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The Historiography of Hadith during the *Mutaqaddimin* Period (2nd-4th Centuries AH): From Early Codification to Methodological Consolidation

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Abstract

Hadith writing constitutes an essential aspect of Islamic intellectual history, serving to preserve the authenticity of the Prophet Muhammad's teachings. This article aims to analyze the development of hadith historiography during the *mutaqaddimin* period (2nd-4th centuries AH) and to identify the principal sources employed in reconstructing the history of hadith during this era. This study adopts a qualitative approach using library research by examining classical works and contemporary studies on hadith codification, historiography, and methodology. The collected data were analyzed through a historical-analytical approach to reconstruct the evolution of hadith writing across different periods. The findings reveal that the second century AH (post-*tabi'in*) marked the initial phase of systematic hadith codification, the third century AH represented the peak of codification with the emergence of canonical hadith collections and the refinement of isnad criticism, while the fourth century AH was characterized by methodological consolidation through the development of *sharh*, *mustakhraj*, *mustadrak*, and other auxiliary disciplines of hadith studies. The study concludes that hadith writing during the *mutaqaddimin* period evolved progressively and laid the intellectual foundation for the subsequent development of hadith scholarship.

Keywords : hadith historiography, *mutaqaddimin*, hadith codification, *tadwin al-hadith*, hadith literature.

INTRODUCTION

Hadith is the second primary source of Islamic teachings after the Qur'an and plays a fundamental role in the formulation of Islamic law, theology, and religious practice. Within the context of Islamic intellectual history, hadith should be understood not only as a normative religious text but also as the product of a historical process of transmission, selection, and codification carried out by Muslim scholars. Therefore, the

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study of hadith historiography is essential for understanding how hadiths were collected, transmitted, and documented in various scholarly works during the formative period of Islam. Fundamentally, hadith historiography seeks to reconstruct the historical development of hadith transmission, including its gradual transformation from an oral tradition into a written scholarly tradition in early Islamic history.[1]

The development of hadith writing reached a crucial stage during the *mutaqaddimin* period, spanning the second to the fourth centuries AH. During this era, the collection and documentation of hadith expanded significantly in response to the need to preserve the authenticity of the Prophet's teachings and to prevent the spread of fabricated traditions. Previous studies indicate that the transition from oral transmission to written documentation was an integral part of the intellectual efforts of early Muslim scholars to safeguard the authenticity of hadith. This process reached its peak during the era of the tabi'in and the generations that followed, when scholars began compiling hadith into systematic written collections.[2] Beyond producing monumental hadith compilations, this period also witnessed the development of methodological tools, including isnad criticism and the evaluation of narrator reliability, which later became the foundation of the discipline of hadith studies.[3]

Several studies have examined hadith historiography and the development of hadith writing during the *mutaqaddimin* period from various perspectives. Watukila (2024) analyzes hadith historiography through the perspective of Mustafa al-Azami, arguing that hadith writing began in the earliest period of Islam while challenging Orientalist claims questioning the authenticity of hadith.[4] Likewise, Nabilah and Najiyah (2024) investigate the historiography of hadith in the second and third centuries AH based on Mustafa al-Azami's *Dirasah fi al-Hadith al-Nabawi*, demonstrating that hadith codification evolved gradually through a well-established system of transmission.[5] Junaid, Nasruddin, and Ismail (2024) examine the historical development of hadith from the Prophet's lifetime to the codification process during the *mutaqaddimin* period, highlighting the factors that stimulated the emergence of written hadith collections.[6] Meanwhile, Fatimah (2020) focuses on hadith codification during the *mutaqaddimin* era by analyzing the stages of hadith compilation and the evolution of various forms of hadith

[1] Fatihunnada, "HADIS DAN SIRAH DALAM LITERATUR SEJARAWAN NUSANTARA," *JURNAL LIVING HADIS* 1, no. 2 (2016): 375–97, https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.14421/livinghadis.2016.1125.
[2] Junaid Junaid, Muh Nasruddin A, and Muhammad Ismail, "HISTORITAS PERKEMBANGAN HADIS," *CARITA: Jurnal Sejarah Dan Budaya* 2, no. 2 (2024): 147–58, https://doi.org/10.35905/carita.v2i2.7135.
[3] Saifuddin, "TADWIN HADIS DAN KONTRIBUSINYA DALAM PERKEMBANGAN HISTORIOGRAFI ISLAM," *JURNAL ILMIAH Ilmu Ushuluddin* 12, no. 1 (2013): 33–58, https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.18592/jiu.v12i1.125.
[4] Slamad Watukila, "Historiografi Hadis Di Masa Mutaqaddimin Dalam Pandangan Mustafa Azami," *Amsal Al-Qur'an: Jurnal Al-Qur'an Dan Hadis* 1, no. 3 (2024): 221–35, https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.63424/amsal.v1i3.126.
[5] Nur Laili Nabilah and Nazahah Najiyah, "MENELAAH HISTORIOGRAFI HADIS AZAMI ABAD 2-3 H DALAM KITAB DIRASAH FI AL-HADITS AL-NABAWIY," *ENLEKTURER: Journal of Islamic Studies* 2, no. 1 (2024): 16–37, https://doi.org/10.71036/cjis.v2i1.332.
[6] Junaid, A, and Ismail, "HISTORITAS PERKEMBANGAN HADIS."

literature.[7] In addition, Fatihunnada (2016) argues that hadith constitutes one of the principal sources for writing Islamic history, particularly in reconstructing the life of the Prophet Muhammad and the development of the early Muslim community.[8]

Based on the review of previous studies, it can be observed that most existing research has primarily focused on the history of hadith codification or the contributions of particular scholars. In contrast, studies that comprehensively examine the development of hadith historiography from the second to the fourth centuries AH while simultaneously identifying the principal sources used in writing the history of hadith remain relatively limited. Yet, these two aspects are essential for understanding the evolution of the hadith writing tradition as a coherent intellectual process. Therefore, this article seeks to address this gap by adopting a historiographical approach that analyzes both the chronological development of hadith writing and the major sources underpinning the historiography of hadith during the *mutaqaddimin* period.

