

The Epistemology Of Hadith Studies

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Abstract – The epistemology of hadith studies has been built in the history of Muslim civilization since the beginning of Islam until now with the structure of *riwāyah* and *dirāyah* studies as well as its various branches, provided a significant contribution to the critique and research of the Prophet hadith authenticity. Through variety of concepts and theories of ‘*Ulūm al-Hadīth*, Muslims can distinguish between authentic hadiths, which are coming from the Prophet and those are not, in terms of *isnād*, *matn*, or both, so they can also be determined whether the hadiths can be used as argumentation (*dalīl*) in the religious life of Muslims or not.

Throughout history, epistemology of hadith studies has been recognized by Muslims and there is no significant resistance from ancient times to the present, except from the Orientalists who had rejected hadith criticism methodology proposed by scholars of hadith. It seems that the Orientalists who were skeptical of the authenticity of Prophet hadith appeared since the second half of the nineteenth century AD., as if they had tried to break down the foundations of hadith epistemology through their premises, concepts, and conclusions. Facing such orientalist attitudes, this paper tries to offer four concepts, namely having critical and scientific attitude, using constructive and not destructive thinking, based on the Quran, and using balanced and proportional method of thinking.

Keywords – Epistemology, Hadith Studies, *Isnād*, *Matn*, *Riwāyah*, *Dirāyah*, Hadith Scholars, Orientalists

I. INTRODUCTION

Epistemology is a branch of philosophy studying the boundaries of knowledge that tries to be used as a mean of connecting to the past. The word epistemology comes from the Greek language, consisting of two words; *episteme* (knowledge) and *logos* (science, mind, conversation). So, epistemology means knowledge, a conversation about knowledge or science (al-Hafani, 2004: 19). Epistemology is a theory of knowledge discussing various aspects of knowledge such as possibility, origin, nature, limitation, assumption, validity, reliability, and the matter of truth

(Gie, 2003: 83).

The main study of epistemology is the source, origin, and nature of knowledge; fields and knowledge reach limits. There are several questions that are commonly asked to explore the problems in epistemology, namely what is knowledge, what is the source and basis of knowledge, is the knowledge a certain truth or is it just a guess (Rapar, 2002: 38).

In other words, epistemology is closely related to how to acquire knowledge, process, analyze, and form a particular theory, postulate, and paradigm. Epistemology is a technical term that is often used in philosophical studies. As pointed out by R. Harre (2007:2), epistemology occupies one branch of study in logic, metaphysics, and ethics. In philosophical discourse, epistemology is a branch of philosophy discussing the origin, structure, method, and the truth of knowledge.

In line with the development of philosophy, epistemology later become a part of the philosophy of science, a field of philosophical study discussing in depth the whole process involved in the effort to gain knowledge (Suriasumantri, 2008:9). Technically, the epistemology in this study is emphasized on the ways to obtain knowledge either through empirical data, rational analysis, or a combination of the two called scientific method. These three methods are commonly used in efforts to gain knowledge. In other words, epistemology is not merely an effort of how a scientist or researcher in relation to the object of science being studied or researched, but more than that is how a scientist acquires knowledge through research based on

correspondence or coherence principle. Or, more precisely through scientific methods that combine inductive and deductive reasoning at once. This epistemology is what meant by John A. Hughes (1999: 5), as philosophical claims about the way in which the world is known or can be made known to us and, as such, clearly involves issues about the nature of knowledge. The essence of the problem in epistemology is the ways or methods in obtaining knowledge that can be attempted to be known by human including the ways of acquiring the knowledge.

The discussion in epistemology focuses on the origin of knowledge and the theory of truth of knowledge. The discussion of the origin of knowledge regarding a matter of whether the knowledge comes from mind (rationalism), senses (empiricism), or intuition. While the study of the truth of knowledge can be described by correspondence, coherence, or practical-pragmatic patterns. Therefore, it is discussed in epistemology about the source of knowledge, processes and methods of obtaining knowledge, the ways to prove the truth of knowledge, and the levels of truth of knowledge (Suriasumantri, 2005: 55-59).

The epistemology of hadith studies deals with the its source of knowledge and the theory of its truth. It can be said that the epistemology of hadith studies is a knowledge discussing the origin of knowledge in hadith studies, the processes and methods in obtaining the knowledge, the ways to prove the truth of knowledge in hadith studies, and the levels of truth of the knowledge. Among the hadith scholars, the sources of knowledge about hadith studies are broadly classified into two; the study of *riwâyah* and *dirâyah*. Both are empirical-historical in which their truth can be measured by correspondence and coherence methods. The study of *riwâyah* examines everything propped up to the Prophet in the form of words, actions, provisions, physical or psychological characteristics in detail and itemized studies (al-Khâtîb, 1999: 7, Abû Shuhbah, 2006: 24). This knowledge also discusses the narration of the hadith and its maintenance, as well as the decomposition of its pronunciations (al- Suyûtî, 1998: 5-6). According to al-Salih (2007: 5), the study of the hadith *riwâyah* strives for free and careful citation of everything based on the Prophet's words, deeds, approvals, characters, or everything based on words or deeds of his Companions and *Tâbi'in* (Followers/generation after the Companions).

Thus, the main source of knowledge of hadith studies is the Prophet Muhammad relating to his words, deeds, approvals, physical or psychological characters, and something coming from the Companions of the Prophet and *Tâbi'in* (generation after the Prophet Companions). Basically, the epistemology of hadith studies begins with the existence of the Prophet as the messenger of God in charge of conveying His teachings both through the revelation of the Quran and the traditions of the Prophet. The origin of knowledge of the Quran is Allah, because the Quran is the word of God delivered to the Prophet Muhammad through the intermediary of Gabriel, which contains miracles, and is a worship service for those who read it (al-Qattân, 2007: 5). Therefore, the source of knowledge of the hadith is the Prophet through his words, deeds, approvals, and attributes. However, because the essence of the Quran and the hadith and their delivery process are different both in terms of the procedures, writing, time of delivery and transmission, as well as their codification, their truths are different. Muslims agree that all verses of the Quran are definitely from Allah, there is no doubt whatsoever and therefore its status is *qat'i al-wurûd* (the coming of Allah is certain) (al-Albânî, 2010: 3). While the hadith of the Prophet, some are ascertained from him (*mutawâtir* hadith), and some are likely to originate from him (authentic *ahâd* hadith), some are doubtful from the Prophet (weak/*da'if* hadith), and some are certainly not from the Messenger of Allah (false/*mawdû'* hadith). Therefore, there are some traditions that are *qat'i al-wurûd* (it is ascertained from the Prophet) and some are *zanni al-wurûd* (it is doubted from the Prophet).

