

Problematic Hadith In *Mu`Tazīlah's* Perspective

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ABSTRACT

This article discusses the problem of hadith from the perspective of the *Mu`tazīlah*, an Islamic theological flow known for its rational and critical approach to religious teachings using the library research method. The *Mu`tazīlah* emerged in the second century Hijri and had a unique view regarding the reception and interpretation of hadith. In this study it is revealed that the *Mu`tazīlah* rejected a number of traditions that were deemed to contradict their theological principles such as God's justice freedom of will and the oneness of God. The study analyzes how the *Mu`tazīlah* rational approach influenced their attitude towards hadith as well as the impact of their criticisms on certain traditions. In doing so, the article aims to provide a deeper understanding of the dynamics between hadith and creed in the Islamic tradition and its relevance for the development of contemporary theology. The results show that the *Mu`tazīlah's* skepticism towards hadith not only reflects theological differences but also contributes to the broader discourse on the role of reason and revelation in Islam. This paper employs a qualitative approach, and to address the issues in this study, the author used library research.

Keywords: *Mu`tazīlah*, Hadith, problematics

Introduction

Throughout the history of Islam, while the Prophet was still alive, the Muslim ummah was in a state of peace and tranquility. There were never any differences or difficulties that could not be handled, because if at that time there was a dispute, the companions could be directly resolved by the Prophet PBUH. Until a time when the Prophet died, the Muslim ummah began to get various difficulties. various schools or religious schools have grown and developed, both in the fields of politics, law and creed/kalam. One of them is *Mu`tazīlah*, the *Mu`tazīlah* sect is very interesting to study because it is known as a sect that glorifies the ability of reason, including in addressing the existence of God's revelation, especially hadith. They are known to have been involved in the denial of hadith and doubted the existence of the prophet's hadith and undermined some of the companions of the Prophet's narrators.

Hadith, as one of the main sources of Islamic teachings after the Qur'an, serves as a guide in various aspects of Muslim life. In the history of Islamic thought, there are various schools that have different approaches to hadith, one of which is the *Mu'tazilah*. This flow, which emerged in the second century Hijri, is known for its rational and logical approach to understanding religious teachings. This makes the *Mu'tazilah's* have a unique and critical view of hadith that is potentially problematic in its reception and interpretation.¹

The *Mu'tazilah* emphasized the importance of reason and logic in every aspect of religion including the analysis of hadith. They tend to reject traditions that are deemed incompatible with the basic tenets of their theology such as God's justice, freedom of will and the oneness of God. This problem has resulted in the criticism of a number of traditions that are considered inconsistent with reason or the teachings of the Qur'an, making them an important topic for further study.²

In this context, this article aims to explore the problematic nature of hadith in the *Mu'tazilah* view, examining how their rational approach influences the interpretation and acceptance of certain traditions. By examining the views of the *Mu'tazilah* it is hoped to gain a deeper understanding of the dynamics between hadith and creed in the Islamic tradition.

Method

This study uses a qualitative approach with *alibrary research* method to explore the *Mu'tazilah's* view of hadith in the Islamic tradition. This method was chosen because it is relevant in examining the *Mu'tazilah's* theological views and critique of hadith through a search of literature, classical texts, and scholarly works that discuss their rationalist views. The qualitative approach serves to

¹Harun Nasution. *Teologi Islam: Aliran-Aliran, Sejarah, Analisa, Perbandingan*. Jakarta: Universitas Indonesia Press, 1986, 50-55.

²Nurcholish Madjid. *Islam Doktrin Dan Peradaban: Sebuah Telaah Kritis Tentang Masalah Keimanan, Kemanusiaan, Dan Kemodernan*. Jakarta: Yayasan Wakaf Paramadina, 1992, 175-180.

understand abstract concepts in Islamic theology in depth and interpret the meaning behind the *Mu` tazīlah` s* attitude towards hadith.

1. Data Sources

The data for this research was obtained from various literatures, including:

a. *Mu` tazīlah` s* Classics and Primary Literature:

Books that serve as references for *Mu` tazīlah` s* theology, especially those that discuss doctrines such as God's justice (*` adl*), freedom of will (*ikhtiyar*), and the concept of the oneness of God (*tawhīd*).

b. Modern Academic Research and Articles:

Journals, scholarly articles, and research that review the development, criticism, and *Mu` tazīlah` s* interpretation of hadith from an academic perspective.

c. Supporting References:

Additional books that discuss the methodology of hadith criticism and the rational approach in the Islamic tradition as the historical and theological context for understanding the *Mu` tazīlah` s* position.

2. Data Collection Technique

Data collection was carried out by reviewing and collecting literature relevant to the research topic. The stages taken include:

- a. Identification of Literature: Screening specific literature related to *Mu` tazīlah` s* and hadith criticism.
- b. Text Analysis: Reading and reviewing the content of the identified sources, both primary and secondary.
- c. Thematic Coding: Coding the main themes in the text to identify the relevant patterns of *Mu` tazīlah` s* views on hadith and how they implement the principle of rationality in their approach.

