

# Analysis of the Credibility of the Abbasid Caliphs as Rāwī Hadith: The Relationship between Power and Knowledge in the Perspective of Naqd al-Hadith

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**Abstract.** This study bridges the gap in previous research, which has discussed Abbasid politics from a historical perspective but has not systematically examined their position as hadith narrators. This study contributes new insights into how power influences trust in sanad and the acceptance of narrations. The credibility of hadith narrators is a crucial factor in determining the quality of a hadith, as the acceptance or rejection of information depends on their reliability. In this context, the Abbasid Caliphs as hadith narrators are often debated regarding their credibility. This study aims to analyze the credibility of the Abbasid Caliphs as hadith narrators and their influence on their transmission of hadith. This study uses the naqd al-Hādīs method with descriptive narratives and Foucault's theory of power relations. The results reveal that the credibility of the Abbasid Caliphs as narrators of hadith is majhūl al-ḥāl (unknown status). The integrity of the critics is maintained, preventing a correlation between knowledge and power.

**Keywords:** Abbasid caliphs, politicization of hadith, majhūl al-ḥāl, quality of hadith.

## Introduction

During the Abbasid Dynasty, hadith writing was intensively conducted to maintain its existence as a secondary source of Islamic teachings and meet the needs of the community, as well as to prevent the extinction of hadith due to the death of many hadith memorizers.<sup>1</sup> The Abbasyd made significant contributions to the development of hadith.<sup>2</sup> The Abbasid caliphs, who served in government, also played a role in the chain of hadith transmission. Imam as-Suyūṭī listed in his book several Abbasid caliphs with links in the hadith transmission chain.<sup>3</sup> However, to determine the authenticity of a hadith recorded in the books, it must first be verified through naqd (criticism) in accordance with the principles established by hadith scholars.

In the tradition of hadith criticism, the scholars' assessment of narrators is largely determined by the narrator's personality. The personality of the narrator includes his scholarly capacity. Furthermore, another key element that defines the assessment of a narrator is self-respect (murūah). Even if a narrator possesses reliable memorization skills, if his murūah is deemed weak, it will certainly impact the assessment of hadith critics. Therefore, these two elements, Ḍābiṭ and 'Adālah, significantly

<sup>1</sup>Syamruddin Nasution, *Sejarah Peradaban Islam*, (Riau: Yayasan Pusaka, cet 1, 2013), 23.

<sup>2</sup>Ahmad Syalabī, *Tārīḥ al-Hadārah al-Islāmiyah*, (Kairo: Maktabah Wahbah, 2012), 168.

<sup>3</sup>Abdurrahmān bin Abī Bakr Jalāluddīn as-Suyūṭī, *Tārīḥ al-Khulafā'*, (Makkah: Maktabah Nazar Muṣṭafā al-Bāz, cet 1, 2004 ).148.

determine the credibility of the narrator and the narration they convey, whether it is worthy of acceptance or not.<sup>4</sup>

This research is based on the hypothesis that the development of *tadwīn al-ḥadīth* from the first to the fourth centuries involved many individuals. This involvement was not only dominated by hadith scholars but also by the rulers of the time, who held the title of caliph. Their involvement was inevitable due to their interest in preserving the existence of hadith as a secondary source of law and a basis for judges in issuing fatwas that developed in society. Another factor that motivated them was their lineage, which traces back to Abdullah ibn Abbas, an authoritative figure in interpreting and verifying hadith. Therefore, this study is necessary to understand their motives for transmitting hadith.

