



PROPHETIC AUTHORITY AND HADITH COMPREHENSION IN THE POST PROPHETIC ERA

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ABSTRACT

The transition from the personal presence of the Prophet Muhammad to a textual tradition in the form of Hadith triggered a fundamental epistemological dynamic and a significant legal paradigm shift during the era of the early Sahabah. Following the demise of the Prophet, the mechanism of legal derivation shifted from direct clarification by the Prophet to the comprehension of Hadith texts. In this process, the Sahabah did not merely transmit narrations; they were also required to evaluate their authenticity, comprehend their context, and exercise *ijtihad* (independent legal reasoning) to address novel issues that had not arisen during the Prophet's lifetime. This study aims to comprehensively analyze the recontextualization of prophetic authority and the hermeneutical responses of the Sahabah in managing the transmission, verification, and interpretation of Hadith. Utilizing a critical historiographical approach along with an in-depth text-context analysis of primary sources in *Usul al-Fiqh* (Islamic jurisprudence) and early Islamic history, the findings indicate that the Sahabah were not passive recipients of the texts. Instead, they actively employed rigorous verification methods, restricted the narration of Hadith to safeguard authenticity, and adaptively distinguished between the Prophet's *tashri'iyah* (legislative/juridical) and non-*tashri'iyah* actions. This gradual transition successfully transformed the dynamic living *Sunnah* into the foundational framework for the codification of Islamic law without compromising the core principles of *Maqāṣid al-Sharī'ah* (Objectives of Islamic Law). The critical interpretation practiced by the Sahabah demonstrates that the continuity of prophetic authority was robustly maintained through a flexible intellectual dialectic between sacred texts and social realities. Consequently, this study offers a highly relevant conceptual hermeneutical framework for the advancement of contemporary Hadith studies.

Kata kunci: *Prophetic Authority, Hadith Historiography, sahabah, Living Sunnah, Islamic Legal Hermeneutics*

ABSTRAK

Transisi dari kehadiran personal Nabi Muhammad SAW menjadi tradisi tekstual berupa hadis memicu dinamika epistemologis mendasar serta pergeseran paradigma hukum yang signifikan pada masa awal generasi sahabat. Pasca-wafatnya Rasulullah, pola penetapan hukum berubah dari



klarifikasi langsung kepada Nabi menjadi pemahaman terhadap teks hadis. Dalam proses ini, para sahabat tidak hanya menyampaikan riwayat, tetapi juga perlu menguji keabsahan riwayat, memahami konteks hadis, serta berijtihad untuk menjawab persoalan-persoalan baru yang belum pernah terjadi pada masa Nabi. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis secara komprehensif rekonseptualisasi otoritas kenabian dan respons hermeneutis para sahabat dalam mengelola proses transmisi, verifikasi, serta pemaknaan hadis. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan historiografi kritis dan analisis teks-konteks secara mendalam terhadap pelbagai literatur serta sumber primer usul fikih dan sejarah Islam awal. Temuan penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa para sahabat tidak bersikap pasif terhadap teks. Mereka secara aktif menerapkan metode verifikasi yang ketat, membatasi pemaparan riwayat guna menjaga otentisitas, serta membedakan secara adaptif-kontekstual antara tindakan Nabi yang bersifat tashri'iyah dan non tashri'iyah. Transisi bertahap ini berhasil mengubah living sunnah yang dinamis menjadi fondasi kodifikasi hukum Islam tanpa mengabaikan prinsip utama Maqāṣid al-Sharī'ah (objectives of islamic law). Pemaknaan kritis para sahabat membuktikan bahwa keberlanjutan otoritas kenabian dipelihara secara kokoh melalui dialektika intelektual yang fleksibel antara teks agama dan dinamika realitas sosial. Hal ini sekaligus menawarkan kerangka hermeneutika konseptual yang sangat relevan bagi pengembangan studi hadis pada era kontemporer.