The *mutaqaddimin* period in the history of hadith scholarship generally refers to the formative stage of hadith codification and the development of hadith methodology, spanning from the second century AH, following the end of the tabi'in generation, to approximately the fourth century AH. During this period, the collection, documentation, and verification of hadith developed significantly through the scholarly works of hadith specialists, who systematically compiled prophetic traditions while refining methodological principles such as isnad criticism and the evaluation of narrator reliability.

Based on this background, this study addresses two research questions: (1) How did hadith historiography develop during the *mutaqaddimin* period (second to fourth centuries AH)? and (2) What were the principal sources employed in the writing of hadith historiography during this period? Accordingly, this article aims to analyze the development of hadith historiography throughout the *mutaqaddimin* period and to identify the primary sources that served as the foundation for documenting the history of hadith. By doing so, it seeks to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the historical foundations and intellectual evolution of classical hadith scholarship.

METHOD

The study adopts a qualitative approach using library research to examine the development of hadith historiography during the mutaqaddimin period (second to fourth centuries AH). The research data were collected from a wide range of relevant documentary sources, including primary sources such as classical hadith collections, works on *rijal al-hadith, tarikh, tabaqat*, and other classical writings on the history and methodology of hadith. In addition, secondary sources consisting of scholarly books and peer-reviewed journal articles on hadith codification, historiography, and the development of hadith studies were consulted to provide broader analytical perspectives

[7] Fatimah, "Hadis Dari Masa Ke Masa (Kodifikasi Era Mutaqaddimin)," *ISLAM TRANSFORMATIF: Journal of Islamic Studies* 04, no. 01 (2020), https://doi.org/10.30983/it.v4i1.2627.
[8] Fatihunnada, "HADIS DAN SIRAH DALAM LITERATUR SEJARAWAN NUSANTARA."

and strengthen the discussion of the evolution of hadith writing during the *mutaqaddimin* period.

Data were collected through the identification, classification, and critical review of literature relevant to the research objectives. The collected data were then analyzed using a historical-analytical approach by tracing the development of hadith writing across the second, third, and fourth centuries AH and by identifying the principal sources employed in the historiography of hadith during each period. The analysis involved data reduction, thematic categorization, interpretation of the evolution of hadith historiography, and inductive conclusion drawing. This approach enabled a comprehensive understanding of the evolution of hadith writing, as well as the development of its methodological framework and the historiographical sources that shaped hadith scholarship during the *mutaqaddimin* period.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The Second Century AH (Post-Tabi'in Period): The Beginning of Hadith Codification

The second century AH marked a pivotal phase in the history of hadith writing, particularly following the end of the tabi'in generation. During this period, the transmission of hadith gradually shifted from a predominantly oral tradition to a more systematic process of documentation and codification. The growing need to preserve hadith was driven by the rapid expansion of the Islamic world, the increasing volume of hadith transmission, and rising concerns over the circulation of unauthentic and fabricated reports. These circumstances prompted Muslim scholars to collect and record hadith in written form, initiating what later became known as the process of *tadwin al-hadith* (hadith codification).[9]

One of the major milestones in the early history of hadith codification was the policy of Caliph 'Umar ibn 'Abd al-'Aziz (d. 101 AH), who ordered the systematic collection of the Prophet's hadith by commissioning Ibn Shihab al-Zuhri (d. 124 AH) to compile reports scattered among various transmitters. This initiative is widely regarded as the first institutional effort to codify hadith, marking the first time that the preservation of prophetic traditions received official state support through written documentation.[10] From a historiographical perspective, this policy signified a transition from individually transmitted reports to a more organized process of codification, responding both to the passing of prominent hadith memorizers and to the rapid expansion of hadith transmission across the Islamic world.[11]

During the first half of the second century AH, hadith writing expanded considerably through the scholarly activities of hadith scholars across different regions of

[9] Fatihunnada.
[10] Watukila, "Historiografi Hadis Di Masa Mutaqaddimin Dalam Pandangan Mustafa Azami."
[11] Siti Makhmudah, "REKONSTRUKSI SEJARAH KODIFIKASI HADIS PASCA-PERIODE SAHABAT: STUDI AWAL KITAB HADIS," *Jurnal Ar Risalah* 2, no. 1 (2025), https://doi.org/https://oj.mjukn.org/index.php/jar/article/view/2280.

the Islamic world. In Medina, Malik ibn Anas (d. 179 AH) compiled *al-Muwatt'*, one of the earliest extant hadith collections. This work contains not only Prophetic traditions but also the legal opinions of the Companions and the tabi'in that reflected the scholarly practice of the Medinan community. The compilation of *al-Muwatta'* demonstrates that hadith literature had begun to be organized systematically according to legal subjects (*abwab al-fiqh*), establishing it as one of the earliest and most influential works transmitted to subsequent generations.[12]

The compilation of *al-Muwatta'* by Imam Malik illustrates that hadith codification in the second century AH had progressed beyond the mere collection of narrations to embrace a systematic organization based on chapters of Islamic jurisprudence (*abwab al-fiqh*). In addition to recording *marfu'* traditions, Imam Malik incorporated the legal opinions of the Companions and the tabi'in, reflecting the religious practice of the people of Medina (*'amal ahl al-Madinah*). These distinctive features established *al-Muwatta'* as one of the earliest models of hadith literature, demonstrating the close relationship between hadith transmission, legal reasoning (*istinbat*), and the formation of Islamic legal schools during the *mutaqaddimin* period.[13]