Critics' studies of the credibility of hadith narrators from the Abbasid Caliphate have not received thorough attention, even though their position as narrators deserves the same attention as other narrators to illustrate their quality and the hadith they narrate clearly. Previous studies have focused more on different aspects, such as Subhan's study of the development of hadith within the context of political interests and the emergence of certain sects during the early period of hadith writing<sup>5</sup> and Arfan's study of the development of hadith during the Abbasid Dynasty and the politics surrounding it.<sup>6</sup>

Study	Focus	Gaps
Subhan (2013)	Politics and Hadith during the Abbasid Era	Does not assess the credibility of the caliphs
Arfan (2015)	Codification of Hadith during the Abbasid Era	Does not examine the sanad and the <i>jarḥ wa-atta'dīl</i> of the caliphs
Sumbulah (2008)	Methodological Critique of Hadith	No application in the context of governance

This article analyzes the credibility of the Abbasid caliphs as narrators of hadith according to hadith critics, and integrates Foucault's theory of power into the critique of the sanad. The main problem addressed in this study is the lack of specific research on the role and credibility of the Abbasid caliphs as hadith narrators in the discipline of *jarḥ wa-ta'dīl*. Although they held the highest political position and were descendants of scholars, their status in the hadith sanad is often overlooked or unclear. This study aims to analyze their credibility from the aspects of *'adālah*, and *dabt*, as well as to assess the interaction between political power and scientific authority using Foucault's theory of power.

<sup>4</sup>Ahmad Isnaeni, *Kritik Hadis Terhadap Sekte Kalamiyah: Studi Periwat Syi'ah Dalam Pandangan Ahlul-sunnah*, (Lampung: Lp2m IAIN Raden Intan Lampung 2015),1.

<sup>5</sup>Mohammad Subhan Zamzami, "Ideologi dan Politik dalam Proses Awal Kodifikasi Hadis, *Religio*," *Jurnal Studi Agama-agama*, Volume 3, Nomor 1, Maret 2013. DOI [10.15642/religio](https://doi.org/10.15642/religio).

<sup>6</sup>Arfan, Nuril Aisyah, "Pengaruh Hadis Politik Pada Fase Awal Dinasti Abbasiyah," Tesis, UIN Sunan Ampel Surabaya, 2015.

## Discussion

### Power Relations Theory and Credibility

In the Kamus Besar Bahasa Indonesia (KBBI), "relations" means connection, a relationship, so a relationship is a special connection between two things.<sup>7</sup> In English, "power" is interpreted as authority and sometimes used to mean power. In the KBBI, power means the ability or capability to do something.<sup>8</sup> According to Miriam Budiardjo, "power" is the capacity of an individual or group to influence the behavior of another individual or group, in accordance with the desires of the actors.<sup>9</sup> Force is the ability to cause someone to act in a way which she would not choose, left to herself. In other words to force someone to do something against her will<sup>10</sup> power must be understood in the first instance as the multiplicity of force relations immanent in the sphere in which they operate and which constitute their own organization, as the process which, through ceaseless struggles and confrontations, transforms, strengthens, or reserves them as the support which these force relations find in one another, thus forming a chain or a system, or on the contrary, the disjunctions and contradictions which isolate them from one another, and lastly, as the strategy in which they take effect, whose general design or institutional crystallization is embodied in the state apparatus in the formulation of the law, in the various social hegemony.<sup>11</sup>

In Foucault's view, power is a widespread network or connection, so it is not limited to one person or group but can be possessed and obtained by everyone.<sup>12</sup> Power is obtained through knowledge, which gives rise to power's effects. Thus, power and knowledge are inseparable, like two sides of the same coin. Power is not the same as influence, because influence is the manifestation of the impact of a person's actions, while power is the general ability to influence.<sup>13</sup>

Then, credibility, according to KBBI, is defined as the quality or power that inspires trust.<sup>14</sup> Imam as-Suyūṭī stated that the credibility of a narrator encompasses two aspects: first, personal integrity, which includes the elements of being a Muslim, having reached puberty, being sane, not being wicked, maintaining good faith, and being neutral toward all sects. Second, intellectual capacity encompasses the elements of not contradicting the authentic narrator, not having poor memorization, not being too erroneous, not being stupid, and not having excessive *wahm* (intellectual intellect). If these two qualities are fulfilled in a narrator, he or she becomes a *ṣiqqah*.<sup>15</sup>

A person's credibility is essential to instil confidence in the information conveyed, especially if that information is a legal source. Credibility for a narrator is an absolute requirement in the transmission of hadith. A credible narrator has a reputation for conveying accurate and reliable information. This is especially important in the context of specific narrations. A narrator's credibility can help ensure the story is true and undistorted. Determining the credibility of a narrator requires critical analysis to maintain the authenticity of the hadith.<sup>16</sup>

<sup>7</sup> <https://kbbi.web.id/relasi>, diunggah tgl 2 Agustus 2022.