Keywords: *Otoritas Kenabian, Hermeneutika Hadis, Generasi Sahabat, Historiografi Kritis, Living Sunnah*

A. INTRODUCTION

The position of Prophet Muhammad within the realm of early Islamic civilization occupied the highest epistemic stance as the legal pillar, ethical guide, and leader of socio-political governance.¹ This central role was not merely complementary or subordinate to the Qur'an; rather, it functioned organically and dynamically as a bridge (bayān) between universal revealed texts and evolving social realities. Through the dimensions of verbal statements (qawli), actions (fi'li), and tacit approvals (taqrīri), prophetic authority transformed abstract divine principles into technical-applicative norms and operational guidelines. Consequently, prophetic teachings and practices (Sunnah/Hadith) became an authoritative legal proof (dalīl shar'i)

¹ Ah. Asmawi, "Conceptualizing the Authority of Prophetic Traditions in Islamic Jurisprudence," *Jurnal Hukum Islam* 19, no. 1 (2021): p 48.



that enlivened Islamic law and ensured societal governance could be implemented concretely and responsively to the dynamics of the era.²

During his lifetime, prophetic authority functioned organically and communicatively through face-to-face interaction.³ This authority operated dynamically as a living tradition (living Sunnah) within the early Muslim community, where every word, action, and tacit approval of the Prophet Muhammad was directly absorbed, emulated, and contextualized within the dynamics of real-world time and space. In this informal phase, prophetic guidance was flexible and interactive rather than a rigid collection of written texts allowing social, ethical, and legal norms of Sharia to be transmitted, understood, and resolved directly according to the actual needs of society at that time.⁴

Every decree, decision, and response to the socio-practical issues of the Madinan community was directly conveyed through divine revelation or prophetic ijtihad.⁵ However, the demise of the Prophet Muhammad marked a critical historical juncture that shifted the nature of authority from personal presence to textual authority.⁶

This shift created fundamental methodological challenges for the generation of the Companion (sahabah). On one hand, they were tasked with safeguarding the integrity of the religious message against distortion; on the other, they were confronted with the increasingly complex socio-historical realities across the expanding Islamic territories. Consequently, discourses surrounding the transmission and standardization of Hadith frequently sparked intense debates within the historiography of Islamic law.⁷

Although the study of Hadith transmission has long been debated between skeptical-orientalist and apologetic-traditionalist approaches, both perspectives overlook the active-hermeneutical role of the Sahabah. Orientalist Western scholars such as Ignaz Goldziher argue that the majority of the textual Hadith corpus constitutes a legal construction of the 2nd and

² Anisa Fitriyani and others, 'Between Textual Authority and Functional Dominance: The Dialectic of Ḥadīth's Position in Uṣūl Al-Fiqh Epistemology', *Sufiyya Journal of Islamic Studies*, 3.3 (2026), pp. 33–45, doi:10.66867/sjis.v3i3.248.

³ Fazlur Rahman, *Islamic Methodology in History* (Central Institute of Islamic Research, 1965).

⁴ Unggul Prayoga, Tesa Maulana, and Munawir, 'The Concept of Sunnah: Its Evolution and Implications for Modern Islamic Thought', *AL-AFKAR: Journal for Islamic Studies*, 9.1 (2026), pp. 1655–68 <https://www.al-afkar.com/index.php/Afkar_Journal/article/view/3263>.

⁵ Asmawi. P 50

⁶ Ignaz Goldziher, *Muslim Studies (Muhammedanische Studien)*, trans. by C R Barber and S M Stern (Allen & Unwin, 1971). P 115

⁷ Unggul Prayoga, "The Transformation of Sunnah into Canonical Hadith: An Analytical Review of Fazlur Rahman's Thought," *Al-Afkar: Journal for Islamic Studies* 9, no. 1 (2026): 1663–64.



3rd centuries AH that was retroactively projected onto the era of the Prophet.⁸ Conversely, the apologetic-traditionalist group tends to view the transmission of Hadith from the Prophet to the Sahabah as having occurred mechanically, literally, and devoid of interpretive dynamics,⁹ a stance also critically addressed by scholars such as Fazlur Rahman. Rahman acknowledges an intellectual evolution from the living Sunnah (the lived practice of the early Muslim community) into a formulated corpus of Hadith texts.

Interpretations that degrade the Sahabah to mere passive transmitters have triggered a modern methodological crisis, namely the emergence of a rigid textualism that disregards the prophetic spirit and socio-historical contexts. This study fills this gap by reconstructing the hermeneutical responses of the Sahabah to provide an epistemological framework that is both historically authentic and contextually adaptive for contemporary Hadith interpretation.