To examine the origin, structure, method, and the truth of hadith studies, the scholars of hadith have compiled a discipline called *dirâyah* hadith. Basically, this study deals with the methods and principles that can be used to find out, analyze, and test the existence of *isnâd* and *matn* of hadith. Al-Tirmasî (2003: 23) stated that this study examines methods and principles to find out the state of *isnâd* and *matn*, namely all provisions relating to the quality of hadith validity (*sahîh*, *hasan*, or *da'if*), its relyment (*marfû'*/relied on the Prophet, *mawqûf*/relied on the Companions, or *maqtû'*/relied on the Followers), or the nature of narrators, and other matters related.

According to Muhammad Zubayr Siddiqî (2006: 94), *dirâyah al-hadîth* is the principles of evaluating hadith. The scholars of hadith and Islamic law have developed several basic principles of evaluating it. These principles are described in the works of *Usûl al-Hadîth* and *Usûl al-Fiqh* or can also be found in the works of *al-Mawdû'ât* and *Asmâ' al-Rijâl*. As every hadith contains two parts, namely *isnâd* (chain of narrators) and *matn* (text of hadith), the principles of evaluating it are also classified into two categories; the principles relating to *isnâd* and those relating to *matn* of hadith. Obviously, the study of the

dirâyah hadith examines the nature, conditions, types, and laws of narration, the condition of hadith narrators, the types of hadiths they narrated, and everything relating to them (al-Suyûtî, 1998: I, 40).

II. THE HISTORY OF HADITH STUDIES EPISTEMOLOGY

The embryo of the hadith studies epistemology had existed since the time of the Prophet Muhammad in the seventh century AD. Before the study of hadith became a scientific discipline, discussions about the quality of hadith had grown since that time. This can be traced from the efforts to confirm the accuracy of the hadith transmission by the Companions to the Messenger of Allah. They could detect lies to the Prophet, if indeed such things happened. The Prophet had also set a number of rules about how a hadith should be accepted and then he conveyed it to his Companions, as well as then he conveyed it to certain people in a certain way (Ali, 2006: 24).

The presence of the Prophet in the midst of his Companions made it easier to clarify and at the same time to anticipate the errors of hadith writing. The extraordinary interest of the Companions towards the Prophet and the hadiths he conveyed made them very careful and earnest in accepting and narrating the hadiths (Siddiqî, 2006: 6). Naturally, there was no need for special theories governing the narration of hadiths as in the following periods, because the source of information was still alive and re-checking could easily be done (al-Khâtîb, 1997: 57-59).

The Companions were known to be very enthusiastic in listening to the Prophet's hadiths or in recording his actions. Since the time of the Prophet, many of them tried to get by heart whatever the Prophet said, observed keenly whatever he did, and reported all of it to other Companions, even some of them had written it (Siddiqî, 2006: 6). However, sometimes there were Companions who heard the hadith of the Prophet from other Companions but they had silence of it, because it was considered as not in line with other hadiths or the understanding of the Quran. In this case, there were two attitudes emerged among them. Firstly, having silence, without comment and without accepting it. Secondly, denying and even criticizing it, because it was considered as a mistake of the Companions (al-Adlabî, 2007: 83). Even so, there were no narrators who were lying, as it was stated by al-Barra', one of the Prophet Companions, told by al-Bayhâqî, that not all Companions directly heard the hadith from the Prophet because they had works and activities. But no one lied. Those who presented in front of the Prophet conveyed to those who were absent (al-Sibâ'î, 2007: 78 and al-Khâtîb, 1997: 59).

After the death of the Prophet in 11 H./623 AD., the discussion about the acceptance or rejection of hadiths began to feel needed especially when the Companions had spread to various regions and Muslims began to collect hadiths and held visitation (*rihlah*) to various Islamic regions to get the hadiths. More than that, according to Siddiqî (2006: 6), they had been willing to travel tiredly, to devote energy and money in collecting the hadiths, and to try to build an epistemology of the Prophet's hadith in order to distinguish between the true and the false ones.

The discussion of the hadiths and the existence of their narrators had been carried out during the time of Companions, for example by 'Ubbadah ibn Sâmî (d. 34 AH.), Ibn 'Abbâs (d. 68 AH.), and Anas ibn Mâlik (d. 93 AH.) (al-Sibâ'î, 2007: 110). During the generation of Companions and *Tâbi'in* (Followers), the spreading of hadiths had reached almost all Islamic territories, such as Medina, Mecca, Kufa, Basra, Shria, Egypt, Yemen, Spain, Khurasan, and others. Therefore, special standards were needed to measure or to test the truth of hadiths especially those were only heard or conveyed by one person (*ahâd* hadith). At this time, the methods were arranged in a simple form to select the narration of hadiths. Intensively, the Companions did researchs and studies on the hadith narrators. Not only in Medina, as a center and historical place of hadith spreading, in various other cities while distributing hadiths, the Companions also conducted discussions and criticisms to maintain the authenticity of the hadiths they narrated, both *isnâd* and *matn* criticism (al-Sâlih, 2003: 50-53).