<sup>8</sup> <https://kbbi.web.id/relasi>, diunggah tgl 2 Agustus 2022.

<sup>9</sup> Miriam Budiardjo, *Dasar-Dasar Ilmu Politik*, (Jakarta: PT Gramedia Pustaka Utama, Jl. Palmerah Barat, 2008), 17.

<sup>10</sup> Barbara Goodwin, *Using Political Ideas*, ed. 4, (England: Barbara Goodwin, 2003), 307.

<sup>11</sup> Michel Foucault, *The History of Sexuality: An Introduction*, Vol. 1. (New York: Vintage Books, 1990) 92-93.

<sup>12</sup> Mangihut Siregar, Kritik terhadap Teori Kekuasaan Pengetahuan Foucault, *Juisspol: Jurnal Ilmu Sosial dan Ilmu Politik*, vol 1, no 1 (2021), 2. DOI. 10.30742/juisspol.v.156

<sup>13</sup> Mangihut Siregar, *Kritik terhadap Teori Kekuasaan Pengetahuan Foucault*, 3.

<sup>14</sup> <https://kbbi.web.id>, diunggah tgl 3 Mei 2023.

<sup>15</sup> Abdurrahmān bin Abī Bakr Jalāluddīn as-Suyūṭī, *Tadrib ar-Rawī Fī Syarḥ Taqrīb an-Nawāmī*, vol. I, (Kairo: Dar at-Turāṣ, 1972), 61.

<sup>16</sup> Umi Sumbulah, *Kritik Hadis Pendekatan Historis Metodologis*, (Malang: UIN Malang Press, 2008), 95.

The principle of 'adālah' is a benchmark for accepting or rejecting a hadith, a requirement for maintaining its authenticity. Ibn Khaldūn stated that it is a consensus among scholars that this characteristic is not possessed by a wicked person who habitually engages in prohibited acts and the like.<sup>17</sup> Proof of 'adālah', according to Imam as-Suyūṭī, can be achieved through several factors: (a) the testimony of two just individuals. (b) Its popularity is recognized by hadith scholars.

A person's ḍābiṭ-ness can be determined through (a) the testimony of scholars, and (b) the consistency of their narration with that narrated by other narrators known for their ḍābiṭ-ness, as well as their memorization of the narrated hadith and their ability to convey it to others.<sup>18</sup> The narrator's memory is categorized into two: (a) a strong memory due to preserving his book (called ḍābiṭ al-kitāb). (b) a strong memorization and understanding (called ḍābiṭ aṣ-ṣadr).<sup>19</sup>

Criticism of hadith is divided into two categories: the criticism of the text (matan) and the criticism of the sanad (chain of narrators). The criticism of the text (matan) is known as *an-Naqd ad-Dakbīlī*, which serves to maintain the purity of the hadith text.<sup>20</sup> One version of the text's authenticity criteria, according to al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī, is as follows: a) It does not contradict common sense, b) It does not contradict established Qur'anic law (muḥkam), c) It does not contradict the mutawāṭir hadith, d) It does not contradict the agreed-upon practices of past scholars (the salaf), e) It does not contradict definitive evidence, f) It does not contradict the ahad hadith, which have a stronger authenticity.<sup>21</sup>

In the critique of the text, two goals are achieved: first, to determine the veracity of a hadith text. Second, to gain a correct understanding of the content of the text of the hadith.<sup>22</sup>

