

Tasahul Al-Hakim Al-Naysaburi in Kitab Al Mustadrak 'Ala Al-Sahihayn: A Critical Analysis of the Methodology of Authenticating and Weakening Hadiths

Abbas Langaji

Institut Agama Islam Negeri Palopo, Indonesia

E-mail: abbaslangaji@iainpalopo.ac.id

Abstract

*The differences in how hadith scholars evaluate the quality of a narration indicate that the processes of tashih and tad'if are inseparable from each muhaddith's critical framework. Al-Hakim al-Naysaburi (321–405 AH), through his work al-Mustadrak 'ala al-Sahihayn, is often characterized as being tasahul (lenient); however, this label cannot be fully explained without examining the coherence between his theoretical criteria and their practical application. This study aims to analyze al-Hakim's methodologies of validation and weakening and to examine the consistency of their application in al-Mustadrak. The study employs a qualitative approach using content analysis of al-Mustadrak as the primary source, read in conjunction with Ma'rifat 'Ulum al-Hadith as the framework for al-Hakim's criteria. The results of the study show that al-Hakim formulated four theoretical criteria for the authenticity of hadith, but only two of them were consistently reflected in the wording of his evaluations, while hundreds of hadith in al-Mustadrak were not explicitly evaluated. Quantitative data from al-Zahabi and Ibn al-Jawzi also reveal a significant proportion of da'if, munkar, and even maudu' hadiths. This study concludes that al-Hakim's leniency is not a reflection of theological bias (tasyayyu') or intentional methodological failure, but rather a consequence of the structural gap between the system of criteria he formulated and the compilation process of *al-Mustadrak*, which remained unfinished at the time of his death.*

Keywords: Manhaj Tashih, Tad'if, al-Hakim al-Naysaburi, al-Mustadrak, Hadith Criticism

Abstrak

Perbedaan penilaian ulama hadis terhadap kualitas suatu riwayat menunjukkan bahwa proses tashih dan tad'if tidak dapat dilepaskan dari perangkat kritik masing-masing muhaddis. Al-Hakim al-Naysaburi (321–405 H), melalui al-Mustadrak 'ala al-Sahihayn, kerap dinilai bersikap tasahul (longgar), namun label ini belum cukup dijelaskan tanpa menelusuri koherensi antara kriteria teoretisnya dan penerapannya secara praktis. Penelitian ini bertujuan menganalisis manhaj tashih dan tad'if al-Hakim serta menguji konsistensi penerapannya dalam al-Mustadrak. Penelitian menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dengan metode analisis isi terhadap al-Mustadrak sebagai sumber primer, dibaca bersama Ma'rifat 'Ulum al-Hadith sebagai kerangka kriteria al-Hakim. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa al-Hakim merumuskan empat syarat kesahihan hadis secara teoretis, tetapi hanya dua di antaranya termanifestasi konsisten dalam lafaz penilaiannya, sementara ratusan hadis dalam al-Mustadrak tidak diberi penilaian eksplisit. Data kuantitatif al-Zahabi dan Ibn al-Jawzi turut memperlihatkan proporsi hadis da'if, munkar, bahkan maudu' yang signifikan. Penelitian ini menyimpulkan bahwa tasahul al-Hakim bukan cerminan kecenderungan teologis (tasyayyu') maupun kegagalan metodologis yang disengaja, melainkan konsekuensi dari kesenjangan struktural antara sistem kriteria yang dirumuskan dan proses penyusunan al-Mustadrak yang belum tuntas sebelum ia wafat.

Kata Kunci: Manhaj Tashih, Tad'if, al-Hakim al-Naysaburi, al-Mustadrak, Kritik Hadis

Introduction

The development of hadith codification not only produced a collection of narrations from the Prophet Muhammad, peace be upon him, but also gave rise to various methods for selecting, evaluating, and classifying the quality of hadith.¹ From the early period of compilation through the formation of various hadith works in the third century AH and beyond, scholars developed methods that were not always uniform in determining the status of a narration.² These differences stem from the distinct characteristics of each work, the scholarly backgrounds of their compilers, and the processes of *ijtihad* employed in evaluating the quality of the *isnad* and *matn*. Thus, the diversity of hadith collections within the Islamic tradition not only demonstrates the quantitative growth of hadith codification but also reflects the evolution of hadith criticism methodology.³

These methodological differences are significant because the status of a hadith is not always determined uniformly by all hadith scholars. A narration deemed *sahih* by one *muhaddith* may receive a different assessment when examined by another *muhaddith*.⁴ These differences demonstrate that the processes of *tashih* (authentication) and *taḍ'if* (weakening) are inextricably linked to the critical frameworks employed by individual scholars.⁵ In this context, examining a hadith scholar's methodology is crucial not only for determining which hadiths are deemed authentic or weak but also for understanding the methodological foundations underlying such evaluations.

One figure who holds a significant position in this matter is Abū 'Abd Allāh al-Ḥākim al-Naysābūrī (321–405 H).⁶ He was a hadith scholar who paid great attention to the issue of hadith quality and produced a number of works

¹ Rauf, Muhammad Abdul. (2012). "Ḥadīth Literature–I: The Development of the Science of Ḥadīth." Dalam *Arabic Literature to the End of the Umayyad Period*. Cambridge University Press.

