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Rereading the Map of Hadith Studies in Indonesia: Contributions from Islamic Scholars and Social Organisations

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Abstract

Despite hadith serving as Islam's secondary religious authority, scholarly work on hadith in Indonesia has developed slowly. This raises the question of what role Indonesian Muslim intellectuals and Islamic community organizations have played in advancing hadith scholarship within the country. To explore this issue, researchers employed a library-based methodology with analytical examination to assess these contributions. Information was collected by reviewing published works from Indonesian Muslim scholars, applying both inductive reasoning and content evaluation techniques. Findings indicate that insufficient scholarly focus and scarce hadith resources account for the delayed progress in this field. Nevertheless, hadith scholarship gained momentum during the latter half of the 1800s and continued expanding into the early 1900s. This growth was partly motivated by efforts to purify Islamic doctrine and by responses to Orientalist criticism that challenged hadith authenticity. Within this framework, Indonesian Muslim intellectuals and Islamic community organizations have made substantial contributions to hadith scholarship development, particularly by producing hadith literature and related scholarly materials. Their methodological approaches, however, show variation. Muslim scholars employ both literal and contextual interpretive methods when examining hadith, whereas Islamic community organizations—with the exception of NU—predominantly rely on literal interpretation. NU distinguishes itself by incorporating both interpretive strategies in its decision-making processes.

Keywords: Hadith Studies, Muslim Scholars, Islamic Social Organizations.

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INTRODUCTION

Within Islamic scholarship, there is widespread consensus that hadith functions as Islam's secondary foundational source, with this authority derived from Qur'anic passages requiring believers to follow the Prophet's guidance (Al-Nisa': 59; al-Hashr: 7; al-Aḥzāb: 36). According to Al-Shafi'i's position, rejecting prophetic hadith amounts to violating divine commands. The hadith serves a complementary role to the Qur'an—it provides concrete applications for broad Qur'anic principles. Take, for instance, the practices of prayer, zakat, and hajj, along with punishments like hand amputation for theft (Al-Naḥl: 44)—these remain broadly stated in the Qur'an without precise procedural details. Without the explanatory framework provided by hadith, Muslims would lack the necessary guidance to properly understand and

practice these religious obligations. This interpretive necessity is underscored by scholars such as Al-Awzā'i, who stress that hadith is essential for making the Qur'an actionable and comprehensible (al-Darimi, n.d).

Yet in Indonesia, a paradox exists: despite being home to the planet's largest Muslim population and boasting extensive Islamic educational infrastructure and scholarship, hadith scholarship has not flourished proportionately. Unlike Qur'anic interpretation, which enjoys relatively open academic discourse, hadith studies encounter significant barriers. Scholars face the risk of being accused of hadith rejection (inkar al-ḥadith), creating an atmosphere that suppresses innovative and critical scholarly inquiry.

Evidence of this underdevelopment appears in multiple forms: sparse scholarly publications, limited hadith collections in institutional libraries, and insufficient focus on Islamic legal rulings (ifta'). Yet paradoxically, as Islam's secondary legal source, hadith continues to be widely invoked in religious discourse, revealing a gap that demands scholarly intervention. This investigation examines how Indonesian Muslim intellectuals and religious organizations have worked to advance hadith scholarship. Using library-based methodology with descriptive-analytical techniques, the research surveys Indonesian hadith scholarship, seeking to illuminate the intellectual contributions of individual scholars and institutional bodies through literature analysis.

Several prior studies address related themes, yet each leaves a distinct gap that this article is positioned to fill. Umi Alfaha's thesis (Alfaha, 2011) applies hermeneutic and sociological frameworks to examine how NU and Muhammadiyah interpret hadiths concerning women. While valuable, its focus is confined to gender-related hadiths within two organizations, leaving unexamined the broader landscape of hadith scholarship across both individual scholars and the wider range of Islamic social organizations in Indonesia. Similarly, Shohibul Adib's thesis (Adib, 2009) offers a detailed study of hadith usage within NU's bahthul masail proceedings from 1926 to 2004, revealing internal tensions between those who subordinate hadith to classical texts (kitab kuning) through qawl and ilhaq methodologies and those who maintain hadith's primacy as Islam's second source. Adib's work, however, is institution-specific and does not account for the contributions of individual scholars or competing organizations.

Ni'ma Diana Cholidah's thesis (Kholidah, 2011) narrows the lens further by focusing exclusively on one scholar, Ali Mustofa Ya'qub, examining his intellectual contributions and reception within both academic and lay communities. Although insightful, its single-figure scope means it cannot illuminate the collective and comparative dynamics of hadith scholarship development. Closest in thematic scope to the present article is Syifana and Pratama's study of hadith studies development in Indonesia across the 20th and 21st centuries (Syifana, 2021); however, their analysis does not systematically differentiate between the methodological approaches of individual scholars and those of Islamic social organizations, nor does it account for the organizational diversity and institutional mechanisms through which hadith scholarship has been produced and transmitted. Taken together, these prior works tend either to isolate a single organization or figure, focus narrowly on specific thematic hadiths, or survey development without methodological differentiation. This article addresses

that cumulative gap by offering a comprehensive, comparative mapping of hadith scholarship in Indonesia that integrates both individual scholarly contributions and those of Islamic social organizations, while explicitly attending to the methodological divergences—literal versus contextual—that distinguish these actors.

