

CHAPTER IV

ANALYSIS

A. Position of Harald Motzki's View in Western Scholarship

Thought of Harald Motzki was much influenced by Western ḥadīth scholars before. Goldziher, the early great western scholar, deliver his view about the validity and authenticity of ḥadīth. Goldziher studies on ḥadīth become most powerful influence among western scholars concern on Islam and also highly praised. But, the scholars are vary in understand goldziher's results of his view. Some corroborated there view that the numbers of ḥadīths spreading in the third century of hijri were not genuine. However, they continued to assume that there are also genuine ḥadīths or ḥadīths having a historical kernel, thus it is a historian task to discover them. While others take more extreme position and derived from Goldziher's thought of methodological principle that the ḥadīth in general must be considered as wrong. It means that it does not go back to the authority to who it is ascribed to.¹

Motzki criticizes Goldziher's skeptic thought that, in any case, he is inconsistent in his skepticism. He avoided using ḥadīth for his presentation of the prophet life, but he didn't hesitate to accept as historically true reports concerning the companions the Companions and other individuals of the following two or three generations. The difficulty is that while he say that it is impossible to distinguish between genuine ḥadīths and false one in the case of the Prophet's time. When it came to the later period, he didn't tell what new criteria now made it possible to draw such distinctions.²

Then, radical skepticism comes from Joseph Schacht who says that none of the corpus of ḥadīths from the prophet and the companions is genuine. Schacht's

¹ Harald Motzki, introduction of *Hadith; Origins and Developments*, Aldershot 2004. The Formation of the Classical Islamic World 28 (Ashgate/Variorum), p. xx

² *Ibid.*, p. xxi

theory is based on two principles. Firstly, an investigation of the role of those ḥadīths from the Prophet and the Companions played in the theory and practice of legal scholars during second Islamic century. Secondly, it is an examination of the growth of legal ḥadīths. The first argument comes from his explanation that ḥadīth or ḥadīth is not genuine because there is an opposition thought between the living ḥadīths of the ancient school of law and ḥadīths from the Prophet circulating by traditionists. Second argument is his attention to the development of legal ḥadīths which are preserved in the earliest legal works, classical ḥadīth collections, and later legal and ḥadīth compilations. He concludes that the materials in these works represent several successive stage of growth. Then he postulated a similar process of growth to the pre-literary period.³

According to Motzki, the research of ḥadīth authenticity by post-schachtian's scholars can be divided into three classifications based on their attitudes toward Schacht's theories: 1) scholars who flatly rejected them, 2) those who followed him in the main points, and 3) those who attempt to modify them. The first group starts from the thought that the transmission of ḥadīth is continued after the Prophet's death, and become fixed in collection of individuals, even in writing. This material is passed to his pupils through lectures, dictations, copying written texts which formed the stocks from which the collectors of the second century will draw. Their collections are again used by later compilers. Therefore, ḥadīth must be early and origin. Their instrument of examination is mostly based on biographical ḥadīths. The authors of this group followed the rule that a ḥadīth must be considered as authentic, if the contrary is not proven.⁴

The second group is Schacht's theories supporters. They oppose the argument of first group that ḥadīths of the Prophet and the Companions must be considered as fictitious. For them, this is a fact that shouldn't be rejected. This group follows skeptical thought that every ḥadīth or ḥadīth must be considered

³ *Ibid.*, p. xxiii

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. xxv

as fictitious as long as the contrary is not proven. The third group is who accepted part of Schacht's method, not all of his method. They managed to moderate the view of ḥadīth authenticity that they are not too extreme or too generalized. Two different approaches can be distinguished between them: 1) they who draw distinction between the content and form of the ḥadīth, such as Noel Coulson, G.H.A. Juynboll, John Burton, and David Power. 2) Others who attempt to use parts of Schacht's methodological approach to check his results, such as Josef van Ess, Gregor Schoeler, and Harald Motzki.⁵

Having similar to Motzki, Wael B. Hallaq states that Since Schacht published his monumental work in 1950, scholarly discourse on this matter has proliferated. Three camps of scholars may be identified: one attempting to reconfirm his conclusions, and at times going beyond them; another endeavoring to refute them; and a third seeking to create a middle, perhaps synthesized, position between the first two. Among others, John Wansbrough, and Michael Cook belong to the first camp, while Nabia Abbott, F. Sezgin, M. Azami, Gregor Schoeler and Johann Fueck belong to the second. Harald Motzki, D. Santillana, G.H.A Juynboll, Fazlur Rahman and James Robson take the middle position.⁶

According to Ali Masrur, western scholars can be categorized into four: *firstly*, early Western skepticism which is known later as Western revisionists. *Secondly*, they who react against skepticism. *Thirdly*, they who have an attempt to search a middle ground. *Fourthly*, renewed skepticism. Goldziher and Schacht can be included to the first phase, early western skepticism because these two figures hesitate together the authenticity of ḥadīth. Second phase are such as Nabia Abbot and M.M. Azami. Third phase are such as G.H.A. Juynboll, Harald