² Azami, M. M. (1992). *Studies in Hadith Methodology and Literature*. American Trust Publications.

³ Bayu Pramesta, Yassinta Ananda, And Emri Agus, "Kritik Hadis Menurut Al-Hakim Al-Naisaburi Dalam Ma'rifah Ulum Al-Hadits," *El-Sunnah: Jurnal Kajian Hadis Dan Integrasi Ilmu* 5, No. 1 (June 25, 2024): 94–104, <https://doi.org/10.19109/Elsunnah.V5i1.14811>.

⁴ Kamali, M. H. (2005). *A Textbook of Hadith Studies: Authenticity, Compilation, Classification and Criticism of Hadith*. Leicester: The Islamic Foundation.

⁵ Ritonga, M. T. (2022). Metodologi ulama hadis dalam jarh dan ta'dil. *Al-Kaffah: Jurnal Kajian Nilai-Nilai Keislaman*, 10(2).

⁶ Rizqa Amelia, "Manhaj Al-Hakim Al-Naisaburi Dalam Al-Mustadrak 'Ala Shahihain," *SHAHIH (Jurnal Ilmu Kewahyuan)* 5, no. 2 (December 22, 2022): 84–99, <https://doi.org/10.51900/SHH.V5I2.14780>; Abbas and Rawabdeh, "The Concept of Munkar in Al-Dhahabī's Critique of Al-Ḥākim's Hadith Authentication in Al-Mustadrak."

in the fields of hadith and *'ulūm al-ḥadīth*.⁷ Among his best-known works is *al-Mustadrak 'alā al-Ṣaḥīḥayn*, a book compiled with the intention of gathering hadiths that, in al-Ḥākim's assessment, met the criteria of al-Bukhārī and Muslim but were not included in either of the two *Ṣaḥīḥ* collections.⁸ The significance of *al-Mustadrak* is thus inseparable from the issue of the methodology of hadith evaluation employed by al-Ḥākim.

The issue becomes more complex when al-Ḥākim's evaluations in *al-Mustadrak* are compared with the critiques of later hadith scholars. Although al-Ḥākim established specific criteria for evaluating hadith, some of the hadiths found in *al-Mustadrak* were later deemed by subsequent scholars to fall short of the standards of authenticity.⁹ This situation led scholars and hadith researchers to conclude that al-Ḥākim tended to be lenient in his authentication process.¹⁰ However, al-Ḥākim's leniency does not necessarily indicate an inability to conduct hadith criticism. Rather, this issue must be viewed within the context of the methodological framework and evaluation standards employed by al-Hakim.¹¹ These differing evaluations are also related to variations in *ijtihād* regarding the interpretation and application of authenticity criteria, as well as to the fact that the compilation process of *al-Mustadrak* is believed not to have undergone a complete editorial review and final verification.

On the other hand, the issue with al-Ḥākim's methodology lies not only in the label *tasāhul*, but in how the criteria for *tashīh* and *taḍ'īf* actually function. In *Ma'rifat 'Ulūm al-Ḥadīth*, al-Ḥākim focuses on the quality of the narrators, the continuity of transmission, the possibility of interaction among narrators, and the narrators' ability to receive and account for the hadith. He also does not limit hadith criticism to the aspect of the sanad but pays attention to the matn through understanding, memorization, and comparison with other, stronger evidence or narrations. This indicates that al-Ḥākim's methodology has a more complex dimension than merely determining the status of a hadith as *ṣaḥīḥ* or *ḍa'īf*.

⁷ Ahmadi Husain, "Al-Hakim Al-Naisaburi Dan Al-Tirmidzi," *PAPPASANG* 5, no. 2 (December 30, 2023): 275–300, <https://doi.org/10.46870/JIAT.V5I2.737>

⁸ Brown, Jonathan A. C. (2009). *Hadith: Muhammad's Legacy in the Medieval and Modern World*. Oneworld Publications.

⁹ Abbas and Rawabdeh, "The Concept of Munkar in Al-Dhahabī's Critique of Al-Ḥākim's Hadith Authentication in *Al-Mustadrak*"; Pramesta, Ananda, and Agus, "Kritik Hadis Menurut Al-Hakim Al-Naisaburi Dalam *Ma'rifah Ulum Al-Hadits*."

¹⁰ Faiz Abdullah and Tajul Arifin, "Tasahul Imam Hakim: Case Study of Hadith 86 in the Book *Mustadrok Al-Hakim*," *Al-Bunyan: Interdisciplinary Journal of Qur'an and Hadith Studies* 2, no. 2 (January 24, 2024): 153–65, <https://doi.org/10.61166/BUNYAN.V2I2.23>.

¹¹ Pramesta, Ananda, and Agus, "Kritik Hadis Menurut Al-Hakim Al-Naisaburi Dalam *Ma'rifah Ulum Al-Hadits*"; Abbas and Rawabdeh, "The Concept of Munkar in Al-Dhahabī's Critique of Al-Ḥākim's Hadith Authentication in *Al-Mustadrak*."