Analytical studies of the hadith and the narrators mainly occurred when a political dispute raged between 'Alî ibn Abî Tâlib (d. 40 AH.) and Mu'âwiyah ibn Abî Sufyân through the Siffin War (40 AH.) which caused the tearing of Muslims to several groups; Shî'ah, Khawârij, Mu'âwiyah faction, and Jumhur (majority). Under the pretext of group justification, each of them seek to strengthen and support their political standings with the verses of the Quran and the Traditions of the Prophet. Of course, their political views tending to be sectarian, justificative, and apologetic did not find a foothold in these two sources of Islamic teachings (al-Dzahabî, 2008: 57). For this reason, in addition to interpreting of the Quran not in its true meaning and interpreting hadiths according to their interests, they also made false hadiths in order that their political standings had legal justification (al-Khâtîb, 1997: 220).

It seems that the embryo of hadith epistemology as an independent scientific discipline had occurred during the time of *Tâbi'in* with the establishment of the foundations of this study by Muhammad ibn Shihâb al-Zuhrî (51-124 AH.) in his capacity as an expert and collector of hadiths during the caliph 'Umar ibn 'Abd al- 'Azîz (99-101 AH.). The discussions on the narrators of hadiths were also carried out by Sa'îd ibn al-Musayyib (d. 94 AH.), al-Sha'bî (d. 104 AH.), and Muhammad ibn Sîrîn (d. 110 AH.). After the generation of *Tâbi'in*, there were scholars who paid great attention to the status of the narrators of hadiths, namely Yahyâ ibn Sa'îd al- Qattân (d. 189 AH.), 'Abd al-Rahmân ibn Mahdî (d. 198 H.), Shu'bah ibn al-Hajjâj (d. 160 AH.), Ma'mar (d. 153 AH.), Hisham al-Dustuwâ'î (d. 154 AH.), al-Awzâ'î (d. 156 AH.), al-Laith ibn Sa'd (d. 175 AH.), Ibn al-Mubâarak (d. 181 AH.), al-Fazarî (d. 185 AH.), Sufyân ibn 'Uyaynah (d. 198 AH.), Wâki' ibn Jarrah (d. 197 AH.), and 'Abd al-Rahmân ibn Mahdî (d. 198 AH.) (al-Sibâ'î, 2007:111).

By the third century of Hîgra, according to al-Khâtîb, 'Alî ibn 'Abd Allâh al- Madîni (161-234 AH.) composed the books of *Usûl al-Sunnah* and *Madzâhib al- Muhaddithin* in two volumes, but unfortunately these books did not reach us. In this century, the Muslim scholars did not compile the book of *Usûl al-Hadîth* (the study of hadith) specifically but it was included in the books of *Usûl al-Fiqh* such as the discussion of *usûl al-hadîth* in the book of *al-Risâlah* by Muhammad ibn Idrîs al- Shâfi'î (150-204 H.). This book, besides discussing *Usûl al-Fiqh*, also discuss the methods of hadith studies when al-Shâfi'î explained the truth of the *ahâd* hadith, the requirements of authentic hadith, the '*adalah*' of the hadith narrators, the rejection of the *mursal* and *munqati'* hadiths, the narration of hadith in its text and meaning, the conditions of narration, etc., so that al-Shâfi'î was considered as a precursor in the fields of *Usûl al-Fiqh* and *Usûl al-Hadîth* (al-Khâtîb, 1999: 451). Therefore, he got a title of *nâsir al-sunnah* or *nâsir al-hadith* (the defender of *sunnah* or hadith).

In the third century of Hîgra, according to Azami (2006: 101-102), the Muslim scholars completed the methods and theories that had been formed in the previous period. The figures who studied the hadith narrators of this century, ones of them were Yazîd ibn Hârûn (d. 206 AH.), Abû Dâwud al-Tayâlisî (d. 204 AH.), 'Abd al- Râziq ibn Hammâm (d. 211 AH.), and Abû 'Asim al-Nabîl (d. 212 AH.). Some terminology and classification of hadith were well known this time such as *sahîh*, *hasan*, and *da'îf* hadiths through the compilation of hadith books like *al-Muwattâ'* by Mâlik ibn Anas (93-179 H.) which was completed in 143 AH., *Sahîh al-Bukhârî* by al-Bukhârî (d. 256 AH.), *Sahîh Muslim* by Muslim ibn al-Hajjâj (d. 261 AH.), *Sunan Abî Dâwud* by Abû Dawud al-Sijistânî (d. 275 AH.), *Sunan al-Tirmidzî* by al-Tirmidzî (d. 279 AH.), *Sunan al-Nasâ'î* by al-Nasâ'î (d. 303 AH.), *Sunan Ibn Mâjah* by Ibn Mâjah (d. 273 AH.), *Sunan al-Dârimî* by al-Dârimî (d. 255 AH.), and *Sunan Sa'îd ibn al-Mansûr* by Sa'îd ibn al-Mansûr (d. 227 AH.).

In some of the above hadith books, the hadith studies epistemology examined in their introductions, for example in the *Sahîh Muslim* by Muslim ibn al-Hajjâj (2009, I: 4), Muslim explained the level of the hadith narrators (*tabâqah al-ruwâh*) whose hadiths could be accepted or not, the *munkar* hadiths and how to know them, the teks addition (*al-ziyâdah*) by trusted people (*thiqah*), the necessity of accepting hadiths from reliable narrators, the rejecting hadiths from weak and liar narrators, the importance of *isnâd*, some methods of knowing the liar narrators of hadith, etc. Muslim closed his introduction by an explanation of the validity of using hadiths collected in his book.