METHOD

This study employs a library research approach, a methodology well-suited to historical and descriptive-analytical investigations of intellectual traditions. Library research is appropriate for this inquiry because the central research questions concern the mapping of hadith scholarship contributions across time and institutions—questions that are best answered through systematic engagement with existing textual sources rather than through fieldwork or empirical data collection. Since the contributions of Muslim scholars and Islamic organizations are primarily documented in written form (books, academic theses, journal articles, institutional legal rulings, and organizational documents), library research provides direct access to the most relevant and authoritative evidence available.

The data for this study were collected through systematic identification and review of primary and secondary literary sources. The criteria for selecting literature sources were guided by the following principles: (1) relevance, meaning that sources must directly address hadith scholarship in Indonesia, the intellectual contributions of Indonesian Muslim scholars, or the institutional roles of Islamic social organizations such as Muhammadiyah, Persatuan Islam (PERSIS), and Nahdlatul Ulama (NU); (2) scholarly credibility, prioritizing peer-reviewed journal articles, published academic books, graduate theses and dissertations from recognized Islamic universities (particularly IAINs and UINs), and official organizational documents such as the Himpunan Putusan Tarjih (HPT) Muhammadiyah and Bahthul Masail proceedings; (3) historical scope, ensuring coverage of sources from the 17th century through the early 21st century to trace the longitudinal development of hadith scholarship; and (4) methodological diversity, including works that employ varying interpretive approaches (textual and contextual) so that this study can assess the range of scholarly orientations present in Indonesian hadith studies. Sources that were purely derivative, lacked transparent methodology, or did not engage substantively with hadith were excluded.

Content analysis was the primary analytical technique applied in this study. This method involves the systematic reading, categorization, and interpretation of the selected literature in order to identify patterns, contributions, and methodological orientations within Indonesian hadith scholarship. The content analysis was carried out in several stages. First, all selected sources were read carefully to extract information relevant to the research questions, specifically: the nature of contributions made by individual scholars and by Islamic organizations, the historical periods in which these contributions occurred, and the hermeneutical methods (literal or contextual) employed in engaging with hadith. Second, the extracted information was organized thematically, grouping scholarly contributions by individual figures and by institutional actors. Third, inductive reasoning was applied to draw broader interpretive conclusions from the patterns identified in the literature—for instance, recognizing that the dominance of Shafi'i taqlid tradition historically constrained direct hadith

engagement, or that modernist organizations were generally more inclined toward hadith criticism than traditionalist ones. Finally, the findings were interpreted within their socio-historical and intellectual context, taking into account the influence of Middle Eastern Islamic reform movements, Orientalist scholarship, and internal Indonesian Muslim debates on the direction of hadith studies.

A review of existing Indonesian hadith research confirms that none of the prior publications identified duplicate the present article's approach. Existing studies tend to focus either on a single organization (e.g., Alfaha's 2011 study on NU and Muhammadiyah's understanding of misogynistic hadiths, or Adib's 2009 study on hadith in NU's Bahthul Masail) or on a single scholar (e.g., Kholidah's 2011 study on Ali Mustofa Ya'qub). By contrast, this study takes a broad, comparative view that encompasses multiple key scholars and organizations simultaneously, enabling a panoramic assessment of the landscape of Indonesian hadith scholarship. Additionally, there exists a body of scholarship examining hadith's practical application in Indonesian Muslim communities, particularly concerning legal matters (Abdul Majid et al., 2023), which complements but does not replicate the intellectual-historical mapping undertaken here.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The Current State of Hadith Scholarship in Indonesia

The foundation of Indonesian hadith scholarship traces back to connections between Indonesian Muslim intellectuals and educational centers in the Middle East throughout the 17th and 18th centuries. Between the mid-17th and 19th centuries, numerous young Javanese scholars journeyed to Mecca and Medina for their education, with hadith becoming a primary focus of their learning (Azra, 2004). Traditional Islamic boarding schools (pesantren) and madrasah introduced students to this field through foundational texts including al-Nawawi's (d.676H) Matn al-Arba'in al-Nawawiyah, Ibn Hajar's (d.832H) Bulug al-Maram, and al-Suyuti's (d.911H) Matn al-Baiquniyah. Nevertheless, hadith scholarship advanced more slowly than other Islamic sciences such as jurisprudence (fiqh), Qur'anic exegesis (tafsir), and Sufism (tasawwuf), with the era producing no major Indonesian hadith scholarship.

The 20th century marked a turning point, as academic contributions from scholars and the founding of Islamic higher education institutions catalyzed substantial growth. This expansion was fueled by new scholarly publications, graduate-level programs, and intellectual debates surrounding hadith that spurred additional research. Yet obstacles remain, including insufficient qualified instructors, limited access to foundational hadith texts, and excessive dependence on derivative works. Researchers such as Karel Steenbrink and Howard M. Federspiel have documented how the shortage of primary hadith collections reveals insufficient attention to this discipline within both government-affiliated and independent Islamic educational institutions. Important compilations like al-Baihaqi's al-Sunan al-Kubra and al-Hakim's al-Mustadrak can be found in only select libraries. Digital resources including CDs and online databases remain largely untapped, especially among traditionally-trained scholars.