Nevertheless, these criteria have not yet fully formed an explicitly and systematically structured methodological system. In several of al-Ḥākim's works, discussions regarding hadith terminology and classification are scattered across various sections, while their application in *al-Mustadrak* also reveals variations in assessment.¹² In fact, in *al-Mustadrak*, one finds hadiths declared to meet the criteria of both al-Bukhārī and Muslim, hadiths that meet the criteria of only one of them, hadiths assessed as having a *ṣaḥīḥ al-isnād* (authentic chain of transmission), as well as hadiths for which al-Ḥākim did not provide an explicit assessment.¹³ This situation highlights a significant issue regarding the relationship between the criteria al-Ḥākim set forth in theory and their application in his work on hadith.

On that basis, studies of al-Ḥākim should be directed not only toward describing his biography, works, or views on the authenticity of hadith, but also toward uncovering the methodological structure underlying his processes of *tashih* and *taḍīf*. The main issues that need to be examined are how al-Ḥākim integrated the criticism of the isnad and the matn, the role of *ijtihād* in determining the quality of a hadith, and how these criteria were applied in *al-Mustadrak*. With this approach, the debate regarding al-Ḥākim's leniency can be situated within a broader methodological context, namely the relationship between the theoretical framework of hadith criticism and its practical application to narrations.

A number of studies have focused on al-Ḥākim's methodology in evaluating hadith. Studies on al-Ḥākim al-Naysābūrī's methodology in *al-Mustadrak* indicate that research has focused on the principles al-Ḥākim employed in evaluating hadith, including the application of al-Bukhārī and Muslim's criteria and debates regarding the consistency of applying these criteria in *al-Mustadrak*.¹⁴ Meanwhile, research on *Ma'rifat 'Ulūm al-Ḥadīth* reconstructs al-Ḥākim's criteria for the criticism of *sanad* and *matan*, highlighting attention to the quality of narrators, the structure of the *sanad*, and various aspects of *matan* criticism such as *al-mudraj*, *gharīb* redactions, and popular hadiths.¹⁵ Another study on the typology of authenticity in *al-Mustadrak* identifies categories of hadith based on their conformity with the

¹² Recep Köklü, "Ḥākim En-Nisâbûrî ve Ma'Rifetü Ulûmi'l-Hadîs'in Hadis Usulü Tarihindeki Yeri," *Ondokuz Mayıs Üniversitesi İlahiyat Fakültesi Dergisi*, no. 54 (June 30, 2023): 49–72, <https://doi.org/10.17120/OMUIFD.1267928>.

¹³ Eko Zulfikar, "Metode Menentukan Kesahihan Hadis: Teori Dan Aplikasi Al-Hakim Dalam Kitab Al-Mustadrak 'Ala Shahihain," *Ishlah: Jurnal Ilmu Ushuluddin, Adab Dan Dakwah* 2, no. 2 (2020): 249–74.

¹⁴ Rizqa Amelia, "Manhaj Al-Hakim Al-Naisaburi Dalam Al-Mustadrak 'Ala Shahihain," *Shahih (Jurnal Ilmu Kewahyuan)* 5, no. 2 (December 22, 2022): 84–99, <https://doi.org/10.51900/SHH.V5I2.14780>

¹⁵ Ramesta, Ananda, and Agus, "Kritik Hadis Menurut Al-Hakim Al-Naisaburi Dalam Ma'rifah Ulum Al-Hadits."

criteria of al-Shaykhayn, the criteria of al-Bukhārī, the criteria of Muslim, and al-Ḥākim's own standards of authenticity.¹⁶ On the other hand, more specific research examining the issue of *tasāhul* through specific hadith cases reveals that there are hadiths which al-Ḥākim deemed *sahih*, but upon reanalysis, problems were found in their isnads.¹⁷ More recent research has also revealed methodological differences between al-Ḥākim's evaluation and al-Dhahabī's critique of hadiths deemed to meet the criteria of al-Shaykhayn or one of them, so the issue of applying al-Ḥākim's criteria for authenticity remains a subject of debate in hadith studies.¹⁸ Thus, previous research has made an important contribution, both in reconstructing al-Ḥākim's theoretical criteria and in testing their application to specific cases.

Nevertheless, the trend in this research still reveals a separate focus on the reconstruction of al-Ḥākim's criteria, the examination of the wording of authentication, and the critique of specific hadiths in *al-Mustadrak*. Research on al-Ḥākim's methodology generally stops at identifying the principles he employed, whereas studies examining the application of these criteria are more often directed at specific samples or categories of hadith. Thus, a study is still needed that brings these two aspects together: al-Ḥākim's methodological framework at the theoretical level and its practical application in *al-Mustadrak*. This issue is important because the label of *tasāhul* (leniency) attached to al-Ḥākim cannot be adequately explained merely by pointing to the existence of hadiths that were later deemed weak by other scholars. What is more fundamental is determining whether these differences indicate methodological inconsistency, epistemological differences in understanding the criteria of authenticity, or a specific character in the application of al-Ḥākim's *ijtihād*.