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. xxvi

⁶ Wael B Hallaq, *The Authenticity of Prophetic Hadith : a Pseudo-problem*, *op.cit.*, p. 76

Motzki, and Yasin Dutton. Fourth phase are such as Michael Cook and Norman Calder.⁷

Jonathan A.C. Brown classifies Western study of early Islamic history and authenticity question into four categories which are either chronologically or thematically distinct: 1) *the orientalist approach*, the initial application of the historical critical method early Islamic history, which challenge many features of the traditional Islamic legal and historical narratives but accept its general structure. 2) *The Philo Islamic Apology*, the arguments of some Muslim and non-Muslim scholars trained in the West responding to first category of western scholars' critic of ḥadīth. 3) *The Revisionist Approach*, beginning in the late 1970s, this approach applied the critical assumptions of the Western approach at a more basic level and questioned the greater narrative of early Islamic history, the origin of the al-Qur'ān, and Islamic law. 4) *The Western Reevaluation*, this approach has rejected the extremes of the revisionists approach while continuing criticism of the early Islamic period according to historical critical method. However, refusing the radical skepticism of the revisionists has led them to some questionable assumptions and also that the Muslim ḥadīths are more sophisticated than previously believed.⁸

The first category includes Ignaz Goldziher and Joseph Schacht, the second category are such as Sayyid Akhmad Khan, Nabia Abbot, and M.M. Azami, and the third category are such as Patricia Crone and Michael Cook, and the fourth category includes David S. Power, G.H.A. Juynboll, and Harald Motzki.

Herbert Berg classifies scholars into three categories according to the level of their skeptic showing from their view about ḥadīth in general and sanad in particular. But, further, he concludes that in reality there are just two positions.

⁷ Ali Masrur, *Perkembangan Historis Studi Hadis di Barat: dari Fase Revisionis Barat Hingga Fase Neo-Skeptisisme*, loc. cit.

⁸ Jonathan A.C. Brown, n.d., *Hadith: Muhammad's Legacy in the Medieval and Modern World* (England: Oneworld Publications, 2009), p. 204. Retrieved on September 11th, 2013 from http://www.scribd.com/document_downloads/direct/42081132?extension=pdf&ft=1378857315<=1378860925&source=embed&uahk=XaKB1ZJU70iSBChCE5yuqv1xygc

On the one side, the skeptical scholars who view that sanad is very few of historical value. In other side, there is Muslim and less skeptical Western scholars who think that sanad is historically useful. Therefore, there is no middle place between the two positions. Furthermore, he states that scholars from each position are circular in delivering their arguments, and therefore can only convince other scholars who give their own assumptions.⁹

Relating to the classification of Berg based on scholar skepticism view, Motzki actually does not agree with this type of classification. It is because Berg doesn't deliver clear explanation about his term of scholar's skeptical thought. So, it affects to the unclear classification. For example, according to Berg, Goldziher is considered as a skeptic scholar, although he admits the possibility of authentic ḥadīth and uses biographical ḥadīths to make historical statements about persons of the first century. Schacht is also classified into skeptical scholars, although he admits to use sanad as instrument of dating ḥadīths.¹⁰ G.H.A Juynboll is labeled as scholar who searches for a middle place; however, in fact, Juynboll has the same level of skeptical thought with Goldziher and Schacht. His later studies show that he interprets the common link as author and fabricator of the texts and of the single strands below him.¹¹

Furthermore, according to Motzki, Berg also makes mistake in applying Motzki's method of *isnād cum matn* analysis. Berg conducts the research of the exegetical ḥadīths ascribed to Ibn 'Abbas dealing with al-Qur'ān 15:90-91 in *Tafsīr al-Ṭabari*. His results are that Ibn 'Abbas may be indeed the author of the exegesis that the word *muqtasimūn* (the partitioners) is referred to Jews and Christians, and the transmitters of the following generation like Mujāhid and 'Ikrima redacted and tendentiously shaped Ibn 'Abbās statements for various theological reasons. In general, he concludes from his analysis that the chain of

⁹ Herbert Berg, *The Development of Exegesis in Early Islam: the Authenticity of Muslim Literature from the Formative Period* (Richmond, Surrey: Curzon, 2000), pp. 49-50

¹⁰ Harald Motzki, *The Question of the Authenticity of Muslim Traditions Reconsidered: A Review Article*, in Herbert Berg ed., *Method and Theory in the Study of Islamic Origins* (Leiden: Koninklijke Brill NV, 2010), p. 213

¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 215

transmission of the exegetical ḥadīths ascribed to Ibn ‘Abbās are largely spurious and that the reliability of the transmissions of the most exegetical ḥadīths must be considered doubtful. So, Motzki also conducts the same research with Berg with the aid of *isnād cum matn* analysis. The results of research is different from Berg’s results, it is because Berg is too superficial and that his application of *isnād cum matn* is not accurate and sophisticated enough.¹²

