

The Academic Study of Hadith in North America Universities

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Abstract

Scholarly interest in Islamic studies has increased over the last decade. The academic study of Islam in North America emerged from Orientalism; after World War II it gave way to area studies and, in the mid-twentieth century, started to be addressed as a separate research area. However, the subfield of Hadith studies remains neglected. In comparison to its role and the approach at modern academic institutions in the Muslim world, Hadith studies in North American universities seem to have received attention mainly in terms of this body of literature's authenticity.

This paper uses qualitative research methods to provide an overview of the historical and contemporary academic study of this subfield and examine the space allocated to it within the broader Islamic studies curriculum. Examining and analyzing its legacy and current state in the academy will help us clarify the general acceptance of this subfield within those institutions.

Introduction

The majority of Muslims accept Hadith as the second source of Islamic legislation. As such, it has been studied for many centuries in the Islamic world and for nearly 1,000 years in the West. Examining and analyzing this legacy

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and the current state of this subfield in North American universities (hereinafter “universities”) will help us understand the general acceptance of Hadith studies among American scholars.

This paper will (1) examine Hadith studies within the broader curriculum of Islamic studies, (2) examine the evolution of Islamic studies within universities, and (3) analyze the state of this subfield from institutional, intellectual, and pedagogical viewpoints. I will discuss its presence in universities, online universities, non-accredited institutions, and research centers (institutional perspective); analyze academic works on Hadith, including master theses, doctoral dissertations, articles, and conference presentations (intellectual perspective); and mention courses on hadith studies, pay attention to their content by studying their syllabuses, and identify the instructors (pedagogical perspective).

One of the limitations of this research study, as Marcia Hermansen has pointed out, is related to the difficulty of defining what is specifically “American” in terms of scholarship and scholars. This difficulty lies in the fact that some leading Islamic and Hadith studies scholars were post-Second World War European immigrants.¹

This study applies qualitative research methods to the materials in order to perform document analysis, descriptive analysis, and content analysis. Theses about Hadith studies were acquired by keyword searches on ProQuest Dissertations and Theses Global (PQDT), one of the most comprehensive thesis databases.² Articles about Hadith studies were found by keyword searches in the four most important journals³ featured on the JSTOR website.⁴ Presentations about Hadith studies were found by searching the presentations made during the American Oriental Society (AOS)⁵ and the American Academy of Religion’s (AAR) annual meetings.⁶

Online university catalogs are quite useful when it comes to accessing the relevant courses, for they provide the course listings, identify the instructors, and even provide their résumés. We also utilized the AAR’s syllabus project and conducted face-to-face interviews with some of the instructors and students. Thus we hope that this study will fill an important gap in understanding the state of this particular subfield.

The State of Islamic Studies

As a discipline, the history of Islamic studies in North American universities can be analyzed in three stages,⁷ those of Orientalist studies, area studies, and an independent discipline. There is continuity in this long history and the con-

nection among these three stages. At the earliest stage, Islamic studies was part of Oriental studies in the beginning of the nineteenth century. The AOS, founded in 1842, began publishing a journal in 1843. Although these developments comprised a milestone in the study of Islamic sciences in terms of the institutionalization of Islamic studies, progress remained slow.

The study of Islamic sciences began to develop mainly after the Second World War,⁸ for the periodic Muslim migrations to the United States led an increase in this population and the rise of academic interest in Islamic studies. This latter interest led to the growth of budgets being set aside to develop research programs and establish Islamic studies departments.⁹ With the advent of the Cold War, Orientalist studies gave way to area studies with the result that during the 1960s, Near Eastern Studies and then Middle East Studies departments started to host Islamic studies. Immigrant scholars like Seyyed Hossein Nasr and Ismail al-Faruqi (murdered in 1986) played an important role in transitioning Orientalist studies to area studies as well as spreading and developing Islamic studies programs. Edward Said's (d. 2003) powerful critique of Orientalist scholarship and influence on area studies should also be noted here.

The final stage concerns the emergence of Islamic studies programs within either religious studies or area studies departments; some departments even included Islamic studies in their titles. Various centers of Islamic studies flourished, and departments devoted to the field were established.

Islamic studies started to be addressed as a separate working area in the mid-twentieth century,¹⁰ when Montreal's McGill University established its Institute of Islamic Studies in 1952. Studies in Islamic sciences became widespread due to the efforts of Gustave E. von Grunebaum (d. 1972), who established the Center of Near East Studies at the University of California Los Angeles in 1957. The Duncan Black Macdonald Center of Study of Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations, founded in 1973 at Hartford Seminary, became the first center of Islamic studies.¹¹

From this initial period up to and including the present day many centers, all of which have played an important role in strengthening Islamic studies departments, have been set up to address Islam together with Christianity, Judaism, and other religions.¹² For example, Georgetown University's Prince Alwaleed Bin Talal Center for Muslim-Christian Understanding opened in 1993; the department that hosted the Islamic studies program changed its name to "Arabic and Islamic Studies" and added "Islamic Studies" phrase to its name in 2004. Also, several chairs in Islamic studies, among them the Ibn Khaldun Chair at American University (1981), the King Fahd Chair at Harvard

Law School (1993), and the IIIT Chair at George Mason University (2008), can be considered reflections of developments in this particular field.