Given this gap, this study is not intended merely to repeat the description of al-Ḥākim's methodology, but rather to analyze the coherence between the principles of *tashih* and *taḍ'if* put forward by al-Ḥākim and their application in *al-Mustadrak 'alā al-Ṣaḥīḥayn*. The analysis focuses on the relationship between three main elements: the criteria for the *sanad*, the criteria for the *matn*, and the use of *ijtihād* in determining the quality of a hadith. In this way, this study seeks to provide a more critical explanation of the issue of al-Ḥākim's *tasāhul*, whether *tasāhul* is a methodological characteristic inherent in his system of criticism, a consequence of the application of *ijtihād*, or arises

¹⁶ Muhammad Khoirur Roziqin, Laili Husnul Khatimah, and Moh. Hasan. (2024) "Tipologi Dan Metode Kesahihan Hadis Kitab Al-Mustadrak Ala Al-Sahihaini," *Indonesian Society and Religion Research* 2, no. 1, <https://doi.org/10.61798/ISAH.V2I1.187>.

¹⁷ Abdullah and Arifin, "Tasahul Imam Hakim: Case Study of Hadith 86 in the Book Mustadrok Al-Hakim."

¹⁸ Abbas and Rawabdeh, "The Concept of Munkar in Al-Dhahabī's Critique of Al-Ḥākim's Hadith Authentication in Al-Mustadrak."

due to a gap between the formulated principles and the practice of hadith evaluation in *al-Mustadrak*.

Method

This study is a literature review (library research) using a qualitative-analytical approach.¹⁹ The study aims to reconstruct al-Ḥākim al-Naysābūrī's methodology of authentication (*tashih*) and weakening (*taḍ'if*) and to analyze the relationship between the methodological principles he articulated and their application in *al-Mustadrak 'alā al-Ṣaḥīḥayn*. The primary source of this study is *al-Mustadrak 'alā al-Ṣaḥīḥayn* by al-Ḥākim al-Naysābūrī, specifically data related to the assessment of hadith quality, the criteria for the *isnad* and *matn*, and al-Ḥākim's statements regarding the standards he employed. This is based on findings in the primary source that al-Ḥākim employed *ijtihād* in determining the quality of hadith and paid attention to both the *isnad* and *matn*. Supporting sources include books on the science of hadith, works discussing al-Ḥākim and *al-Mustadrak*, as well as academic literature relevant to *tashih*, *taḍ'if*, and critiques of al-Ḥākim's methodology.

Data was collected through the process of searching for, reading, recording, and categorizing information from primary and secondary sources. Primary data was identified based on the criteria used by al-Ḥākim in *al-Mustadrak*, such as *ṣaḥīḥ 'alā shart al-shaykhayn*, *ṣaḥīḥ 'alā shart al-Bukhārī*, *ṣaḥīḥ 'alā shart Muslim*, and *ṣaḥīḥ al-isnād*. Furthermore, the data was grouped based on the aspects of *isnad*, *matn*, standards for accepting hadith, and the use of *ijtihād*. Data related to scholars' critiques of al-Ḥākim's evaluations was also documented as comparative data to examine variations in the assessment of the hadiths in *al-Mustadrak*.

Data analysis was conducted using descriptive-analytical, comparative, and interpretive methods. The first stage involved identifying and describing the principles of *tashih* and *taḍ'if* that could be reconstructed from al-Ḥākim's statements. The second stage categorized these principles into the aspects of *sanad*, *matn*, and *ijtihād* considerations. The third stage compared these methodological principles with al-Ḥākim's evaluation practices in *al-Mustadrak* as well as with the scholars' critiques of a number of hadiths he had evaluated. This comparison is important because there are hadiths in *al-Mustadrak* that were later deemed weak, *munkar*, or even *mawḍū'* by scholars after al-Ḥākim, even though the majority of the hadiths in that book are still considered to meet the criteria of al-Shaykhayn or one of them. The final stage involves interpreting the identified patterns to determine the coherence between al-Ḥākim's theoretical methodology and his practical approach to

¹⁹ Sugiyono, *Metode Penelitian Kualitatif, Kuantitatif, Dan R&D* (Bandung: Alfabeta, 2019).

authenticating and weakening hadiths. Using this technique, the study not only describes the criteria for hadith authenticity according to al-Ḥākim but also analyzes how these criteria function in practice and how al-Ḥākim's leniency can be understood within his methodological framework.

Result and Discussion

Profile of Al-Hakim al-Naysaburi: Intellectual Foundations and the Views of the Scholar

Al-Hakim al-Naysaburi, whose full name is Abu Abdillah Muhammad bin Abdillah bin Hammad bin Hamdun al-Naysaburi, was born in Naisabur on the 12th of Rabi' al-Awwal 321 AH and died in Safar 405 AH.²⁰ His religious education began with his father and his own uncle. At the age of nine, he began studying hadith, and at thirteen, he studied specifically under Abu Hatim bin Hibban.²¹ To deepen his knowledge, he undertook scholarly journeys to Iraq, Khorasan, Transoxiana, and the Hijaz, resulting in an estimated total of one thousand teachers. Two of the most influential figures in shaping his expertise as a hadith scholar were Ibn Hibban (d. 354 AH) and al-Daraquthni (d. 385 AH).²²