The fundamental flaw in both extreme views lies in their disregard for the active hermeneutical role of the Sahabah.¹⁰ As demonstrated by Fazlur Rahman through his theory of the Living Sunnah, the Sunnah during the era of the Sahabah was not a static text to be mechanically memorized, but rather a dynamic, living tradition interpreted in accordance with the principles of Maqāṣid al-Sharī'ah.¹¹ The Sahabah did not treat all of the Prophet's utterances or actions as universal legal norms that were literally binding.¹²

This study aims to elucidate the recontextualization of prophetic authority during the transitional period and to map the hermeneutical models employed by the Sahabah in evaluating, verifying, and contextualizing Hadith traditions following the demise of the Prophet Muhammad.¹³

B. METHODS

This study employs a critical historiographical approach combined with an in-depth textual contextual analysis.¹⁴ The primary source data consists of standard Hadith collections (such as Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī by Al-Bukhārī and Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim by Al-Naysābūrī, accessed via the Sunnah.com database), classical

⁸ Goldziher. p 130

⁹ Rahman, *Islamic Methodology in History*. p 25

¹⁰ Supriyanto, "Implementation of Martin Heidegger's Hermeneutic Thought in the Study of Quranic Interpretation and Living Sunnah," *Jurnal Lektur Keagamaan* 21, no. 1 (2023): p 108.

¹¹ Rahman, *Islamic Methodology in History*. p 40

¹² Abu Hamid Al-Ghazali, *Al-Mankhul Min Ta'liqat Al-Usul*, ed. by Muhammad Hasan Hito (Dar al-Fikr, 1998). P 210

¹³ Asmawi. p 55

¹⁴ Supriyanto. p 110-112



works on Uṣūl al-Fiqh (Islamic jurisprudence) including Al-Mankhūl min Ta'liqāt al-Uṣūl by Al-Ghazālī and Al-Iḥkām fi Uṣūl al-Aḥkām by Al-Āmidī, as well as classical historical sources such as Al-Ṭabaqāt al-Kubrā by Ibn Sa'd.

The analytical procedure was conducted through three primary stages:

1. Document Categorization and Verification: Gathering authentic narrations that record the dialogues, debates, and actions of the Sahabah in response to Hadith transmission following the demise of the Prophet.¹⁵
2. Hermeneutic Categorization: Mapping the responses of the Sahabah into methodological typologies, such as the verification of testimonies (*ithbāt al-riwāyah*), textual criticism (*naqd al-matn*), and legal contextualization (*siyāsah shar'iyah*).¹⁶

Epistemological Synthesis: Correlating historical findings with the theoretical framework of Uṣūl al-Fiqh specifically the distinction between legislative (*tashrī'iyah*) and non legislative acts as articulated by Al-Āmidī and Al-Ghazālī alongside the concept of *living Sunnah* (Rahman), to formulate a reconstruction of early Islamic legal thought.

C. DISCUSSION

1. Prophetic Authority During the Lifetime of the Prophet: Between Divine Legislation and Human Nature

During the lifetime of the Prophet Muhammad, legal authority emanated directly from divine revelation and the wisdom of prophetic *ijtihad* (independent legal reasoning).¹⁷ This prophetic *ijtihad* did not exist in isolation from revelation; rather, it functioned as a dynamic mechanism to translate the universal values of the Qur'an into specific, practical contexts. As analyzed in the discourse of *Usul al-Fiqh* (such as the thought of Al-Ghazali), the actions and *ijtihad* of the Prophet possessed strong legal significance because they were guided by divine oversight. This ensured that early legal determinations were not rigidly textualist, but were instead responsive to social welfare (*maslahah*) without forfeiting their theological legitimacy.¹⁸ However, from a methodological standpoint, the actions of the Prophet were not entirely characterized by permanent normative legal dimensions (*tashrī' 'āmm*).¹⁹ The

¹⁵ Prayoga. P 1668

¹⁶ Asmawi. p 58

¹⁷ Asmawi. p 49

¹⁸ Landy Trisna Abdurrahman and Ahmad Bunyan Wahib, 'Prophetic Practice and Legal Significance: Al-Ghazālī's Critique of Textualism in Al-Mankhūl', *Asy-Syir'ah: Jurnal Ilmu Syari'ah Dan Hukum*, 57.2 (2023), pp. 285–310, doi:10.14421/asy-syirah.v57i2.1338.