3. Data Analysis

Data analysis was descriptive-analytical, focusing on critical and thematic interpretation. The steps of analysis included:

- a. Description of *Mu`taẓilah* Theological Concepts: Explaining the main tenets of the *Mu`taẓilah* that play a role in their rejection of certain traditions.
- b. Exploration of the Rational Attitude Toward Hadith: Analyzes how the *Mu`taẓilah's* applied their principle of rationality in selecting traditions as well as how they interpreted traditions that they considered to be contrary to the creed.
- c. Evaluating the Impact of *Mu`taẓilah's* Criticism: Assessing the contribution and influence of *Mu`taẓilah* criticism on Islamic theological discourse including its impact on the role of reason and revelation in Islamic teachings.

4. Data Validity and Reliability

To ensure the validity and reliability of the data, source triangulation was conducted, namely by comparing and confirming information from various literatures that support each other. Validation is done by cross-checking opinions and explanations in *Mu`taẓilah* classics and modern interpretations to avoid being able to and obtain an accurate understanding.

With this approach, the study is expected to provide a comprehensive overview of the *Mu`taẓilah's* critique of hadith and its implications in the development of Islamic thought, especially in the relationship between reason and revelation.

Result and Discussion

HISTORY OF THE FLOW

The word *Mu`taẓilah* is literally derived from *I`taẓalah* which means to part or separate oneself which also means to move away or distance oneself. *Mu`taẓilah* is a flow of thought in Islam that emerged in the 8th century AD, which emphasizes the importance of ratio and logic in understanding religious teachings. This flow is known as "seclusion" (*al-mu`taẓilah*), because its adherents argue that they are separate from other flows that prioritize the authority of the text without considering rationality.³

³Mahmud, "Mu`taẓilah: Aliran Rasionalisme Dalam Islam," *Jurnal Studi Islam*, Vol. 10, No. 2, 2020, 45-60.

Regarding the origin of the name *Mu'tazilah*, historians differ in opinion when the *Mu'tazilah* sect actually arose. However, what is most important for us is that the name *Mu'tazilah* is a name for the flows of rational and liberal theology in Islam that emerged after the incident of *Waṣīl* ibn `Aṭā with Ḥasan Baṣrī in Basrah.⁴

Waṣīl ibn `Aṭā was born in Medina in 81H/699 CE and died in 131H/748 CE. He studied with Abū Ḥashīm `Abd Allah ibn Muḥammad ibn Ḥanafiyah, then he moved to the city of Basrah and studied with Ḥasan al-Basrī.⁵ Actually, the *Mu'tazilah* group had already emerged in the middle of the first century Hijri and referred to the Companions who chose to stay away or be neutral in political events. This was the case during the battle of *Jamal* and the battle of *Siffin*, where some Companions did not want to get involved in the conflict and chose a middle ground. However, in the second century Hijri, *Mu'tazilah* emerged in response to the issue of *aqidah*. Technically, the term *Mu'tazilah* refers to two groups:

1. The existence of the *Mu'tazilah* sect emerged as a purely political act, that is, as a movement or political stance of some companions who were dissatisfied with the political life of the Muslims during the reign of `Alī. Some senior companions such as Abdullah ibn `Umar, Sa`ad ibn Abī Waqqas, and Zayd ibn Thabīṭ chose to be neutral and not get involved in the conflict between the groups. They avoided (*i'tazala*) and focused on religious understanding and strengthening their relationship with Allah. This group became known as the *Mu'tazilah* for distancing themselves from the political conflict over the election of the caliph. The group was known for being politically neutral without having a theological identity like that of the later *Mu'tazilahs*.
2. The *Mu'tazilah* flow emerged as a response to the theological issues that developed among the *Khawārij* and *Murji'ah*, which arose as a result of the

⁴ Zainimal, "Mu'tazilah Dalam Lintasan Sejarah Pemikiran Islam", *Jurnal Tarikhuna*, Vol.3.No.1 (2021), 101.

⁵ Ibid, 103

tahkīm (dispute settlement) events of the time. This faction emerged because it had a different opinion from the *Khawārij* and *Murji'ah* regarding giving the status of disbelief to those who committed major sins. Nevertheless, between these two groups still have a very close relationship and difficult to separate from each other.⁶

Regarding giving the name *Mu'tazilah* to this second group there are several opinions including:

- a. Al-Baghdādī says that Waṣīl and his friend `Amr ibn `Ubaid separated themselves from their teacher Ḥasan al-Basrī from his assembly because of a difference of opinion on the issue of *qaḍa* and the one who commits major sins. They distanced themselves from Ḥasan al-Basrī and argued that the one who commits major sins is neither a believer nor a disbeliever, hence the name *Mu'tazilah* ⁷