Al-Hakim's scholarly background reveals a multifaceted character: he studied under scholars from the four schools of fiqh (Hanafi, Maliki, Shafi'i, and Hanbali), as well as from diverse theological circles, including the Shi'a, Qadariyya, and Jabariyya. In addition to hadith, he also studied fiqh and Sufism under a number of different teachers. This diversity of scholarly affiliations is important to note because it would later be relevant to debates regarding his theological leanings in compiling *al-Mustadrak*.²³ In terms of productivity, al-Hakim was known to be highly prolific, with works estimated to number around one thousand juz, including *Ma'rifat 'Ulum al-Hadith*, *al-Madkhal ila 'Ilm al-Sahih*, and, of course, *al-Mustadrak 'ala al-Sahihayn* the work that is the subject of this study.²⁴

²⁰ Abu al-Falah Abd al-Hay bin Imad Al-Hanbaliy, *Syazarat Al-Zahab Fi Akhbar Man Zahab* (Beirut: Dar al-Fikr, n.d.), 17; Syams al-Din Muhammad bin Ahmad Al-Zahabiy, *Siyar Al-'Alam Al-Nubala'* (Beirut: Muassasah al-Risalah, 1990), 165; Reffiyani and Arifin, "Kajian Kitab Al-Mustadrak Lil Hakim: Metodologi, Kontroversi, Dan Kontribusi Dalam Studi Hadis."

²¹ Syams al-Din Muhammad bin Ahmad Al-Zahabiy, *Al-Mu'in Fi Thabaqat Al-Muhaddisin* (Dar al-Sahwat, 1987), 173.

²² M. Abdurrahman, *Pergeseran Pemikiran Hadis Ijtihad Al-Hakim Dalam Menentukan Status Hadis* (Jakarta: Paramadina, 2000), 34-35.

²³ Hakim Köklü, "Hâkim En-Nîsâbûrî ve Ma'Rifetü Ulûmi'l-Hadîs'in Hadis Usulü Tarihindeki Yeri."

²⁴ W. Wandu and Dadah Robbani, "Analisis Kritis Terhadap Al-Hakim Al-Naisaburi (Konteks Sosial Dan Historis): Konteks Sosial Dan Historis | TAMMAT: Journal of Critical Hadith Studies," *Tammat: Journal of Critical Hadith Studies* 2, no. 2 (2024), <https://ejournal.uinsgd.ac.id/index.php/tammat/article/view/1660>.

Scholarly assessments of al-Hakim are not uniform. On the one hand, he was awarded a number of honorary titles such as al-Hafiz al-Kabir, al-Naqid, and Shaykh al-Muhaddithin, reflecting recognition of his scholarly prowess. On the other hand, a number of critics, including Muhammad bin Thahir al-Muqaddasi and Abdullah bin Muhammad al-Ansari, labeled him a *rafidi khabith*, indicating a pro-Shi'ite inclination. This accusation was refuted by some scholars, who assessed that al-Hakim merely leaned toward Shi'ism (*tasyayyu'*) without falling into the category of the Rafidah. This difference in perspective is also evident in how Shi'a and Sunni scholars position him: Shi'a circles regard him as a representative of their tradition because several accounts in *al-Mustadrak* are considered supportive of Shi'a theology, while Sunni scholars claim him as a Sunni figure, in part because his admiration for Imam al-Shafi'i is evident in his work *Fada'il al-Imam al-Shafi'i* and his position as a judge representing the Sunni community during the reign of the Bani Saman, who followed the Ismaili Shi'ite doctrine.²⁵

This biographical profile is significant not merely as a personal background, but because the diversity of doctrinal and theological affiliations that shaped al-Hakim's intellectual development may help explain some aspects of his methodological approach to the authentication and weakening of hadith, as will be discussed in the following section.

Al-Hakim al-Naysaburi's Methodology of Authentication and Weakening

Like most hadith scholars, al-Hakim determined the authenticity of a narration through *ijtihad*, rather than through rules that are fixed and uniform for all hadith scholars. Despite the stance of some scholars who reject the use of *ijtihad* in determining the authenticity of hadith, al-Hakim continued to follow this path, employing a fundamental approach that was, in fact, no different from that of other scholars: evaluating both the quality of the *isnad* and the *matn*.²⁶ The differences in his assessments compared to other scholars, therefore, do not necessarily indicate a methodological error, but rather a natural consequence of differences in each scholar's capacity for *ijtihad*.

Al-Hakim explicitly formulated his criteria for authenticity in the following statement:

²⁵ Abu Abdillah al-Hakim Al-Naisaburiy, *Al-Mustadrak 'Ala Al-Sahihaini* (Beirut: Dar Al-Kutub Al-Ilmiyah, n.d.); Amelia, "Manhaj Al-Hakim Al-Naisaburi Dalam Al-Mustadrak 'Ala Shahihain."

²⁶ Amelia, "Manhaj Al-Hakim Al-Naisaburi Dalam Al-Mustadrak 'Ala Shahihain."

