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Transformation of Hadits Transmission in The Tadwin Era: Epistemological Analysis and Its Implications on Hadits Studies

Muhammad Rijal Mushthofa^{1✉}, Muhid²

^{1,2}UIN Sunan Ampel Surabaya, Indonesia

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Abstract

This study analyzes the transformation of hadits transmission methodology during the tadwin (systematic codification) era and its implications for hadits studies. The focus includes changes in verification mechanisms from the pre-tadwin period to the tadwin era, as well as their impact on the epistemological framework. Using a qualitative library research approach, the study examines classical sources and relevant academic literature. The findings reveal that the tadwin era marked not only the codification of hadits but also a fundamental transformation in transmission verification. In the pre-tadwin period, transmission largely depended on memorization and personal authority of narrators. In contrast, the tadwin era introduced a more structured approach through the central role of isnad, standardization of transmission practices, and application of hadits criticism. This development led to the emergence of key methodological tools such as 'ilm rijal al-hadits and al-jarh wa al-ta'dil, which enable objective assessment of narrators and transmitted reports. Furthermore, these methodological changes contributed to the formation of an epistemological structure grounded in verification, objectivity, and accountability. The principles of tahqiq and tabayyun demonstrate the relevance of hadits methodology in addressing contemporary challenges, particularly the spread of disinformation in the digital era. Academically, this study contributes to the discourse on hadith studies by providing a comprehensive analysis of the methodological transformation during the tadwin era and highlighting its significance for the development of contemporary epistemological approaches to hadith scholarship.

✉ Email Correspondent:
rijalulmushthofa24@gmail.com

Introduction

The authenticity of Hadits has long depended upon the reliability of its transmission system, making the *tadwīn* era a decisive phase in the formation of Hadits epistemology. Historically, the *tadwīn* era which took place from the end of the first century to the beginning of the third century constituted a crucial phase in the construction of Hadits science. This period is significant because it served as a reference for later scholars in compiling Hadits books (Bistara, 2020). Concerns over the potential loss of Hadits due to the deaths of early transmitters prompted efforts toward more structured codification and documentation (Shiddieqy, 1980). This study positions the *sanad* (chain of transmission) as a fundamental epistemological element in the Hadits knowledge system, because it is through the *sanad* that the validation process of a tradition is methodologically carried out. The assessment of Hadits from that time onward was not done arbitrarily, but through clear parameters, such as the continuity of the transmission chain, the moral integrity of the transmitters, their level of precision and memorization capacity, as well as the absence of hidden defects (Hakim, 2017). All these criteria became prerequisites before a Hadits could be determined as authentic or classified as weak (Jaya, 2025). A number of empirical studies show that the mechanism of *sanad* criticism did not emerge spontaneously, but was formulated and developed systematically through structured stages. All of these stages are grounded in classical principles that were scientifically constructed, thus forming a robust methodological framework within the tradition of Hadits science.

Although previous studies have extensively discussed the history of *tadwīn*, the development of *sanad* criticism, and the emergence of Hadits sciences, most of them examine these aspects separately or descriptively. Limited attention has been given to explaining how the transformation of transmission methodology during the *tadwīn* era reshaped the epistemological foundations of Hadits scholarship as an integrated process. In particular, the relationship between methodological changes in transmission, the institutionalization of verification mechanisms, and the formation of a systematic epistemological framework remains insufficiently explored. This study addresses that gap by analyzing the transformation of Hadits transmission methodology not merely as a process of codification, but as an epistemological shift that established the principles, standards, and scientific instruments underlying the development of classical Hadits studies.

The transformation of Hadits transmission methodology in the *tadwīn* era cannot be separated from several factors, such as the dynamic, (Umar Al Faruq, Ayu Cendana Kirana, Wirda 'Aidzatus Salma, 2024) socio-political and intellectual context of the early Muslim community, the expansion of Islamic territories, the emergence of various schools of thought, and the increasing need for normative legitimacy in the fields of jurisprudence (*fiqh*) and theology (Fuad Ardlin, 2023). On this basis, the methodology of transmission developed as an epistemological response to the need to preserve the authenticity of the Prophet Muhammad's teachings amid the complexity of contemporary challenges. *Tadwīn*, therefore, cannot be reduced merely to an administrative process of textual recording; rather, it marks a fundamental change in the patterns of production, transmission, and legitimation of Hadits knowledge (Umar Al Faruq, Ayu Cendana Kirana, Wirda 'Aidzatus Salma, 2024). This shift is clearly evident in the transformation of the basis of scholarly authority from reliance on the personal reputation of transmitters toward a system of

collective evaluation grounded in rational, standardized, and documented methodological procedures (Faqih, 2022). This transformation subsequently gave rise to more specific and systematic scholarly tools, such as the science of *tarikh ar-ruwah* or *tarikh arrijal* and *al-jarh wa al-ta'dil*, which later became branches within the construction of Hadits science (Palangkey et al., 2025). The presence of these two disciplines demonstrates that the transformation of transmission methodology had a direct impact on the formation of the conceptual and epistemological framework of Hadits science as a whole. This process made Hadits science a discipline with solid theoretical and methodological foundations in the Islamic intellectual tradition (Tamjidnor, 2025).