Notwithstanding these obstacles, Indonesian hadith scholarship has accelerated since the middle of the 20th century, propelled by increasing recognition of hadith's importance for deriving Islamic legal principles. The scholarship of figures like Shuhudi Ismail and current specialists, including Sobron Efendi and Kamaruddin Amin, demonstrates movement toward more rigorous methodologies. This evolution corresponds with modernist and fundamentalist movements seeking to restore authentic Islamic teachings and address present-day questions through primary source analysis. Although the discipline lags behind Qur'anic scholarship in development, the growing priority given to hadith as a foundational source of Islamic jurisprudence suggests an encouraging outlook for Indonesian hadith studies.

The Role of Islamic Scholars in Advancing Hadith Scholarship

Islamic scholars in Indonesia have made essential contributions to advancing hadith scholarship through both scholarly writings and intellectual discourse. Key figures in this development include Muhammad Maḥfuẓ al-Tarmasī (d. 1920), Ahmad Surkati (d. 1943M), Ahmad Hasan (d. 1958M), TM. Hasbi Ash-Shiddieqy (d. 1975M), Fatchur Rahman (d. 1995M), Muhammad Syuhudi Ismail (d. 1995M), and Ali Muṣṭafa Ya'qub.

Muhammad Maḥfuẓ bin 'Abd Allāh bin 'Abd al-Mannān al-Tarmasī (1285-1338H) stands among three major reformers who transformed Islamic education across the Archipelago from the 19th into the 20th centuries. He pioneered hadith dirayah scholarship and introduced foundational hadith texts to the region. The scarcity of scholars bearing the muhaddith title during this period underscores his significance. His writings became foundational texts studied widely in Indonesian pesantren during the early 1900s.

Prior to 1909, hadith scholarship received minimal attention in educational curricula (Fatihunnaha, 2013). By 1921, the Ṭawālib madrasah in Sumatra incorporated hadith texts including al-Arba'īn, Ṣahih al-Bukhāri, Ṣahih Muslim, and the Matn and Sharh al-Bayquniyah, with Fath al-Bāry as commentary being taught at Madrasah Azizah by 1927. Al-Tarmasī emerged in the early 20th century as a muhaddith engaged across multiple scholarly disciplines. His hadith scholarship includes Thulāthiyat al-Bukhāri, al-Mabhah al-Khairiyah fi Arba'in Hadīthan min Ahādith Khayr al-Bahiyyah, al-Khal'at al-Fikriyah bi Sharh al-Minhah al-Khayriyah, Manhaj Dhaw al-Naẓar fi Sharh Alfiyat 'Ilm al-Athar, and Kifāyat al-Mustafīd fi Mā 'Alā min al-Asānīd.

Al-Tarmasī's impact on Indonesian hadith scholarship proves substantial. He maintained a scholarly lineage connecting to Imam al-Bukhāri through two chains from his teachers. One transmission line proceeds through Sayyid Shaṭā al-Makki, Ahmad bin Zayni Dahlan, Shaykh Usman al-Dimyaṭi, Shaykh Muhammad al-Shanwani, 'Isa al-Barawi, Shaykh Muhammad al-Dafri, Shaykh Salim, Shaykh Abdullah bin Salim al-Baḥri, Shaykh Muhammad bin 'Ala al-Din al-Bābili, Shaykh Salim bin Muhammad al-Sanhurī, Al-Najm Muhammad al-Ghaytī, al-Imam Zakariya, Ibn Hajar al-Asqalanī, Ibrahim bin Ahmad, Abu al-Abbas, al-Husain bin al-Mubarak, Abu al-Waqt, Abu al-Hasan, Abu Muhammad al-Sarakhī, Muhammad bin Yusuf al-Faribarī, al-Imam al-Hafiẓ al-Hujjaj, and Imam al-Bukhāri.

Following al-Tarmasī's second departure to Haramayn without returning home, he established multiple channels for disseminating his scholarship throughout the Archipelago:

(1) through students like Hashim Ash'ary (1871-1947) and others; (2) through family members including Dimyati bin Abdullah, Abdurrazak, and Dahlan; (3) through publishing houses that printed his texts; and (4) through pilgrims. Subsequently, his hadith scholarship spread throughout the Archipelago via students who studied briefly during pilgrimage journeys. This initiated broader recognition of hadith texts among Indonesian Muslims.

Ahmad Surkati, who established al-Irshad, represents another significant figure, particularly known for his work al-Kafā'ah. This text addresses hadiths concerning equality between the Prophet's descendants (sayyid) and other Muslims (non-sayyid), validating intermarriage (Afandi, 1999). Surkati identified the Qur'an and hadith as Islam's foundational sources, with the Qur'an and Ṣahih al-Bukhāri (with Ibn Hajar al-Asqalaniy's commentary) serving as the most authoritative references for Muslim life. He maintained that those unable to comprehend hadith directly should follow mujtahid opinions, with non-Qur'anic and non-hadith references being valuable only when ulama base them on these primary sources (Afandi, 1999).