The sanad criticism is known as *an-Naqd al-Khārījī*, which means an assessment of the chain of hadith narrators from the beginning of the sanad to the end of the sanad by examining the credibility of the narrator, whether it meets the requirements of a narrator who is 'ādil and ḍābiṭ or not.<sup>23</sup> Meanwhile, to test it using methodological steps such as a) Testing the connection of the sanad between the student and the teacher with the symbol of the bond of history (ṣīgat at-Taḥdīs), b) Testing the integrity of the narrator (al-'adālah), c) Testing the intellectual capacity of the narrator (ḍabt), d) Avoiding syāz and the alleged existence of 'illat in the sanad of the hadith.<sup>24</sup>

### The Credibility of the Abbasid Caliphs as Hadith's Narrators

The credibility of the caliph of the hadith narrator as part of the sanad criticism was developed by hadith critics. The sanad criticism in this study focuses on the narrator's personal integrity, which includes being Muslim, having reached puberty, being sane, not being wicked, maintaining muru'ah (religious integrity), and being ḍābiṭ (virtuous).<sup>25</sup> Hadiths from the history of the Abbasid caliphs are recorded in Sunan ad-Dāruquṭnī (ad-Dāruquṭnī, 2004), Tārīḥ Baghdād (al-Baghdādī, 2002), Tārīḥ Dimasyqī (Ibn 'Asākir, 1995), Asy'ār Aulād al-Khulafā' wa-akhbārīhim (as-Ṣhūlī, 1929), al-Mustadrak 'alā as-Ṣaḥīḥain (Al-Ḥākim, 1990), al-Mu'jam al-Kabīr Wal-Mu'jam al-Ausaṭ (at-Ṭabrānī), Sunan al-

<sup>17</sup>Abdurrahmān Ibn Khālid, *Muqaddimah*, pent Masturi Irham dkk, (Jakarta Timur: Pustaka al-Kautsar 2011), 342.

<sup>18</sup>Abdurrahmān bin Abī Bakr Jalāluddīn as-Suyūṭī, *Tadrib ar-Rawī Fi Syarḥ Taqrīb an-Nawāwī*, 353-358.

<sup>19</sup>Mahmūd Ṭaḥḥān, *Taisir Muṣṭalah al-Ḥadīṣ*, (Kairo: Maktabah al-Ma'ārif, cet 10, 2004), 183.

<sup>20</sup>Umi Sumbulah, *Kritik Hadis Pendekatan Historis Metodologis*, 95.

<sup>21</sup>Bustamin dan M. Isa H. A. Salam, *Metodologi Kritik Hadis*, (Jakarta: PT. Raja Grafindo Persada, 2004), 63

<sup>22</sup>Suryadi, Rekonstruksi Kritik Sanad Dan Matan Dalam Studi Hadis, Jurnal Esensia, Vol. 16, No. 2, (2015), 101. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.14421/esensia.v16i2.996>.

<sup>23</sup>Mahmūd Ṭaḥḥān, *Taisir Muṣṭalah al-Ḥadīṣ*, 183.

<sup>24</sup>Abdurrahmān bin Abī Bakr Jalāluddīn as-Suyūṭī, *Tadrib ar-Rawī Fi Syarḥ Taqrīb an-Nawāwī*, vol. I, 60.

<sup>25</sup>Mahmūd Ṭaḥḥān, *Taisir Muṣṭalah al-Ḥadīṣ*, 183.

Baihaqī (Al-Baihaqī, 2003), Sunan Ad-Dailamī (Ad-Dailamī) and As-Sulī's book "Ash'ār Aulād al-Khulafā' wa-akhbārihim."<sup>26</sup>

Critical studies of the sanad of hadiths through the Abbasid caliphate show that the chain of transmission is muttasil, meaning there is continuity between a student and a teacher.<sup>27</sup> Critics' assessments of the narrators in the sanad of the hadith narrated by the Abbasid caliphs vary in quality, ranging from ta'dīl, which is šiqqah, to tajrīh, which is in the form of majhūl.