In the third century, it had also been known the theory and epistemology of hadith studies, e.g. in the study of *Gharîb al-Hadîth*, *Mukhtalîf al-Hadîth*, *al-Jarh wa al-Ta'dîl*, and *'Ilal al-Hadîth*. The scholars who first compiled books containing the *gharîb* hadith were Abû al-Hasan Ismâ'îl al-Mazîni al-Nahawî (d. 204 AH.) and Abû Ubaydah Ma'mar ibn Mathnâ al-Taymî al-Basrî (d. 210 AH.). The study of *Mukhtalîf al-Hadîth* was compiled by Imam al-Shâfi'î (d. 204 AH./819 AD.) in his book *Ikhtilâf al-Hadîth* and 'Abd Allâh ibn Qutaybah (d. 276 AH.) in his book *Ta'wîl Mukhtalâf al- Hadîth*. At this era, it was also written the study of *al-Jarh wa al-Ta'dîl* describing the history and criticism of the hadith transmitters, such as in *Tabaqât al-Kubrâ* by Muhammad ibn Sa'ad (d. 230 AH.) and *Tabaqât al-Ruwâh* by Khalifah ibn Asfarî (d. 240 AH.). Similarly, the books on *al-Jarh wa al-Ta'dîl* written by Ahmad ibn Hanbal (d. 241 AH.), Muhammad ibn Sa'ad (d. 230 AH.), Yahyâ ibn Ma'in (d. 232 AH.), 'Alî ibn al-Madîni (d. 234 AH.), al-Bukhârî (d. 256 AH.), Muslim ibn al-Hajjâj (d. 261 AH.), and Abû Dâwud al-Sijistânî (d. 275 AH.). There was also the book of *al-'Ilal* composed by 'Alî ibn al-Madîni (d. 234 AH./818 AD.) discussing about the disabled hadiths (al-Sibâ'î, 2007: 110-111).

At the end of the third century of Hîgra, Abû Bakr Ahmad ibn Hârûn al-Bardijî (d. 301 AH.) examined epistemology of Hadith studies in the *Book of Ma'rifah al- Muttasil min al-Hadîth wa al-Mursal wa al-Maqtû'* and *Bayân al-Thuruq al-Sihhah*. However, these books came to us only through the citation in other books such as the *Book of Ma'rifah Usûl al-Hadîth* (al-Khâtîb, 1999: 453).

According to Nûr al-Dîn 'Itr (2007: 450), the achievement of Muslims in the field of transmission and research of hadith spawned a considerable discipline and literature concerning the books of hadith transmission system, criticism and research on *isnâd* and *matn* contained in the study of *Mustalah al-Hadîth*, the study of *Rijâl al-Hadîth*, and several other branches of hadith studies. All of those studies had been grown perfectly in an adjacent time and complements one to another. Then, various works emerged in the field of *al-Jarh wa al-Ta'dîl*, *Târîkh al-Ruwâh*, *'Ilal al-Hadîth*, *Gharîb al-Hadîth*, *Nâsikh wa Mansûkh al-Hadîth*, *Rijâl al-Hadîth*, *Târîkh al-Mutûn*, *Asbâb Wurûd al-Hadîth*, *Mukhtalif al-Hadîth*, etc. so that various kinds of studies had been formed as independent disciplines.

In addition, it were also written works gathering the general principles and theories of the whole hadith, the principles and theories explaining about *sahîh*, *hasan*, and *da'îf* hadith, the acceptable and rejected ones, the *'adil* transmitters and the disabled ones, everything related to the state of the hadith transmitters, the methods of hadith transmission (*'adâh al-tahammul wa adâ' al-hadîth*), and so on. These principles and theories were standardized by the hadith scholars under the name of *Mustalah al-Hadîth*, *'Ulûm al-Hadîth*, or *Usûl al-Hadîth* ('Itr, 2007: 450).

The epistemology of hadith studies was first fully compiled by al-Qâdî Abû Muhammad al-Ramahurmuzî (d. 360 AH.) in his book *al-Muhaddith al-Fâsil bayn al-Râwî wa al-Wâ'î*. This book, according to some Muslim scholars, was considered as the earliest complete books in the field of hadith studies. However, according to Ibn Hajar al-'Asqalânî, al-Ramahurmuzî's work did not cover the entire hadith studies. Nevertheless, this book until its time was the most complete book that was later developed by the next scholars, and was taken into account by the writers of hadith books when they compiled the books in this field (al-Khâtîb, 1999: 453).

In the fourth century, there was also a book specifically discussing the problematic hadith entitled *Mushkil al-Athâr* by Abû Ja'far al-Tahâwî (d. 321 AH./933 AD.). Although did not discuss about the hadith studies comprehensively, this book was worth to be reckoned because it discussed the problematic hadiths and their reasons. Similarly, the work of al-Mu'amar Abû al-Fadl Sâlih (d. 384 AH.), entitled *Sunan al-Tahdîth*, discussing the hadith studies relatively complete as a work produced in this century. At the end of the fourth century of Hîgra, al-Hâkim Abû 'Abd Allâh Muhammad al-Naysabûrî (321-405 AH.) composed the book *Ma'rifah 'Ulûm al-Hadîth*, explaining as many as 52 kinds of discussion. However, as the work of al-Ramahurmuzî, the work of al-Hâkim according to al-Khâtîb (1999: 453), was not perfect yet and less systematic compared with the books written by the next scholars. The book was later completed by Abû Nu'aim Ahmad ibn 'Abd Allâh al-Asfâhânî (336-430 AH.) through his book *al-Mustakhrâj 'alâ Ma'rifah 'Ulûm al-Hadîth*. In this book, he presented his finding methods which were not found in the *Ma'rifah 'Ulûm al-Hadîth* by al-Hâkim al-Naysabûrî (Abû Shuhbah, 2006: 31).

About half century later, al-Hâkim Abû 'Amr Yûsuf al-Namirî al-Qurtubî (368- 463 AH.) produced many works in the field of hadith and it studies. Regarding the hadith studies in the Introduction of *al-Tamhîd li ma fî al-Muwatta' min al-Ma'ânî wa al-Asânîd*, al-Qurtubî collected most of the principles of *Usûl al-Hadîth* (al-Khâtîb, 1999: 455). Then, the book of *al-Kifâyah fî Qawânîn al-Riwâyah* composed by al-Khâtîb al-Baghdâdî (392-463 AH.) was the most complete book in this field. This book contained various descriptions of hadith studies and principles of transmission. According to Abû Shihâb, most hadith studies had been compiled in this book (Abû Shuhbah, 2006: 31). Al-Baghdâdî also wrote *al-Jâmi' li Akhlâq al-Râwî wa Adâb al-Sâmi'* as the most complete and earlies book in the field of listening and narrating hadith and related matters. In addition, he also composed the books of *Sharf Ashâb al-Hadîth* and *Taqyîd al-'Ilm*. According to Abû Bakr ibn Nuqtah, quoted by al-Khâtîb (1999: 456), the scholars of the hadith after al-Baghdâdî, when compiled knowledge, they always took from his books.