Ahmad Surkati's hadith methodology represents pioneering work in Indonesian hadith scholarship. His approach proved more explicit than that of traditional Indonesian scholars, who primarily relied on Shafi'i jurisprudence texts. For traditional Indonesian Muslims, Shafiite juristic opinions from established collections were considered both adequate and mandatory. They believed conducting ijtihad—including interpreting Qur'an and hadith—required extensive knowledge no longer obtainable, including hadith sciences.

Traditional Muslims viewed Shafiite jurists' historical accomplishments as having produced comprehensive jurisprudence collections addressing all legal matters, making their opinions sufficient references. When hadiths appeared as references, they underwent such thorough examination that readers needed not verify arguments independently. Indonesian traditional Muslims felt no obligation to assess hadith quality classifications as ṣahih, hasan, or ḍaif.

Ahmad Hasan, who founded Persatuan Islam (Persis), advanced hadith scholarship in Indonesia through validation methodologies and interpretive approaches. Ahmad Hassan argued that determining hadith authenticity (ṣahih) requires examining all transmitters through rijāl al-hadith texts like al-Dhahaby's Mizān al-I'tidāl (Hasan et al., 2000). When all transmitters prove trustworthy (thiqah) without moral defects, the hadith merits classification as hasan or ṣahih. This demonstrates Ahmad Hasan's expertise in rijāl al-hadīth literature.

Ahmad Hasan's transmitter knowledge became evident through his extensive collection of biographical texts on hadith narrators, preserved in his Bangil Pasuruan, East Java library. His collection included (a) Tahdzīb al-Tahdzīb and (b) Lisān al-Mīzān, both by Ibn Hajar al-'Asqalāniy; (c) Mīzān al-I'tidāl by al-Dzahabiy; (d) Al-Ishābah by Ibn Hajar al-'Asqalāniy; (e) Usud al-Ghābat fī Ma'rifat Asmā' al-Shahābah by Ibn al-Atsīr al-Jazriy; (f) Al-Tārīkh al-Kabīr by al-Bukhāriy; (g) Al-Fihris by Ibn Nadīm in 10 volumes; (h) Al-Badr al-Ṭāli' by al-Syawkāniy; (i) Al-Jarh wa al-Ta'dīl by Ibn Abīy Hātim; (j) Al-Durar al-Kāminah by Ibn Hajar al-'Asqalāniy; (k) Nuzhat al-Khawāthir by Abd al-Hayy al-Hasaniy; (l) Ta'jīl al-Manfa'ah by Ibn Hajar al-'Asqalāniy; (m) Thabaqāt al-Mudallisīn by Ibn Hajar al-'Asqalāniy in 1 volume; and

(n) ‘Ilal al-Hadīth by Ibn Abīy Hātim in 2 volumes addressing hadith defects. This collection confirms his comprehensive knowledge of rijāl al-hadīth.

According to Ahmad Hasan, investigating hadith transmitters requires examining numerous elements: (1) complete names including nicknames (laqab) and family lineages, (2) birth dates, (3) death dates, (4) countries of origin, (5) teachers, (6) students, (7) locations of hadith study and learning journeys, (8) hadith experts encountered, and (9) other scholars’ assessments of them. Ahmad Hasan’s biographical investigations included examining a hadith regarding Prophets’ bodily conditions in the afterlife, narrated by Ahmad bin Hanbal, Abū Dāwud, Al-Nasā’iy, Ibn Mājah, Ibn Hibbān, al-Hākim, al-Bayhaqiy, al-Dārimiy, Sa’īd ibn Manshūr, al-Thabrāniy, and Ibn Abī Shaybah. While al-Hākim and al-Nawāwiy classified it as sound (ṣahih) and Al-Mundhiriy as hasan, Ahmad Hasan deemed it weak due to the transmitter ‘Abdurrahmān bin Yazīd bin Jābir (Hasan et al., 2000). Other scholars disputed this, arguing the chain runs through ‘Abdurrahmān bin Yazīd bin Tamīm instead.

Thorough transmitter investigation ensures hadith transmission. Ahmad Hasan verified teachers of transmitters extending to the tabi’in generation following the ṣahabah, arguing Companions’ integrity (adil) was established and required no verification. Ahmad Hasan stated:

> *“The hadith codifiers, including Malik, Ahmad, Bukhāriy, Muslim, and others, require no additional verification as their scholarship, devotion, and trustworthiness have been confirmed by meticulous contemporary scholars, particularly regarding hadith. Similarly, the Prophet’s Companions serving as transmitters underwent scholarly examination proving their complete truthfulness, piety, sincerity, and reliability. Therefore, the investigation should focus on individuals beyond these two generations”* (Hasan, 1972).

This statement indicates Ahmad Hasan focused investigations on individuals beyond “well-known Companion transmitters” and “Hadith Codifiers,” considering them validated by earlier scholars.

Ahmad Hasan demonstrated remarkable scholarly courage in expressing opinions. His bold position on hajj maintained that no pilgrimage replacement (badal hajj) exists, arguing the supporting al-Bukhāri hadith contradicts the Qur’anic verse (53:39) stating individuals obtain only their own efforts. Another controversial stance rejected weak hadiths (ḍaif) as primary references even for faḍāil al-a’māl. Regardless of agreement or disagreement, Ahmad Hasan’s intellectual courage merits recognition in Indonesian hadith scholarship history.