This historical transformation has attracted considerable scholarly attention. Previous research indicates that the writing and codification of Hadits did not occur instantly, but rather through a long historical process. In his study, Muhammad Nizar affirms that the codification of Hadits was an important and strategic policy which conceptually distinguishes between *kitabah*, *tadwin*, and *tashnif* (Nizar, 2019). On the other hand, Raha Bistara writes that the development of Hadits science in the fourth and fifth periods represented a peak period as well as a transformative period in the history of Hadits scholarship (Bistara, 2020). Meanwhile, Faizal Luqman's study highlights that during the time of the Prophet and the Companions, the transmission of Hadits relied more on memorization and direct practice, whereas structured codification only took place gradually until it reached a more systematic form (Faizal Luqman, Euis Indah, 2023). Thus, these three studies collectively depict a historical continuity ranging from the phase of oral transmission, through the stage of formal codification, to the refinement of Hadits methodology, which ultimately became the foundation for strengthening the authority and legitimacy of Hadits within the structure of Islamic law and thought.

Although relevant, these studies generally still focus on the aspect of codification and the roles of key figures, without deeply examining the transformation of transmission methodology as a process of forming the epistemological foundations of Hadits science. Consequently, the constructive dimension of *tadwīn* as a turning point in the formation of methodological structure has not yet been systematically studied. Starting from this gap, this research focuses attention on two main issues: first, what is the form of transformation in Hadits transmission methodology that occurred during the *tadwīn* era compared to the pre-*tadwīn* period; and second, how does this transformation have implications for the construction of the conceptual structure of Hadits science. This research seeks to position *tadwīn* not merely as a historical event, but as a moment of scholarly transformation that shaped the methodological foundations of the Hadits discipline in subsequent periods. This research contributes to demonstrating that Hadits methodology from the very beginning was built upon structured principles of rationality, systematization, and verification. Thus, this research not only enriches historical studies but also strengthens the theoretical relevance of Hadits science in modern academic discourse.

Method

This research is qualitative research, an approach that emphasizes in-depth understanding of scholarly phenomena through the analysis of non-numerical data (Rachmad, 2024). The research design is library research, relying on documentary analysis of authoritative written sources relevant to the transformation of Hadits transmission methodology during the *tadwīn* era.

The primary sources consist of classical Hadits literature (*kutub al-turath*), including major Hadits collections and foundational works on Hadits methodology, *'ulum al-hadith*, *'ilm al-rijal*, and *al-jarh wa al-ta'dil*. Secondary sources include peer-reviewed journal articles, scholarly books, dissertations, and other academic publications that discuss the history of *tadwīn*, the development of Hadits transmission methodology, and the epistemological dimensions of Hadits studies. The literature was selected based on several criteria: (1) relevance to the research topic, namely the transformation of Hadits transmission methodology during the *tadwīn* era; (2) academic credibility, prioritizing classical authoritative works and peer-reviewed scholarly publications; (3) historical and methodological significance; and (4) the ability of the sources to provide evidence regarding the development of verification mechanisms and the construction of Hadits epistemology.

Data were analyzed using qualitative document analysis through five sequential stages. First, literature selection was conducted to identify and classify sources that met the established inclusion criteria. Second, source criticism was applied to evaluate the authenticity, credibility, and scholarly authority of both classical and contemporary references. Third, historical analysis was employed to reconstruct the socio-intellectual context that shaped the transformation of Hadits transmission methodology during the *tadwīn* era. Fourth, conceptual analysis was carried out to examine the development of key concepts, including *sanad*, verification, *'ilm al-rijal*, and *al-jarh wa al-ta'dil*, as components of the epistemological framework of Hadits scholarship. Finally, synthesis was undertaken to integrate the historical and conceptual findings in order to explain how methodological transformation contributed to the establishment of a systematic and accountable epistemological structure within classical Hadits studies (Faizal Luqman, Euis Indah, 2023).

Results

Transformation of Hadits Verification Methodology in the Epistemological Construction of Hadits Science

The characteristics of Hadits transmission and compilation methodology in the second century AH, as outlined above, demonstrate a strong tendency toward systematization in the collection of narrations. To grasp the significance of this development more comprehensively, an epistemological approach is required that can trace the fundamental changes in the mechanism of Hadits transmission from the pre-*tadwīn* phase to the *tadwīn* era. Within this framework, the transformation that occurred is not merely related to the technical aspects of recording, but also touches upon the way Hadits knowledge is constructed, tested, and legitimated scientifically.

In the pre-*tadwīn* phase, the acceptance of Hadits relied more on the personal authority of a socially recognized transmitter, without any requirement to present a complete chain of transmission. Moreover, there was a tendency among the Companions

to limit Hadits narration (*taqlil al-riwayah*) as a form of caution to avoid errors in conveying the Prophet's words (Al-'Asqalani, 1984). This attitude shows that the validity of Hadits at that time was maintained not only through trust in individuals but also through controlling the quantity of narrations transmitted. However, entering the *tadwīn* era, this pattern underwent a significant shift. The *sanad* was no longer positioned as a supplement but as an essential element that must be stated and verified (Ali, 2019). Thus, the authority of Hadits shifted from a personal basis toward a transmission system that can be traced and tested methodologically.

Another change is evident in the medium and mechanism of Hadits transmission. In the pre-*tadwīn* phase, Hadits transmission occurred predominantly through memorization (oral transmission), which allowed for flexibility in wording and variation in the delivery of narrations. This tradition of memorization not only reflected the Arab culture's strength in memorization but also served as the primary means of preserving Hadits in the early period (Junaid et al., 2024). Entering the *tadwīn* era, a significant shift occurred toward the use of written media as the primary means of collecting and transmitting Hadits. Codification in the form of Hadits books not only functioned as a documentation tool but also as a mechanism for textual stabilization and standardization of narrations. With systematic recording, Hadits no longer depended solely on the memorization capacity of individuals but rather on written documents that could be verified, reviewed, and transmitted in a more controlled manner (Al-Athīr, 2016).