Studies on Islam in universities may be found in specific Islamic studies departments or under the aegis of other departments that host Islamic studies programs.¹³ As noted before, most universities do not have special departments for this field but locate them within their Near Eastern Studies, Middle East Studies, or Religious Studies departments.

Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations Departments. At their core, these departments reflect the idea that one must understand a specific culture's language(s) in order to understand that culture. As a result, Islamic studies are pursued with language-related works, as in such prestigious universities as Harvard, Yale, Princeton, the University of Chicago, and the University of Michigan.

Middle East Studies Departments. These departments began to spread in 1958 with the establishment of the National Resource Center (NRC), to which the American Ministry of Education provided funds to support field-work.¹⁴ These departments are especially common in American universities and tend to be concerned with political and regional issues and language. In some universities, this field of study is located within specific centers or institutes. The University of Virginia, the University of Texas, and the University of California at Berkeley locate their Islamic studies programs in their Middle Eastern studies departments or provide such studies via related centers.

Religious Studies Departments. In the United States, more than 1,400 religious studies departments are dedicated to the Bible and Protestant theology studies.¹⁵ Unlike the theological studies departments found in seminaries or theological schools, departments of religion aim at "teaching about religion" rather than "teaching religion." For this reason, they are most often found within the university's arts and sciences faculties. In 1960, as Islamic studies programs began to be included in the expanding field of religious studies, the number of Islamic studies programs, activities, experts, and job opportunities¹⁶ increased.¹⁷ Religious studies departments, especially after 1980, have featured more studies related to Islam. But despite this progress, only 10 percent of experts on Islamic sciences teach in these departments.¹⁸ The University of Georgia, the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, Boston University, Arizona State University, and others offer Islamic studies programs within their religious studies depart-

ments. These above-mentioned private and public universities also offer bachelors, masters, or doctoral programs.¹⁹

The growing interest in Islamic sciences over the last fifty years has led to an increase in the number of university Islamic studies programs. Other driving factors have been the West's political and economic relations with Muslim countries, Muslim immigration to the United States, Cold War politics, and terrorism. September 11 and subsequent violent events, which made people realize that they need to understand and analyze Islam,²⁰ have led to a huge increase in Islam-related courses, especially in the United States,²¹ and in the number of academic publications on Islam.²² Scholars of Islam have treated this new trend as both a positive (e.g., an attempt to understand Islam) and a negative (e.g., triggered by national security concerns) development.²³

The State of Hadith Studies

The institutional context can be divided into three categories: universities; unaccredited colleges and universities; and online universities, research centers, and non-profit organizations.

Universities. As North American universities offer no separate subfields under Islamic studies departments (e.g., Hadith, *tafsīr*, and *kalām*), Islamic studies programs and their instructors must be considered when evaluating the state of Hadith studies. Most Islamic studies scholars in these universities specialize in multiple areas, as this helps them work in an interdisciplinary fashion.

The department in which the program is located affects the quality of work. In those located in Middle East and Near Eastern studies departments, Islam is studied from a more contemporary and political lens. Courses and research focus on current issues in the Islamic world, especially the Middle and Near East. Scholars like Nasr do not approve of this, given that the Islamic world extends far beyond these two regions, and thus argue that religious studies departments are more suitable for such programs.²⁴ However, some scholars do approve of this arrangement because it facilitates interdisciplinary research. According to this view, placing Islamic studies programs in religious studies departments leads to a decline in the scholars' interest in other fields like history, politics, culture, and demographics.²⁵

Nasr and others also maintain that Islamic studies in North America, as compared to its counterpart in Europe, is far from satisfactory. He especially criticizes the style of education employed in Middle East and Near Eastern

studies departments, which, he contends, teach many subjects concerning the Islamic world with minimal reference to Islam itself.²⁶ As Hermansen points out, Hadith studies remain a neglected subfield within Islamic studies.²⁷

Moreover, there are several serious problems with this subfield's institutionalized context, such as the lack of scholars specializing in Islamic studies and the even lower number of Hadith specialists. In universities that do not have such specialists, the Hadith courses offered by non-specialists are generally introductory and provide only insufficient and superficial information.