The biographies of the Abbasid caliphs as narrators of hadith are recorded in the *Tarikh al-Kabīr* by Imam Bukhari (d. 256 AH) and the *Tarikh al-Baghdād* by Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī. Al-Baghdādī recorded the biographies of Al-Mansur,<sup>28</sup> Al-Mahdī,<sup>29</sup> Al-Makmūn, Al-Mu'tašim<sup>30</sup> and Al-Mutawakkil<sup>31</sup> without explaining their *tajrīh* and *ta'dīl* status. However, in applying *Jawāmi' al-kalim*, their status is described as *Majhūl al-Khāl*.<sup>32</sup> The status of *Majhūl al-Khāl* is that of a person known, but whose condition (good or bad) is unknown. This status, in the *Ilm al-Jarh wat-Ta'dīl*, indicates a *tajrīh* (defective) prediction.<sup>33</sup> Meanwhile, Harun ar-Rasyīd is the only caliph whose biography is recorded in the book *Tārīḥ al-Kabīr* with the status of maqbul without specifying the degree of *ta'dīl*.<sup>34</sup>

Caliph	Biography Source	Jarḥ-wa-Atta'dīl	Scholar Evaluation	Implications for Hadith
Al-Mansūr	Tārīḥ al-Baghdād	Majhūl al-ḥāl	al-Baghdādī	Da'if
Al-Mahdī				
Al-Amīn				
Al-Makmūn				
Al-Mu'tašim				
Al-Mutawakkil				
Harun al-Rasyīd	Tārīḥ al-Kabīr	Maqbul	al-Bukhārī	Accepted with conditions

<sup>26</sup> Abdurrahmān bin Abī Bakr Jalāluddīn as-Suyūṭī, *Tārīḥ al-Khulafā'*, 62.

<sup>27</sup> Abdurrahmān bin Abī Bakr Jalāluddīn as-Suyūṭī, *Tadrib ar-Rawī Fī Syarḥ Taqrīb an-Nawawī*, vol. I, 61.

<sup>28</sup> Ahmad bin 'Alī Abu Bakar al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī, *Tārīḥ Baghdād*, vol. i, (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-Ilmiyah, 1996), 63.

<sup>29</sup> Ahmad bin 'Alī Abu Bakar al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī, *Tarikh Baghdād*, vol v, 391.

<sup>30</sup> Ahmad bin 'Alī Abu Bakar al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī, *Tarikh Baghdād*, vol iii, 342.

<sup>31</sup> Ahmad bin 'Alī Abu Bakar al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī, *Tārīḥ Baghdād*, vol viii, 165.

<sup>32</sup> Aplikasi Gawami Alkalem V 4.5.

<sup>33</sup> Helimy Bin Aris Mohd Fauzi, *Maqbul as Terminology, its Use and Meaning according to Al-Hafiz Ibn Hajar Al-Asqalani in his book Taqrīb at-Tabzīb*, International Journal of Academic Research in Business and Social Sciences 2017, Vol. 7, No. 8 ISSN: 2222-6990.

<sup>34</sup> Abū Abdullah Muhammad bin Isma'il al-Bukhārī, *Tārīḥ-al-Kabīr*, vol. viii, (Haidar Abad: Dār al-Ma'ārif al-Uṣmāniyah, tt). 225.

The apparent insignificance of their situation in the eyes of critics and the omission of their comments in the *rijal* are inseparable from the benchmark for determining the credibility of narrators, namely, their *'adalah*, which is closely related to their personal qualities. According to ar-Rāzī, as quoted by M. Agus Solahudin, justice is a spiritual force that drives people to always act with piety, avoid major sins, avoid the habit of committing minor sins, and abandon immoral acts that tarnish the *murū'ah* (religious character), such as eating while standing in the street, urinating in places not specified for it, and excessive joking.<sup>35</sup>

*Murū'ah* here has a very local meaning, in accordance with the customs and traditions of the area where the narrator lived. Thus, *murū'ah* is a personal etiquette that leads to self-preservation, maintaining moral virtue and habits. This can be seen in customs prevailing in various countries, such as eating on the street, cursing one's wife or family members with foul language, and urinating in the street.<sup>36</sup>