The most famous scholar post al-Khâtîb al-Baghdâdî in the field of hadith studies was Abû al-Fadl 'Iyâd ibn Mûsâ al-Yashâbî (476-544 AH.), who compiled the book of *al-Ilmâ' ilâ Ma'rifah Usûl al-Riwâyah wa Taqyîd al-Asmâ'* which was also called *al-Ilmâ' fî Dabt al-Riwâyah wa Taqyîd al-Asmâ'*. Similarly, Abû Hafs 'Umar ibn 'Abd al-Majîd al-Mayanjî (d. 580 AH.) wrote the book of *Mâ lâ Yasi' al-Muhaddith Jahluh* and Abû al-Faraj Ibn al-Jawzî (d. 597 AH.) wrote his book *al-'Ilal al-Mutanâhiyah*. After that, there were many works written such as the work of Taqî al-Dîn al-Syahrzurî known as Ibn al-Salâh (577-643 AH.) through his book *'Ulûm al-Hadîth* or also called *Muqaddimah Ibn al-Salâh* (al-Khâtîb, 1999: 456).

The book of Ibn al-Salâh was a monumental work in the field of hadith studies epistemology. This book was explained by the subsequent scholars and abridged of about 27 summaries. After Ibn al-Salâh, it was difficult to be found the activity of

writing hadith studies books except rearrangement of the existing books, namely the books of the *sharh*; summarizing the length, widening the simple, ordering the contents, and others (al-Khâtîb,1999: 456). This time, there was no new *ijtihad* in establishing hadith studies principles except merely reviewing the books of hadith had existed before, unlike the works of early scholars such as al-Ramahurmuzî and al- Khâtîb al-Baghdâdî, which collected abundant of hadith studies materials, as the sources and inspirations in writing various works of hadith studies, so that the following writers of hadith studies just sufficiently told the principles they had formulated.

Some works emerged after the seventh century of Hira were *Fath al-Mughîth bi Sharh Alfiyah al-Hadîth* by Shams al-Dîn Abî Khayr Muhammad al-Sakhâwî (d. 902 AH.), *Tadrîb al-Râwî fî Sharh Taqrîb al-Nawawî* by Jalâl al-Dîn 'Abd al-Rahmân al-Suyûtî (849-911 AH.) which was an explanation of *al-Taqrîb* by Muhyî al-Dîn Yahyâ ibn Sharf al-Nawawî (d. 676 AH.). These two books gathered the methods of *mutaqaddimûn* and *mutaakhirûn* of the hadith studies scholars. Similarly, the *Tajrîd Asmâ' al-Sahâbah* by Muhammad ibn Ahmad al-Dzahabî (d. 748 AH.), *Nazh al- Durar fî 'Ilm al-Athâr* and *al-Tabshirah wa al-Tadzkirah* by Zayn al-Dîn 'Abd al-Rahmân ibn al-Husayn al-'Irâqî (d. 806 AH.), *Nukhbah al-Fikâr fî Mustalah Ahl al- Athâr* and *al-Nukat 'ala Kitâb Ibn al-Salâh* by Ibn Hajar al-'Asqalânî (d. 852 AH.), and *Fath al-Mughîth Sharh Alfiyah al-Hadîth* by Muhammad ibn 'Abd al-Rahmân al- Sakhâwî (d. 902 AH.). Furthermore, the books of *mustalah al-hadîth* emerged in the form of *nazm* such as *Alfiyah al-Suyûtî* and in the form of *nathr* (prose). Of these two types, the scholars also made explanations such as *Manhaj dzawî al-Nazâr* by Muhammad Mahfûz al-Tirmasî as an explanation of *Manzûmah 'Ilm al-Athâr* by al- Suyûtî (d. 911 AH.). The books compiled after the tenth century of Hira also *al- Manzûmah al-Bayqûniyah* by 'Umar ibn Muhammad al-Bayqûnî (d. 1080 AH.), *Tawdîh al-Afkâr li Ma'ânî Tanqîh al-Anzâr* by Muhammad ibn Ismâ'il (d. 1182 AH.), and *Qawâ'id al-Tahdîth* by Muhammad Jamâl al-Dîn al-Qâsimî (d. 1332 AH.) (al- Khâtîb,1999: 456-457).

Besides the epistemology of the hadith studies compiled by hadith scholars, it is known also a hadith 'epistemology' formulated by Orientalists. Although did not intend to infiltrated an epistemology of hadith studies, rather a critique of the authenticity of the hadith mainly seen from the historical perspective, they indirectly had built the theory pertaining to hadith, for example the Projectingback theory by Joseph Schacht, Common Link theory developed by G.H.A. Juynboll, and so on. The Orientalists involved in the epistemology of hadith studies were Ignaz Goldziher (1850-1920 AD.), a Hungarian-born Jews (1850-1920 AD.) through his work *Muhamedanische Studien* in 1980 containing his perspective of hadith (Azami, 2006: 94), Snouck Hurgronje, an Orientalist of the Netherlands, through his book *Revue Coloniale Internationale* in 1886 AD., Hamilton Alexander Roskeen Gibb, a British Orientalist (1895-1971 AD) through his work *Mohammedanism and Shorter Encyclopaedia of Islam*, Joseph Schacht (1902-1969 AD.), a Polish Orientalist, through his work *The Origin of Muhammadan Jurisprudence*, G.H.A. Joynboll with his book *Muslim Tradition, Studies in Chronology, and Provenance, and Authorship of Early Hadith*, Bernard G. Weiss, through his work *The Search for God's Law*, as well as many other names such as W. Montgomery Watt, Von Guerboum, Arberry, Jeffre, Ira Lapidus, and John L. Esposito (Darmalaksana, 2004: 88).