In addition, the evaluative aspect of Hadits science also underwent significant development. Whereas in the early phase no formal classification of Hadits quality had yet been found, in the *tadwīn* era, categorizations such as *shahih* (authentic), *hasan* (good), and *dlaif* (weak) began to be formulated based on specific methodological parameters. This classification allowed the process of Hadits assessment to be carried out in a more structured, objective, and consistent manner. All of these changes ultimately led to an epistemological shift in Hadits science. Knowledge that was previously rooted in social trust transformed into a scholarly system based on rigorous verification procedures. In this context, concepts such as *sanad*, *'adalah* (integrity), *dlaibth* (precision), and *'ilal* (hidden defects) function not only as technical instruments but also as epistemological categories that determine the validity of a narration. Therefore, the transformation of transmission in the *tadwīn* era can be viewed as a significant moment marking the birth of a systematic, critical, and methodologically grounded structure of Hadits scholarship within the Islamic intellectual tradition.

The transformation from the pre-*tadwīn* phase to the *tadwīn* era not only produced changes in the technical aspects of transmission but also brought fundamental implications for the conceptual construction and epistemic structure of Hadits science. One of the most significant consequences of this process was the emergence of more systematic methodological tools for verifying the authority of narrations, which were subsequently institutionalized in derivative disciplines such as the science of *al-jarh wa al-ta'dīl* (criticism and validation of transmitters). This science functions as the primary instrument for assessing the credibility of transmitters, so that the validity of a Hadits is no longer determined solely by the existence of a *sanad*, but also by the quality of the individuals within that transmission chain.

Historically, the embryo of the science of *al-jarḥ wa al-ta'dīl* began to develop in the second century AH, parallel with the increasing need to filter narrations due to the expansion of Islamic territories and the growing complexity of transmission networks. During this period, a number of early scholars played important roles in laying the foundations for the criticism of transmitters. Among the prominent figures were Yahya bin Ma'in (d. 233 AH) known for his contributions to the assessment of transmitters compiled in various biographical works such as *Tarikh al-Ruwat*. Imam Ahmad bin Hanbal (d. 241 AH) also had great attention to Hadits and transmitter criticism, reflected in his works *al-'Ilal wa Ma'rifat al-Rijal* as well as his transmitted evaluations of transmitters. Additionally, 'Ali Al Madini (d. 234 AH) is known as one of the pioneers in the science of *jarḥ wa ta'dīl* with works such as *al-'Ilal* and discussions on *al-kunā* (agnomens) and the identities of transmitters (Fawzi, 2008). These scholars not only compiled transmitter data but also established early standards for assessing the credibility of Hadits transmission. The intellectual activities of these scholars demonstrate that the process of Hadits verification had entered a more established phase of institutionalization, where evaluation of transmitters became an integral part of determining the authenticity of narrations.

Within a broader framework, the development of the science of *jarḥ wa ta'dīl* reflects an epistemological paradigm shift in the tradition of Hadits science: from one originally based on social trust toward an approach that emphasizes rational justification and methodological verification. This shift aligns with the post-*tadwin* epistemological character of Hadits, which prioritizes systematic procedures in ensuring the validity of information. Thus, the validity of knowledge is determined not only by the aspect of transmission alone but also by the epistemic quality of the agents conveying that information.

Discussion

Historical and Socio-Political Dynamics in the Background of Hadits Tadwin

Since the earliest phase of the emergence of Hadits, the interaction of the Muslim community with the Prophet's traditions was based on two main mechanisms: memorization (*al-hifdz*) and recording on written sheets (*at-taḥyid fishuḥuf*) (Musaddad, 2021). Although in the early stages, oral transmission was more dominant as a consequence of the temporary and contextual prohibition of writing Hadits, the practice of writing still existed, albeit on a relatively limited scale. This is evidenced by many records from the Companions, such as the *shahifah* Jabir bin Abdillah Al-Anshary, *shahifah as-shadiqah* by Abdullah bin Amr bin Ash, and *shahifah* Hammam bin Munabbih. Muhammad 'Ajjaj Khatib, *Al-Sunnah Qabla Al-Tadwin* (Beirut: Dar al-Fikr, 1980), 348. The socio-political developments toward the end of the first century AH significantly disrupted the stability of Hadits transmission. Territorial expansion scattered the Companions and Successors across various regions, making transmission networks increasingly complex and decentralized. Meanwhile, the political turmoil following the *Fitnah Kubra* generated sharp ideological polarization, causing Hadits to be exploited as a tool of theological and political legitimation by various factions, including the fabrication of narrations to serve particular interests. This situation ultimately led to an increasingly urgent need to establish a more systematic and controlled mechanism for safeguarding the authority of transmissions (Al-Athir, 2016).

This situation was further compounded during the Umayyad period (661–750 CE), where ethnic, linguistic, and cultural diversity demanded a more authoritative normative reference, while internal rivalries, Khawarij rebellions, and Shi'ah political articulations created persistent tensions that spilled into the religious sphere (Al-Athīr, 2016). These cumulative pressures made the need for a systematic and controlled mechanism to safeguard transmission authority increasingly urgent (Rachmah et al., 2025). This phenomenon raised serious concerns about the mixing of the Prophet's teachings with the pragmatic interests of power, thereby giving rise to the need for institutional measures capable of preserving the purity and authority of the Sunnah. Thus, the findings extend previous scholarship by demonstrating that the historical dynamics surrounding *tadwīn* contributed not only to the preservation of Hadits but also to the institutionalization of methodological standards that later became the foundation of Hadits epistemology. Therefore, the socio-political context of the late first century AH should be understood not merely as the historical background of *tadwīn*, but as the catalyst for the transformation of Hadits transmission into a systematic epistemological enterprise.