Though Ahmad Hasan left no comprehensive hadith sciences legacy, his works contain substantial hadith discussions, exemplified by Ringkasan Islam, written in 1939 and first published in 1972. Its second chapter explicitly addresses hadith definitions and scope, historical development, evaluation methods, codification approaches, and eight hadith collections with authors. Another work, Muqaddimah Ilmu Hadith dan Ushūl Fiqh, provides brief introductions to hadith, usul al-fiqh, and concepts used in Tarjamah Bulūghul Marām. Additional books include Kumpulan Risalah A. Hasan, Soal Jawab, Tarjamah Bulūg al-Marām, and Pengajaran Ṣalat, addressing hadith interpretation techniques and approaches (Hasan, 2002).

Beyond extensive hadith knowledge, Ahmad Hassan maintained consistent practices in issuing fatwas. As Persatuan Islam's sole mufti for years, he issued numerous fatwas through ijtihad, engaging directly with Qur'an, hadith, and qiyas (analogy). Unlike traditional Muslims hesitant to employ ijtihad, Ahmad Hassan independently issued abundant fatwas compiled in four volumes titled Soal-Jawab tentang Berbagai Masalah Agama during his mufti tenure.

T.M. Hasbi Ash-Shiddieqy (1904-1975), professor of Islamic studies at IAIN Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta, represents our fourth key figure. This prolific writer produced essential hadith scholarship in Indonesian when needed. As a self-taught scholar trained domestically yet achieving global reach, his clear contribution involved providing Indonesian-language hadith and hadith sciences literature. His hadith scholarship emerged from fiqh foundations, consistently connecting hadith works to Islamic law while employing ushul fiqh methodologies.

Between 1960 and 1973, Hasbi produced extensive academic Islamic texts needed by students across 14 State Institutes for Islamic Studies (IAINs) nationwide despite few Indonesian writers then available. Throughout his lifetime, Hasbi completed 72 books and 50 articles covering tafsir, hadith, fiqh, and rituals. His hadith collections include Mutiara hadith (6 Volumes), Beberapa Rangkuman Hadith, and Koleksi Hadith-Hadith Hukum (9 volumes). His hadith sciences works comprise Sejarah dan Pengantar Ilmu Hadith, Pokok-Pokok Ilmu Dirayah Hadith (2 Volumes), Problematika Hadith Sebagai Dasar Pembinaan Hukum Islam, Rijalul Hadith, and Sejarah perkembangan Hadith. Additionally, he published critical reviews of hadiths Al-Ghazali used in Ihya 'Ulum al-Din. His controversial books challenging majority ulama positions include *Pedoman Ṣalat, Pedoman Puasa, Pedoman Haji*, and *Sharah Hadith* (Afandi, 1999), the latter demonstrating extensive coverage of scholarly hadith interpretations on law.

Our fifth figure, Fatchur Rahman, significantly contributed to Indonesian hadith scholarship development by advancing transmission research that TM Hasbi Ash Shiddieqy had not addressed. He pioneered explaining transmission research methods with transmitter scheme examples in his work Ikhtiṣar Muṣṭalah al-Hadith. Despite available transmission and content research texts, Fatchur Rahman's work remains relevant for complementing transmission research references.

Indonesian hadith scholarship development cannot exclude the substantial contribution of our sixth figure, Syuhudi Ismail. Beyond formal employment and professorial responsibilities, Syuhudi Ismail prolifically produced working papers, research reports, speeches, articles, and materials for IAIN "Alauddin" Makassar and other audiences. His publications appeared in Makassar and Jakarta magazines and newspapers. His published textbooks include Pengantar Ilmu Hadis and Menentukan Arah Kiblat dan Waktu Ṣalat (both Bandung, 1987). His work Kaedah Kesahihan Sanad Hadith: Telaah Kritis dan Tinjauan dengan Pendekatan llmu Sejarah developed from his 1987 doctorate thesis in Hadith sciences at IAIN "Syarif Hidayatullah" Jakarta's Postgraduate program.

Syuhudi Ismail produced numerous papers during Yogyakarta Postgraduate Program enrollment and Jakarta master's and doctorate programs. He also contributed 13 entries to the Indonesian Encyclopedia of Islam. His formal position was professor at IAIN "Alauddin"

Makassar's Shari'ah Faculty. Since undergraduate studies, Syuhudi Ismail focused on hadith scholarship, completing transmission criticism methods that Fatchur Rahman later reproduced in Metodologi Penelitian Sanad Hadis. This book explained transmission research criteria and procedures alongside content research criteria. To assist researchers in locating hadith references, he wrote the dictionary Cara Praktis Mencari Hadith. Additionally, Syuhudi Ismail's contextual hadith interpretation significantly advanced Indonesian hadith scholarship, particularly since Indonesian hadith understanding remained predominantly textual.

Syuhudi Ismail's contextual approach proved relevant since not all hadiths require textual interpretation. This is demonstrated by contextual hadith understanding during the Prophet's era. A well-known example involves the Prophet commanding Muslim soldiers sent to Bani Quraiẓah not to perform Aṣar prayers until reaching their destination. Some Companions understood this contextually, performing Aṣar prayers before arrival because the prayer time was ending, arguing the Prophet intended swift movement to Bani Quraiẓah before sunset rather than postponing prayers (Al-Asqalany, n.d). The Prophet remained silent when informed of this interpretation. In this instance, they understood the Prophet's hadith as motivating rapid movement rather than determining prayer timing.