The orientalist had a distinctive views of the hadith so that directly or not, they had composed their own epistemology on the hadith studies different from the epistemology compiled by the hadith scholars. The difference had suffered considerable impact because it touched on the claims that the whole hadiths of the Prophet were false, or at least all the hadiths of law were false (Azami, 2006: 62). The occurrence of the difference of the epistemological perception, of course, requires a study of how to respond their opinions in relation to the epistemology of hadith studies formulated by hadith scholars.

III. THE STRUCTURE OF HADITH STUDIES EPISTEMOLOGY

The field of science can essentially be mapped into two categories, namely the material and the formal object. The material object deals with what is learned and peeled as material of the science. The formal object concerns with an angle of view to the material object, namely how the approach to the material object is so distinctive characterizing or specialising the field of activity, whether it is knowledge, religion, arts, or others (Verhaak and Imam, 2003: 1). Obviously, the material object deals with the materials learned and examined in a discipline. These materials are organized systematically (sequential and burst) and comprehensively (with complete scope of all parts) (Nafiah, 2005: 149). While the formal object deals with the point of view of the material objects from various aspects such as historical, social, philosophical, cultural, economic, political, and so on.

The material object of *riwāyah* hadith studies is everything leaned on the Prophet either words, deeds, approvals, as well as physical and psychological characters. Similarly, everything leaned on the Companions and the Followers. Therefore, the material objects of hadith studies are: Firstly, the hadith in the form of the Prophet words (*qawli* hadith), namely all the words of the Prophet concerning worship and daily life. Secondly, the hadith in the form of the deed of the Prophet (*fi'li* hadith), namely all the deeds that leaned on the Prophet such as the Prophet ways in carrying out prayers, ablutions, and others conveyed by Companions to Muslims. Thirdly, the hadith in the form of Prophet's approval (*taqrīri* hadith), that is the agreement of the Prophet for something done by Companions dealing with speech and deed in which the Prophet keeping silent (not denying), agree, and consider it as good (Khallāf, 2008: 36). Fourthly, the hadith in the form of the Prophet condition (*ahwālī* hadith), namely something coming from the Prophet concerning with physical conditions, morality, and personality. Fifthly, the hadith as a desire or a wish of the Prophet that was unrealized (*hammi* hadith). In addition, the material object of *riwāyah* hadith studies is a *mawqūf* hadith, namely the hadith leaned on the Companions and the *maqtū'* hadith which is all that held on the Followers (*tābi'in*).

The above material objects are examined through the discipline of *dirāyah* hadith as a formal object. There are three focuses of *dirāyah* hadith used to highlight all things derived from the Prophet, his Companions, and Followers, namely the hadith transmission, the status and condition of transmitters, and the hadith transmitted. The study of transmission includes: the essence of transmission, namely its quotation and leaning to the source of hadith, namely the Prophet Muhammad, the requirements of the transmission, that is the acceptance of information on the hadith narrated in various ways of acceptance and delivery, such as through *al-samā'* (hearing), *al-qirāah* (recitation), *al-wasiyah* (wills), *al-ijāzah* (diploma), or others, various kinds of transmissions concerning the connection or breaking-out of the transmission, and the laws of the transmission, which is a discussion of the acceptance or rejection of a hadith. The study on the state of narrators dealing with their abilities, disabilities and their requirements in receiving and the narrating hadith. The study on hadith narrated deals with definition, criteria, and various types of hadith including also the hadith had been compiled in the books of *tasnīf*, *tasnīd*, and *mu'jam* (Khallāf, 2008: 40-41).

As a formal object, the study of *dirāyah* hadith has a wider space of movement and scope than the study of *riwāyah* hadith. This discipline has experienced a very significant development from time to time, thus bringing out many branches of hadith studies. Some scholars such as al-Hākīm al-Naysabūrī (321-405 AH.) stated that the branch of the hadith studies are 52 kinds and Ibn al-Salāh said that there are 65 branches of hadith studies (al-Khātīb, 1999: 454-456). Muhammad ibn Nasr al-Hāshimī, as quoted by al-Khātīb (1999: 11), stated that the number of hadith studies more than 100 kinds, each has a special study object that can be considered as an independent study. If one tries to spend his age to study the hadith studies comprehensively, he or she will never complete them. According to Zubayr Siddiqī (2006: 73), there are about 100 kinds of studies to be treated as an independent branch of knowledge in the hadith studies. Part of the discipline is related to the *isnād* of hadith and its criticism, partly related to the text (*matn*) of hadith, and some other concerning to the *isnād* and the *matn* of hadith simultaneously.

The number of hadith studies branches caused by the examining of this discipline based on formal object. Generally, the scholars of the hadith examine this discipline in terms of the elements of the hadith; the *isnād*, *matn*, or both. In terms of *isnād*, hadith studies can be classified into the study of *Rijāl al-Hadīth*, *Tabaqah al-Ruwāh*, *Tārīkh al-Ruwāh*, and *al-Jarh wa al-Ta'dīl*. In terms of *matn*, some disciplines of hadith studies include the study of *Gharīb al-Hadīth*, *Asbāb al-Wurūd*, *Nāsikh wa Mansūkh al-Hadīth*, *Mukhtalif al-Hadīth*, and *al-Tashīf wa al-Tahrīf*. In terms of *isnād* and *matn*, there are two types of disciplines, namely the study of *'Ilal al-Hadīth* and *Fann al-Mubhamāt*.

The hadith studies discipline can also be seen through historical, comparative, and language approaches. Judging from the historical point of view, the *dirāyah* hadith study can be classified into the study of *Rijāl al-Hadīth* which is also called *Asmā' al-Rijāl*, *Tabaqah al-Ruwāh*, *Tārīkh al-Ruwāh*, *al-Jarh wa al-Ta'dīl*, *Asbāb al-Wurūd al-Hadīth*, and *Tārīkh al-Mutūn*. Through comparative approaches, there are several disciplines of hadith studies, namely the study of *'Ilal al-Hadīth*, *Nāsikh wa Mansūkh al-Hadīth*, and *Mukhtalif al-Hadīth*. The language approach can also be used for the epistemology of hadith studies so it raises various branches of disciplines, among others are the study of *Gharīb al-Hadīth*, *al-Tashīf wa al-Tahrīf*, and *Mustalah al-Hadīth*.