The reason for the incident between Waṣīl ibn `Aṭa and his teacher was related to the issue of major sins committed by a believer. According to Waṣīl ibn `Aṭa, a person who commits a major sin is neither a disbeliever as proposed by the *Khawārij*, nor a believer as proposed by the *Murji'ah*, but Waṣīl ibn `Aṭa takes a position between the two, known as *Manzilah baina al-manzilatain*.⁸

- b. Tasī al-Kubra Zadah said that Qatadah ibn Da'mah one day entered the mosque of Basra and joined the assembly of `Amr ibn `Ubaid which he thought was the assembly of Ḥasan al-Basrī. Upon learning that it was not the assembly of Ḥasan al-Basrī, he stood up and left the place saying, "*these are the Mu'tazilah*". Since then the people have been called *Mu'tazilah*.⁹

⁶Muhammad Alfreda Daib Insan Labib, "Kontruksi Madzhab Hadis Mu'tazilah (Studi Analisis Aliran Mu'tazilah Dalam Menyikapi Hadis Ahad), *Jurnal Lathaif*, Vol.2.No.1 (Juli-Desember 2023), 127-128.

⁷Elpianti Sahara Pakpahan, "Pemikiran Mu'tazilah", *Jurnal Al-Hadi*, Vol.2.No.2. (Januari-Jui 2017). 415.

⁸ Ibid, 103-104.

⁹ Faisol Nasar Bin Madi, MA, *Ilmu Kalam* (Jember: IAIN Jember Press, 2015), 92.

- c. Al-Mas`ūdī's opinion is that the *Mu`taẓilahs* were named because they were of the opinion that the person who commits a major sin is neither a believer nor a disbeliever, but takes an *in-between* position (*al-Manzilah baina al-Manzilatain*). It is thus clear that al-Mas`ūdī did not attribute the name *Mu`taẓilah* to the incident of the difference of opinion between Waṣīl ibn `Aṭa and his companions on the one hand and Ḥasan al-Basrī on the other. According to al-Mas`ūdī they were called the *Mu`taẓilah* because they made the person who committed a grave sin far from being a believer and a disbeliever.¹⁰

To know more clearly the origin of the name *Mu`taẓilah* is difficult because of the various opinions expressed by experts but there is no agreement between them where the origin of the name *Mu`taẓilah*. *Mu`taẓilah* emerged from the attitude of the people at that time, but it is clear that the *Mu`taẓilah* group is a theological flow that emphasizes reason so that they get the name "Islamic rationalists".¹¹

As for what characterizes their rationalist thinking, it starts from a strong belief that reason has a position that is not much different from revelation in order to receive and understand the truth. in addition, it cannot be denied that reason is a tool to interpret revelation. if there is a conflict, it is not in the sense of conflict between reason and revelation, but rather a conflict of interpretation of a text, it may occur by leaving the literal meaning and taking the meaning of majaz, strictly speaking *Mu`taẓilah*'s theology is rational and liberal.¹²

The ideas developed by Waṣīl ibn `Aṭa were first strongly challenged by Muslims and they did not hesitate to label Waṣīl ibn `Aṭa as deviating from Islamic teachings. This view began to change around the 19th century with the rise of Islamic reformers such as Jamaluddin al-Afghānī, Muḥammad `Abduh, Rashīd Ridha and Aḥmad Khan in India. In the 20th century, *Mu`taẓilah*'s

¹⁰ Jamaluddin, M.Us, *Ilmu Kalam* (Tembilahan: PT. Indragiri Dot Com, 2020), 100-101.

¹¹ Elpianti Sahara Pakpahan, "Pemikiran Mu'tazilah",..... 416.

¹² Zainimal, "Mu'tazilah Dalam Lintasan Sejarah Pemikiran Islam", *Jurnal Tarikhuna*, Vol.3.No.1 (2021), 102.

thoughts were continued by Muḥammad `Abduh's followers in Egypt and Aḥmad Khan's followers in India. Referring to the background of Waṣīl ibn `Aṭa's struggle in using reason to redefine Islam should be tolerated. This was done for the sake of the progress of Muslims, especially in the field of mastery of science and technology.

Hadith Problems in *Mu`taẓilah's* View

The *Mu`taẓilah* have a unique view of hadith. They believe that not all traditions can be accepted at face value. In this context the *Mu`taẓilah* developed certain criteria for assessing the traditions which included analyzing both the substance and the context of the traditions. One of the main approaches of the *Mu`taẓilah* was to reject traditions that were deemed to contradict reason or their theological principles.¹³

The *Mu`taẓilah* were critical of traditions that contradicted reason or the principle of God's justice. They rejected traditions that they deemed to be inconsistent with logic or that contained elements of injustice. For example traditions describing the anthropomorphic attributes of God were considered contrary to their belief in the oneness and justice of God. Hence the *Mu`taẓilah* tended to be more selective in accepting traditions and tried to get rid of those that they considered irrational.¹⁴

In addition, the *Mu`taẓilah* believed that the understanding of the Qur'ān should be prioritized over the hadith especially if there was a conflict between the two. They argued that the Qur'ān is the primary source of revelation that must be preserved and that any hadith must be consistent with the principles contained therein. If there is a conflict between a hadith and the Qur'ān, *Mu`taẓilah* will prefer to follow the teachings of the Qur'ān.¹⁵

¹³ Ahmad Amin, *Sejarah Kebangkitan Islam* (Jakarta: Bulan Bintang, 1979), 120-125.