Beyond Medina, the writing of hadith also flourished in other major centers of Islamic scholarship, particularly Iraq and Yemen. In Kufa, prominent scholars such as Sufyan al-Thawri (d. 161 AH) compiled hadiths and reports from the Companions into written collections that later served as important references for their students. Meanwhile, in Yemen, 'Abd al-Razzaq al-San'ani (d. 211 AH) produced his monumental work *al-Musannaf*, which contains Prophetic traditions, reports from the Companions (*athar*), and the opinions of the tabi'in, systematically arranged according to legal topics. The emergence of these works demonstrates that by the second century AH, the codification of hadith had become an established scholarly enterprise across several major intellectual centers of the Islamic world.[14]

This development was further supported by the refinement of hadith transmission methods and the emergence of critical evaluation of narrators. Hadith scholars increasingly emphasized the authenticity of the *isnad*, the reliability of transmitters, and the continuity of the transmission chain. These scholarly efforts laid the foundation for the development of the science of hadith, particularly the disciplines of *isnad* criticism and the evaluation of narrator credibility (*jarh wa ta'dil*). Consequently, the second century AH can be regarded as the formative stage in the establishment of a systematic scholarly tradition of hadith documentation and verification, which reached a higher level of methodological sophistication in the third century AH.[15]

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[12]Saifuddin, "TADWIN HADIS DAN KONTRIBUSINYA DALAM PERKEMBANGAN HISTORIOGRAFI ISLAM."

[13] Siddik Firmansyah, "Penulisan Hadis Di Masa Ulama Muttaqaddimin (Kodifikasi Kitab Muwaththa' Imam Malik)," *AL FAWATIH Jurnal Kajian Al-Qur'an Dan Hadis* 2, no. 1 (2021): 38–52, https://doi.org/10.24952/alfawatih.v2i1.4798.

[14] Junaid, A, and Ismail, "HISTORITAS PERKEMBANGAN HADIS."

[15]Saifuddin, "TADWIN HADIS DAN KONTRIBUSINYA DALAM PERKEMBANGAN HISTORIOGRAFI ISLAM."

During the *atba' al-tabi'in* period in the second century AH, the compilation and codification of hadith became more systematic than in earlier generations. Hadiths began to be organized according to specific classifications, although they had not yet undergone rigorous authentication, resulting in collections that combined Prophetic traditions with the *athar* of the Companions and the legal opinions of the tabi'in. Consequently, the hadith works of this period contained *marfu'*, *mawquf*, and *maqtu'* reports. Prominent scholars of this era included Imam Malik, Ibn Ishaq, Sufyan al-Thawri, Ibn 'Uyaynah, al-Awza'i, al-Layth ibn Sa'd, Abu Hanifah, and al-Shafi'i. Among the most influential works was *al-Muwatta'* by Imam Malik, which began to be compiled around 143 AH during the reign of Caliph al-Mansur. Containing approximately 1726 narrations from the Prophet, the Companions, and the tabi'in, *al-Muwatta'* is widely regarded as one of the earliest surviving hadith compilations, and Imam al-Shafi'i famously praised it as the most authentic book after the Qur'an in his time.[16]

From the middle of the second century AH onward, hadith compilation and codification became increasingly systematic, with traditions organized according to specific legal chapters and thematic categories (*tasnif*). The codification process during the *atba' al-tabi'in* period was characterized by several distinctive features. First, hadiths were arranged in a structured manner based on legal subjects or thematic divisions. Second, unlike the earlier *sahifah* collections that primarily contained Prophetic traditions, these compilations integrated *marfu'* hadiths with the opinions of the Companions and the legal rulings of the tabi'in. Third, related narrations were grouped under individual chapters, which were then compiled into comprehensive volumes. Finally, these works drew extensively upon earlier written materials, including *suhuf* (written scrolls), personal notebooks compiled during the eras of the Companions and the tabi'in, as well as transmitted reports containing both the statements of the Companions and the legal opinions of the tabi'in.[17]

The hadith compilations produced during this period appeared under a variety of titles, including *al-Muwatta'*, *al-Musannaf*, *al-Jami'*, *al-Sunan*, and *al-Musnad*, as well as more specialized works devoted to subjects such as *jihad*, *zuhd*, *maghazi*, and *sirah*. Among the most influential works were *al-Muwatta'* by Imam Malik (95–179 AH), *al-Maghazi wa al-Siyar* by Muhammad ibn Ishaq (d. 150 AH), *al-Jami'* by 'Abd al-Razzaq al-San'ani (d. 211 AH), several *Musannaf* collections compiled by scholars such as Shu'bah ibn al-Hajjaj (d. 160 AH), al-Layth ibn Sa'd (d. 175 AH), al-Awza'i (d. 157 AH), and al-Humaydi (d. 219 AH), as well as *al-Maghazi al-Nabawiyyah* by Muhammad ibn Waqid al-Aslami. Other notable works included the *Musnad* collections attributed to Abu Hanifah, Zayd ibn 'Ali, and Imam al-Shafi'i (d. 204 AH), together with al-Shafi'i's *Mukhtalif al-Hadith*, all of which made significant contributions to the early development of hadith literature and its methodological foundations.[18]

[16] Fatimah, "Hadis Dari Masa Ke Masa (Kodifikasi Era Mutaqaddimin)."
[17] Saifuddin, *ARUS TRADISI TADWIN HADIS DAN HISTORIOGRAFI ISLAM* (YOGYAKARTA: PUSTAKA PELAJAR, 2011).
[18] Fatimah, "Hadis Dari Masa Ke Masa (Kodifikasi Era Mutaqaddimin)."

From a historiographical perspective, the second century AH demonstrates that the writing of hadith was not a sudden development but rather the result of a gradual and cumulative process involving numerous scholars and major centers of Islamic learning. Milestones such as the codification initiative of Caliph ‘Umar ibn ‘Abd al-‘Aziz, the compilation of *al-Muwatta’* by Malik ibn Anas, and the hadith collections produced by scholars such as Sufyan al-Thawri and ‘Abd al-Razzaq al-San’ani collectively illustrate that this period laid the intellectual and methodological foundations for the subsequent development of hadith literature and the broader tradition of hadith scholarship.