IV. EPISTEMOLOGICAL CRITICISM: ADDRESSING THE ATTITUDES OF THE ORIENTALISTS

Epistemologically, Muslims believe that what they had built from time to time in the study of hadith both the *riwāyah* and *dirāyah* is a truth and can be used to detect and select the hadith of the Prophet. For centuries, the hadith scholars had been tried to build and develop a discipline of hadith studies with all of its devices, hoping that it can be used as a manual in reviewing the Prophet's hadiths. They had create principles, terms, concepts, and theories that are expected to be used to determine the truth of the hadiths.

Through this discipline, they believe that the Prophet's hadith can be traced, identified, selected, codified, and subsequently applied by Muslims in their daily life. For centuries, the epistemology of the hadith studies they developed has not suffered wide distinction. The scholars of hadith are not much different when explaining the terms in hadith studies concerning the definition, sorts and kinds, criteria or term- conditions, authenticity, blasphemy, and so on. If there is a difference, it only concerns the terminologic things, not the principle. Therefore, it is not known schools of thought in the hadith studies, as in the Islamic theology and Islamic law. In such case, the epistemology of hadith studies has been in a stable position, not gaining criticism or rejection among the Muslim scholars and Muslims in general. In fact, the methods used by classical hadith scholars to pledge a hadith to the Prophet do not get a significant challenge from modern Muslim scholars. Indeed, there are a number of modern scholars who try to demonstrate their resistance to the '*Ulūm al-Hadīth*', but they fail to get sympathy from the majority of Muslim scholars.

Such conditions are different when the hadith studies are in contact with the Western world through the study of Orientalists. The epistemology of hadith studies that had been built painstakingly by the scholars of hadith, as if just being torn down by some Orientalists, especially those who were skeptical of the authenticity of the Prophet's hadith, emerging since the second midst of the nineteenth century. Since then, the debate on the authenticity of the Prophet's hadith was dominated by skeptical groups such as Ignaz Goldziher, Joseph Schacht, Wansbrough, Patricia Crone, Michael Cook, and Norman Calder. However, not all Orientalists were skeptical in facing the authenticity of the hadith. Some of them 'support' the epistemology of hadith studies developed by Muslim scholars. The Orientalists such as Joseph Van Ess, Harald Motzki, Miklos Muranyi, M.J. Kister, Fueck, Schoeler reacted vigorously to a number premises, concepts, conclusions, and methodology of skeptical Orientalists.

An example of skepticism was demonstrated by Joseph Schacht in *The Origins of Muhammadan Jurisprudence*, stating that the greatest part of the hadith *isnād* are false. According to him, everyone knows that the *isnād* initially appeared in a very simple form, then reached its level of perfection in the second half of the third century of Hīgra (Schacht, 2002: 163). He stated that the *isnād* was the result of the scholars' engineering at the second century of Hīgra in leaning hadiths to the previous figures and finally reached the Prophet to seek a strong legitimacy of the hadith. The leaning process like this then known as the Projecting back theory (*al-qadhf al-khalfi/projection backward*). Based on this understanding, Schacht concluded that both the classical Islamic law and the hadith scholars forged the hadith and therefore no hadith actually originated from the Prophet but it was a product born from the rivalry between the Muslim scholars (Azami, 2005: 232-233).

The Schacht theory can obviously knock down some or even the entire pillars of the hadith studies epistemology structured in *riwāyah* and *dirāyah* discipline with all of their branches, namely the study of *Rijāl al-Hadīth*, *Tabaqah al-Ruwāh*, *Tārīkh al-Ruwāh*, *al-Jarh wa al-Ta'dīl*, *Gharīb al-Hadīth*, *Asbāb al-Wurūd al-Hadīth*, *Nāsikh wa Mansūkh al-Hadīth*, *Mukhtalif al-Hadīth*, *al-Tashīf wa al-Tahrīf*, *'Ilal al-Hadīth*, *Fann al-Mubhamāt*, and several other branches of hadith studies. This is because the branches of the hadith studies are interconnected in explaining the status of hadiths. Obviously, if all hadiths are judged false as Joseph Schacht and some other Orientalists stated above, then the epistemology of hadith studies in all branches of hadith studies will collapse and useless.

Facing the fact, there are some attitudes and efforts to be aware of. Firstly, being critical and scientific. The Orientalists doubted or even rejected the existence of hadiths, including the epistemology of hadith criticism built by Muslim scholars, based on the assumption that most of hadith literatures emerged about 250 years after the Prophet death. Since the first century of Hīgra, there were no books of hadith that were recorded and the hadiths just transmitted orally. They questioned, how could the hadiths delivered only through oral story in a very long time be true. It was impossible that many hadiths could be transmitted accurately through several generations in very long time (Maherali, 2010: 31).

Answering the critical stance of the Orientalists, we can give some arguments:

(a) The Islamic scholarly tradition at the time was memorizing and transmitting orally, even before that, the Prophet was known as a man who could not read and write. Because of such conditions, they had good memorizing power, including when they memorized and transmitted the Prophet's hadiths. (b) As Azami stated, the criticism of the Orientalists does not meet the scientific requirements because when examining the *isnâd*, they used the books of *fiqh* and *sîrah* as references not the books of hadith (Azamî, 2007: 457-458). (c) There are several criteria that must be fulfilled by the hadith transmitters, as an epistemological requirement in determining the authenticity of the hadiths they transmitted. These criteria are not the result of imagination, contemplation, or reflection (reflective thinking), but based on the facts and data accumulated in the discipline of the *Rijâl al-Hadîth*, *Târîkh al-Ruwâh*, *Tabaqah al-Ruwâh*, *al-Jarh wa al-Ta'dîl*, *Asbâb Wurûd al-Hadîth*, and so on. These disciplines were scientifically structured (systematic, logical, objective, and empirical). (d) If some Orientalists doubted the correctness of the hadith scholars' judgment contained in the literature of *Rijâl al-Hadîth*, such as *Tahdzîb al-Kamâl* by al-Mizzî, *Tahdzîb al-Tahdzîb* by Ibn Hajar al-'Asqalânî, or *Mizân al-I'tidâl* by al-Dzahabî, it can be accepted because they may have made a mistake, but it must be demonstrated where is the mistake. If everything expressed incorrectly, then it is unacceptable because in criticizing something one should base on accurate evidence in detail rather than a result of generalization. One thing to note, as Azami stated, the research and criticism of the hadith scholars on the *isnâd* and *matn* of hadith, with all of their abilities, were done on the basis of sincerity and without worldly tendencies (Azamî, 2007: 458). Therefore, the data in these literatures are still relevant to be recognized and revered in seeing the biography of hadith transmitters and in determining the authenticity of the hadiths they conveyed.