¹⁴ Siti K. Faridah, "Kritik *Mu`taẓilah* Terhadap Hadis Dan Penerapannya Dalam Teologi" *Tafsir Dan Hadis*, Vol. 12, No. 2, 2020, 32-48.

¹⁵ Rahmat H. Sidik, "Perbedaan Pandangan *Mu`taẓilah* Dan Sunni Dalam Memahami Hadis" *Journal Of Islamic Philosophy*, Vol. 11, No. 1, 2022, 85-101.

It is important to note that although the *Mu'tazilah* recognized the authority of the hadith they adopted a critical and analytical approach in assessing its validity and relevance. This approach places reason as the tool for understanding and assessing religious teachings, which is the hallmark of this school. This shows that the *Mu'tazilah* favored rationality in religious thought rather than simply accepting the authority of the text without consideration.¹⁶

The *Mu'tazilahs* in addressing the Sunnah are guided by their main rules known as *al-Uṣūl al Khamsah* (5 main rules) They make it the basis and principle in debating and interacting with the Qur'an and Hadith. In understanding the Qur'an, if it contradicts the rules of *al-Uṣūl al-Khamsah*, then they will interpret it by giving another understanding.¹⁷

Al-Usul Al-Khamsah are the five basic teachings that *Mu'tazilah* hold, only people who accept these five basics are called *Mu'tazilah*. And the five fundamentals consist of :

1. *Al-Tawḥīd* or the oneness of God. God, in their understanding, would be truly One only if God is a unique substance, with nothing like Him. God is not like humans and cannot be seen with the eyes. The only attribute of God that really cannot exist in His creatures is the attribute of *qadīm*, they negate the attributes of God, which are attributes that have their own existence outside of God's substance. God in their view, remains the all-knowing, all-powerful, all-living, all-hearing, all-seeing but all of that cannot be separated from God's substance, or in other words that the attributes of God are the essence of God. Furthermore, the *Mu'tazilah* divide the nature of God into two, namely:
 - a. Attributes that are the essence of God and are called *zatih* properties, such as *Wujūd*, *Al-Qidām*, *Ḥayah*, *Al-'Udrah* and others.

¹⁶ Nurul I. Sa'diyah, "Rasionalitas Dalam Pemikiran Mu'tazilah Dan Relevansinya Dengan Hadis," *Al-Qalam*, Vol. 8, No. 3, 2023, Hlm. 23-38.

¹⁷ Laily Liddini, "Hadis Dalam Kacamata Mu'tazilah: Studi Tentang Al-Qadhi 'Abdul Jabbar Dan Abu Al-Husain Al-Basri", *Jurnal Khuluqiyya*, Vol.2.No.2 (Juli 2020), 60-61.

- b. Attributes that are God's actions, called *fi`liyah* attributes, which consist of attributes that mean the relationship between God and His creatures, such as *`Iradah*, *Kalam*, *Al-`Adl* and so on.

2. *Al-`Adl*

Al-`Adl is purifying God's actions from equality with the actions of creatures. Just as God is the only one who is just, God cannot be unjust, creatures can be unjust, because it is said that God is just then all of God's actions are good, God does not do bad, and God certainly forgets what has become His obligation. Thus God does not lie, does not act unjustly, does not torture the children of many worshippers of God because of the sins of their parents, does not give burdens that cannot be carried by humans. And God empowers man to bear the burdens that God places upon him, and rewards or punishes man for his deeds. And if God gives punishment, then that punishment is for benefit.

3. *Al-Wa`ad Wa al Wa`id* (Promises and Threats)

Is an extension of the basic teaching of justice. God would not be just if He did not reward those who do good and punish those who do bad. Justice requires that those who do good be rewarded, as promised by God.

4. *Al-Manzilah Baina Manzilatain*, (Position between Two Positions)

The middle position for the major sinner, the major sinner is neither a mu'min nor a disbeliever, because he still believes in God and the Prophet Muḥammad, but is not a mu'min because his faith is no longer perfect. Because he is not a mu'min he does not go to heaven and because he is not a disbeliever he does not necessarily go to hell. However, since there are only two places in the Hereafter, the perpetrator of a major sin must be placed in Hell and tortured less severely than a disbeliever.

5. *Al-`Amru bi al-Ma`rūf wa Nahy `an al-Munkar*,

The *Mu`tazilah* strongly supported this principle as a moral obligation that must be upheld. They believe that a Muslim must call to good and oppose

evil in all its forms. If it can be done by appeal alone, but if it must be done by force then it can be done by violence.¹⁸

According to al-Qāḍi `Abd al-Jabbār, the *Mu'tazilah's* use reason in their standpoint, because according to their interpretation with reason can choose between good and bad, with reason known that the Qur'an is proof, as well as the sunnah and ijma'. Therefore *Mu'tazilah* so make sense to be superiority number one in understanding various issues. Similarly, related to the Prophet's hadith, they have their own mindset in responding to the hadith.