Third Century AH: The Peak of Hadith Codification

By the third century AH, the writing and codification of hadith had developed into a far more systematic enterprise than in the previous century. Whereas second-century compilations generally combined Prophetic traditions with the statements of the Companions *(athar)* and the opinions of the tabi’in, the third century witnessed the emergence of hadith collections devoted primarily to the traditions of the Prophet Muhammad. This transformation was driven by the growing awareness among hadith scholars of the necessity for rigorous evaluation of transmitted reports and the need to compile hadith according to increasingly stringent methodological standards.[19]

During the third century AH, hadith scholars adopted new approaches to *tadwin al-hadith* that differed significantly from those of earlier generations. In the first century AH, hadith was primarily preserved in individual *sahifah* (written sheets) alongside oral memorization. During the second century AH, scholars compiled hadith without strict classification, often combining Prophetic traditions with the statements of the Companions and the legal opinions (*fatwas*) of the tabi’in. By the early third century AH, however, scholars had begun to distinguish the Prophet's traditions from these other materials through the compilation of *Musnad* collections, in which hadith were arranged according to the names of the Companions who narrated them. Although this represented a major methodological advance, these compilations had not yet undergone rigorous authentication and therefore included both authentic (*sahih*) and weak (*da’if*) traditions. Notable examples include the *Musnad* of Abu Dawud al-Tayalisi (d. 204 AH), *Musnad* of ‘Ubayd Allah ibn Musa al-‘Abasi (d. 213 AH), *Musnad* of Musaddad ibn Musarhad (d. 228 AH), *Musnad* of Nu’aym ibn Hammad (d. 229 AH), *Musnad* of Abu Bakr ‘Abd Allah ibn Muhammad ibn Abi Shaybah (d. 235 AH), *Musnad* of ‘Uthman ibn Abi Shaybah (d. 239 AH), and the celebrated *Musnad* of Ahmad ibn Hanbal (d. 241 AH).[20]

Among these compilations, the *Musnad* of Ahmad ibn Hanbal has survived in its entirety and remains one of the most important hadith collections available today. The *Musnad* arrangement organizes traditions according to the names of the Companion narrators rather than by subject matter or the level of authenticity. Consequently,

[19] Junaid, A, and Ismail, “HISTORITAS PERKEMBANGAN HADIS.”
[20] Ismail Yusuf, “SEJARAH PERKEMBANGAN HADIS DAN METODOLOGINYA PADA ABAD III HIJRIAH,” *JURNAL AL-ASAS* 1, no. 2 (2018): 102–12, https://doi.org/https://ejournal.iainpalopo.ac.id/index.php/alasas/article/view/926.

authentic (*sahih*), weak (*da'if*), and occasionally fabricated (*mawdu'*) reports may appear together within the same collection, as the primary objective was to preserve all available transmissions from each Companion rather than to distinguish authentic reports from weaker ones.[21] This characteristic reflects the transitional nature of hadith scholarship during the early third century AH, when comprehensive compilation preceded the rigorous authentication methods that would later be perfected by scholars such as al-Bukhari and his contemporaries.[22]

A more significant development occurred with the emergence of hadith collections compiled according to the authenticity of their transmitted reports. In this context, Muhammad ibn Isma'il al-Bukhari's (d. 256 AH) *al-Jami' al-Sahih* is widely regarded as a landmark in the history of hadith codification.[23] Al-Bukhari employed exceptionally rigorous criteria in evaluating both the chains of transmission (*isnad*) and the reliability of narrators, admitting only those reports that satisfied his strict standards of authenticity. This methodological approach represented a major advancement in hadith criticism, establishing a more systematic framework for verifying the authenticity of Prophetic traditions and setting a benchmark for subsequent hadith scholarship.[24]

A similar undertaking was carried out by Muslim ibn al-Hajjaj (d. 261 AH) through the compilation of *Sahih Muslim*. This work features a more systematic arrangement of hadith by organizing reports into thematic chapters and presenting multiple chains of transmission (*isnad*) for the same tradition.[25] The methodological differences between al-Bukhari and Muslim demonstrate that by the third century AH, hadith scholars had moved beyond the mere collection of traditions toward the development of sophisticated methods for their authentication, organization, and classification. Alongside these two canonical collections, other influential works also emerged, including Abu Dawud al-Sijistani's (d. 275 AH) *Sunan Abi Dawud* and Muhammad ibn 'Isa al-Tirmidhi's (d. 279 AH) *Sunan al-Tirmidhi*. These collections were generally arranged according to legal topics (*abwab al-fiqh*) and became major references for the development of Islamic jurisprudence. Their appearance reflects the maturation of hadith literature during the third century AH, as scholars produced diverse forms of compilation tailored to different scholarly objectives.[26] As concerns over the spread of fabricated traditions increased, hadith scholars devoted greater efforts to the critical evaluation of transmitted reports and the compilation of authentic traditions. This

[21] Nadya Syahda Faradillah et al., "The Diffusion of AI-Driven Digital Da'wah Innovation In Communication Media: A Perspective of Q.S. Al-Mulk 23 And Audio-Visual Cognitive Analysis On Instagram @Ace_Timetraveller," *Afkaruna: International Journal of Islamic Studies (AIJIS)* 4, no. 1 (June 2026): 96–111, https://doi.org/10.38073/aijis.v4i1.4691.
[22] Nabilah and Najiyah, "MENELAAH HISTORIOGRAFI HADIS AZAMI ABAD 2-3 H DALAM KITAB DIRASAH FI AL-HADITS AL-NABAWIY."
[23] Subkhana Adzim Baqi and Miftakhus Sifa' Bahrul Ulumiyah, "Evaluation And Analysis Of The Integration Of Islamic Values Through Religious Practices In Building Student Character Atmi Darul Hikmah Mojosari," *DAS CONFERENCE INTERNATIONAL SERIES* 2 (September 2025): 13–23.
[24] Watukila, "Historiografi Hadis Di Masa Mutaqaddimin Dalam Pandangan Mustafa Azami."
[25] Fatihunnada, "HADIS DAN SIRAH DALAM LITERATUR SEJARAWAN NUSANTARA."
[26] Saifuddin, "TADWIN HADIS DAN KONTRIBUSINYA DALAM PERKEMBANGAN HISTORIOGRAFI ISLAM."