Relating to the Schacht’s thought, Motzki also criticized it impressively in discussion of *Muwattaʿa* of Mālik’s texts which are from Ibn Shihāb al-Zuhri as fictitious ḥadīths according to Schacht. In his article, *the Jurisprudence of Ibn Shihāb al-Zuhri. A Source-Critical Study*, Motzki shows that Schacht assumption of the fictitious of al-Zuhri’s transmissions are to be found for example in Shaibani’s recension of *Muwattaʿa*, in al-Shāfi‘i’s treatises, and in the *Mudawwana* of Saḥnūn. By referring to the end of the second century as the time when fictitious of al-Zuhri’s transmissions is circulated, it also includes *Muwattaʿa* of Mālik. Therefore, through this article, Motzki try to show that the statement of Schacht is mistake by proving that there are texts of al-Zuhri’s transmission which considered to be authentic from the Prophet and also from the Companion in *Muwattaʿa* of Mālik with the aid of method of source of critical reconstruction.¹³

Motzki also criticized the thought of several western scholars. Juynboll’s theory is one of the Motzki’s critic objects. He refuses the common links theory improved by Juynboll. Juynboll is mistake in explaining the position of common links and in interpreting single strand phenomenon below the common links. Juynboll states a generalization that the common links are fabricators, and the

¹²Harald Motzki, *The Origins of Muslim Exegesis. A Debate*, in Harald Motzki *et.al*, *Analysing Muslim Traditions; Studies in Legal, Exegetical, and Maghazi Hadith* (Leiden: Koninklijke Brill NV, 2010), p. 234

¹³Harald Motzki, *The Jurisprudence of Ibn Shihāb al-Zuhri. A Source-Critical Study*, *op. cit.*, pp. 1-2

single strands must be product of later fabrication which is made by common link himself.¹⁴

Motzki rejects this theory by proposing other interpretation of the common links phenomenon that the common link is not a fabricator, but he is first great systematic collector of ḥadīths and professional teacher of knowledge in general and of ḥadīths about persons living in the first century of Islam in particular. On the other side, single strand phenomenon is the consequence of the fact that the early collectors usually gave only one transmission source for a ḥadīth. The reason may have been that they only transmitted those ḥadīths that they considered very reliable transmission that there is also no requirement that number of authorities and their informants must be mentioned.¹⁵

Motzki also criticized the theory of the Western scholar, Irene Schneider. He follows Schacht on his theory that short texts are older, and long texts, especially detailed stories are younger than the corresponding short ones, and inconsistent Method which allowed single strand to be considered as authentic, even though western scholars methods is not allowed to prove that.¹⁶ Motzki refuses this short-long texts theory because this will generalized the result of investigation. With the aid of *isnād cum matn* analysis, Motzki shows the mistake of the theory by evidence that not all of long version texts are copy or improved ones from the short version. It is also possible for long texts to be earlier than the short one, and it also possible that the long texts are become model of short one. As a respond of her mistake theory and analysis of ḥadīth research criticized by Motzki, Schneider counterattacks Motzki's critic with the critic explanation that is such a misunderstanding of Motzki's arguments.

Western scholar who is also criticized by Motzki is Norman Calder. Calder, based on method of theory *argumentum e silentio* of Schacht, states that

¹⁴Harald Motzki, *Whither Hadith Studies?*, *op. cit.*, p. 51

¹⁵*Ibid.*, p. 52

¹⁶Harald Motzki, *The Prophet and The Debtors. A hadith Analysis Under Scrutiny*, *op. cit.*, p. 141

Muwaṭṭa' of Mālik by Yahyā's recension in the fact is not be able to be Mālik as his author. *Argumentum e silentio* applied by him is through checking two of Mālik's compilations, *Mudawwana* of Saḥnūn and *Muwaṭṭa'* of Mālik by Yahyā's recension. He observes both of their characteristic features, and compares them. After checking two of them, he concludes that the *Muwaṭṭa'* must belong to a later stage in the development of Islamic juristic theory than the *Mudawwana*.¹⁷ Therefore, Motzki managed to reject *e silentio* of Calder by conducting ḥadīth analysis of the Prophet and the Cat. The result of this analysis is that the ḥadīth is really able to goes back through Mālik.

B. Reliability of Harald Motzki's Method

In Harald Motzki's Method, the three instruments which must be involved are sanad, matn, and biographical information. Before using these three types of sources, middle ground of Western scholars have tested and examined the historical value of these three types of information by means concrete examinations. It must be investigated first that these three can be used to reconstruct the historical events happened in the early era of Islam.