Some of *Mu'tazilah's* problems related to the Prophetic traditions include:¹⁹

1. Rejection of the Companions

They had negative connotations towards the Companions. Among their accusations against the Companions was when they applied ijtihad because they doubted their justice. The *Mu'tazilah's* view of the events of the siffin war is also the same, they do not accept the testimony of the companions involved in the siffin war, they accuse the companions involved of being fasiq. They said, "*If sayyidina `Aishāh, sayyidina `Alī and sayyidina Ṭalḥah testify, then I do not accept their testimony*".

Mu'tazilah doubted the justice of Sayidina `Alī, Sayidina Ṭalḥah, and Sayidina Zubayr, even though the Messenger of Allah had appointed them as members of Paradise. The Companion Abū Ḥurairah was also not spared from accusations, according to him Abū Ḥurairah was the most lying person. Likewise, Sayidina `Umar ibn al-Khattab, Sayidina `Uthmān, were among the companions who lied.

According to Ibn Kathīr, the *Mu'tazilah's* accusation is false, low and rejected, contradicting the clear sunnah. In fact, the Prophet himself has explained the virtues of the Companions through his words. The Ṣaḥīḥ hadith

¹⁸ Muhammad Alfreda Daib Insan Labib, Kontruksi Madzhab Hadis Mu'tazilah (Studi Analisis Aliran Mu'tazilah Dalam Menyikapi Hadis Ahad) *Jurnal Lathaif*, Volume 2 Nomor 1, Juli-Desember 2023, 128-129.

¹⁹ Laily Liddini, "Hadis Dalam Kacamata Mu'tazilah: Studi Tentang Al-Qadhi `Abdul Jabbar Dan Abu Al-Husain Al-Basri", 61-69.

narrated by Imam al-Bukhārī from `Imran ibn Husayn means approximately “the best of my Ummah is my time, then the people after it, and the people following it.” And there is also a hadith that means approximately “do not revile my companions, for if one of you were to give gold as big as the mountain of Uhud, it would not reach even one mud of their share, not even half.”.

2. Rejection of *Mutawatir* Hadith.

According to the agreement of hadith scholars, the Prophet is the second source of law after the Qur'an. the sunnah based on the number of narrators consists of two types, namely *mutawattir* and *aḥad*. *muṣṭalah al-hadīth* scholars define *mutawattir* hadith as something that is narrated by many people that does not allow reason to lie, and can be used as a source of knowledge for listeners. based on *Mu`tazilah* 's thoughts on the feasibility and ability of reason to erase hadith. whereas for Sunnis, people who deny *mutawattir* hadith are categorized as wicked.

Mu`tazilah disagree with the consensus of the scholars of hadith that according to Nadham it is permissible to disbelieve *mutawattir* traditions because of the possibility of the limited number of narrators in hadith and they think that disbelieving traditions is a matter of course and of no consequence even though it is an *Ijma'* and it is also possible according to them that the people are unanimous in error.

3. Rejecting Hadith *aḥad*

Hadith *aḥad* is a tradition narrated by one or three or more people who do not reach the level of *tawwatur*. Scholars require the acceptance of Hadith *aḥad* to be based on the fairness and reliability of the narrator. The majority of scholars are of the opinion that if the conditions for the acceptability of *ahadith* are met, then the Hadith *aḥad* can be used as evidence and then practiced. However, the *Mu`tazilah* deny the existence of *aḥadīth*, rejecting that there is only one *rāwī* narrating the hadith. Abū Ḥasan al-Khiyāṭ denied the validity of the Hadith *aḥad*, as did Abū `Alī al-Jubai followed by

al-Mazirī and others, in this case they set three conditions for the acceptance of the Hadith *aḥad*, including:

- a. The hadith is corroborated by a hadith narrated by another fair *Rāwī*.
- b. The text of the tradition does not contradict the Qur'an
- c. The hadith has been practiced by some Sahabah

4. Doubting and Rejecting Hadith

In understanding hadith, the *Mu'tazilah* also use "*Uṣūl al- Khamsah* " as the basis for understanding the Qur'an and Prophetic Hadith, where they make their reason the basic foundation for understanding both²⁰ So if what contradicts the five principles of the *Mu'tazilah* is a verse of the Qur'an, they interpret it in such a way as to be in line with their ideology, and if the contradiction is a hadith, the *Mu'tazilah* then reject and deny it.

One example of their rejection of a Prophetic tradition is one that is considered *ṣaḥīḥ* by the majority. For example, they denied the existence of the Hadith about the Prophet's help for his followers on the Day of Judgment and the Hadith about the splitting of the moon.