scholarly development ultimately gave rise to two major categories of hadith literature: *Sahih* collections, which contained only rigorously authenticated traditions, and *Sunan* collections, which organized hadith according to legal themes while incorporating reports of varying degrees of authenticity for juristic purposes.[27]

The third century AH also witnessed the compilation of the major *Sunan* collections, which became foundational works in Sunni hadith literature. These include *Sunan Abu Dawud* by Abu Dawud al-Sijistani (d. 275 AH), *Sunan al-Tirmidhi* by Abu 'Isa Muhammad ibn 'Isa al-Tirmidhi (d. 279 AH), *Sunan al-Nasa'i* by Ahmad ibn Shu'ayb al-Nasa'i (d. 303 AH), and *Sunan Ibn Majah* by Ibn Majah (d. 273 AH). Together with the *Sahih* collections of al-Bukhari and Muslim, these works formed the core of the canonical Sunni hadith corpus and played a central role in the transmission, preservation, and legal interpretation of Prophetic traditions.[28]

The major hadith collections compiled during the third century AH include *Sunan Abu Dawud* by Abu Dawud Sulayman ibn al-Ash'ath al-Sijistani (202-275 AH), *Sunan al-Tirmidhi* by Abu Isa Muhammad ibn Isa al-Tirmidhi (209-279 AH), *Sunan al-Nasa'i* by Ahmad ibn Shu'ayb al-Nasa'i (215-303 AH), and *Sunan Ibn Majah* by Muhammad ibn Yazid Ibn Majah (209-273 AH). Alongside these *Sunan* collections, several major *Sahih* compilations also emerged during this period, including *Sahih al-Bukhari* (*al-Jami' al-Sahih al-Musnad*) by Muhammad ibn Isma'il al-Bukhari (194-256 AH), *Sahih Muslim* (*al-Jami' al-Sahih*) by Muslim ibn al-Hajjaj al-Naysaburi (204-261 AH), *Sahih Ibn Khuzaymah* by Muhammad ibn Ishaq Ibn Khuzaymah (d. 311 AH), and *Sahih Ibn Hibban* (*al-Taqasim wa al-Anwa'*) by Muhammad Ibn Hibban al-Busti (d. 354 AH).[29] In addition to producing these major canonical collections, the third century AH witnessed the diversification of hadith literature into various formats, including *musnad*, *sahih*, *sunan*, *jami'*, and other thematic compilations. This diversification reflects the maturation of hadith writing into a well-established scholarly tradition, with methodologies tailored to the needs of hadith transmission, legal reasoning, and isnad criticism.[30]

In addition to the remarkable achievements in the codification of hadith collections, the third century AH also witnessed the systematic development of the auxiliary sciences of hadith (*'ulum al-hadith*). During this period, numerous specialized works were produced, reflecting the growing sophistication of hadith methodology. These included *'Ilal al-Hadith* by Ali ibn al-Madini (d. 234 AH), *Bayan Gharib Alfaz al-Hadith* by Abu 'Ubaydah Mu'ammar ibn al-Muthanna al-Tamimi al-Basri (d. 210 AH), *Ta'wil Mukhtalif al-Hadith* by Ibn Qutaybah (d. 276 AH), *Nasikh al-Hadith wa Mansukhuhu* by Ahmad ibn Hanbal, *Ma'rifah al-Rijal* and *al-Tarikh wa al-'Ilal* by Yahya ibn Ma'in (d.

[27] Yusuf, "SEJARAH PERKEMBANGAN HADIS DAN METODOLOGINYA PADA ABAD III HIJRIAH."
[28] MUHAMMAD ABU ZAHW, *THE HISTORY OF HADITH HISTIOGRAFI HADIS NABI DARI MASA KE MASA* (Depok: KEIRA PUBLISHING, 2015).
[29] Fatimah, "Hadis Dari Masa Ke Masa (Kodifikasi Era Mutaqaddimin)."
[30] Qhoirin Anisa et al., "Historiography of the Golden Age of Hadith Codification from the Third to Fifth Century Hijri (A Historical and Methodological Analysis of Hadith Codification from a Sunni Perspective)," *Al-Dzikra: Jurnal Studi Ilmu Al-Qur'an Dan al-Hadits* 19, no. 2 (2025): 323–38, https://doi.org/10.24042/al-dzikra.v19i2.25588.

233 AH), *al-Tarikh al-Kabir* by al-Bukhari, *al-Jarh wa al-Ta'dil* by Ibrahim ibn Ya'qub al-Jurjani (d. 295 AH), and *al-Du'afa'* by Abu Hafs al-Fallas (d. 249 AH). The emergence of these works demonstrates that hadith scholarship had expanded beyond the compilation of Prophetic traditions to encompass critical disciplines concerned with narrator evaluation, textual interpretation, hidden defects (*'ilal*), abrogation, and historical documentation, thereby establishing the methodological foundations of classical hadith studies.[31]

The hadith codification process during the third century AH was characterized by several distinctive features. First, scholars systematically distinguished Prophetic traditions from the statements of the Companions and the legal opinions (*fatwas*) of the *tabi'in*. Second, greater attention was devoted to assessing the authenticity of hadith by differentiating between sound and weak reports rather than treating them indiscriminately.[32] Third, hadith compilations began to appear in specialized literary forms, such as *Sahih*, *Sunan*, *Musnad*, and *Mukhtalif al-Hadith*. In addition, more specialized works focusing on particular subjects also emerged, including texts on *maghazi* (the Prophet's military expeditions), such as *al-Maghazi* by Ibn Abi Shaybah. These characteristics illustrate the increasing methodological sophistication and specialization of hadith scholarship during the third century AH.[33]