أنا أستعين بالله على إخراج أحاديث رواتها ثقات فقد احتج بمثلها الشيخان أو أحدهما وهذا شرط الصحيح عند كافة فقهاء الإسلامى أن الزيادة فى الأسانيد والمتون من الثقات مقبولة.²⁷

From this statement, four conditions for the authenticity of a hadith according to al-Hakim can be identified: (1) it is narrated by a *thiqah* narrator according to the criteria of al-Bukhari and Muslim; (2) it is narrated by a narrator meeting the same criteria as *al-Sahihayn*; (3) it meets the criteria of the fuqaha; and (4) *ziyadat al-thiqah* (additional narrations from trustworthy narrators). However, the boundaries of these four criteria are not entirely clear; the expression "*bi mithliha*" (equivalent to it) is relative, while the inclusion of the jurists' criteria as one of the conditions for the authenticity of a hadith has the potential to open the door to double standards, since these criteria essentially originate from the discipline of *usul al-fiqh*, not hadith criticism itself.

Al-Hakim's framework of criteria also rests on two general orientations common in the tradition of hadith criticism, namely *tasyaddud* (strictness) and *tasahul* (leniency) a pattern that continues the tradition pioneered by Ahmad ibn Hanbal and Abdurrahman ibn Mahdi.²⁸ Within this framework, a strict approach is generally applied to the evaluation of hadith narrators (*rijal al-hadith*) regarding matters of creed (*aqidah*) and Islamic law (*sharia*), while a lenient approach is more tolerated for issues outside of these areas.

In addition to the general framework outlined above, al-Hakim also formulated more detailed criteria regarding the sanad and matn. In *Ma'rifat 'Ulum al-Hadith*, he established that a hadith is considered *sahih* if it is narrated by a narrator who meets the criteria of *sidq* (truthfulness), *dhabit* (a strong memory), *itqan* (strong memory), *sihhat usulihi* (sound creed), *mu'asarah* (contemporary with his teacher), and *liqa'* (having met in person), as well as being free from negligence or forgetfulness, and his narration can be verified as having been genuinely received from the mentioned teacher, not merely found in written records. Based on these criteria, al-Hakim then categorized the isnads according to their level of strength, such as *asahh al-asanid*, *asbah al-asanid*, and *awha al-asanid*.²⁹

إن الصحيح لا يعرف بروايته فقط وإنما يعرف بالفهم والحفظ وكثرة السماع.³⁰

The statement *yu'rafu bi al-fahm* indicates that, in his view, the text of a hadith must be rationally acceptable, while the emphasis on *al-hifz* suggests that the authenticity of the text also requires that it be free from contradiction

²⁷ Al-Naisaburiy, *Al-Mustadrak 'Ala Al-Sahihaini*.

²⁸ Abdurrahman, *Pergeseran Pemikiran Hadis Ijtihad Al-Hakim Dalam Menentukan Status Hadis*, 34-35.

²⁹ Abu Abdillah al-Hakim Al-Naisaburiy, *Ma'rifat Fi 'Ulum Al-Hadits* (Madinah al-Munawwarah: Maktabah al-'Ilmiyah, 1977).

³⁰ Abu Abdillah al-Hakim Al-Naisaburiy, *Ma'rifat Fi 'Ulum Al-Hadits*, 14-16

with stronger evidence whether verses of the Qur'an, mutawatir hadiths, or ahad hadiths of higher quality. Thus, al-Hakim's criteria do not stop at the aspect of the isnad but also include rational and textual considerations regarding the text of the hadith.

Overall, al-Hakim's methodology reveals a multi-layered system of criteria: a general framework (*tasyaddud-tasahul*), four conditions of authenticity at the theoretical level, and detailed criteria at the levels of isnad and text. However, as previously mentioned, there is ambiguity in some of these formulations particularly regarding the criteria of the *fuqaha* and *ziyadat al-thiqah* which has the potential to lead to inconsistencies when these criteria are applied concretely in *al-Mustadrak*, as will be discussed in the following section.

Application of The Criteria in *al-Mustadrak* and The Issue of *Tasahul*

The criteria for *tashih* and *tad'if* that al-Hakim formulated theoretically can essentially be traced in their application in *al-Mustadrak*; however, in reality, it is rare to find a hadith scholar who consistently applies the rules he himself established there are always exceptions that constitute anomalies to those rules.³¹ This is also evident in al-Hakim's classification of narrator quality namely, *sahih* and *saqim* or *sahih* and *majruh* without recognizing the category of *hasan*, as was commonly used by later scholars. Hadiths whose authenticity al-Hakim did not affirm actually fall into the *hasan* category according to other scholars' concepts, yet he did not assign them a separate label.³² The absence of this intermediate category indicates that al-Hakim's classification system is simpler than the three-tiered system (*sahih-hasan-da'if*) that had become established in al-Tirmidhi's time,³³ and this simplicity, in turn, contributed to various reassessments by later scholars regarding the status of the hadiths in *al-Mustadrak*.

The issue of its application cannot be separated from the circumstances surrounding the compilation of *al-Mustadrak* itself. This book was written when al-Hakim was in his later years around 52 years old by dictating hadiths to his students periodically until his death.³⁴ These circumstances raise the possibility that most of the hadiths in the book were not reviewed by him a hypothesis supported by Zayn al-Din al-'Iraqi's statement that al-Hakim's

³¹ Al-Naysaburi, *Al-Mustadrak 'Ala Al-Sahihaini*.