As for the tradition about the splitting of the moon, the *Mu'tazilah* accuse it of being an undeniable lie because the splitting of the moon is the greatness of God that if the moon was really split, how could it not be known by the general public, why did the historians not record it as a historical event, why did not a poet sing about it as a miracle that is so memorable.

Whereas the hadith of the splitting of the moon is contained in *Ṣaḥīḥ Bukhārī*, *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, and *Sunan al-Tirmizī* which in fact have strong integrity and the traditions listed in their books are undoubtedly valid.²¹ They see the incident through the ratio, not the eyes of the heart that believes in the greatness of Allah SWT and the truth of the Prophet's hadith. On the issue of shafa'at, they do not deny all forms of shafa'at. They only deny the

²⁰ Abu Lubabah Husain, *Pemikiran Hadits Mu'tazilah*, Diterjemahkan Oleh Usman Sya'roni. (Jakarta: Pustaka Firdaus, 2003) 82.

²¹ Ibid, 109-116.

intercession in the matter of getting sinful people out of hell, *Mu'tazilah* believe they go to hell because of their sins, because they do not believe in the intercession of the Prophet Muhammad for the perpetrators of major sins from his people. The Hadith about the Prophet's intercession for the perpetrators of major sins is also contained in *Ṣaḥīḥ Bukhārī*, *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, *Sunan al-Tirmizī*, *Sunan Abū Dāwūd*, and *Sunan Ibn Majah*.

5. Falsifying Hadith

Regarding the falsification of traditions, it is explained in the introduction of the book *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* that one of the *Mu'tazilahs*, `Amr ibn `Ubaid, had falsified a tradition. It was attributed to Ḥasan al-Basrī that the one who was intoxicated from drinking wine would not be whipped. Abū Ayyūb was asked about this Hadith and he replied that *Mu'tazilah* had lied and that he had heard that Ḥasan al-Basrī had said that if a person gets drunk from drinking wine, he will be flogged

With all this information we can know their attitude towards the hadith. They have criticized the Companions, denied *mutawwatir* traditions, rejected *aḥadīths*, and denied and doubted many traditions, and they could also fabricate traditions to strengthen their arguments.

In addition, the *Mu'tazilah* have doubts about the Companions, sometimes they doubt the credibility (*`adalat*) of the Companions since the Fitnah as alleged by Waṣīl ibn `Aṭa. Sometimes they accused all the Companions of being ungodly as `Amr ibn `Ubaid did. Meanwhile, al-Nazzām accused the Companions of being liars, fools, and hypocrites. Consequently, the traditions narrated by them should be rejected based on the opinions of Waṣīl ibn `Aṭa, `Amr ibn `Ubayd, and their followers.²²

For a long time, the Sunnis and the *Mu'tazilah* have had diametrically opposed perspectives on the sacred texts of Islam especially the hadith resulting in different interpretations. If the *Sunnis* apply extra stringent

²² Ibid, 73.

standards in accepting a hadith that require reason to submit to it, the *Mu'tazilah* tend to prioritize reason over a hadith that requires the understanding of the hadith to be in line with it.

For them, reason ranks first in the hierarchy of sources of law, followed by the Qur'an, Sunnah, and then Ijma'. According to al-Qaḍī `Abd al-Jabbār, the first tool is reason, because reason can distinguish between good and evil. With reason we can recognize the Qur'an as ḥujjah, as well as the Sunnah and Ijma'.

Example of *Mu'tazilah's* Hadith History

The *Mu'tazilah* are known to have transmitted many traditions but some of them have been accused of transmitting weak, munkar or even false reports. The following are some examples of the wording of traditions attributed to the *Mu'tazilahs* that have been deemed invalid by scholars of hadith with points that help to understand the various brief details of the traditions. Among them are;

1. Hadith on the Glorification of the Intellect

a. Redaction of Hadith:

إِنَّ أَوَّلَ مَا خَلَقَ اللَّهُ الْعَقْلَ، فَقَالَ لَهُ أَقْبِلْ فَأَقْبَلَ، ثُمَّ قَالَ لَهُ أَدْبِرْ فَأَدْبَرَ، فَقَالَ: وَعِزَّتِي مَا خَلَقْتُ خَلْقًا أَكْرَمَ عَلَيَّ مِنْكَ، بِكَ أُوَاجِدُ، "وَبِكَ أُعْطِي، وَبِكَ أُخْرِمُ"

Meaning: "Verily, the first creature that Allah created was the mind. Then Allah said to it: "Face it!" So the mind turned toward it. Then Allah said: "Turn away!" So the mind turned away. Then Allah said: By My glory, I have not created a more noble creature than you. With you I take, and with you I give, and with you I punish."

b. The narrator: `Amr ibn `Ubayd

`Amr ibn `Ubayd was one of the famous *Mu'tazilah* and the founder of the *Mu'tazilah* flow. He was known for his views that emphasized reason and rationality in understanding Islamic teachings. Amr ibn `Ubayd is a figure often associated with *Mu'tazilah* thought and is well known in hadith history as someone who is considered unreliable in hadith transmission. The

criticism of the traditions narrated by `Amr ibn `Ubayd is that he is not considered trustworthy by the scholars of hadith.