This monumental policy was realized during the reign of Caliph 'Umar ibn 'Abd al-'Azīz, a caliph from the Umayyad dynasty who came to power at the end of the first century AH. He felt it necessary to take steps for the official collection and writing down of the Prophet's Hadits, which until then had been scattered in the records and memories of the Companions (*Shahābah*) and Successors (*Tabi'īn*) Nawir Yueslem, *Ulumul Hadis* (Surabaya: Mutiara Sumber Widya, 2001), 126. In academic studies, the phase of codification during the time of 'Umar ibn 'Abd al-'Azīz is not always understood in a single way. The Caliph instructed his governors in various Islamic regions to participate in the process of collecting Hadits with firm orders ('Itr, 1981). One of the governors who received this trust was Abu Bakr bin Muhammad bin Amr bin Hazm, the governor of Medina, to collect the Hadits found with Amrah bintu Abdurrahman, a student of Sayyidah Aisyah and the Hadits found with Al-Qasim bin Muhammad bin Abu Bakr As-Sidiq (Alwi, 2021). In his official order, the Caliph expressed concern over the potential loss of prophetic knowledge due to the passing of scholars, and therefore instructed the systematic collection and documentation of Hadits (Al-Bukhari, 2012).

The Hadits of Medina occupied a priority position in the hierarchy of transmission authority, both in terms of comprehensiveness and validity. In terms of comprehensiveness, this was due to Medina's status as the place of residence of the Prophet Muḥammad and his Companions after him, so that the city became the center and main source of the transmission of the Sunnah, both in the form of verbal narrations received by the Successors from the Companions, and in the form of practices (*amal*) passed down through generations. As for validity, the transmission chains originating from the two holy cities, Mecca and Medina, were considered to have a high level of authenticity, given that the practice of *tadlīs* (concealing weaknesses in transmission) among their transmitters was relatively minimal, and the reputation of Hadits forgery in those regions was very rare (Binkiran, 2019). In addition to Abu Bakr ibn Hazm, Ibnu Syihab Az-Zuhri also made significant contributions to the collection of Hadits. This was due to al-Zuhri's reputation for having extensive knowledge in the field of Hadits, particularly the narrations that circulated among the scholars of Medina and the Hijaz. Ibn 'Abd Al-Barr, *Jami' Bayan Al-'Ilm Wa Fadlilh* (Riyadh: Dar Ibn al-Jawzī, 1994), 321.

Umar ibn Abd al-Aziz ordered that the Hadits compiled by Ibn Shihab Al-Zuhri be written down in the form of official lists and registers (*dīwān*), then disseminated to various Islamic regions (Zarkasih, 2012). During this period, the common practice among Hadits students was to document only certain specific narrations, especially those related to legal rulings (*aḥkām shar'īyyah*). However, Al-Zuhri took a different approach. He recorded all the Hadits he heard without any thematic restriction, whether related to legal rulings or other religious fields. This is affirmed in a narration cited by Al-Khatib al-Baghdadi and Ibn Abd al-Barr in their works, from Abu al-Zinad.

During that period, the main orientation of codification remained directed toward collecting Hadits that originated directly from the Prophet, while the *ātsār* (reports) of the Companions were not the primary focus of the official compilation project. Therefore, although Al-Zuhri personally tended to record the narrations of the Companions, the institutional policy initiated by Umar bin Abdul Aziz still placed the Prophet's Hadits as the center and priority in the early *tadwīn* process. Beyond these two figures, the codification effort extended across Islamic territories, with prominent scholars in Medina, Basra, Kufa, Syria, Yemen, Khurasan, and Egypt each contributing to the growing corpus of documented Hadits (Fawzi, 2008). Building upon this perspective, the present study demonstrates that the geographical expansion of codification also encouraged the standardization of transmission practices across diverse scholarly centers. This finding broadens existing explanations by emphasizing that regional scholarly networks played a significant role in establishing common methodological principles for Hadits transmission and verification. Overall, the regional expansion of *tadwīn* transformed Hadits preservation from localized scholarly activities into a collective intellectual project that laid the foundation for the methodological unity of classical Hadits scholarship.

Characteristics of Hadits Transmission and Compilation Methodology in the Second Century AH

The transmission of Hadits during the early codification period, particularly among the generation of muḥaddithūn in the second century AH such as Imam Malik and his contemporaries, exhibits a number of distinctive methodological characteristics in the process of Hadits transmission. This period can be understood as a transitional phase from a predominantly oral transmission tradition toward a more systematic and structured transmission system (Faqih, 2022). In this context, scholars not only served as transmitters of Hadits but also as collectors and examiners of chains of transmission (*asanīd*), striving to preserve the authenticity of the Prophet's narrations through various transmission methods that developed during that time. Hadits transmission in this period maintained the oral transmission tradition, but it began to be accompanied by greater attention to the methods of receiving and delivering Hadits, as well as to the classification of the types of narrations used in the *sanad*. The process of Hadits transmission itself is understood as the transmission of narrations from one generation to the next, aimed at preserving the authenticity of Hadits within the Islamic scholarly tradition (Muh. Nur Fadli Tufail, Muh. Asrullah, Rahmi Dewanti Palangkey, 2023).

However, whereas earlier studies mainly emphasize the historical process of documentation and transmission, the present findings demonstrate that this transition also involved significant methodological refinement. The growing concern for transmission

methods (*ṭuruq al-taḥammul wa al-adā'*), the critical examination of *asanīd*, and the increasing attention to transmission procedures indicate that Hadits scholars were developing a more structured framework for ensuring the reliability of transmitted reports. These findings therefore extend previous studies by showing that the early *tadwīn* period should be understood not only as a phase of textual preservation but also as a formative stage in the institutionalization of Hadits verification methodology. Accordingly, the transmission practices of the second-century *muḥaddithūn* represent a critical turning point in the evolution of Hadits scholarship, laying the methodological foundation upon which subsequent systems of *sanad* criticism and epistemological verification were constructed.