Western Scholars have managed to make reliable methodologies which will allow them to reconstruct historical events accurately. They developed and tested methods that make it possible in specific cases to decide more closely the historical value of the three source types. They depart from the assumption that only on the basis of numerous tests of three sources types, it will be possible to decide historical reliability of these source, and method of *isnād cum matn* analysis is one of the kind of these method suggested by Motzki.¹⁸

The dating of ḥadīths firstly is facilitated by sanad placed at the beginning of matn. It is possible that this sanad is forged by the author of the compilations or their informants and, therefore, don't present a true picture of the transmission

¹⁷Harald Motzki, *The Prophet and the Cat: on Dating Mālik's Muwaṭṭa' and Legal Traditions*, *op. cit.*, p. 20

¹⁸Harald Motzki, *Theme Issue: Methods of Dating Early Legal Traditions. Introduction*, *op. cit.*, p. 3

process. It means that a systematic analysis of the sanad is needed in attempt to distinguish between authentic and forged sanad, and to determine the oldest genuine common transmitter of the several sanads. Then, Motzki suggests completing sanad examination with an analysis of the matn to provide broader basis for dating. It is because that matn of the report found in several sources shows both similarities and differences.¹⁹

However, in investigation of matn, texts of ḥadīth are not always transmitted word-to-word (*verbatim*). In the transmission of the texts of ḥadīth, there are two ways in delivering ḥadīth from the informant to his pupil, they are: 1) transmission by *verbatim* (*al-riwāya bil lafẓi*) and 2) transmission by meaning (*al-riwāya bil ma'nā*). In the case of type of transmission by *verbatim*, it's clear to apply the investigation of matn based on Motzki's method. However, in the case of transmission by meaning, the researcher finds a difficulty to understand if it is related to his method of matn investigation.

Factors which cause the rise of *al-riwāya bil ma'nā* are: 1) not all of ḥadīth are transmitted through the way of *mutawātir lafẓi*. It's very different from the transmission of al-Qur'ān. 2) In the Prophet until the Companion era, ḥadīth is not yet codified; even ḥadīth is not written by the companion, except some of the certain Companions, while transmission of ḥadīth in that era is still dominated by oral transmission. 3) Differences of memorizing level and transmitted capability among them. 4) Only ḥadīth of *qauli* which may be transmitted by *verbatim*, although kind of ḥadīth is not only *qauli*, but also *taqrīri*, *fi'li*, and *aḥwāl*.²⁰

According to Salamah Noor hidayati, there are some impacts as the implication of the existence of *al-riwāya bil ma'nā*. They are: 1) *al-ikhtiṣār* (summary) and *al-taqfī'* (cutting), it means that transmitter only transmits part of the texts of ḥadīth, and leaves the remaining of the ḥadīth text. 2) *al-Taqdīm*

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 4

²⁰ Salamah Noor hidayati, *Kritik Teks Hadis, Analisis tentang ar-Riwayah bi al-Makna dan Implikasi bagi Kualitas Hadis* (Yogyakarta: TERAS, 2009), p. 52

(be the first) and *al-ta'khīr* (be the last), it means that transmitting ḥadīth by putting part of text ḥadīth in the front, but in fact that the part of ḥadīth should be place in the back or in the last, and *vice versa*. 3) *al-Ziyāda* (addition) and *al-nuqṣān* (decreasing), adding or decreasing the original ḥadīth text. 4) *al-Ibdāl* (change), it means changing alphabet, word, or phrase of ḥadīth text.²¹

In the case of type of transmission by *verbatim*, it's clear for Motzki's investigation of matn. However, in the case of transmission by meaning, it seems that there is a problem if it is related to his method of matn investigation. In this case, firstly, the researcher finds contrary in his method of matn investigation relating to *al-riwāya bil ma'nā*. In the kind of transmission by meaning (*al-riwāya bil ma'nā*), transmitter just delivers the ḥadīth based on his understanding what the Prophet means is. Transmitter disobeyed originally detail of words that was used from his informant. In the other side, his investigation of matn observes characteristic features of the texts that will involve analyzing of texts wording. While, in the case of transmission by meaning, the main is meaning/content, and text is disobeyed. So, original detail of words is also disobeyed. It also doesn't known exactly about a ḥadīth whether it is transmitted by *verbatim* or by meaning. It is just able to be identified (either transmission by *verbatim* or by meaning) by recognizing who the transmitter is and what type of the transmission he usually used.

Then, the aim of his matn investigation is to open the differences and the similarities in the variation of texts. So, we will know the independency of each texts in every transmissions. However, from the above explanation, it becomes absurd in deciding the independency of texts.

However, the researcher also finds that Motzki actually aware of this kinds of transmission. He realized that transmissions are not only *verbatim* but also by meaning. Because in fact that each texts of ḥadīth in every transmissions are various although in one ḥadīth. It is reasonable that the transmission is for the

²¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 92-117

most part written and oral, the errors and repairs are possible cases. Motzki also tries to explain why this various matn is possibly happened. For example, the transmitter may not have passed on the words of the text received from their sources *verbatim*. This may be because they do not write it down immediately or because they have to quote from memory. They may feel justified in using synonyms or expand the text. Finally, they may have reduced the text to a single issue to answer certain questions.