The three initial criteria for a caliph are undoubtedly fulfilled. As a caliph of the Muslim community, being Muslim, having reached puberty, and being sane are mandatory requirements. However, maintaining good conduct and abstaining from evil requires valid proof from reliable sources. Based on research conducted in historical books on kings, Imam as-Suyūṭī describes their biographies and behavior. Abū Ja'far al-Mansūr was a caliph with brilliant achievements in leading a dynasty and a virtuous character, yet he shed much blood and killed people to maintain his power. He also beat Abū Hanīfah and imprisoned him, leading to his death. Even Imam Mālik ibn Anas, in his fatwa, permitted deviation from the obedience to al-Mansūr.<sup>37</sup> Al-Hādī was a caliph who killed many heretics and shed the blood of his fellow Muslims. Furthermore, Aḏ-Ḍaḥabī, in his commentary, stated that al-Hādī was a drunk, playful, wasteful, neglected his duties as a caliph, and was arrogant.<sup>38</sup>

Al-Amīn was the most handsome caliph, had extraordinary strength and courage, but he had bad management, was wasteful, weak-minded, careless, and was not suitable to be caliph.<sup>39</sup> Al-Makmūn was a caliph with a good personality, was diligent in science, and his goodness was written about in the history books. Still, he created the *ḵhalq al-Qur'an* so that the incident of the *miḥnah ḵhalq al-Qur'an* occurred, which caused many ulama to be killed and imprisoned.<sup>40</sup> Mu'taṣim was a caliph who had kindness and courage, strength and determination. Still, he lacked knowledge and had a temperamental attitude; when he was angry, he did not hesitate to commit murder.<sup>41</sup>

Mutawakkil was a caliph who restored the Mu'tazilite version of the Qur'anic *ḵhalq* (community) to the Ahlus Sunnah wal Jama'ah, so the ulama praised his attitude. However, he was known for his fanaticism, which caused many Muslims to suffer. The people of Baghdad wrote curses against him on walls and mosques, and poets even criticized him.<sup>42</sup>

The daily behavior of the Abbasid caliphs in their closed, luxurious, and glamorous palaces, their involvement with worldly affairs, and their policies in governing the country, which sometimes prioritized lust, led to both small and large-scale sins, making them unable to maintain their dignity and commit sins. This became a criticism of their personalities, leading to their being considered *majbūl al-Khāl*. In terms of *ḍabīṭ*, the author did not find any reference from the *rijal book* that explains the

<sup>35</sup>M. Agus Solahudin dan Agus Suyadi, *Ulumul Hadis*, (Bandung: Pustaka Setia, 2019), 142.

<sup>36</sup>M. Syuhudi Ismail, *Kaedah Keshahihan Sanad Hadis*, (Jakarta: PT. Bulan Bintang, Cet.II, 1995), 133.

<sup>37</sup> Abdurrahmān bin Abī Bakr Jalāluddīn as-Suyūṭī, *Tārīḥ al-Khulafā'*, 193.

<sup>38</sup> Abdurrahmān bin Abī Bakr Jalāluddīn as-Suyūṭī, *Tārīḥ al-Khulafā'*, 207.

<sup>39</sup> Abdurrahmān bin Abī Bakr Jalāluddīn as-Suyūṭī, *Tārīḥ al-Khulafā'*, 219.

<sup>40</sup> Abdurrahmān bin Abī Bakr Jalāluddīn as-Suyūṭī, *Tārīḥ al-Khulafā'*, 225.

<sup>41</sup> Abdurrahmān bin Abī Bakr Jalāluddīn as-Suyūṭī, *Tārīḥ al-Khulafā'*, 243.