One of the important characteristics of Hadits transmission methodology in this period is that transmission was not limited only to *marfu'* Hadits, which are directly attributed to the Prophet Muhammad. Rather, scholars of this period also transmitted *mawqūf* narrations originating from the Companions and *maqthū'* narrations originating from the Successors (*Ṭabī'ūn*), as stated by Shalih bin Kaisan (Al-Zahrani, 1996).

An example of a *mawqūf* Hadits in the *Muwatha'* is:

حَدَّثَنَا مَالِكٌ، عَنِ ابْنِ شَهَابٍ، عَنْ أَنَسِ بْنِ مَالِكٍ، أَنَّهُ قَالَ: كُنَّا نُصَلِّي الْعَصْرَ، ثُمَّ يَذْهَبُ الدَّاهِبُ إِلَى قُبَاءٍ فَيَأْتِيهِمْ وَالشَّمْسُ مُرْتَفِعَةٌ.

Malik narrated to us from Ibn Shihab, from Anas bin Malik, who said: 'We used to pray the 'Asar prayer, then one of us would go to Quba', and he would reach them while the sun was still high' (Anas, 2013). This Hadits is *mawqūf* because it stops at the Companion Anas bin Malik and he did not raise it (*rafa'*) to the Prophet Muhammad.

An example of a *maqthū'* Hadits in the *Muwatha'*:

أَخْبَرَنَا عَبْدُ اللَّهِ بْنُ أَبِي بَكْرٍ، عَنْ عَمَّتِهِ، عَنِ ابْنَةِ زَيْدِ بْنِ ثَابِتٍ، " أَنَّهُ بَلَغَهَا أَنَّ نِسَاءً كُنَّ يَدْعُونَ بِالْمَصَابِيحِ مِنْ جَوْفِ اللَّيْلِ، فَيَنْظُرْنَ إِلَى الطُّهْرِ، فَكَانَتْ تَعِيبُ عَلَيْهِنَّ وَتَقُولُ: مَا كَانَ النِّسَاءُ يَصْنَعْنَ هَذَا

'Abdullah bin Abi Bakr narrated to us from his aunt, from the daughter of Zaid bin Tsabit, that it reached her that some women would light lamps in the middle of the night to check for purity (from menstruation). She criticized their action and said: 'Women in the past did not do such a thing.' The daughter of Zaid bin Tsabit was *tabī'in*, because she did not live at the same time as nor see the Prophet, so this Hadits is classified *maqthū'*.

This shows that the tradition of Hadits transmission during that period was not oriented only toward collecting the sayings of the Prophet alone, but also toward preserving the scholarly traditions of the early Islamic generation more broadly. Thus, the Hadits works that emerged in this period reflect the scholars' efforts to record the entire treasury of Islamic knowledge that developed among the Companions and Successors, including their legal opinions and religious practices, which became important sources for the development of jurisprudence (*fiqh*).

The second characteristic is the absence of restriction to transmitting only authentic (*shahih*) Hadits. In the Hadits works of this period, scholars did not transmit only Hadits of authentic status, but also included those of *hasan* (good) or even *dlaif* (weak) grades, as long as they were not fabricated (*mawḍu'*) (Binkiran, 2019). This is related to the developmental phase of Hadits

science, which was still at the stage of collection and initial verification of the various narrations scattered across different Islamic regions. In other words, the main goal of transmission in this period was to gather all available narrations, so that the process of selection and *sanad* criticism could be carried out in the subsequent stage of the development of Hadits science.

An example of a weak (*dloif*) in the Muwatha':

عن ابن شهاب، عن سعيد بن المسيّب، أنّ رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم، قال: "لا يعلّق الرهن".

From Ibnu Syihab, from Sa'id bin al-Musayyib, that the Rasulullah ﷺ said: "A pledge (as collateral) does not become closed (it cannot be permanently possessed by the pledgee)" *Malik bin Anas, Al-Muwatha' Riwayat Al-Laytsi (Abu Dhabi: Mu'assasah Zayid Al Nahyan, 2004), 1054*. This Hadits is considered weak because Said bin Musayib is successor, so this Hadits falls into the category of *mursal* (where a Successor narrates directly from the Prophet without mentioning the Companion).

The third characteristic is the systematic effort to gather multiple chains of transmission (*asanid*) for a single Hadits. The *muḥaddithun* of this period did not only transmit a Hadits through a single *sanad*, but rather sought to collect different transmission pathways for a single *matn* (text) if the narration had more than one *sanad* (Muh. Nur Fadli Tufail, Muh. Asrullah, Rahmi Dewanti Palangkey, 2023). This method holds significant importance in the process of Hadits criticism, because by comparing these various *sanads*, scholars could assess the strength of a narration and identify possible errors or weaknesses in a particular chain. It could be that a Hadits from a certain narration has a defect that makes it weak, but from another chain the same Hadits is authentic. Thus, the compilation of multiple *sanad* pathways was part of the scholarly effort of the *muḥaddithun* to preserve the validity of Hadits and strengthen its authority as a source of Islamic teaching (Dasto, 2025).