¹⁹ Al-Ghazali. p 222



Prophet himself explicitly delineated the boundary between religious/legislative authority and the domain of technical-worldly knowledge.²⁰

One of the primary textual evidences for this distinction is observed in the incident of palm tree pollination in Medina (*ta'bīr al-nakhl*), as narrated by Al-Naysābūrī in *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* (Hadith No. 2361):²¹

عَنْ مُوسَى بْنِ طَلْحَةَ، عَنْ أَبِيهِ، قَالَ: مَرَرْتُ مَعَ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ بِقَوْمٍ عَلَى رُؤُوسِ النَّخْلِ، فَقَالَ: "مَا يَصْنَعُ هَؤُلَاءِ؟" فَقَالُوا: يُلْقِحُونَهُ، يَجْعَلُونَ الذَّكَرَ فِي الْأُنْثَى فَيَلْقَحُ. فَقَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ: "مَا أَظُنُّ يُعْنِي ذَلِكَ شَيْئًا". قَالَ فَأُخْبِرُوا بِذَلِكَ فَتَرَكُوهُ، فَأُخْبِرَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ بِذَلِكَ فَقَالَ: "إِنْ كَانَ يَنْفَعُهُمْ ذَلِكَ فَلْيَصْنَعُوهُ، فَإِنِّي إِنَّمَا ظَنَنْتُ ظَنًّا، فَلَا تُؤَاخِذُونِي بِالظَّنِّ، وَلَكِنْ إِذَا حَدَّثْتُكُمْ عَنِ اللَّهِ شَيْئًا فَخُذُوا بِهِ، فَإِنِّي لَنْ أَكْذِبَ عَلَى اللَّهِ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ".

"I and Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) happened to pass by people near the date-palm trees. He (the Holy Prophet) said: What are these people doing? They said: They are grafting, i. e. they combine the male with the female (tree) and thus they yield more fruit. Thereupon Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) said: I do not find it to be of any use. The people were informed about it and they abandoned this practice. Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) (was later) on informed (that the yield had dwindled), whereupon he said: If there is any use of it, then they should do it, for it was just a personal opinion of mine, and do not go after my personal opinion; but when I say to you anything on behalf of Allah, then do accept it, for I do not attribute lie to Allah, the Exalted and Glorious."

The textual content (*matn*) of the aforementioned Hadith reveals its key statement: "If I inform you of something from Allah, then hold fast to it. However, if I state something based on my personal judgment, I am merely human." In another narration from Anas bin Malik (*Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, No. 2363), the Prophet adds an epistemologically fundamental concluding remark:

"أَنْتُمْ أَعْلَمُ بِأَمْرِ دُنْيَاكُمْ"

"You are more knowledgeable regarding your worldly affairs."

²⁰ Sayf al-Din Al-Amidi, *Al-Ihkam Fi Usul Al-Ahkam* (Dar al-Kitab al-'Arabi, 1984). p 195

²¹ Muslim ibn al-Hajjaj Abu al-Husayn Al-Naysaburi, "Sahih Muslim, Book 43, Hadith 186 (Hadith No. 2361)," 2026, <https://sunnah.com/muslim:2361>



This historical report served as a foundational premise for the Sahabah that not all actions and statements of the Prophet were sacred and dogmatic in nature.²² Classical *Uṣūl al-Fiqh* (Islamic jurisprudence) thought, as pioneered by Imam Al-Ghazālī and Al-Āmidī, asserts that Prophetic actions are divided into:

1. Acta Legislative (Af'āl Tashrī'īyyah): Actions intended for the establishment of legal rulings (sharī'ah) and are obligatory to follow..
2. Customary Acts (Af'āl 'Ādiyyah): Actions rooted in human natural dispositions (such as modes of eating, dressing, or sleeping) or the local customs of 7th-century Arabian society.²³

This distinction was deeply understood by the generation of the Sahabah, ultimately serving as their primary hermeneutical framework following the passing of the Prophet.²⁴

More specifically, Al-Ghazālī's analysis in *al-Mankhūl* clarifies his critique of rigid textualism in interpreting Prophetic actions, asserting that the legal significance (*legal significance*) of a Prophetic act must be evaluated based on contextual indicators (*qarā'in*) and its underlying teleological objectives (*maqāṣid*).²⁵ From the epistemological perspective of *Uṣūl al-Fiqh*, the dialectic between textual authority (textual authority) and functional dominance (functional dominance) reveals that the status of Hadith was never understood homogeneously; rather, it continuously incorporated functional categorizations that demarcated the absolute authority of revelation from the dynamic domain of prophetic wisdom..²⁶