³² Abdurrahman, *Pergeseran Pemikiran Hadis Ijtihad Al-Hakim Dalam Menentukan Status Hadis*, 201-202.

³³ Abdurrahman, *Pergeseran Pemikiran Hadis Ijtihad Al-Hakim Dalam Menentukan Status Hadis*, 216.

³⁴ Al-Hakim al-Naysaburi, M. ibn 'Abd Allah. (1990). *Al-Mustadrak 'ala al-Sahihayn* (M. 'Abd al-Qadir 'Ata, Ed.). Dar al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyyah.

tendency toward leniency was not solely due to his Shi'ite leanings, but rather because the compilation of *al-Mustadrak* took place during his old age, leaving him no time to review the manuscript.³⁵ Ibn Hajar al-'Asqalani even emphasized that this impression of leniency was actually unintentional, since *al-Mustadrak* was still in the draft stage when al-Hakim passed away, before he had a chance to re-verify the sources.³⁶

The argument linking *tasahul* al-Hakim to a theological bias (*tasyayyu'*) appears difficult to sustain when examined in light of the evidence typically cited to support it. One frequently cited indication is the inclusion of the hadith "*man kuntu mawlahu fa 'Aliyyun mawlahu*" in *al-Mustadrak*, which is considered to reflect a bias toward the preeminence of the Ahl al-Bayt. However, the same hadith is also found in non-Shi'ite works, such as *Sunan al-Tirmidhi*, *Sunan Ibn Majah*, and *Musnad Ahmad*, so its inclusion cannot be used as sole evidence of a specific theological inclination.³⁷ Thus, explanations based on the book's age and its incomplete compilation process appear to have a stronger textual basis than those based on *tasyayyu'*.

The inconsistency in applying these criteria is evident in the four categories of hadith that can be identified in *al-Mustadrak*: (1) hadith not found in *al-Sahihayn* but possibly found in other works; (2) hadith whose wording differs from that in *al-Sahihayn* but whose meaning is the same; (3) hadiths that supplement wording already found in the *Sahihayn*; and (4) hadiths that use a different chain of transmission (*sanad*) from that used in the *Sahihayn*.³⁸ The diversity of these categories indicates that *al-Mustadrak* was not intended as a replica of the *Sahihayn*, but rather as a supplement; yet this very diversity also allows for a wide range of variations in quality.

This variation is even more evident in the wording of the evaluations used by al-Hakim himself: hadiths that meet the criteria of *al-Sahihayn* are marked with the phrase "*hadha hadithun sahihun 'ala syarhi al-Syaikhayn wa lam yukhrijah*" (sometimes abbreviated as "*ala syarhihima*"), hadiths that meet only Bukhari's criteria are marked "*hadha hadithun 'ala syarhi al-Bukhari wa lam yukhrijah*," and those that meet Muslim's criteria are marked "*hadha hadithun sahihun 'ala syarhi Muslim wa lam yukhrijah*."³⁹ However, as mentioned in the previous section, these three phrases only operationalize two of the four criteria for authenticity formulated theoretically by al-Hakim

³⁵ Zainuddin Abd Rahim bin Husain Al-Iraqiy, *Al-Ta'ayid Wa Al-Idhah Syarh Muqaddimah Ibn Salah* (Beirut: al-Maktabah al-'Asriyyah, 2001).

³⁶ Syihabuddin Abu al-Fadl Ahmad bin Ali bin Hajar Al-Asqalaniy, *Al-Nukat 'Ala Kitab Ibnu Salah* (Madinah: al-Majlis al-'Ilm, 1984).

³⁷ Al-Naisaburiy, *Al-Mustadrak 'Ala Al-Sahihaini*.

³⁸ Abdurrahman, *Pergeseran Pemikiran Hadis Ijtihad Al-Hakim Dalam Menentukan Status Hadis*, 216.

³⁹ al-Hakim al-Naysaburi, M. ibn 'Abd Allah. (1990). *Al-Mustadrak 'ala al-Sahihayn* (M. 'Abd al-Qadir 'Ata, Ed.). Dar al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyyah.

namely, conformity with the criteria for narrators in al-Sahihayn or one of them while the criteria of the fuqaha and ziyadat al-thiqah do not have their own specific verbal markers in the practice of evaluation. This discrepancy is compounded by the fact that approximately 480 hadiths in *al-Mustadrak* were not explicitly evaluated by al-Hakim at all, meaning that nearly half of the book's content falls outside the scope of these three terms of validation.