On the other hand, that the teacher reported the text at different times in different words. This can be happened because the teacher thought that the words of the text are less important than its content. Another possible explanation would be the possibility that he memorized everything and teach only from the (sometimes failing) memory, or that he does not have to hand-written notes or do not want to use them at that time.²²

Therefore, according to him, the distinction between *al-riwāya bil ma'nā* and *bil lafẓī* is just on the theoretical one. Because his experience of ḥadīth research proves that the transmission of traditions, including those from the Prophet, was mostly orally and aurally during the first one hundred and fifty years after the death of the Prophet. This statement is based on the many textual differences between the versions of ḥadīths preserved. After 150 H, the transmission of ḥadīth becomes much more accurate and the differences between the variants become smaller.²³ Because Motzki's important of dating purposes is just on very early period, the issue of *al-riwāya bil ma'nā* and *bil lafẓī* is less important for his research.²⁴

Therefore, Motzki's investigation of matn is looking for the accuracy of the line of the transmission. He always carefully managed to detect or identify, for example, copying ḥadīth or parts of ḥadīth which is unable to be ascribed to

²² Harald Motzki, *Whither Hadith Studies?*, *op. cit.*, pp. 119-120

²³ Harald Motzki, *The Jurisprudence of Ibn Shihāb az-Zuhri. A Source-Critical Study*, *op. cit.*, p. 33

²⁴ Harald Motzki's email on November 17th, 2013

its author. This kind of Motzki's matn investigation seems like looking for the 'illa of ḥadīth. In Muslim ḥadīth studies, 'illa of ḥadīth are, for example, *tadlis*, *iḍṭirāb*, and *ziyāda*. 'Illa itself is such a hidden existence of factor and not transparent, but if it is detected in a matn or sanad of ḥadīth, the ḥadīth which firstly looks like authentic will fall to be inauthentic. It is said that the factor is hidden existence because it is unable to be detected by regular ḥadīth expert, and only professional who deeply analyzes the ḥadīth will discover it. According to al-Hakim, cited by Salamah Noor Hidayati, warns that 'illa of ḥadīth is not related to *al-jarḥ wa al-ta'dīl*. It is because chain of transmitters in the ḥadīth consists of *thiqah* persons. The ḥadīth which in fact contains 'illa also met the criteria that indication of sanad connectivity, contemporaneity between transmitter and his informant, symbol of transmission connectivity are accomplished, and substance of ḥadīth content is in proper.²⁵ Therefore, Harald Motzki's matn investigation which is placed earlier than sanad investigation will give more attention to the 'illa discovery. With discovering of 'illa, it also will give more attention in detecting the accuracy of each transmissions of a ḥadīth, including the detection of by meaning transmission.

Then, the main analysis of Motzki is basically to identify genuine sources from fabrication one. Furthermore, it will analyze text of ḥadīth for the early history of Islam. Ḥadīth is certainly a very important source, if only for the reason that there are not many other sources available. Source criticism is a prerequisite of a historical reconstruction, one methodological achievements of modern historical study. Source criticism sets out to evaluate the resources available by checking the accuracy, originality and authenticity of the source information.

According to Motzki, Muslim ḥadīth criticism judges the reliability of ḥadīth first of all is based mainly on sanad. In contrast, Western scholars impress their judgment of ḥadīth reliability with their aim of assessing the historical

²⁵ Salamah Noor Hidayati, *op. cit.*, p. 79

value of ḥadīth mainly on the text. This opinion was shared by Ignaz Goldziher, one of founding fathers of Western ḥadīth studies. On the other hand, it is extremely difficult, if it is not impossible, to verify the reliability of sanads. This could not be done without consulting to the information given by the early Muslim themselves in the biographical dictionaries. But, this information is not considered to be very reliable by Western scholars.²⁶

The sources for early Islam contain several types of information. The texts of ḥadīth that contain historical descriptions or events in the past are attached with chain of transmissions. Identification of the names of transmitters obtains some help from the biographical information available from the third century onwards which are usually consist of the information around familial and geographical origin, contact with other scholars, change of residence, assessments of their abilities as transmitters, and dates of death. The skeptics reject all three source types, texts, transmission's chain, and biographical information, *a priori* as fictions that have little or no value for historical reconstruction of the first century and a half of Islam. In contrast, some of middle ground scholars, including Motzki, advocate testing the historical value of these three types of information. They have tested and developed the methods that make it possible to elaborate these kinds of sources.

Based on the researcher's analysis, Motzki's *isnād cum matn* and Muslim critical ḥadīth is almost same. The similarity is that his method and Muslim method is similar in involving three instruments of research: sanad, matn, and biographical information. The difference is in starting points of method. In Muslim critical ḥadīth, after making sanad bundle, then continued by investigation on sanad by checking reliability and connectivity of each transmitters in every transmissions in biographical information. Finally, after discovering one or more reliable transmission, it is continued by matn investigation by trying to discover *shadh* and *'illa* on matn. While in Motzki's

²⁶ Harald Motzki , *Whither hadith studies, op. cit.*, p. 48

method, after making sanad bundle, then continued by identifying common link checked by matn analysis. Finally, after discovering transmissions which have text independency, then continued by sanad investigation by checking each transmitters started from transmitters which are indicated to become the common link by checking their historicity, reliability, and connectivity.