An example of a Hadits narrated by Imam Malik through multiple *sanad* is :

أَنَّ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ قَالَ: « إِذَا اشْتَدَّ الْحَرُّ فَأَبْرِدُوا عَنِ الصَّلَاةِ، فَإِنَّ شِدَّةَ الْحَرِّ مِنْ فَيْحِ جَهَنَّمَ »

That the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: 'When the heat becomes intense, delay the prayer until it becomes cooler, for the intensity of heat is from the blast of Hell.' *This Hadits was narrated by Imam Malik through several chains: the chain of Zaid bin Aslam from Atha' bin Yasar (Anas, 2004), the chain of Abdullah bin Zubair from Abu Salamah from Abu Hurairah, and the chain of Abu Zinad from Al-A'raj from Abu Hurairah.*

The fourth characteristic of Hadits transmission methodology in this period is the use of various forms of *sanad* narrations. In addition to *musnad* (connected *sanad*) Hadits, scholars also narrated other forms such as *mursal* and *balaghat* *Al-Khatib Al-Baghdadi, Al-Jami' Li Akhlaq Al-Rawi Wa Adab Al-Sami' (Beirut: Dar al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyyah, 1996), 418*. The presence of these various forms of *sanad* indicates that scholars of that period sought to collect all available narrations without restricting themselves only to perfect chains. In many cases, they were even more cautious in narrating *marfu'* Hadits directly attributed to the Prophet and preferred to narrate *atsar* of the Companions or Successors if the *sanad* of the *marfu'* Hadits could not yet be fully verified for its authenticity. This attitude reflects the scholarly caution of the *muḥaddithun* in preserving the purity of the Prophet's Sunnah.

An example of a *mursal* Hadits in the Muwatha':

عَنْ ابْنِ شِهَابٍ ؛ أَنَّ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ وَأَبَا بَكْرٍ وَعُمَرُ، كَانُوا يَمْشُونَ أَمَامَ الْجَنَازَةِ. وَالْحُلَفَاءُ هَلُمَّ جَرًّا وَعَبْدُ اللَّهِ بْنُ عُمَرَ.

From Ibnu Syihab, that the Rasulullah ﷺ, Abu Bakar, and Umar used to walk in front of the funeral procession. Likewise, the caliphs after them and Abdullah bin Umar. Anas, Al-Muwatha' (Riwayat Al-Laythi)..., 315. This Hadits is *mursal* because Ibnu Syihab Az-Zuhri who was a Successor, narrated directly from the Prophet, even though it is impossible for a Successor to have met the Prophet.

An example of a *balaghat* in the Muwatha':

أَنَّهُ بَلَغَهُ أَنَّ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ قَالَ: "تَرَكْتُ فِيكُمْ أَمْرَيْنِ لَنْ تَضِلُّوا مَا تَمَسَّكْتُمَا بِهِمَا: كِتَابَ اللَّهِ، وَسُنَّةَ نَبِيِّهِ"

That it reached him (Malik) that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: "I have left among you two matters; you will never go astray as long as you hold fast to them: the Book of Allah and the Sunnah of His Prophet" A *balaghat* is when a Hadits narration is transmitted by Malik ibn Anas with an expression such as "*balaghanī anna...*" (it has reached me that...) or similar, without mentioning the complete chain of transmission.

The fifth characteristic is the use of *shighat tahammul wal ada'* (formulas of receiving and transmitting) as indicators of the methods of receiving and delivering Hadits. In the generation of Imām Mālik, the use of transmission phrases began to show clear methodological differentiation according to the method of receiving the Hadits from the teacher. Narrations obtained through direct listening (*sama'*) from the teacher typically used phrases such as *sami'tu* (I heard), *haddatsani* (he narrated to me, atau *haddatsana* (he narrated to us). Ahmad Muhammad Syakir, *Al-Ba'its Al-Hathits Sharh Ikhtisar 'Ulūm Al-Hadits* (Cairo: Dar Ibn al-Jawzi, 2013), 241. Meanwhile, narrations obtained through the method of reading in front of the teacher (*qira'ah 'ala al-shaykh*) were often expressed with the phrases *akhbarani* (he informed me) or *akhbarana* (he informed us) (Anas, 2013). As for narrations obtained through the *munawalah* method (handing over of written notes), they often used the phrase *'an* (from) or *qala* (he said). The differentiation in the use of these phrases demonstrates a methodological awareness among the *muhadditsun* to distinguish the levels of Hadits reception methods and to avoid mixing narrations heard directly from the teacher with those obtained through other methods. In the tradition of Hadits science, the methods of *tahammul* (reception) and *ada'* (transmission) constitute an important mechanism for ensuring the continuity of the *sanad* and the validity of the transmission process from one generation to the next.

Example of the use of *qira'ah* formula :

أَخْبَرَنِي ابْنُ شِهَابٍ الزُّهْرِيُّ، عَنْ عُرْوَةَ، قَالَ: حَدَّثَتْنِي عَائِشَةُ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا، أَنَّ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ كَانَ يُصَلِّيَ الْعَصْرَ، وَالشَّمْسُ فِي حُجْرَتِهَا قَبْلَ أَنْ تَظْهَرَ

Ibnu Syihab az-Zuhri informed to me, from 'Urwah, who said: 'Aisyah ra. narrated to me that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ used to pray 'Ashr when the sun was still in her room, before its light became visible (outside the room) (Anas, 2020).

Example of the use of *sama'* formula :

حَدَّثَنَا أَبُو الزِّنَادِ، عَنْ عَبْدِ الرَّحْمَنِ الْأَعْرَجِ، عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ، قَالَ: ((إِذَا تَوَضَّأَ أَحَدُكُمْ فَلْيَجْعَلْ فِي أَنْفِهِ، ثُمَّ لِيَسْتَنْثِرْ))

Abu al-Zinad narrated to us, from 'Abd al-Rahman al-A'raj, from Abu Hurairah, who said: The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: 'When one of you performs ablution, let him put water in his nose, then blow it out.'