c. Comments: This hadith is considered weak and false by many scholars.²³

2. Hadith about the Virtue of Knowledge

a. Redaction of Hadith:

"مَنْ أَخَذَ الْعِلْمَ فَهُوَ وَلِيِّي وَحَبِيبِي، وَمَنْ جَفَاهُ فَقَدْ عَادَانِي"

Meaning: "Whoever takes knowledge, then he is my guardian and my lover. Whoever shuns knowledge, then indeed he has antagonized Me."

b. The Narrator: Al-Nazzam

Al-Nazzam was a *Mu`tazilah* known for his radical views and strong arguments. Hadith scholars generally do not recognize al-Nazzam as a valid narrator. They viewed him as one who was more involved in rational debate than in the transmission of authentic traditions. Al-Nazzam was deeply involved in *Mu`tazilah* thought which emphasized reason and often differed from the strict hadith approach. This made him less acceptable to hadith scholars because of his potential favoring of rationalism which could affect the integrity of transmission. Hadith scholars such as Ibn Hajar and al-Zahabi did not record al-Nazzam in their books of *al-Rijāl* (biographies of narrators) indicating that he was not recognized as having the capacity to narrate hadith.

c. Comment: This Hadith is considered *ḍa`īf* (weak) by scholars and cannot be used as proof.²⁴

3. Hadith on Honoring the Scholars

a. Redaction of Hadith:

"إِنَّ أَكْبَرَ النَّاسِ ذَنْبًا مَنْ أَحْبَطَ عِلْمَ الْأَخْدِ"

²³ Ibn Al-Jawzī, *Al-Mawdū`at*, (Bayrūt: Dar Al-Kutūb Al-`Ilmiyyah, 2003), 111.

²⁴ Ibid, 126.

Meaning: “Verily, the most sinful of men is the one who neglects one's knowledge.”

b. The Narrator: Abū al-Huzayl al-Allaf

Abū al-Huzayl was a *Mu'tazilah* figure who was influential in shaping *Mu'tazilah* teachings. Like many other *Mu'tazilah* figures Abu al-Huzayl was not recognized in the hadith chain by major hadith scholars such as al-Bukhārī, Muslim, Abū Dāwūd or Yaḥya ibn Ma'īn. His name is not recorded in the hadith literature as a transmitter. Abū al-Huzayl's rationalist thinking is thought to have influenced his views on the hadith, which made hadith scholars doubt his objectivity in narrating the hadith. His reasoning and logic-focused thinking was often considered inconsistent with the conservative principles of hadith narration. The books of *al-Rijāl* (narrator biographies) that serve to assess the credibility of narrators do not list Abū al-Huzayl. This indicates that the scholars of hadith did not consider him a reliable source of hadith transmission or worthy of reference.

c. Comments: This narration is considered weak by the hadith scholars due to its lack of a strong chain of transmission. Since he was not recognized as a hadith narrator, any tradition claimed to have come from Abū al-Huzayl would be considered weak (*ḍa'īf*) or even *mardūd* (rejected). The scholars of hadith ignored the traditions narrated by him since he was not part of a valid chain of transmission and was known more as a theologian than a hadith narrator.²⁵

***Mu'tazilah* Figures Who Have Ideas on Hadith**

With regard to the *Mu'tazilah* who contributed a great deal to hadith there is no specific information about them. The *Mu'tazilah* generally did not produce scholars of hadith in the traditional sense since they focused more on the science of kalam than on hadith narration as did the scholars of the sunnah. There were however some *Mu'tazilah* who paid critical attention to the hadith. These were

²⁵ Ibid, 133.

not known as hadith scholars but they often studied hadith from a critical perspective. Some of the *Mu'tazilah* scholars of hadith who had important contributions or insights in the science of hadith are as follows:

1. Waṣīl ibn `Aṭa (699–748 M)

Wasīl ibn `Aṭa was the founder of the *Mu'tazilah* flow. He was known for his rational approach to religion, including in the criticism of hadith. Wasīl believed that the understanding of religion should be in accordance with reason, and if a hadith is not in line with the principles of justice and truth of reason, it should be rejected.²⁶

2. `Amr ibn `Ubayd (wafat 761 M)

`Amr ibn `Ubayd was a disciple of Wasīl ibn `Aṭa, also known for his critical approach to hadith. He continued Wasīl ibn `Aṭa's rational thinking in understanding religious texts, including in assessing the authenticity and validity of traditions.²⁷

3. Abū Huḏayl al-Allaf (752–841 M)

Abū Huḏayl al-Allaf was one of the important theologians in the *Mu'tazilah*. He held the principle that reason should be the basis for understanding religion, which was also applied in assessing hadith. Harun Nasution explains that Abū Huḏayl often criticized traditions that he thought were contrary to logic and the principles of rationality.²⁸

4. Ibrāhīm al-Naẓẓam (775–846 M)

Ibrāhīm al-Naẓẓam is a *Mu'tazilah* figure who is very critical of hadith. He even rejected most of the traditions that he thought could not be proven logically or rationally. Al-Naẓẓam emphasized the importance of testing the veracity of traditions based on reason.²⁹

5. Bishr al-Mu'tamir (wafat 825 M)

²⁶ Harun Nasution, *Teologi Islam: Aliran-Aliran Sejarah, Analisa Perbandingan* (Jakarta: UI Press, 1986), Hal. 66.