From a historiographical perspective, the third century AH represents the consolidation phase in the history of hadith writing. This period was marked not only by a substantial increase in the production of hadith literature but also by the establishment of methodological standards for the selection of traditions, the evaluation of transmitters, and the systematic compilation of hadith collections. The scholarly tradition that emerged during this era laid the intellectual foundations for the subsequent development of hadith studies and established the third century AH as the golden age of classical hadith codification. More importantly, it marked a significant shift in scholarly orientation from the mere collection of hadith to the critical verification, authentication, and classification of transmitted reports.

The Fourth Century AH: The Consolidation of Hadith Methodology and Literature

While the third century AH is widely regarded as the golden age of hadith codification, the fourth century AH marked a period of methodological consolidation and the further development of hadith literature. During this era, the compilation of new hadith collections was no longer the primary concern, as the major canonical works, including *Sahih al-Bukhari*, *Sahih Muslim*, and the principal *Sunan* collections, had already been compiled and gained broad scholarly acceptance. Instead, the attention of hadith scholars (*muhaddithun*) shifted toward refining, organizing, expanding, and

[31] Fatimah, "Hadis Dari Masa Ke Masa (Kodifikasi Era Mutaqaddimin)."
[32] Nila Nabilatul Rizqiya, As'aril Muhajir, and Agus Zaenul Fitri, "The Implementation of Quality Management in Improving the Quality of Qur'an Learning," *Afkaruna: International Journal of Islamic Studies (AIJIS)* 4, no. 2 (October 2026): 267–81, https://doi.org/10.38073/aijis.v4i2.5557.
[33] Fatimah, "Hadis Dari Masa Ke Masa (Kodifikasi Era Mutaqaddimin)."

interpreting the existing corpus of hadith literature inherited from earlier generations. This shift in scholarly orientation reflects the intellectual maturity of the hadith tradition, as its focus evolved from the compilation of reports to the refinement of methodology, critical analysis, and scholarly interpretation.[34]

This shift in scholarly orientation gave rise to new genres within hadith literature. Rather than merely compiling hadith according to legal themes, as had been the practice of earlier generations, fourth-century AH scholars developed a variety of literary forms, including *mustakhraj*, *mustadrak*, *mu'jam*, *atraf*, abridgments (*ikhtisar*), and commentaries (*sharh*).[35] These works were intended to strengthen chains of transmission, supplement traditions omitted from earlier compilations, facilitate the identification and tracing of hadith reports, and provide detailed explanations of their meanings. Consequently, the development of hadith literature during the fourth century AH was characterized less by the accumulation of additional narrations than by the enhancement of its scholarly quality and methodological sophistication.[36]

The diversification of hadith literature during this period demonstrates that the fourth century AH represented a phase of consolidation in hadith historiography. Whereas the second century AH was primarily devoted to the collection of hadith reports and the third century AH emphasized their critical selection and codification, the fourth century AH witnessed a shift toward the refinement of methodological approaches and the expansion of existing scholarly literature. This transition reflects the intellectual maturity of the hadith tradition, as the work of *muhaddithun* extended beyond the collection of narrations to include rigorous verification, isnad analysis, the composition of commentaries (*sharh*), and the development of specialized methodologies such as *mustakhraj* and *mustadrak*. These contributions laid an essential foundation for the continued evolution of hadith scholarship in subsequent centuries.[37]

In expanding the corpus of hadith literature, fourth-century AH scholars adopted diverse methods of compilation according to the objectives of their works. Some followed the methodology of al-Bukhari and Muslim by compiling collections that contained only authentic (*sahih*) hadith, including Ibn Khuzaymah (d. 311 AH), Ibn Hibban al-Busti (d. 354 AH), Abu Ali Ibn al-Sakan (d. 353 AH), and Ibn al-Jarud. Others compiled collections of authentic hadith that had not been included in earlier works, while another group developed literary forms such as *mustakhraj*, *mustadrak*, *mu'jam*, and *sharh* to strengthen isnad transmission, supplement existing hadith collections, and provide scholarly explanations of previously codified traditions. This diversity of approaches

[34] Yunus and Muhammad Lutfianto, "TRANSFORMASI METODE PENULISAN KITAB HADIS PASCA ABAD KE-4," *Al-Kalimantan: Jurnal Kajian Keislaman* 2, no. 2 (2026): 443–55, https://doi.org/https://albaayaninstitute.org/index.php/alkalimantan/article/view/698.
[35] Paola Colonello, "The Issue of Competitiveness in Islamic Dimension: The Paradigmatic Case of Iranian Child Education," *Afkaruna: International Journal of Islamic Studies (AIJIS)* 4, no. 2 (October 2026): 227–49, https://doi.org/10.38073/aijis.v4i2.4608.
[36] Yunus and Lutfianto, "TRANSFORMASI METODE PENULISAN KITAB HADIS PASCA ABAD KE-4."
[37] atho'illah umar, *Manahijul Muhadditsin Sejarah Penulisan Kitab Hadis Dai Abad Pertama Hingga Abad Empat* (Surabaya: dimar jaya press, 2020).

demonstrates that the primary concern of fourth-century AH scholars had shifted from the collection of hadith to the refinement of methodological frameworks and the further development of hadith literature.[38]