Syuhudi Ismail's contextual interpretation appears in his work Hadith Nabi yang Tekstual dan yang Kontekstual. He pioneered writing a dedicated book on contextual hadith interpretation. This work elaborated on contextual understanding of hadiths Muslim scholars frequently cite as prohibiting female state leadership. His analysis noted that historically, females lacked higher education and were generally inferior to males. However, contemporary times feature numerous highly educated females superior to their male counterparts. While past circumstances might have made female leadership inappropriate, contemporary conditions differ, rendering the prohibition no longer applicable (Ismail, 1994).

Beyond these figures, Ali Mustafa Ya'qub represents another scholar contributing significantly to contemporary Indonesian hadith scholarship development. He actively discusses and critiques Orientalists (Ya'qub, 2002), seemingly influenced by his teacher Muhammad Muṣṭafa Azami, who maintained firm, uncompromising positions toward Orientalists perceived as devaluing hadiths (Azami, 1994). His published hadith works include: (1) Nasihat Nabi kepada Pembaca dan penghafal al-Qur'an (1990); (2) Imam Bukhari dan Metodologi Kritik dalam Ilmu Hadith (1991); (3) Hadith Nabawi dan sejarah Kodifikasinya; (4) Peran Ilmu Hadith dalam Pembinaan Hukum Islam (1999); (5) Hadith-Hadith Bermasalah (2003); and (6) Hadith-Hadith Palsu Seputar Ramaḍan (2003).

Ali Muṣṭafa Ya'qub's comprehensive hadith sciences knowledge resulted from formal training in the Exegesis and Hadith Department at King Saud University, Riyad, Saudi Arabia, where he completed his Magister in exegesis and hadith in 1985. Since 1986, he has resided in Jakarta, teaching at the Institute of Qur'anic Sciences (IIQ), the Institute for the Study of Qur'anic Sciences (ISIQ/PTIQ), and instructing Sahih al-Bukhari at Istiqlal mosque. Additionally, he serves as Secretary General of Islamic Boarding School Ittihad al-Muballighin, Fatwa Commission member of the Assembly of Indonesian Muslim Scholars (MUI) central board, and vice-chancellor of the College of Propagation (Dakwah) Sciences al-Hamidiyah

(STIDA) Jakarta (Azami, 1994). Currently, he is considered the most senior figure contributing knowledge to Indonesian hadith scholarship development.

The Role of Islamic Social Movements

Indonesia's Islamic social movements that demonstrate significant engagement with hadith scholarship include Muhammadiyah and Persatuan Islam (Persis). This focus aligns with their foundational principles, as modernist Muslim leaders established both groups with an emphasis on practicing ijtihad. From its inception, Muhammadiyah declared that its tarjih (legal decision-making body) would base rulings on the Qur'an and authentic hadith. This foundational approach has evolved to recognize the Qur'an and Sunnah Maqbulah (accepted Prophetic tradition). Consequently, Muhammadiyah acknowledges both sahih and hasan categories of hadith as legitimate foundations for legal determinations. Practical examination of the Himpunan Putusan Tarjih (HPT) Muhammadiyah—the comprehensive collection of organizational legal rulings—reveals reliance not merely on sahih hadith but also on hasan and ḍaif categories. Chudlori's 1988 scholarly investigation substantiates this, examining 50 hadiths representing 29% of the 172 hadiths contained in the HPT.25 Analysis of these 50 hadiths' transmission chains revealed 15 sahih hadiths (30%), 19 hasan hadiths (38%), and 16 ḍaif hadiths (32%). Additionally, 29 hadiths (38%) exhibited textual variations from their original sources.

Nevertheless, Chudhori maintains that these findings do not undermine the HPT Muhammadiyah's authority. A principal justification is that hadith authentication among scholars frequently yields divergent conclusions. This variability extends to transmission chain evaluation. Individual narrators may receive thiqah (credible) assessments from one hadith critic, ḍaif ratings from another, and ṣadiq (honest) evaluations from yet others. These varying assessments correspondingly classify narrations as sound, weak, and trustworthy. Despite these observations, Chudhori's research suggests the need for enhanced hadith expertise within Muhammadiyah's scholarly community.

Beyond Muhammadiyah, Persatuan Islam (PERSIS), another modernist movement, has made noteworthy contributions to Indonesian hadith scholarship. PERSIS originated with the mission of consolidating Islamic understanding throughout Indonesia according to Qur'anic and al-Sunnah principles (Zamik, 2011). Members of this organization demonstrate considerable determination to reexamine accepted legal positions, suspecting problematic hadith usage in their argumentative foundations. The hadith addressing proxy pilgrimage exemplifies this scrutiny. According to PERSIS analysis, this hadith conflicts with Qur'an Chapter al-Najm verse 39, which declares that individuals receive only what they themselves earn, despite this hadith appearing in Ṣahih al-Bukhari with Ṣahih-rated transmitters. During September 2000, PERSIS convened to reassess this legal determination and reconcile the hadith's meaning with verse 39 of Chapter al-Najm. According to their position, most hadith authorities have reconciled these texts by characterizing the verse as general principle while treating the hadith as specific exception. However, PERSIS faces challenges with limited qualified human resources for achieving its objectives. Following Ahmad Hassan's death, the organization has lacked a comparably prolific scholar or confident mufti possessing equivalent

knowledge and determination. This situation is evidenced by PERSIS having only one doctoral-level hadith scholar, Abdurrahman, as of 2005 (Wahid, 2006).27