Example of the use of *munāwalah* formula:

عَنْ عَمِّهِ أَبِي سُهَيْلِ بْنِ مَالِكٍ ، عَنْ أَبِيهِ ؛ أَنَّهُ قَالَ: مَا أَعْرِفُ شَيْئاً مِمَّا أَدْرَكْتُ عَلَيْهِ النَّاسَ، إِلَّا الْبِدَاءَ بِالصَّلَاةِ

From his uncle, Abu Suhail bin Malik, from his father, that he said: 'I no longer know anything of what I used to find people practicing, except only the call to prayer (adzan)' (Anas, 2004). These five characteristics demonstrate that Hadits transmission in the early codification period had developed toward a more structured scientific form of transmission, while also becoming an important foundation for the development of Hadits criticism methodology in subsequent periods.

In addition to showing developments in the aspect of transmission, this period also exhibits significant progress in the methodology of compiling Hadits books. One of the main characteristics in the compilation of Hadits books during this period is the diversity of compilation methods. Scholars used various approaches in arranging the narrations they collected. Some scholars compiled Hadits according to the names of the Companions who narrated them, as seen in works that later became known as the *musnad* method, such as the *Musnad of d Abu Dawud At-Tayalisi and Musnad of Imam Syafi'i*. Another method that also developed was the compilation of Hadits based on themes or scholarly chapters, as done by Imam Malik in the *Muwatha'*. In addition, there was also a compilation method known as the *athraf al-hadits* method, which involves citing part of the beginning or a segment of a Hadits as an indicator for the entire narration. One of the scholars who used this method was 'Abd bin Humayd al-'Abdi, who compiled a work on *atraf al-hadits* for the narrations transmitted by al-Hasan al-Bashri from the Prophet Muhammad. Ahmad Muharram Naji, Al-Dlaw' Al-Lami' Al-Mubin (Cairo: Dar al-Imam al-Razi, 2018), 238.

Al-Jarh wa al-Ta'dil in the Perspective of Linda Zagzebski's Virtue Epistemology

To examine the epistemological implications of the transformation, this study adopts Linda Zagzebski's theory of virtue epistemology as its analytical framework. In this perspective, knowledge is understood as the result of cognitive actions performed by epistemic agents who possess intellectual and moral virtues, such as honesty, carefulness, and the ability to assess truth accurately (Zagzebski, 2012). Thus, the focus of epistemology lies not only on the propositional structure of knowledge but also on the quality of the knowing subject. In the context of Hadits science, this principle is reflected in the mechanism of *jarh wa ta'dil*, where the moral integrity ('*adalah*) and intellectual capacity (*dlabth*) of a transmitter are used as the main parameters in determining whether a narration is accepted or rejected. Zagzebski's virtue epistemology also emphasizes that epistemic agents who possess virtues tend to produce true beliefs through correct and responsible processes (Zagzebski, 2012). This relates to the practice in Hadits science, where a transmitter deemed *thiqah* (reliable) is so not only because of the accuracy of their transmission but also because of their consistency of character and intellectual credibility. Thus, the science of *jarh wa ta'dil* can be understood as a practical form of virtue

epistemology within the Islamic tradition, integrating moral and intellectual dimensions into a single evaluative framework for sources of knowledge.

The transformation from the dominance of oral transmission to written codification in the *tadwīn* era not only strengthened the documentation aspect of Hadits but also gave rise to a new epistemic need: a verification mechanism for information sources. In this context, the science of *jarh wa ta'dil* emerged as a systematic response to this need, serving as a methodological tool for assessing the credibility of transmitters as part of the validity of narrations. Thus, the validity of a Hadits is determined not only by the formal existence of a *sanad* but also by the epistemic quality of the agents involved in the transmission chain.

When viewed from Zagzebski's perspective, this practice demonstrates a structure of knowledge grounded in *epistemic trust* accompanied by rational evaluation of the authority of the source. Zagzebski asserts that humans cannot completely abandon reliance on others in acquiring knowledge, so trust in testimony becomes an inherent element in epistemic activity. Nevertheless, such trust must be accompanied by reflective consideration of the source's credibility. In this regard, there is conceptual alignment with Hadits science, where the transmitter is positioned as an authoritative source who must undergo a rigorous evaluation process based on the parameters of '*adalah* (integrity) and *dlabth* (precision) before their narration is accepted.

Furthermore, the science of *jarh wa ta'dil* can be understood as a form of managing epistemic trust within the Islamic scholarly tradition. Hadits scholars did not reject the role of trust in other sources, nor did they accept it naively. Rather, they built an evaluation system that allows such trust to be tested through objective methodological standards. This aligns with Zagzebski's rejection of extreme epistemic egoism, and her placement of trust in others as an important part of the structure of human knowledge, provided it is accompanied by rational evaluation of the source (Zagzebski, 2012).

When examined through the lens of virtue epistemology, the characteristics that are the object of assessment in *jarh wa ta'dil* reflect two main dimensions of epistemic virtue: the moral dimension and the intellectual dimension. The moral dimension is reflected in the concept of '*adalah* which encompasses honesty, integrity, and consistency in maintaining the truth of information, while the intellectual dimension is reflected in *dlabth* which relates to precision, strength of memory, and the ability to maintain accuracy in transmission. This shows that the validity of a narration in the Hadits tradition is not mechanistic but rather depends on the quality of the epistemic agent as an intermediary of knowledge transmission.