Motzki doesn't analyze sanad firstly as in Muslim ḥadīth critic because Western scholars are not fully trusted about *rijāl* works, and Motzki come in the middle of them. According to Western scholars, *rijāl* works are not fully reliable. They are products of scholars in the third century, thus, they cannot be used to reconstruct event in the first century. In Motzki's opinion, neither information found in a *rijāl* work nor these types of literature in general are as such suspect 'from the beginning'. They are sources like any others that contain historically useful and less useful information. The usefulness of a report or a certain type of report is not *a priori* certain. Whether it is useful or not must be ascertained case by case. Then, he will give the arguments in his research why he gave preference for certain information found in the *rijāl* works and why he rejected other information found in the same type of literature. In the ḥadīth 'prophet and the cat', *zakat al-fiṭr*, and 'the Prophet and the debtors', the researcher found that, in conducting his Method, all of the transmitters involved must firstly be checked his biography, Especially, transmitters who are indicated as common link for dating ḥadīth.²⁷

The way to determine the *thiqa*'s level of transmitter is by referreing him to *rijāl* books and also with comparing his text with other texts. But, Western scholars questions how far the accuracy of the judgment of the author of *rijāl* books toward transmitters. It means that the reliability of *al-jarḥ wa al-ta'dīl* which are found in *rijāl* books is still questened and long distance period between the author's life and the transmitters'life also drive them doubting on the accuracy of *rijāl* books' information. However, it doesn't mean that *rijāl* book is

²⁷ Harald Motzki's email on August 29th,2013

not important to be consulted, because empirical observation toward *rijāl* books shows that there are also found valuable information, although it must be kept to be criticized.²⁸

Motzki actually always checks *al-jarḥ wa al-ta'dīl* literature in order to look whether the judgements of the classical ḥadīth scholars are in line with his own results of analysis. Mostly they are in line, sometimes they are not, as for instance in the case of *Surraq*. The problem of using the *al-jarḥ wa al-ta'dīl* literature is that Motzki, and any other Western scholars, do not know how the scholars arrived at their judgments. Are they based on their own analysis of the narrations or on hearsay? Quite often they find disagreement in the judgements; in some cases Motzki found that the judgments were influenced by rivalry between scholars or centres of learning.²⁹ These are the reasons why he does not use this literature uncritically but only for a check-up of the results of his own studies of sanads and matns of the narrations.

The other difference of Motzki's *isnād cum matn* from Muslim critical ḥadīth is that Muslim ḥadīth critic doesn't consider common link as important part. Common link is treated as other transmitters by checking his reliability and connectivity, without any specializations. In other side, his method is really consider common link as important part. Common link must be investigated whether he is fabricator or just systematic collector and disseminator of ḥadīth. If common link is fabricator of ḥadīth, dating ḥadīth will finish on common link himself. While if common link is systematic collector and disseminator of ḥadīth and his informant is historical person (not fictitious person), dating ḥadīth will be able to pass on common link toward his informant or more if there is a reason for it.

It's because of that Motzki comes in the middle of skeptical scholars who developed a method that is responsible to be based on the quality and quantity of

²⁸ Kamaruddin Amin, in his article, *Western Methods of Dating vis-a-vis Ulumul Hadis; Refleksi Metodologis atas Diskursus Kesarjanaan Hadis Islam dan Barat*, loc. cit.

²⁹ Harald Motzki's email on August 29th, 2013

transmission. Then, Motzki arrives with his method that tries to reduce Western skepticism to be more balance in judgment, and also managed to influence Western scholars in order to not rivet on common link. Therefore, Motzki's method which is departed from their own skeptical Western scholars' method, but with different interpretation from them, and tries to undermine their skeptical thought.

However, the implication of matn investigation used firstly and the usage of common link concept, *isnād cum matn* analysis cannot be conducted to single transmission. This method must be applied to complex or interconnected transmissions. The implication of common link concept requires to look for transmissions as much as possible because common link is effectively detected if there are number of transmissions. While, matn investigation through it's way of analysing by comparing each of matns in order to discover its characteristic features cannot be done with just single matn. It is very different from Muslim ḥadīth critic that is able to investigate ḥadīth, although it is a single transmission. It is because Muslim ḥadīth critic investigate sanad firstly -one by one- by checking *rijāl* works and *al-jarḥ wa al-ta'dīl* they trust, although, in *al-jarḥ wa al-ta'dīl*, there are also rules in judging it's critic objectivity.