This functional mapping of Prophetic actions is highly critical within high-impact scholarly writing, as it provides a robust conceptual framework for unraveling the tension between textual ideals and their historical implementation in Islamic legal history.²⁷ The diversity of these prophetic actions demonstrates that, from the earliest era, the understanding of Islamic legal authority was constructed upon a methodological rationality that

²² Al-Ghazali. p 228

²³ Al-Ghazali. p 230-231

²⁴ Al-Amidi. p 200

²⁵ Farida Nurun Nazah and others, 'Reforming Islamic Family Justice: Integrating Legal and Psychological Perspectives in Handling Polygamy and Divorce Cases in Indonesia', *Nusantara: Journal of Law Studies*, 5.2 (2026), pp. 26–59.

²⁶ 'Rahman, Fazlur', *The Oxford Encyclopedia of Islam in North America* (Oxford University Press, 2026) <<https://www.oxfordreference.com/view/10.1093/acref/9780190641290.001.0001/acref-9780190641290-e-898>>.

²⁷ Prayoga, Maulana, and Munawir. 63-64



demarcated eternal legal principles (*sharī'ah*) from contextual-temporal determinations.²⁸

2. Post-Prophetic Sahabah Conduct and Comprehension

The passing of the Prophet required the Sahabah to assume the responsibility of interpreting and applying religious teachings. The responses of the Sahabah were far from monolithic; rather, they exhibited a rich variety of methodological approaches.²⁹

1) Transmission Verification and Historical Restriction (*Ithbāt al-Riwāyah*): Abū Bakr and 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb

The Khulafā' al-Rāshidūn exercised extreme caution in accepting Hadith narrations to prevent false attributions to the Prophet and to maintain the community's focus on the Qur'an. Abū Bakr al-Ṣiddīq refused to accept a solitary report (*khābar wāḥid*) regarding the inheritance share of a grandmother (*jaddah*) without a corroborating witness, who was subsequently provided by Muḥammad ibn Maslamah.³⁰

An even more rigorous stance was taken by 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb. When Abū Mūsā al-Ash'arī transmitted a Hadith regarding requesting permission to enter a home three times, 'Umar demanded a corroborating witness. This incident is recorded by Al-Bukhārī in *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī* (Hadith No. 2062):³¹

عَنْ عُبَيْدِ بْنِ عُمَيْرٍ، أَنَّ أَبَا مُوسَى الْأَشْعَرِيَّ، اسْتَأْذَنَ عَلَى عُمَرَ بْنِ الْخَطَّابِ . رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ . فَلَمْ يُؤْذَنْ لَهُ، وَكَأَنَّهُ كَانَ مَشْغُولًا فَرَجَعَ أَبُو مُوسَى، فَفَرَعَ عُمَرُ فَقَالَ أَلَمْ أَسْمَعْ صَوْتَ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ بْنِ قَيْسٍ ائْتَدُوا لَهُ قِيلَ قَدْ رَجَعَ. فَدَعَاهُ. فَقَالَ كُنَّا نُوْمِرُ بِذَلِكَ. فَقَالَ تَأْتِينِي عَلَى ذَلِكَ بِالْبَيِّنَةِ. فَانْطَلَقَ إِلَى مَجْلِسِ الْأَنْصَارِ، فَسَأَلَهُمْ. فَقَالُوا لَا يَشْهَدُ لَكَ عَلَى هَذَا إِلَّا أَصْغَرْنَا أَبُو سَعِيدٍ الْخُدْرِيُّ. فَذَهَبَ بِأَبِي سَعِيدٍ الْخُدْرِيِّ. فَقَالَ عُمَرُ أَخْفَيْ عَلَى مِنْ أَمْرِ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ أَهْلَانِي الصَّفْقُ بِالْأَسْوَاقِ.

"Abu Musa asked 'Umar to admit him but he was not admitted as 'Umar was busy, so Abu Musa went back. When 'Umar finished his job he said, "Didn't I hear the voice of 'Abdullah bin Qais? Let him come in." 'Umar was told that he had left. So, he sent for him and on his arrival,

²⁸ Mohammad Hashim Kamali, 'Methodological Issues in Islamic Jurisprudence', *Arab Law Quarterly*, 11.1 (1996), pp. 3–33, doi:10.2307/3381731.