The science of *jarh wa ta'dil* has an epistemological structure that aligns with virtue epistemology, which emphasizes the importance of trust accompanied by evaluation of the virtue of the knowledge source. Nevertheless, there is a contextual difference that needs to be noted: namely, that in the Hadits tradition, this evaluation mechanism developed collectively through the authority of scholars and was transmitted as an established scholarly discipline, whereas in Zagzebski's virtue epistemology the emphasis is more directed at the individual as an epistemic agent. This difference actually enriches our understanding that Hadits science not only represents the practice of epistemic trust but also builds a collective verification system that integrates moral, intellectual, and social dimensions in determining the validity of knowledge.

Application of Hadits Epistemology in Overcoming Digital Disinformation

In the contemporary era, dominated by information technology, the principles of Hadits *tadwīn* find new relevance as instruments of digital literacy to counter hoaxes and hate speech. The characteristics of hoaxes in the digital age, which often use provocative headlines, emotional narratives, (Eriq Ilham, 2025) and visual manipulation, can be countered using the logic of Hadits verification. The principle of *tabayyun* (seeking clarity), commanded in the Qur'an and rigorously practiced in Hadits *tadwīn*, is a fundamental solution to the phenomenon of misinformation. *Tabayyun* requires every individual to be selective, not hasty in drawing conclusions, objective, and to act based on clear knowledge.

In facing the flood of information in the digital era, a systematic and critical approach is needed, as exemplified in the tradition of Hadits scholarship. The first step to be taken is the identification of the information source (*sanad*). Every piece of information received should be traced back to its clear origin: whether it comes from official, verified media, (Fadilah et al., 2026) or instead from anonymous accounts lacking credibility. The clarity of the source is the primary foundation for determining the level of trust in a piece of news. Next, an examination of the content of the information (*matn*) should be conducted. This process requires verification through comparison with other credible and independent sources. Information that relies on a single source without confirmation from other parties deserves to have its validity questioned. Thus, truth is not accepted naively but is tested through a layered process of clarification.

Equally important is the analysis of the context and motives behind the emergence of such information. Many news items are factually true but are presented partially or taken out of their original context, resulting in a distorted and unobjective understanding (Herman, 2025). Therefore, understanding the background, interests, and purpose of disseminating information becomes an integral part of the evaluation process. Finally, technical verification is also a relevant step in the digital era. Users can utilize various tools to check the authenticity of images, videos, and digital documents. This aligns with the practice of classical Hadits scholars who were able to detect forgery through in-depth analysis of linguistic style, textual structure, and historical inconsistencies. (Rahman, Imelda Putri Hsb, 2025) By integrating these four steps, a robust framework of information literacy is formed, rooted in the epistemology of the Islamic tradition that has been tested throughout history.

One of the advantages of Hadits epistemology compared to modern information systems is its emphasis on the moral aspect of the news carrier. In Hadits science, intellectual precision (*dlaḥṭh*) is insufficient without being accompanied by moral integrity (*'adalah*). A transmitter who has ever lied in worldly matters will have their Hadits narration rejected. This principle is highly relevant for building communication ethics on social media, where honesty must be the primary foundation before a person spreads information to the public. The epistemological contribution of Hadits *tadwīn* also plays a role in integrating religious knowledge with modern science. The integration-interconnection paradigm seeks to bridge the dichotomy between Islamic law and the natural, social, and human sciences, with the conviction that all true knowledge originates from God.

The integration of Hadits into modern science is not only in the methodological aspect but also in the axiological (value) aspect. Hadits that emphasize the importance of sincere intention (*niyyah*), perfection of work quality (*itqan*), and the welfare of the

community (*mashlahah*) serve as ethical guidelines for scientists in developing technology. Science from an Islamic perspective is not merely a materialistic intellectual achievement, but rather a way to understand the signs of God's greatness and to fulfill a social function for the well-being of humanity. Therefore, the epistemological principles established during the *tadwīn* era should be understood not merely as historical instruments for authenticating Hadits, but as a comprehensive framework of knowledge verification whose methodological rigor and ethical foundations remain highly relevant for strengthening digital literacy and combating misinformation in the contemporary information society.

Conclusion

This study concludes that the transformation of Hadits transmission methodology during the *tadwīn* era represented not merely a process of textual codification but a fundamental epistemological shift in the construction of Hadits scholarship. The transition from predominantly oral transmission to a systematic verification framework established the *sanad*, standardized transmission procedures, and critical evaluation of narrators as the principal foundations for determining the authenticity of Hadits. Accordingly, the *tadwīn* era marked the emergence of a structured and accountable methodology that shaped the epistemological foundations of classical Hadits studies. The primary academic contribution of this research lies in demonstrating that the methodological transformation of the *tadwīn* era should be understood as an integrated epistemological process rather than solely as an administrative effort to preserve prophetic traditions. By combining historical analysis with Linda Zagzebski's virtue epistemology, this study offers a new perspective for interpreting *al-jarḥ wa al-ta'dīl* as a systematic model of knowledge verification that integrates moral integrity and intellectual reliability.

The findings also suggest that the epistemological principles developed during the *tadwīn* era remain relevant for contemporary scholarship, particularly in strengthening digital information verification, promoting critical literacy, and fostering responsible knowledge production. These principles demonstrate that the classical Hadits tradition provides methodological insights applicable beyond the discipline of Hadits studies. Nevertheless, this study is limited to qualitative library research based on classical texts and contemporary academic literature. It does not examine the practical implementation of Hadits verification principles in present-day digital communication or compare them empirically with modern information verification systems.

Future research is therefore recommended to employ interdisciplinary and empirical approaches to explore the application of Hadits epistemology in digital literacy, artificial intelligence, media studies, and contemporary knowledge verification. Such studies would further clarify the relevance and applicability of the *tadwīn* methodology in addressing current epistemological challenges.

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