<sup>42</sup> Abdurrahmān bin Abī Bakr Jalāluddīn as-Suyūṭī, *Tārīḥ al-Khulafā'*, 253.

strength of his memorization in narrating the hadith, so that in viewing the quality of his personality, it is only from one side, namely his *'adalab*. However, if a hadith does not fulfil one of the five conditions of a maqbūl hadith, namely: continuity of the sanad, narrated by a narrator who is *'Adil*, *ḍābiṭ*, not *ḡyāḍ* and has no defects, then the hadith has fulfilled the criteria of a *ḍa'if hadith*.<sup>43</sup>

### The Low Credibility of the Abbasid Caliphs

Factors contributing to the low credibility of the Abbasid Caliphs as narrators of hadith are, *first*, the steadfastness and commitment of hadith critics. Hadith scholars maintained a firm commitment to truth and scholarly integrity. This attitude was reflected in their commitment to avoiding authority, even at personal risk and under pressure from those in power. This attitude allowed them to meditate and question any hadith narrator without fear. Imam al-Bukhārī was a steadfast figure in the face of the *mihnah khalq al-Qur'an*. He spoke in accordance with his beliefs without fear of intimidation from the authorities at the time. During this ordeal, he displayed unparalleled patience, prompting his colleagues to advise him that many others had fallen into this trap, but he asserted that Satan's deception was very weak.<sup>44</sup> Another testament to his steadfastness and integrity as a critic is that when he arrived in Bukhara, the ruler of Bukhara requested that Imam al-Bukhārī come to the palace with *al-Jami'*, *at-Tārikh*, and other works so that the ruler and his family could hear them. However, Imam al-Bukhārī considered this an insult to knowledge. He told the ruler's envoy that he did not want to disgrace knowledge and would not bring it to people's doors. If the ruler needed it, he should visit the mosque or Imam al-Bukhārī's house. According to historians, this incident was why Imam al-Bukhārī was expelled from Bukhara and died during the exile.<sup>45</sup>

Imam an-Nasāī also experienced this steadfast critical personality. Political sentiment was still prevalent, even though power had shifted from the Umayyad Dynasty to the Abbasid Dynasty. He responded to Umayyad supporter sentiment against Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib by writing the book *Khaṣā'is Amir al-Mu'minin*. When he moved from Egypt to Damascus to disseminate his work, he found that many Umayyad loyalists were still present and requested that he collect narrations on Mu'awiyah's virtues. However, they received no satisfactory answers from Imam an-Nasāī, and he was persecuted by Umayyad extremists in the Umayyad Mosque, leading to his death.<sup>46</sup>

A similar incident occurred with Imam Ahmad ibn Hanbal. Imam al-Jauzī, in his book, narrates the case of Imam Ahmad ibn Hanbal, who refused the position of Qāḍī in Yemen during the reign of Caliph al-Amin. Even Imam Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī in his book wrote a "chapter of turning away from power" by mentioning the figures of hadith scholars who avoided narrating their hadith to the ruler and entering the palace, including Sufyān aṣ-Ṣaurī, Ibn al-Mubārak, Qabīṣah bin 'Uqbah, and al-A'māsy.<sup>47</sup>

Second, Turning to the People of Bid'ah. Imam Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī emphasized that the people of Bid'ah should not be asked for help in the affairs of the Muslim community, because it would cause the most significant harm to the religion, even though it was in line with the policy of the Amir al-mu'minin.<sup>48</sup> The rivalry between the scholars of hadith and the Mu'tazilah group supported by the Abbasid Dynasty during al-Makmūn afterwards caused a major disaster for the Muslim

<sup>43</sup>Muhammad bin Abdur Rahman as-Sakhāwī, *Fath al-Mughīṣ Syarḥ Alfīyah al-Ḥadīṣ*, vol. I, (Mesir: Maktabah as-Sunnah, 2003), 126.

<sup>44</sup>Abū Bakar Kāfi, *Minhāj al-Imām al-Bukhārī fī Taṣḥīḥ al-aḥādīṣ wa Ta'līlībā*, (Beirut: Dār ibn Ḥazm, 2000), 49-51.

<sup>45</sup>Abū Bakar Kāfi, *Minhāj al-Imām al-Bukhārī fī Taṣḥīḥ al-aḥādīṣ wa Ta'līlībā*, 51.