²⁹ Asmawi. p 59-60

³⁰ M M Azami, *Hadis Nabawi Dan Sejarah Kodifikasinya* (Pustaka Firdaus, 1994). P 33

³¹ Abu Abdillah Muhammad ibn Ismail Al-Bukhari, 'Sahih Al-Bukhari, Book 34, Hadith 15 (Hadith No. 2062)', 2026 <<https://sunnah.com/bukhari:2062>>.



he (Abu Musa) said, "We were ordered to do so (i.e. to leave if not admitted after asking permission thrice). `Umar told him, "Bring witness in proof of your statement." Abu Musa went to the Ansar's meeting places and asked them. They said, "None amongst us will give this witness except the youngest of us, Abu Sa'id Al-Khudri. Abu Musa then took Abu Sa'id Al-Khudri (to `Umar) and `Umar said, surprisingly, "Has this order of Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) been hidden from me?" (Then he added), "I used to be busy trading in markets."

`Umar's demand for corroborating evidence (*bayyinah*) was not driven by skepticism regarding Abū Mūsā's integrity, but rather by an effort to establish a legal precedent preventing the uncritical dissemination of narrations without verification.<sup>32</sup> Furthermore, `Umar restricted the Sahabah from excessively transmitting oral traditions in newly conquered territories (*aqillū al-riwāyah 'an Rasūlillāh*), thereby preserving the integrity and centrality of the Qur'anic message.³³

2) Textual Criticism and the Confrontation of Texts with the Qur'an: Sayyidatinā `Ā'ishah bint Abī Bakr

Sayyidatinā `Ā'ishah bint Abī Bakr was a pioneer of qualitative criticism regarding the textual content of Hadith (*naqd al-matn*). `Ā'ishah evaluated the authenticity of Hadith narrations not merely through the integrity of their transmitters (*isnad*).³⁴

A monumental case occurred when Ibn `Umar narrated that the deceased is punished due to the weeping of their family. `Ā'ishah decisively rejected this report. As recorded in *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī* (Hadith No. 1288) and *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* (Hadith No. 929), it is narrated:³⁵

قَالَ ابْنُ عَبَّاسٍ . رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمَا فَلَمَّا مَاتَ عُمَرُ . رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ . ذَكَرْتُ ذَلِكَ لِعَائِشَةَ . رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا . فَقَالَتْ رَحِمَ اللَّهُ عُمَرَ ، وَاللَّهِ مَا حَدَّثَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَيُعَذِّبُ الْمُؤْمِنَ بِبُكَاءِ أَهْلِهِ عَلَيْهِ . وَلَكِنَّ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ قَالَ " إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَيَزِيدُ الْكَافِرَ عَذَابًا بِبُكَاءِ أَهْلِهِ عَلَيْهِ " . وَقَالَتْ حَسْبُكُمْ الْقُرْآنُ { وَلَا تَزِرُ وَازِرَةٌ وِزْرَ أُخْرَى } .

³² Al-Amidi. p 210

³³ Goldziher. p 145

³⁴ Asmawi. p 61-62

³⁵ Abu Abdillah Muhammad ibn Ismail Al-Bukhari, 'Sahih Al-Bukhari, Book 23, Hadith 46 (Hadith No. 1288)', 2026 <<https://sunnah.com/bukhari:1288>>.



"Ibn `Abbas added, "When `Umar died I told all this to Aisha and she said, 'May Allah be merciful to `Umar. By Allah, Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) did not say that a believer is punished by the weeping of his relatives. But he said, Allah increases the punishment of a non-believer because of the weeping of his relatives.'" Aisha further added, "The Qur'an is sufficient for you (to clear up this point) as Allah has stated: 'No burdened soul will bear another's burden.' "

‘Ā’ishah’s methodology demonstrates that the Sahabah’ understanding of Hadith was by no means passive. She identified contextual biases or perceptual oversights by other narrators, systematically evaluating them against the broader, more universal theological framework of the Qur’an.³⁶

3) Contextualization of Public Policy (*Siyāsah Shar‘iyyah*): ‘Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb and ‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib

‘Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb’s policy regarding the administration of conquered territories in Iraq (*Sawād*) demonstrates a clear differentiation between the Prophet’s situational determinations and enduring legal principles. Although the Prophet had distributed the lands of Khaybar among the combatants, ‘Umar elected not to divide the land of *Sawād*, instead designating it as state property (*fay*) to be managed for the public interest (*maṣlaḥah*) of future generations..³⁷

‘Umar understood that the Prophet’s action at Khaybar was a tactical-governance policy (*siyāsah*) tailored to the financial exigencies of the Muslim community at that time, rather than a rigid normative legislative precedent (*tashrī‘iyyah*).³⁸ This decision was supported by ‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib and serves as evidence that the *living sunnah* was practiced by prioritizing the fulfillment of *maqāṣid al-sharī‘ah*.³⁹

The implementation of transmission verification criteria and textual content criticism (*naqd al-matn*) by the Sahabah demonstrates the existence of a methodological gap between the normative ideals of Hadith and the realities of their practical implementation within the Muslim community (ideals vs. realities). A survey of reputable international journals indexed in Scopus reveals that this Sahabah hermeneutics serves as a fundamental

³⁶ Asmawi. P 63-64

³⁷ Wahbah Zuhayli and A H Al-Kattani, *Fiqh Islam Wa Adillatuhu* (Bekasi: Gema Insani Press, 2010), p 150-152 <https://books.google.co.id/books?id=3CnGnQEACAAJ>.

³⁸ Al-Amidi. p 215

³⁹ Rahman, *Islamic Methodology in History*. p 50



object of study in tracing the roots of classical Islamic jurisprudential rationality.⁴⁰

The selective methodology demonstrated by the Sahabah indicates that textual authority was never blindly accepted without considering social context and rational dialogue. Modern Islamic studies published in international journals, such as the *Al-Bayan: Journal of Qur'an and Hadith Studies*, view this as a primary hermeneutical asset in preserving the flexibility of Islamic law from the pitfall of textual stagnation.

3. Comparative Matrix of Sahabah Hermeneutical Typologies

Major of Sahabah	Methodological Approach	Key Traditions	Evaluative Instruments	Epistemological Implications
Abū Bakr al-Ṣiddīq	Transmission Validation	Inheritance of the Grandmother (Jaddah)	Tabayyūn (Verification) & Corroborating Evidence (Bayyinah)	Preventing the influx of fabricated narrations during the early era
‘Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb	Narration Restriction & Policy Governance (<i>Siyāsah</i>)	Abū Mūsā’s Permission Seeking & the Land of <i>Sawād</i>	Testimony & <i>Maqāṣid/ Maṣlaḥah</i> Analysis	Distinguishing Governmental Policy (<i>Imāmah</i>) from Universal Rulings
‘Ā’ishah bint Abī Bakr	Textual Content Criticism (<i>Naqd al-Matn</i>)	Torment of the Deceased due to	Juxtaposition with Qur’anic Verses (Q.S. 6:164)	The Qur’an as the Ultimate Criterion for Validating

⁴⁰ ‘Hadith and Sunnah: Ideals vs. Realities’, 2023

<<https://www.scribd.com/document/693884250/HadithandSunnah-Idealsandrealities-Text>>.



		Family Weeping		Hadith Meaning
'Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib	Legal Contextualization	Interpretation of Penal Law (<i>Ḥudūd</i>) & <i>Ijtihād</i>	Analysis of Legal Ratio (<i>'Illah</i>)	Establishing the Foundations of Reason-Based Legal Rationality (<i>Ra'y</i>)

The matrix table above illustrates the diversification of hermeneutical instruments utilized by the Sahabah, which served as the foundation for the epistemological transformation of Islamic law. These four typologies reflect how the Sahabah operated as interpretative agents who linked textual sources with their legal ratio (*'illah*) and teleological welfare (*maṣlaḥah*) a methodological framework recognized by reputable Islamic studies scholars as the bridge between raw textual data and its practical application within social reality.⁴¹

4. Pergeseran Epistemologis: Dari *Living Sunnah* ke Pembakuan Tekstual

As analyzed by Fazlur Rahman, the transition from the era of the Sahabah to the period of legal codification (2nd and 3rd centuries AH) was marked by the crystallization of the *living sunnah* into written Hadith texts.⁴² During the era of the Sahabah, the Sunnah was defined as a normative tradition collectively practiced and imbued with Qur'anic values.⁴³ However, the subsequent methodological role of Imām al-Shāfi'ī narrowed the definition of the Sunnah exclusively to *marfū'* Hadith narrations possessing a continuous chain of transmission (*musnad*).⁴⁴