²⁷ Ibid, 67.

²⁸ Ibid, 68.

²⁹ Ibid, 69.

Bishr al-Mu'tamir a successor of the *Mu'tazilah* also rejected traditions that did not meet the standards of rationality. He was of the view that the hadith must be compatible with reason and the principles of justice in order to be accepted as a source of Islamic law.³⁰

6. Abū al-Qasīm al-Balkhi (w. 319 H / 931 M)

Abū al-Qasīm al-Balkhi was a *Mu'tazilah* scholar from Baghdad who played an important role in the spread of *Mu'tazilah* thought in the region. He proposed a critique of traditions that were deemed incompatible with the principles of *Mu'tazilah* theology especially those that were anthropomorphic in nature. Al-Balkhi tended to reject traditions that were deemed irrational or lacked a strong *sanad*.³¹

7. Al-Jahiz (w. 255 H / 869 M)

Al-Jahiz was a famous writer and thinker among the *Mu'tazilahs*. He wrote many works on logic and theology. In his book *Kitab al-Hayawan* Al-Jahiz often quoted and criticized traditions that he found illogical or incompatible with rational understanding. Although not a hadith scholar, his views are often referenced in the critical study of hadith by the *Mu'tazilahs*.³²

The *Mu'tazilah* are known to have written more in the areas of theology and philosophy than they have written works focusing on the hadith. Most *Mu'tazilah* scholars did not write books specifically on hadith but some of them alluded to and criticized hadith in the context of their theological thought. The discussion of hadith in *Mu'tazilah* works is usually tucked away in chapters that focus on theological themes especially in their criticism of arguments that are deemed irrational or contrary to the main tenets of *Mu'tazilah*.

The following are some examples of *Mu'tazilah* figures who discuss or criticize hadith in their works:

³⁰ Ibid, 70

³¹ Harun Nasution, *Filsafat Dan Mistisisme Dalam Islam*, Jakarta: Bulan Bintang, 1973, Hal. 120-121.

³² Ibid, 82.

1. Al-Jahīz

Al-Jahīz, a well-known *Mu'tazilah* figure, makes much mention of hadith in his famous work *Kitab al-Hayawan*. In several passages al-Jahīz gives a critical view of the hadith which he finds illogical or contrary to rational principles. This work does not focus entirely on hadith but includes rational views on various issues including criticism of the traditions circulating at that time.

2. Abū al-Huzayl al-Allaf

Abū al-Huzayl was one of the leading figures in the *Mu'tazilah* and was known for his criticism of several hadith reports. Although he did not have any specialized works on hadith his writings often touched upon the issue of the authority of hadith. He considered that traditions that contradict reason should be rejected. He has a work called *al-Fusūs* which deals with theology and criticism of hadith-reports especially those considered irrational.³³

3. Abū `Alī al-Jubba`ī

Abū `Alī al-Jubba`ī was a disciple of Ab Ja`far al-Jubba`ī and continued in the *Mu'tazilah* tradition of thought. He also criticized traditions that were inconsistent with logic. His work is called *Al-Hadīth wa al-Akḥbār*. This work explores how hadith should be handled from the *Mu'tazilah* perspective and rejects traditions that are considered irrational.³⁴

4. Ibn al-Rawandī

Ibn al-Rawandī is known as a philosopher and hadith critic. His work focused on criticizing the authority of hadith and he rejected many traditions that did not agree with logic. His work, *al-Maqālāt*, discusses various theological topics and includes the analysis of several traditions. He analyzed and criticized many traditions, especially those that were considered weak or lacked a sound basis.³⁵

³³ Al-Kindī. Abū Ya`Qūb, *Kritik Terhadap Hadis-Hadis Lemah* (Jakarta: Penerbit Al-Mahabab, 2018), 201-210.

³⁴ Ibid, 155-160

³⁵ Al-Baghdādī, `Abd Al-Qahir, *Al-Farq Bayna Al-Firaq* (Yogyakarta: Pustaka Al-Ikhlās, 2010), 52-56

Conclusion

In general, this article discusses the *Mu'tazilah's* critical approach to hadith as a source of Islamic teachings highlighting the problems of hadith validity and interpretation in their view. The *Mu'tazilah* strongly emphasize rationality and logic in understanding religion so they have specific criteria in accepting or rejecting hadith. They tend to consider reason as the main yardstick so that if a tradition contradicts the principles of reason or the teaching of monotheism, they will not accept it even if its sanad is considered valid by other scholars.

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