al-Daraqutni The Method of Matn Hadith Criticism According to Al-Daraqutni," *Journal of Qur'an and Hadis Studies* 3, no. 1 (2022): 42–54.

¹⁰⁵ Muhammad Fahmi et al., "Analysis of Takhrij Hadith in the DSN-MUI Fatwa on Halal Tourism: A Critical Study of the Sanad and Matan," *AJIS: Academic Journal of Islamic Studies* 10, no. 1 (2025): 99–116, <https://doi.org/10.29240/ajis.v10i1.11857>.

¹⁰⁶ Gaanoun and Alsuhaibani, "Fabricated Hadith Detection: A Novel Matn-Based Approach With Transformer Language Models."

Hidayat, and Maharani, in their study of the contextual approach in legal istinbath from hadith, affirm that a hadith “sometimes applies permanently and continuously, and can change dynamically,” as the law depends on a specific ‘illat. They further argue that understanding the social background and context in which a hadith appeared is essential “because it can prevent the meaning of a hadith from being mixed up with personal prejudices or things that come out of the zahir meaning of a text.” This contextual sensitivity is precisely what the digital reactualization of hadith criticism must preserve.¹⁰⁷

The third challenge lies in the socio-cultural context of contemporary Muslims. Hadith is no longer only understood as a legal text, but also as ethical, social, and spiritual inspiration. Thus, the methodology of hadith criticism must be able to accommodate multidisciplinary reading, for example by combining historical, sociology, and anthropological approaches. This interdisciplinary approach makes the hadith relevant to the needs of society without losing its scientific validity. Evidence of this living dimension of hadith can be found in empirical studies of Islamic practice.¹⁰⁸ Nasrudin, Mukti, Nashirudin, and Maliki, in their living hadith study of the Manaqiban tradition in Majelis Dzikir Al-Khidmah Lampung, demonstrate that hadiths on dzikir and ihsan are not merely textual relics but continue to be actively implemented and actualized within the religious life of Muslim communities. This phenomenon challenges the orientalist assumption that hadith is a frozen textual artifact disconnected from living Islamic practice, and instead affirms the organic continuity between the hadith text and the religious experience of the ummah across generations.¹⁰⁹

The fourth challenge is to maintain a balance between a critical attitude and a commitment to faith. Goldziher’s philological criticism tends to give birth to total skepticism that has the potential to undermine the authority of the hadith, while apologetics risk ignoring real historical problems. The reactualization of the methodology of hadith criticism requires the birth of a middle attitude: remain academically critical, but also respect the position of hadith as a normative source for Muslims. In this way, the study of hadith not

¹⁰⁷ Muhammad Hilmi Syukri, Nur Hidayat, and Khayyu Anggun Maharani, “Implementation of Hadith Contextual Approach in Legal Istibath,” *AJIS: Academic Journal of Islamic Studies* 8, no. 1 (2023): 172–97, <https://doi.org/10.29240/ajis.v8i1.6376>.

¹⁰⁸ Moath Mustafa Ahmad Najeeb, “A Novel Hadith Processing Approach Based on Genetic Algorithms,” *IEEE Access* 8 (2020): 20233–44, <https://doi.org/10.1109/ACCESS.2020.2968417>.

¹⁰⁹ Syukri, Hidayat, and Maharani, “Implementation of Hadith Contextual Approach in Legal Istibath.”

only becomes an academic discourse, but also continues to function in the religious life of the ummah. Addressing this balance requires a re-examination of the epistemological foundations that underpin the evaluation of hadith.¹¹⁰ Silmi and Arif, in their study on rethinking standpoint epistemology through an Islamic lens, argue that Islamic epistemology grounded in the principle of tawhid offers a coherent reformulation of objectivity and knowledge that does not need to be subordinated to Western positivist standards. Goldziher's skepticism was rooted in a particular epistemological framework derived from 19th-century European philology. Responding to it effectively, therefore, requires not only technical counter-arguments but also a recognition that the Islamic tradition's own criteria for the validation of hadith such as *tsiqah*, *'adl*, and *dhabt* constitute a legitimate and internally coherent epistemological system in its own right.¹¹¹

From all these descriptions, it can be affirmed that the reactualization of the methodology of hadith criticism is an important research finding. It offers an integrative paradigm that combines the rigor of modern philology with the richness of classical Islamic methodology. This finding is not only an answer to Goldziher's skepticism, but also a constructive contribution to the development of hadith studies in the contemporary era. Thus, this study confirms that hadith criticism is a discipline that is lively, adaptive, and always open to methodological enrichment. This integrative direction is further supported by the expanding role of *maqasid al-shari'ah* as a comprehensive evaluative framework for hadith.¹¹² A systematic literature review by Kurniawan, Mustaniruddin, Rizani, and their colleagues on recent studies of *Maqasid al-Shari'ah* of Abu Ishaq al-Shathibi confirms that the tradition of Islamic legal and textual methodology is not static but has been continuously refined and enriched across generations of scholars. The *maqasid* framework provides a substantive criterion for assessing hadith beyond mere formal *sanad* analysis enabling scholars to evaluate whether the content of a hadith is genuinely consistent with the higher objectives of the Islamic *shari'ah*. This is precisely the kind of indigenous methodological resource that can anchor the

¹¹⁰ Taufiq Hidayat, "TAKHRĪJ ḤADĪTH GHARS AL-ASHJĀR: Tracing The Greening Spirit Root in Sunnah Nabawiyyah," *AL Bukhari: Jurnal Ilmu Hadis* 4, no. 1 (2021): 1-17.