One of the major literary forms that flourished during the fourth century AH was the *mustakhraj*, a method of recompiling hadiths contained in earlier canonical collections through alternative chains of transmission that converge with the original compiler's teachers or higher authorities in the isnad. This method was employed by scholars such as Abu Nu'aym al-Asbahani (d. 430 AH) in *al-Mustakhraj 'ala al-Sahihayn*. Rather than replacing the original narrations, the primary objective of the *mustakhraj* was to strengthen the authenticity of the isnad by providing corroborating chains of transmission *(mutabi'at)*, thereby enriching the material available for hadith criticism. In addition, this method helped clarify the identities of ambiguous narrators *(mubham)*, identify instances of tadlis, and provide further information regarding the reliability and continuity of transmission chains.[39]

In addition to the development of the *mustakhraj* and *mustadrak* methodologies, fourth-century AH scholars increasingly produced specialized works that served as essential tools for hadith evaluation, including books on *rijal al-hadith* (biographical evaluation of transmitters), *jarh wa ta'dil* (narrator criticism and accreditation), and *atraf al-hadith* (hadith indexes). The emergence of these works demonstrates that the focus of *muhaddithun* had expanded beyond the mere compilation of hadith to the development of scholarly instruments that facilitated isnad analysis, narrator identification, and the tracing of transmission networks. Consequently, the fourth century AH witnessed the emergence of a more analytical and methodologically sophisticated tradition of hadith scholarship than in previous periods.[40]

Alongside the development of the *mustakhraj* genre, the *mustadrak* methodology also gained prominence during this period. This approach involved compiling hadiths that met the authenticity criteria established by the compilers of particular collections but had not been included in their works. Its most prominent representative was al-Hakim al-Naysaburi (d. 405 AH), whose *al-Mustadrak 'ala al-Sahihayn* became one of the most influential works of this genre. This compilation demonstrates that fourth-century AH scholars did not merely accept the existing canonical collections as complete; rather, they critically assessed their comprehensiveness by identifying authentic traditions that had been omitted. Such efforts reflect the emergence of a scholarly culture characterized by

[38] atho'illah umar.
[39] Fahrul, "KITAB HADIS PADA ABAD IV H DAN SETELAHNYA; KUTUB AL-SYURUH DAN MUKHTASAR," *Jurnal Media Akademik (JMA)* 3, no. 9 (2025): 1–11, https://doi.org/10.62281/dhszmd59.
[40] Mustikawati, Muhammad Al Mighwar, and Engkos Kosasih, "The Codification of Hadith in the Third Century of Hijriah as the Peak of the Golden Age of Knowledge," *Al-Afkar, Journal For Islamic Studies* 8, no. 3 (2025): 645–54, https://doi.org/10.31943/afkarjournal.v8i3.1498.The.

critical engagement, intellectual dialogue, and continuous refinement within the field of hadith studies.[41]

During the same period, several auxiliary disciplines of hadith scholarship also experienced significant development, including *rijal al-hadith* (biographical evaluation of transmitters), *jarh wa ta'dil* (narrator criticism and accreditation), *gharib al-hadith* (the study of uncommon expressions in hadith), *'ilal al-hadith* (the study of hidden defects in hadith), and *sharh al-hadith* (hadith commentary). The emergence and expansion of these disciplines demonstrate that the scholarly focus had extended beyond the compilation of hadith to encompass the interpretation of textual meanings, the evaluation of isnad authenticity, the assessment of narrators, and the resolution of methodological issues related to hadith transmission. As these specialized fields matured, hadith evolved from being merely a collection of transmitted reports into a fully developed scholarly discipline with its own systematic research methodologies.[42]

In conclusion, the fourth century AH represented a period of consolidation in the history of hadith writing, characterized by the refinement of literary forms and the strengthening of scholarly methodologies. The emergence of genres such as *mustakhraj*, *mustadrak*, *sharh*, *mu'jam*, and numerous works on the sciences of hadith demonstrates that hadith scholarship had reached a high level of intellectual maturity. This period served as a crucial bridge between the classical era of hadith codification and the subsequent development of hadith studies, making a lasting contribution to the formation of research methodologies that have continued to evolve into the modern era.[43]

Primary Sources of Hadith Historiography in the Mutaqaddimin Period

In the development of hadith historiography during the *mutaqaddimin* period, scholars relied not only on oral transmission but also on a wide range of written sources that formed the foundation for recording and reconstructing the history of hadith. The most fundamental source was the hadith itself, whether transmitted directly from the Prophet Muhammad or preserved in the form of *sahifah* (written scrolls) and personal notebooks compiled by the Companions and the *tabi'un*. These early written records gradually evolved into the more systematic processes of *tadwin* (compilation) and codification that emerged during the second century AH. Through these sources, scholars obtained essential information concerning the *isnad*, the *matn*, and the contexts of hadith transmission, all of which became the foundation for the subsequent development of hadith literature.[44]

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[41] Mohamad Anas, "Al-Hakim Al-Naisabury Dan Al-Mustadrak 'Ala Al-Sahihain," *KACA (Karunia Cahaya Allah): Jurnal Dialogis Ilmu Ushuluddin* 8, no. 1 (2018): 1–10, https://doi.org/10.36781/kaca.v8i1.299.

[42] Yunus and Lutfianto, "TRANSFORMASI METODE PENULISAN KITAB HADIS PASCA ABAD KE-4."

[43] Retno Endah Kusuma Wardani and Nasrulloh Nasrulloh, "The Role of Hadith in Shaping Digital Spirituality: An Analysis of Texts on Controlling the Gaze and the Heart," *Pelita: Jurnal Studi Islam Mahasiswa UII Dalwa* 3, no. 1 (November 2025): 93–106, https://doi.org/10.38073/pelita.v3i1.3649.

[44] Anugrah Eran Batu, *Historiografi Hadis Dalam Aliran Islam : Mengulas Sejarah Penulisan Dan Penghimpunan Hadis Sunni Syiah*, 5, no. 1 (2024): 116–29, https://doi.org/10.19109/elsunnah.v5i1.23748.