The present state of Indonesian hadith scholarship development described above reflects the broader circumstances of Indonesian Muslim communities. Despite the presence of certain hadith scholars and Muslim organizations advancing hadith studies, Indonesian Muslims predominantly maintain traditionalist orientations that avoid direct hadith application in legal reasoning. This pattern exists because Indonesian Muslims, similar to Muslims globally, have historically concentrated on Islamic jurisprudence studies. Other disciplines serve supporting functions to Islamic jurisprudence.

As Schacht observes, Islamic law represents the fundamental identity marker for every Muslim (Schacht, 1964). Moreover, Indonesian Muslims' jurisprudential methodology does not proceed through ijtihad. Rather, they depend on classical jurists' interpretations associated with particular madhhab (legal schools), which constitutes taqlid. Throughout Indonesia and Southeast Asia generally, most communities embraced the Shafi'i legal school. Muslims affiliated with social organizations including NU, al-Waṣliyah, al-Ittihādiyah, Maṭlaul Anwar, and PUI adopted Shafi'i madhhab. MUI has similarly adopted the madhhab structure, adhering to authoritative positions (mu'tamad) within madhhab frameworks. Madhhab interpretations are understood to incorporate arguments derived from the Qur'an and hadith. Consequently, the methodology for determining a specific madhhab's legal positions involves consulting naṣ found in authoritative texts without returning to Qur'anic and hadith sources. This practice has characterized Indonesian Muslim communities for centuries, resulting in limited human resources for hadith studies, particularly regarding legal reasoning applications.

Analysis of Islamic social organizations' contributions to hadith scholarship development remains incomplete without examining Nahdlatul Ulama (NU). NU's influence emerges through hadith utilization in its bahthul masail (deliberative problem-solving sessions) (Said et al, 2006). Bahthul Masail functions as NU's religious fatwa-issuing mechanism for addressing and resolving contemporary Islamic law questions affecting Muslim life. Departing from traditional practice where individual muftis would perform independent ijtihad to address issues, NU instituted a collective assembly of Shafiite jurists to develop solutions. Additionally, rather than ijtihad, NU has consistently maintained commitment to preserving madhhab traditions or turās qadīm (classical intellectual heritage) as documented in "yellow books" (kitab kuning) (Radino, 2000).

NU consequently requires Muslims to adhere to one among the four recognized legal schools (Bruenessen, 1990). This dedication shapes NU's official position regarding Qur'anic and hadith texts in Islamic jurisprudence. According to NU principles, legal determinations through direct Qur'anic and hadith consultation without considering fiqh literature is impermissible, prohibited, or potentially misguided. Nevertheless, evidence shows that during bahthul masail sessions, NU occasionally consults the Qur'an and hadith directly (Zahro, 2004). This inconsistency manifests in its thematic problems deliberation unit (lajnah bahthul masail al-mauḍu'iyyah). Throughout the bahthul masail sessions from 1926 to 2004, 458 legal rulings were issued. According to Shohibul Adib's assessment, NU employed only 75 hadiths during these occasions, whether partially quoted or cited completely (Adib, 2009). Primary

sources (Qur'an and Hadith) usage intensified following the 1991 conference when NU issued fatwa guidelines permitting ijtihad employment when jurisprudence provided insufficient answers.

NU's bahsul masail methodology for addressing these 75 issues encompasses three approaches: muqārin (comparative), ijmali (holistic), and tahlili (analytical). The muqārin approach was applied 41 times for hadith interpretation, while ijmali methodology was utilized 20 times. Tahlili methodology received application only 14 times. NU's muqārin methodology for hadith interpretation extends beyond merely cross-referencing hadith commentary literature (kitab sharah) or simply applying Tanẓir al-Masāil Binazāirihā (precedent analogy), instead employing constrained intellectual exercise (muqayyad ijtihad) within Shafiite legal theory using rigorous methodological reasoning.

NU applies two comparative approaches for hadith interpretation. First, muqārin compares hadith with other hadiths, various hadith commentary texts, fiqh literature, or additional authoritative sources (mu'tabar). Second, muqārin methodology compares hadith against Qur'anic verses, Companions' statements (athar), Shafii-jurists' positions, and prior congress decisions (mukhtar). Therefore, NU's hadith interpretation approach in bahthul masail sessions combines textual and contextual methodologies. However, contextual methodology received application by NU for only 2 among 75 hadiths in bahsul masail proceedings. These are (1) hadith concerning bribery's legal status in civil service (Pegawai Negeri Sipil/PNS) hiring processes and (2) hadith addressing contemporary matters such as women working night shifts outside their homes.