C. The Authenticity in Harald Motzki's View

1. Harald Motzki's Authentic Meaning

According to Motzki, the term 'authentic' is have different meaning in his dating research Method from Muslim scholars. Authentic is judgment for the type of transmission that every transmitter who arranges every chain of transmission is not fabricator of ḥadīth, but he really gets the ḥadīth from his informant he mentioned. His term about authentic explicitly shows on the title of his article *The Muṣannaf of 'Abd al-Razzāq al-Ṣan'ānī as a source of Authentic aḥādīth of the first Islamic century* and his article *The Prophet and the Cat* which he call that ḥadīth as an authentic aḥādīth of the first Islamic

century. His saying does not necessarily imply that such a ḥadīth can always be proved to go back to the Prophet or the Companion, but it means that the ḥadīth is really exist in the first century of Hijri although it cannot be decided it is from the Prophet or not. This meaning is also misunderstood by other Western scholars, such as U. Rubin, Irene Schneider, and Herbert Berg. They interpret Motzki's term of authentic ḥadīth as ḥadīth which is reached back to the Prophet.

Gledhill also criticizes Motzki's use of the term "authentic". As an alternative to authentic transmissions, he implies, Motzki recognizes only forgeries. As can be seen from what has been said above, this is an error. Motzki's understanding of authentic transmission is not limited to verbatim transmission from teacher to pupil, and his understanding of forged transmission is not limited to pure falsification. Only extremely sceptical scholars use the term 'authentic' and 'forged' in this sense.³⁰ Other students of the informant may report parts of his instruction differently or not at all, because those students did not take classes at the same time as the transmitter did, or because they did not transmit parts of the teaching further.³¹

The technical meaning of the Arabic word *ṣaḥīḥ* for a ḥadīth supposed to really go back to the Prophet developed only since the time of Mālik bin Anas. As a term of ḥadīth criticism it has been translated by Western scholars with the term 'authentic', meaning 'going back to the Prophet'. Yet the meaning of the term 'authentic' is much broader and can be used to describe any point of origin. Therefore, he will state 'authentic of the first Islamic century' if the origin of a ḥadīth ascribed to the Prophet can be dated in all probability to this century but not with certainty to the Prophet himself. His statement of an authentic ḥadīth of the first half of the second century is for a ḥadīth ascribed to the Prophet which can only securely be dated second half of the second

³⁰ Harald Motzki, *Motzki's Reliable Transmitter: A Short Answer to P. Gledhill*, in *Journal: Islamic Law and Society* 19 (2012), pp. 194-199, p. 196

³¹ *Ibid.*, p. 197

century of Hijri because of problematic *asānīd* or *mutūn*. If the ḥadīth is able to be traced back to the Prophet, it will be called as an authentic ḥadīth of the Prophet. Therefore, he doesn't reject and still believe the existence of authentic ḥadīth from the Prophet if his Method can prove it.³²

2. Harald Motzki's Authenticity criteria

according to the researcher, the method of *isnād cum matn* analysis is that the quality of a transmitter is not only based on comments or judgments of scholars about such transmitters. Comments about it are being secondary evidence. The quality of transmitters is primarily determined mainly by matn or texts of ḥadīth themselves. In other words, whether the transmitter is *thiqa* person or not is not only just based on the books of biography that discusses the quality of transmitters, but also based mainly on the analysis of sanad and matn. Quality of ḥadīth is determined primarily by the quality of sanad, although not ignore consideration of matn.

The method of *isnād cum matn* analysis is managed to guess quality of ḥadīth based on its matn, even quality of sanad can be estimated through its matn. Analysis of matn is not whether it is about the contrary to the Qur'an, logic, or later Islamic legal, but it is about the extent to which a transmitter distorted text history in the process of transmission, textually different from the text history of others. But before textual or matn analysis is done, it must be firstly mapped who received the ḥadīth and who is his informant, ranging from *mukharrij* until the last transmitter (the Companion of the Prophet) or the owner of the text, the Prophet.

Muslim ḥadīth criticism judges the reliability of ḥadīth first of all is based mainly on sanad. In contrast, Western scholars impress their judgment of ḥadīth reliability with their aim of assessing the historical value of ḥadīth mainly on the matn. Muslim scholars determine the reliability of ḥadīth

³² Harald Motzki's email on November 17th, 2013.

transmitter and mainly through their base judgment on transmitter in *rijāl* works (*al-jarḥ wa al-ta'dīl*). Non-Muslim scholars consider these *al-jarḥ wa al-ta'dīl* are less reliable and still need to be criticized. It also drives their analysis mainly on matn. His concern mainly on the matn let him deeply investigate the 'illa in order to know the reliability of transmissions leading to the authenticity of ḥadīth, without neglecting biography information as secondary. While Muslim scholars concern on *al-jarḥ wa al-ta'dīl* let him deeply investigate the reliability of transmission in order to know the authenticity of ḥadīth.