Secondly, using constructive and not destructive thinking. In this case, a constructive thinking starts from an objective and positive thinking, instead of destructive one that stems from subjective and negative thinking. When examining the authenticity of Prophet's hadith according to the hadith scholars or the Orientalists, we start objectively in accordance with the data recorded in the books of hadith and accept them reasonably without certain pretension. Not to the contrary, the hadith data existing in the books are rejected because according to our thinking, they are not possible, seen in terms of the way of oral and not written transmission for a long time. As much as possible, the thought is not influenced by a predeveloped mindset that measures everything from a certain point of view.

Thirdly, resting on the basic concept of the Quran. In examining the authenticity of hadith, the Orientalists do not see and refer to the provisions of the Quran about the command to follow the Prophet and all that he brought because they do not believe in the truth of the Quran. According to them, the Quran is the words of Muhammad and the hadith was made by his Companions, the *Tabi'in*, and Muslim scholars or *Fuqahâ* (al-Mursâfi, 2004: 19). For Muslims, in examining the epistemology of hadith studies, one should base his study on the basic concept of the Quran because it is the word of God that undoubtedly true (The Quran, 2:2). There are some basic concepts of the Quran explaining and encouraging positive traits such as piety, faith, righteous charity, honest, patient, confident, gratitude, and so on (The Quran, 18: 107, 19: 96, 22: 14, 27: 40, 31: 12, 5: 119, 2: 45, 153, etc.). In the Quran, there are also suggestions to avoid negative traits such as infidel, hypocritical, ungodly, lying, stealing, killing, slandering, sheep complaining, and others (The Quran, 2: 161, 171, 3: 4, 32: 18, 5: 3, 9: 64, 4: 140, etc.). If the basic concept used to examine the epistemology of hadith studies, it can be known that it is impossible for the Companions, *Tabi'in*, and the subsequent generations lied in narrating hadiths, except for some people whose faith is weak, because this is contrary to the basic principles of the Quran that they believed as true. Similarly, the hadith studies epistemology constructed and developed by the scholars of hadith can be trusted and it was impossible based on lies and deceptions.

Fourthly, using balanced and proportional method of thinking. When trying to prove the truth of their opinion, the Orientalists sometime conveyed disproportionate opinions, such as when criticizing Shu'bah ibn al-Hajjâj (d. 160 AH./776 AD.), G.H.A. Juynboll, a Dutch-born Orientalist (1986: 192, 223), stated that Shu'bah was involved in the development and refinement of hadiths for the development of Islam and he was the common link of a hadith prohibiting lying to the Prophet, namely: *Man kadzdzab 'alayy muta'ammidan fal-yatabawwa' maq'adah min al-nâr*, which sourced from Shu'bah ibn al-Hajjâj. According to Juynboll, the hadith appeared because Shu'bah was upset when he saw the falsification of hadiths performed by the hadith scholars at his time, especially by the storyboards (*qussâs*) who liked to add the hadith. To stop the movement of the hadith counterfeiting that would endanger Islamic teachings, Shu'bah made the hadith berating the lie. However, according to him, the hadith anti-lying was not detected by the hadith scholars until now.

The assessment to Shu'bah is disproportionate because among the hadith scholars, Shu'bah was a prominent hadith

transmitter who earned the title of *amîr al- Mu'minîn fi al-hadîth* (the leader of believers in the field of hadith) (Abû Zahw, 2006: 295, al-'Asqalânî, 2003: 301, al-Râzî, 1998: 359). Also, the quality of hadith prohibiting lying to the Prophet, according to the scholars of hadith, is *mutawâtir* transmitted by more than seventy Companions of the Prophet and so on each *tabâqah* of *isnâd* narrated by many narrators (al-Tahhân, 2005: 20). In this regard, it appears that the Orientalists did not consider and acknowledge the opinions and judgments of the hadith scholars in the discipline of the '*Ulûm al-Hadîth*, but they made their own assumptions. It should, they saw a problem of hadith based on balanced and proportional arguments through the basic epistemology of thought they had developed and also did not forget to see from the point of view of hadith studies both *riwâyah* and *dirâyah*.

V. CONCLUSION

The epistemology of hadith studies has been built by the scholars for centuries is a scientific heritage with a very high value, as a hallmark of Islamic studies system, which needs to be preserved. As a discipline, the hadith studies have fulfilled the scientific requirements with a clear epistemology structure as seen in the literatures of

hadith studies written by Muslim scholars. The *riwâyah* and *dirâyah* studies with all of their branches can be used as references when one wants to examine and search the authenticity of the Prophet's hadith.

The different epistemology of hadith criticism proposed by the Orientalists does not necessarily break down the scientific epistemological structure built by Muslim scholars. The criticism of the Orientalists on the methodology of hadith transmissions that was assessed as not in line with historical-empirical facts, can be addressed with a critical-scientific stance, constructive and non-destructive thinking, based on the basic concepts of the Quran, and using balanced and proportional method of thinking. Thus, when epistemology of the hadith studies faced with the premise, concepts, and conclusions expressed by the Orientalists who rejected the epistemology of hadith studies built by hadith scholars, it should not happen an underestimate attitude among Muslim scholars on the scientific epistime they have developed today.

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