Prospects for Hadith Scholarship Development

The foundational work in hadith examination undertaken by the Islamic community organizations previously discussed represents a meaningful foundation for advancing hadith scholarship in Indonesia. Similarly, prominent Muslim intellectuals including Muhammad Mahfuẓ al-Tarmasī, Hasbi Ash-Shiddieqy, Ahmad Surkati, Ahmad Hasan, Syuhudi Ismail, and Ali Musthafa Ya'qub pioneered hadith discourse while their contemporaries concentrated on fiqh and Sufism. Nevertheless, these accomplishments remain limited in scope. This characterizes the state of hadith scholarship development in Indonesia through the opening decade of the twenty-first century.

A fresh development in the nation's hadith scholarship landscape appeared in the closing years of the 1990s, marked by renewed enthusiasm and broader engagement. Several significant hadith collections became core teaching materials in mosques, Islamic schools, boarding institutions, and universities. Mahmud Yunus documented that between 1900 and 1908, certain hadith texts were instructed in modest mosques that functioned as precursors to formal Islamic education in Sumatra.

Islamic universities have assumed a vital function in this advancement. Graduate departments at Islamic universities have cultivated a new generation of hadith specialists. For example, the Graduate School at UIN Sunan Ampel Surabaya generated 31 master's-level studies focused on hadith topics. Its doctorate program yielded 11 hadith-centered dissertations. IAIN Sumatra Utara's Graduate Program similarly produced master's research

in this field. UIN Syarif Hidayatullah Jakarta's Graduate School generated 190 doctoral studies, with 14 examining hadith sciences, authentication procedures (takhrij), or related investigations. Among these 14 works, 8 concentrated on authentication techniques or hadith evaluation. Additionally, establishing undergraduate Tafsir-Hadith departments within theology faculties across various IAINs throughout Indonesia has amplified scholarly attention to hadith. Regrettably, few of these academic works reach broader readership through publication. Another important catalyst for Indonesian hadith scholarship has been theological disputes between Sunni and Shi'i communities. These controversies center on critiques of Abu Hurairah, al-Zuhri, and the hadith antum a'lamu bi umūri dunyākum featured in Jalaluddin Rahmat's Islam Aktual, along with Panji Masyarakat magazine's issue 690 covering Kritik Hadith and the anonymously written Studi Kritis Sejarah Rasulullah. This prompted Ahmad Husnan's counter-response, Kritik Hadith Cendekiawan Dijawab Santri. Subsequently, Agus Efendi authored Menjawab "Santri" Menanggapi Tanggapan Atas Buku Islam Aktual, released by Cahaya Bandung in 1993.

Additionally, the Inkar al-Sunnah movement surfaced in Jakarta. This includes Jama'ah Islam Qur'ani, based at al-Burhan mosque in Pasar Rumput, Jakarta, which recognizes only the Qur'an as authoritative scripture for Muslims, alongside Dalimi Lubis's hadith rejection campaign in Padang Panjang. A more rigid fundamentalist approach, the Salafi movement, also gained traction. This ideology compels adherents to interpret hadith literally, growing facial hair, performing communal worship exclusively in mosques, and maintaining trouser lengths above the ankle. They reject certain religious observances of conventional Muslims as un-Islamic. Moreover, they view nation-states, democratic governance, and universal human rights concepts—which Indonesian mainstream Muslims embrace—as incompatible with Islamic principles. This movement has compelled conventional Muslims from both modernist and traditionalist camps to counter these challenges through their hadith expertise.

CONCLUSION

Based on the preceding discussion, scholarly engagement with hadith in Indonesia did not begin simultaneously with Islam's arrival in the archipelago. Throughout the 1600s and 1700s, hadith scholarship in Indonesia remained in its early stages and trailed behind developments in fiqh, Sufism, theological discourse, and Qur'anic exegesis. This lag stemmed primarily from the prevalent focus on Shafi'i jurisprudence, minimal incentive to directly consult the Qur'an and al-hadith, and scarce availability of hadith collections alongside specialists in hadith and its related disciplines.

Only during the latter portion of the 1800s did hadith scholarship begin to emerge more prominently, initially attracting attention from a small circle of Muslims before accelerating in the opening decades of the 1900s. This growth coincided with efforts by certain Muslim communities to authenticate Islamic teachings through rigorous verification of the hadith employed to support their viewpoints in the early twentieth Century, debates over hadith usage between Sunni and Shi'i communities during the 1980s, the Inkar al-Sunnah movement, and Orientalist scholarship that appeared to diminish hadith's authority.

Within this framework, Indonesian Muslims began redirecting, or at a minimum supplementing, their jurisprudential foundations toward hadith and Islamic legal reasoning. Additionally, hadith-related scholarship may be categorized as secondary literature employing methodologies that command broad acceptance among global Muslim communities. Against this backdrop, Indonesian Muslim intellectuals and Islamic civic institutions have made substantial contributions to advancing hadith scholarship, chiefly by producing literature on hadith and its auxiliary sciences. Nevertheless, their interpretive methodologies diverge. Muslim intellectuals employ both literal and contextual hermeneutics, whereas Islamic civic institutions, with the exception of NU, predominantly favor literal interpretation. NU, conversely, incorporates both methodological frameworks in its decision-making processes. Faculty members at Islamic institutions of higher learning have likewise begun championing hadith scholarship. That said, Indonesian hadith studies require continued advancement to ensure hadith achieves its rightful standing as the secondary source after the Qur'an.

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