This method does not require general presumptions about the authenticity of the transmissions. Neither the statement that single type of ḥadīths has to be considered as fictional until it is proven to be authentic. Nor the prejudice that they have to be considered as authentic until fictional is proven. With this approach, the question is not about whether the ḥadīth is authentic or not, but what part and how far of it that can be ascribed or be traced back to the earlier author. It is grand theme of dating analysis.³³

Common link also plays important role in ḥadīth authenticity. How far a ḥadīth will be able to be traced back depends on who the common link of that ḥadīth. Although the phenomenon of common link is interpreted differently, common link theory has been widely used as a powerful research tool for analysis of sanad in Western scholarship. This theory is made by Western scholarship. At the beginning of this method, the existence of common link must be predicated as fabricator of ḥadīth.³⁴

On the other hand, this theory has also brought other Western scholars doing some ḥadīths dating backwards further than commonly believed by

³³ Harald Motzki, *The Prophet and the Debtors*, *op. cit.*, p. 147

³⁴ Joseph Schacht, who popularizes the theory, says that the existence of common link gives strong indication that the hadith was originated in the time of the common link. See Joseph Schacht, *the Origins of Muhammadan Jurisprudence*, *op. cit.*, p. 171; Juynboll also follows the common link's interpretation by Joseph Schacht that he is the originator of ḥadīth. See Harald Motzki, *Dating Muslim Traditions*, *op. cit.*, p. 224

another west colleagues. In other words, although using a different approach from the approach used by Muslim scholars to assess the reliability of ḥadīth history, the results of several ḥadīths dating by Motzki goes farther (earlier) than the results achieved by Joseph Schacht, who popularized the theory.

Motzki put it more cautiously that the possibility that a tradition (*ḥadīth, athar*) has a transmission history before the common link cannot be ruled out *a priori* (out of hand). He is convinced and demonstrated it in a several cases that the dating must not necessarily stop at the common link transmitter. This does not necessarily mean that the complete single strand before the common link can be dated. Sometimes one can show that the person mentioned by the common link as his direct source is most probably really his informant, sometimes you can even go two or three generations further back if there are reasons for it.³⁵

It is not as in the case of common link, the case of single strand, according to most of the Western scholars, is no solid criteria to assess a solitary sanad and to reconstruct the transmission history on the basis of such a single strand. On the other hand, it is still possible to judge the reliability of single strand with the aid of the traditional method of Muslim scholars and to investigate the transmitters more deeply by referring to information from the *rijāl* works (biographical dictionaries of ḥadīth transmitters).³⁶

D. Harald Motzki's View about the Earlier Western Theory

1. Backward Projection

Motzki does not dismiss Schacht's theory of growth backward of sanads, however he rejects its generalization. He, further, says that the fact that ḥadīths and sanads were forged must not lead someone to conclude that

³⁵ Harald Motzki's email on August 29th, 2013

³⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 157

all of them are fictitious or that the genuine and the spurious cannot be distinguished with some degree of certainty.³⁷

2. *Argumentum e Silentio*

Motzki denied common applications of *argumentum e silentio*. In his articles, Motzki criticized the adoption of this concept and present a number of examples which show that the conclusion *e silentio* is dangerous. While analyzing the history of Ibn Juraij from ‘Aṭa, he concluded that the scholars in the early days of Islam did not always feel obliged to cite all of the details of the ḥadīth even though they know it. Similarly, the fact that a scholar does not mention a particular ḥadīth may be because they do not know. This does not mean that these ḥadīths do not exist at all. Eventually, the sources that we have are not complete but scattered (fragmentary). Therefore, the emergence of a ḥadīth in recent ḥadīth collections that are not found in the collection of the older ḥadīths should not be understood that these ḥadīths are fabricated.³⁸

3. Common Links

Motzki interprets common links different from its predecessors which states that the common links are as forgers of ḥadīth, but it is a first systematic collector of Ḥadīth, which records and narrated in the regular lectures of students, and of the classes that a learning system is institutionally developed. The common links, ie, the first systematic collector, which convey the ḥadīths from the first century to complement the sanad, which they call the names of informants where they receive along with sanad or not. Explanation of the fact that these early collectors (common links) cites only one authority for their history is that they only deliver versions of the ḥadīth

³⁷ Harald Motzki, *The Muṣannaf of ‘Abd al-Razzāq al-San’ānī as a source of Authentic aḥādīth of the first Islamic century*, pp. 1-21 (Jurnal of Near Eastern Studies 50, 1991), p. 9

³⁸ In several cases he refuses the application of this theory by western scholars, for example Calder’s application in dating *Muwatṭa’* of Mālik. See Harald Motzki, *The Prophet and the Cat*, *op. cit.*, pp. 19-29, Juynboll on Nāfi’s biographical information. See Harald Motzki, *Whither Hadith Studies?*, *op. cit.*, pp. 61-74, and the *man kadhhaba* ḥadīths. See Harald Motzki, *Dating Muslim Traditions*, *op. cit.*, pp. 215-219

that they have received and/or they regard it as the most reliable path and that the need to cite authority and more informants, and also means a different version of honor, not prosecuted. Nevertheless, it is possible that the collector (common links) to add the most suitable informants if they forget the real informant.³⁹

³⁹ It is stated severally in Motzki's articles, but clear explanation will be found in his articles, *Whither Hadith Studies, op. cit.*, p. 51-52; and *al-Radd 'ala al-Radd, op. cit.*, p. 210