¹¹¹ Nadaa Afifah Silmi et al., "Rethinking Standpoint Epistemology through an Islamic Lens: A Tawhid-Based Reformulation of Objectivity and Knowledge" 5, no. 5 (2025): 5-22.

¹¹² Wasman, Mesraini, and Suwendi, "A CRITICAL APPROACH TO PROPHETIC TRADITIONS: Contextual Criticism in Understanding Hadith," *Al-Jami'ah* 61, no. 1 (2023): 1-17, <https://doi.org/10.14421/ajis.2023.611.1-17>.

reactualization of hadith criticism in a framework that is both academically rigorous and authentically Islamic.¹¹³

5. Conclusion

This study confirms that Ignaz Goldziher's skepticism of hadith, which is rooted in Western philological approaches, has posed a serious challenge to the study of hadith in the Islamic tradition. Goldziher's view that highlights the engineering of sanad and the relationship of hadith with the political dynamics of early Islam opens up the space for the inevitable critical discourse. However, the analysis in this study shows that despite having a certain academic basis, the argument is not able to completely ignore the complexity of the methodology of hadith criticism that has been established since the first generation of Muslims.

Through philological studies, this study found that philology can function not as a tool to cancel the authority of hadith, but as an additional instrument to enrich the criticism of matan. Analysis of text variants, historical contexts, and manuscript comparisons show the great potential of philology in uncovering the historical layers of hadith. However, this methodological value can only function optimally if combined with the tradition of sanad criticism which is a characteristic of Islamic science.

The responses of Muslim scholars, both apologetic and reconstructive, show a collective awareness of the importance of maintaining the authority of the hadith while updating its methodology of criticism. Figures such as Azami, Fazlur Rahman, and Ali Mustafa Yakub show that dialogue with orientalist does not necessarily end in total rejection, but rather can lead to new methodological spaces that are more creative and productive. This is the conceptual basis for the reactualization of hadith criticism in the contemporary era.

The main finding of this study is that the challenge of reactualizing the methodology of hadith criticism lies in the ability to integrate modern philology with the classical tradition of Islam. This integration not only reaffirms the epistemological resilience of hadith science, but also expands the scope of study by involving contemporary scientific disciplines such as history, anthropology, and digital technology. Thus, the methodology of hadith criticism has

¹¹³ Edi Kurniawan, "Recent Studies on the Maqāṣ Id Al- Sharī'ah of Abū Is Ḥā q Al- Shāṭibī: A Systematic Literature Review," *AJIS: Academic Journal of Islamic Studies* *Academic Journal of Islamic Studies* 10, no. 1 (2025): 1–26, <https://journal.iaincurup.ac.id/index.php/AJIS/article/download/11282/3565>.

transformed to be more adaptive, without losing its normative roots in the Islamic tradition.

This research offers an integrative paradigm that places hadith as an authoritative text as well as an academic object that is open to methodological enrichment. This approach not only responds to Goldziher's skepticism, but also answers the needs of the times, where hadith is required to remain relevant both in the realm of science and religious praxis. With this position, hadith can be understood more critically, contextually, and functionally for contemporary Muslim society. In terms of theoretical implications, the IHCF proposed in this study contributes to hadith studies by demonstrating that philological methods and classical Islamic criticism are not epistemologically irreconcilable but methodologically complementary. It also contributes to orientalism studies by showing that Goldziher's legacy, rather than being merely a source of skepticism, can be productively re-read as a catalyst for methodological enrichment within Islamic scholarship. In terms of practical implications, the IHCF offers a replicable methodology for researchers engaged in contemporary hadith authentication, particularly in digital contexts where access to manuscript variants and hadith databases has expanded dramatically. It also provides a model for Islamic educational institutions to incorporate critical philological methods into hadith studies curricula without compromising normative Islamic commitments. For future research, it is recommended that: (1) the IHCF be applied to specific contested hadith case studies to test and empirically refine its analytical categories; (2) research explore computational implementations of the framework using digital hadith databases such as Islamweb or al-Maktaba al-Shamila to advance the digital humanities dimension; and (3) future studies investigate how the IHCF can be integrated with *maqasid al-shari'ah* as a substantive evaluative criterion for hadith content, thereby grounding reactualization of hadith criticism in an authentically Islamic methodological tradition.

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