The most concrete evidence of this gap between theoretical criteria and practical application comes from the assessments of later scholars. Al-Zahabi, in *Talkhis al-Mustadrak*, identified a number of *da'if*, *munkar*, and even *maudu'* (fabricated) hadiths and specifically compiled the *maudu'* hadiths from *al-Mustadrak* into a separate book containing approximately 100 hadiths. Ibn al-Jawzi, in *al-Maudu'at*, counted approximately 60 *maudu'* hadiths from the same book. Nevertheless, al-Zahabi's overall assessment reveals a proportion that is not entirely negative: the majority of the hadiths in *al-Mustadrak*, when combined with those that meet one of the criteria of the *Sahihayn*, account for about half of the book's total content; another quarter has a *sahih* chain of transmission despite containing an '*illat*'; and the remaining quarter falls into the categories of *munkar* and *maudu'*.⁴⁰

The implication of this discrepancy is the emergence of a number of rather sharp criticisms of *al-Mustadrak*, such as Ibn Salah's statement that hadiths authenticated solely by al-Hakim himself are in fact only of *hasan* quality, while hadiths containing an '*illat*' a flaw should be rejected. Taking into account all of the above data the quantitative proportions cited by al-Zahabi and Ibn al-Jawzi, the discrepancy between the four theoretical criteria and the three practical formulations, as well as the context of the book's compilation, which had not yet been re-verified it can be concluded that al-Hakim's leniency was not an intentional methodological failure, but rather a consequence of the gap between the system of criteria he formulated and the limitations of the final editing process, which he did not have time to complete.

Conclusion

This study shows that al-Hakim al-Naysaburi's methodology for authenticating (*tashih*) and weakening (*taḍ'if*) hadith is based on a fairly detailed theoretical framework encompassing four criteria for authenticity (conformity with the criteria for *thiqah* narrators according to the Bukhari-Muslim standard, the criteria of the fuqaha, and *ziyadat al-thiqah*), criteria for the authenticity of the isnad (*sidq*, *dhabit*, *itqan*, and the like), as well as criteria for the *matn* that emphasize rationality and consistency with stronger evidence. However, when the application of this framework is examined in *al-Mustadrak 'ala al-Sahihayn*, a significant gap is found: of the four theoretical

⁴⁰ Muhammad Mubarak Al-Sayyid, *Manahij Al-Muhaddisin* (Kairo, 1998), 159.

criteria formulated, only two are actually manifested in the wording of the evaluations that al-Hakim consistently used, while the criteria of the *fukah* and *ziyadat al-thiqah* lack explicit markers in his evaluation practice. This discrepancy is reinforced by the fact that approximately 480 hadiths in *al-Mustadrak* were not evaluated at all, as well as by quantitative data from al-Zahabi and Ibn al-Jawzi, who identified tens to hundreds of hadiths classified as *dhafi*, *munkar*, and even *maudu'* in the book.

Thus, the answer to the research question is that al-Hakim's *tasahul* is not merely a reflection of methodological inadequacy or theological bias (*tasyayyu'*), as this argument proves difficult to sustain when tested against the available textual evidence but rather a consequence of the gap between the theoretically formulated system of criteria and the process of compiling the *Mustadrak*, which al-Hakim did not have time to complete and re-verify before his death. This gap in coherence is structural, not incidental, as it recurs across various layers of analysis: from the formulation of criteria to the annotation of hadith texts, and from qualitative classification to the quantitative proportion of hadiths in his book.

Theoretically, this study offers a different interpretation of the issue of al-Hakim's *tasahul*, which has often been approached in isolation whether as a mere reconstruction of criteria, an examination of the wording of authentication, or a critique of specific hadiths. By bringing these three dimensions together within a single framework of theory-practice coherence, this study demonstrates that the label *tasahul* can in fact be explained more precisely as a matter of methodological consistency, rather than merely a moral or theological judgment regarding al-Hakim's character.

Methodologically, this study demonstrates that an analysis of a muhaddith's methodology cannot be limited to identifying the criteria he formulated theoretically; rather, it must be compared with the actual patterns of application in his works—including aspects that have received little attention thus far, such as the correspondence between the number of theoretical criteria and the number of practical linguistic markers, as well as the proportion of hadiths that were not evaluated at all. This approach has the potential to be applied to studies of other hadith scholars' methodologies that face similar issues.

This study has a number of limitations that must be acknowledged. First, the analysis conducted is still qualitative and descriptive in nature, based on a literature review of al-Hakim's work and the commentaries of subsequent scholars, without direct verification of specific hadith chains in *al-Mustadrak* using a representative sample. Second, the quantitative data regarding the proportions of *sahih*, *da'if*, and *maudu'* hadiths in this study are derived from the assessments of al-Zahabi and Ibn al-Jawzi; thus, their accuracy depends on the credibility and methodologies of these two scholars, rather than on the results of an independent examination of the isnads conducted by the researcher. Third, this study has not systematically compared al-Hakim's

methodology with that of contemporary or later hadith scholars who also compiled *mustadrak* or similar works; consequently, al-Hakim's position within the broader landscape of hadith criticism during his time has not yet been fully mapped out.

To that end, further research is recommended to conduct a direct verification of the isnad for a sample of hadiths in *al-Mustadrak* that were not explicitly evaluated by al-Hakim, in order to further examine the degree of consistency in his methodology. Further research could also focus on a comparative study between al-Hakim's methodology and that of other hadith scholars who compiled similar **Mustadrak** works, to determine whether the issue of theory-practice coherence identified in this study represents a general trend within the *Mustadrak* genre or is, in fact, a distinctive characteristic of al-Hakim al-Naysaburi.

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