Another important category of sources consists of the hadith collections compiled during the *mutaqaddimin* period. The second century AH witnessed the emergence of works such as *al-Muwatta'* by Malik ibn Anas, *al-Musannaf* by Abd al-Razzaq al-San'ani, and several other *musannaf* compilations. During the third century AH, major canonical collections were produced, including *Sahih al-Bukhari*, *Sahih Muslim*, *Sunan Abu Dawud*, *Sunan al-Tirmidhi*, *Sunan al-Nasa'i*, and *Sunan Ibn Majah*. These works served not only as repositories of prophetic traditions but also as primary sources for tracing the development of hadith transmission, authentication, and codification during the formative period of Islamic scholarship.[45]

In addition to the hadith collections, hadith historiography also relied extensively on the literature of *rijal al-hadith* and *jarh wa ta'dil*. These works contain biographical information on hadith transmitters, including their identities, teachers, students, scholarly journeys, and assessments of their reliability and integrity. Such sources enabled scholars to verify the authenticity of hadith chains of transmission *(isnad)* while reconstructing the networks of transmission across successive generations. Consequently, the literature of *rijal al-hadith* and *jarh wa ta'dil* constitutes one of the most indispensable sources for writing the history of hadith.[46]

Another significant source is the literature of *tarikh* (historical works) and tabaqat (biographical dictionaries). Works such as Tabaqat Ibn Sa'd, *al-Tarikh al-Kabir* by al-Bukhari, and numerous other historical writings provide valuable information regarding the chronology of hadith scholars, the development of major centers of Islamic learning, and the dynamics of hadith transmission across different regions. Through these sources, historians of hadith are able to understand the social, political, and intellectual contexts that shaped the development of hadith writing during the *mutaqaddimin* period.[47]

By the fourth century AH, when the hadith tradition had reached a more consolidated stage, a variety of complementary works also emerged, including *mustakhraj, mustadrak, mu'jam*, and hadith commentaries *(shuruh al-hadith).* These works not only expanded upon the existing hadith collections but also served as important sources for tracing variations in chains of transmission, strengthening the reliability of narrations, and explaining the meanings of hadith. Therefore, the sources of hadith historiography during the *mutaqaddimin* period were not confined solely to hadith collections but encompassed the broader corpus of literature concerning transmission, hadith criticism, transmitter biographies, and the intellectual development of hadith within the classical Islamic tradition.[48]

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[45] Batu.

[46] I. Gusti Bagus Agung Perdana Rayyn, Tasmin Tangngareng, and Darsul S. Puyu, "SEJARAH DAN KAIDAH AL-JARH WA AL-TA'DIL," *Ihyaussunnah : Journal of Ulumul Hadith and Living Sunnah* 2, no. 1 (2021): 142–63, https://doi.org/10.24252/ihyaussunnah.v1i2.29997.

[47] Batu, *Historiografi Hadis Dalam Aliran Islam : Mengulas Sejarah Penulisan Dan Penghimpunan Hadis Sunni Syiah*.

[48] Muhid Muhid, "ILMU KRITIK HADIS (AL-JARH WA AL-TA'DIL) DALAM LINTASAN SEJARAH," *Dar El-Ilmi : Jurnal Studi Keagamaan, Pendidikan Dan Humaniora* 6, no. 2 (2019): 338–62, https://doi.org/10.52166/dar%20el-ilmi.v6i2.1742.

CONCLUSION

The development of hadith historiography during the *mutaqaddimin* period (second-fourth centuries AH) reflects a gradual and systematic evolution of scholarly tradition. The second century AH, corresponding to the post-tabi'un period, marked the initial phase of hadith codification, during which narrations were compiled into written works that combined Prophetic hadith with the athar of the Companions and the legal opinions (fatwas) of the tabi'un. By the third century AH, hadith writing had reached its formative peak with the emergence of major hadith collections compiled according to increasingly rigorous standards for evaluating chains of transmission *(isnad)* and narrators, alongside the development of various branches of hadith sciences as methodological tools for assessing the authenticity of narrations. The fourth century AH represented a phase of methodological consolidation, characterized by the flourishing of *mustakhraj, mustadrak,* hadith commentaries *(shuruh al-hadith)*, and other disciplines of hadith studies. This study also finds that hadith historiography during the *mutaqaddimin* period was founded upon a diverse body of complementary sources, including hadith collections, *rijal al-hadith* literature, *tarikh* works, *tabaqat* literature, and other classical scholarly writings.

This study is limited to a historical examination of the development of hadith writing and the sources of hadith historiography during the *mutaqaddimin* period. Future research is therefore encouraged to adopt a more analytical approach by comparing the characteristics of the historiographical sources employed by *mutaqaddimin* scholars, examining the contribution of each category of sources to the formation of hadith methodology, and investigating the continuity of their methodological influence on the development of hadith studies from the *muta'akhkhirin* period to the contemporary era. Such studies are expected to enrich the field of hadith historiography while providing a deeper understanding of the evolution of the hadith scholarly tradition within the broader intellectual history of Islam.

DECLARATION OF AI AND AI-ASSISTED TECHNOLOGIES IN THE WRITING PROCESS

In preparing this manuscript, the authors employed ChatGPT (OpenAI) to assist in translating the manuscript from Indonesian into English. The generated outputs were carefully reviewed and revised by the authors, who retain full responsibility for the accuracy and final content of the published work.

AUTHOR CONTRIBUTION STATEMENT

This article was jointly written by two authors. The first author took the lead in conducting the research, including searching for, analyzing, and verifying relevant data, as well as compiling the findings into a complete scholarly article. The second author contributed by offering academic direction and guidance, as well as reviewing the manuscript to ensure its quality and suitability for publication.

DATA AVAILABILITY STATEMENT

The data underlying the findings of this research are publicly accessible and were primarily obtained from open-access academic literature available through Google Scholar.

DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

The authors declare that they have no known competing financial interests or personal relationships that could have influenced the research presented in this paper.

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