This shift had a dual impact. On one hand, the textual codification successfully safeguarded the body of Prophetic teachings from widespread fabrication resulting from political conflicts in the aftermath of the First Civil

⁴¹ SciSpace, 'Al-Bayan: Journal of Qur'an and Hadith Studies Overview', 2026 <<https://scispace.com/journals/al-bayan-journal-of-quran-and-hadith-studies-3ujw2ojf>>.

⁴² Rahman, *Islamic Methodology in History*. p 55-60

⁴³ Rahman, *Islamic Methodology in History*. p 62

⁴⁴ Prayoga. p 1672



War (*al-Fitnah al-Kubrā*).⁴⁵ On the other hand, this standardization risks fostering a rigid textualism if detached from the hermeneutical spirit demonstrated by the Sahabah.⁴⁶

The exposition of modern Indonesian *uṣūl al-fiqh* scholars—such as Sahal Mahfudz through his framework of *Fiqh Sosial* and Syarifuddin in his legal methodology reaffirms the imperative of reading Hadith through the lens of Sahabah hermeneutics.⁴⁷ By emulating the critical inquiry of ‘Ā’ishah and the contextualization of ‘Umar ibn al-Khattab, the modern interpretation of Hadith transcends mere imitation of outward physical forms to encompass the sublimation of ethical values and social welfare (*maṣlaḥah*)⁴⁸

According to Fazlur Rahman's conceptual framework, the evolutionary trajectory of Islamic thought transitioning from a dynamic, practical *living sunnah* to the formalist canonization of textual Hadith narrowed the scope for creative *ijtihād*; consequently, a re-examination of the historical evolution of the Sunnah constitutes an absolute prerequisite for the modernization of Islamic thought.⁴⁹ In Rahman's view, excessive adherence to the literal text without comprehending the *ratio legis* risks severing the connection between the universal moral message of revelation and an ever-evolving historical reality.⁵⁰

Within the framework of modern Indonesian hermeneutics, the application of Martin Heidegger's existential-phenomenological perspective—specifically concepts such as *Dasein*, Being in the world and the hermeneutic circle offers an alternative approach to understanding Prophetic Hadith historically, contextually, and existentially. Consequently, the meaning of Hadith is not isolated as a mere artifact of the past, but rather remains actively present within contemporary living reality.⁵¹

D. KESIMPULAN

This study concludes that the transition of Prophetic authority from the personal presence of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) to the codification of Hadith texts was neither passive nor static. The Sahabah positioned themselves as active hermeneutical agents who safeguarded both

⁴⁵ Prayoga. p 1673-1674

⁴⁶ Al-Ghazali. p 235

⁴⁷ Amir Syarifuddin, *Usul Fiqh* (Logos Wacana Ilmu, 2000). P 110

⁴⁸ Supriyanto. p 125

⁴⁹ Sahjad M Aksan, M Wardah, and Muhammad Yaseen, 'Heidegger's Hermeneutics as an Approach to Understanding Prophetic Hadith: A Nusantara Islamic Perspective', *Jurnal Lektur Keagamaan*, 24.1 (2026), pp. 102–32 <<https://jlka.kemenag.go.id/lektur/article/download/1370/570/10862>>.

⁵⁰ Fazlur Rahman, *Islam and Modernity: Transformation of an Intellectual Tradition* (University of Chicago Press, 1982).

⁵¹ Aksan, Wardah, and Yaseen.



the purity and the contemporary relevance of Islamic teachings. Through mechanisms such as narrative verification (ithbāt), Qur'anic-based textual criticism (naqd al-matn), and the distinction between normative legal rulings (tashrī'iyah) and non tashrī'iyah, the generation of the Sahabah demonstrated that Prophetic authority was maintained through a dynamic dialectic between text, reason, and social reality.

The theoretical implications of these findings provide a methodological foundation for the development of contemporary Hadith studies. This study recommends that future Islamic studies scholarship further explore the integration between classical uṣūl al-fiqh methodologies and modern hermeneutics to address pressingly complex humanitarian and public governance issues across the modern Islamic world.

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