<sup>46</sup>Azwir, Imam an-Nasāi: Mengurai Biografi dan Perjalanan Intelektual Imam An-Nasa'i, Al-Hadi, vol II No 02, 2017, 404. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.54248/alhadi.v2i2.148>.

<sup>47</sup>Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī, *al-Jāmi' li-Akhlāq ar-Rāwī wa-adāb as-Sāmi'*, vol 1, (Riyad: Maktabah al-Ma'a'rif, 1983), 321.

<sup>48</sup>Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī, *al-Jāmi' li-Akhlāq ar-Rāwī wa-adāb as-Sāmi'*, 1, 320.

community. Al-Makmūn issued a decree by testing the scholars of hadith regarding the khalq of the Qur'an, accompanied by intimidation, not to provide a place for fatwas and narration, even with threats of death. Al-Makmūn was not satisfied with this, he bequeathed his brother al-Mu'taṣim and continued to al-Wāṣiq to follow in his footsteps by carrying out his hostility against the Sunnis, resulting in the killing of a large number of scholars and the humiliation of hadith scholars, including Imam Ahmad bin Hanbal<sup>49</sup> as was done by his predecessors from among the companions and successors.

The Mu'tazilites' verbal insults and abuse towards the ahlul hadith did not stop here; they uttered dirty words and persecuted them with inappropriate words. In this unfavorable political situation, the hadith scholars in selecting hadith narrators never changed like their predecessors from among the companions and tabi'in, they were careful in religious matters, firm in transmitting the sunnah and were not tempted like the high priests of the Mu'tazilah who took advantage of their closeness to the caliphs, and took control of the ministry and judiciary. This demonstrates the stance of hadith scholars, who took the straight path by fortifying the faith of the Muslim community so that it would not be led astray by their own desires.<sup>50</sup>

The steadfastness and commitment of hadith critics in safeguarding hadith have established them as figures of independence and integrity. This is evident in the fact that the power and authority of the Abbasid caliphs were unable to penetrate or influence the integrity of hadith critics, even though they provided them with opportunities in the field of scholarship at that time. Their integrity was not lost, allowing the caliphs to alter the criteria for accepting a hadith. This steadfastness of the critics is evident in the chain of transmission of hadith by the Abbasid caliphs, who did not circulate among the hadith scholars, but instead circulated within the palace circle.

Within Foucault's framework, power operates through discourse and knowledge. However, in the context of hadith, scholars act as agents of knowledge who oppose the hegemony of political power. Therefore, there is no symbiosis between power (the caliph) and knowledge (hadith scholars); instead, there is scientific resistance that affirms the objectivity of hadith science as a free discourse.

## Conclusion

This study examines the credibility of a hadith narrator through the criteria of *'Adālah and Ḍabīṭ of the narrators*. The three initial criteria for a caliph have been met, such as being Muslim, having puberty, and being mature. Meanwhile, the criteria of maintaining murū'ah and not being immoral are difficult for rulers to avoid, resulting in their status as *majhūl al-Ḥāl*. This majhūl status impacts the hadith they narrate, becoming ḍa'īf. The existence of hadith critics who maintain integrity has resulted in the lack of a strong relationship between knowledge and power. As a result, the credibility of the Abbasid caliphs as hadith narrators remains low.

Within Foucault's framework, power operates through discourse and knowledge. However, in the context of hadith, scholars act as agents of knowledge who oppose the hegemony of political power. Therefore, there is no symbiosis between power (caliph) and knowledge (hadith scholars); instead, there is scientific resistance that affirms the objectivity of hadith science as a free discourse.

<sup>49</sup>Muhammad Abū Zāhū, *al-Ḥadīs wal-muḥaddiṣūn*, (Mesir: Maṭba'ah Masr, 1958 ), 320.

<sup>50</sup> Muhammad Abū Zāhū, *al-Ḥadīs wal-muḥaddiṣūn*, 328.



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