Within Middle East and area studies, the Hadith are dealt with as literary rather than religious texts. Moreover, language classes commonly teach Modern Standard Arabic, which leads to some difficulty in understanding classical Arabic texts. This causes mistranslated texts to be used in Hadith courses, for not a great deal of Hadith literature and texts have been translated into English. Unfortunately, some of those translated texts do not meet accepted academic standards and contain major mistranslations. In addition, the lack of comments and explanatory notes makes it harder for students to understand the Hadith if they are not already familiar with Islam.²⁸ To rectify this lack of translated classical literature, the International Institute of Islamic Thought (IIIT) has proposed starting a global project in this regard known as the State of Islamic Studies in American Universities.²⁹

Unaccredited Colleges and Universities. Zaytuna College, established by Hamza Yusuf and Zaid Shakir in 1996, is the only fully accredited university or college founded by Muslims in North America and therefore serves as an example for all such universities.³⁰ However, Muslim-established unaccredited colleges and universities are important because they are designed to conduct research solely on Islamic studies. In contrast to other universities, Zaytuna³¹ has an intensive course program on classical Islamic studies and several Hadith studies courses, among them "Introduction to Hadith Sciences" and "Legal Issues in the Hadith: Marriage and Divorce."³²

The Graduate School of Islamic and Social Sciences (GSISS),³³ established in 2003 and incorporated into Cordoba University, is specifically geared to Islamic studies. The only Muslim-founded affiliate member of the Washington Theological Consortium,³⁴ it offers an introduction to Hadith and courses on the methodology of textual criticism.

Online Universities, Research Centers, and Non-profit Organizations. Online universities are often used alongside formal education in North America. The American Learning Institute for Muslims (ALIM),³⁵ the Islamic Online Uni-

versity³⁶ founded by Bilal Philips, and the American Open University³⁷ are examples of Muslim-founded online universities that provide undergraduate and graduate courses in Islamic studies.

IIIT was founded in 1981 by al-Faruqi, the pioneer of the Islamization of Knowledge movement.³⁸ This research center conducts various projects, holds intellectual and cultural meetings, and publishes academic studies. Its main target audiences are international, intellectual, and academic circles. However, the institute does organize summer courses in classic Islamic sciences, Hadith, and Arabic for students interested in Islamic studies.³⁹

Al-Maghrib Institute,⁴⁰ founded by Yasir Qadhi in 2002, offers weekend courses with volunteer teachers on the main branches of Islamic studies, including Hadith. Among other publications, these courses feature al-Nawawi's *Forty Hadith*, *Ḥadīth al-Akhām*, and *Al-Kutub al-Sittah*.⁴¹

The intellectual context of these institutions can be divided into four categories: scholars of Hadith, and theses, articles, and presentations about Hadith studies.

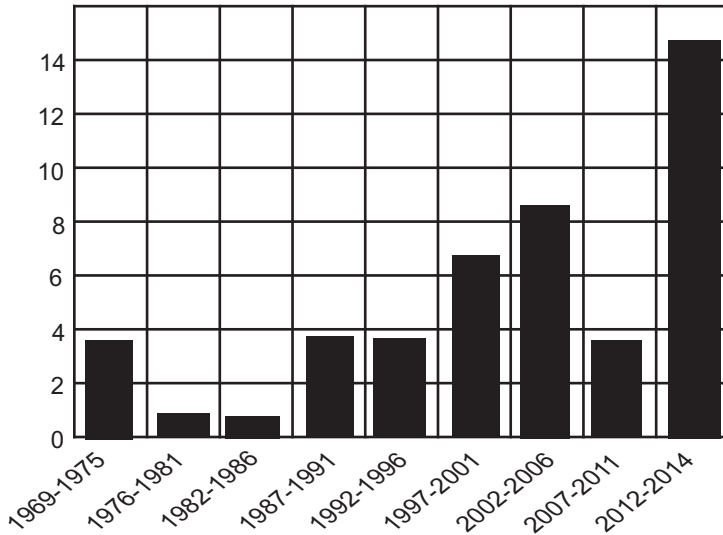
Scholars. The classical Orientalist tradition started with Ignác Goldziher (1850-1921), peaked with Joseph Schacht (1902-69), and has continued with G. H. Juynboll (1935-2010). Muhammad Azami and Fuat Sezgin, and non-Muslim scholars like the University of Chicago's Nabia Abbott (d. 1981), have criticized this approach and tradition. Fazlur Rahman (1919-88), whose position between the western and classical Islamic account is unique, accepted some of Goldziher's conclusions and hesitated to dismiss the Hadith.⁴² At the end of 1970s, scholars like John Wansbrough (d. 2002), Michael Cook,⁴³ and Patricia Crone⁴⁴ applied skepticism to the whole history of Islam and thereby pushed the revisionist discourse to the forefront.

In recent years, a new opposition to this revisionist-Orientalist discourse from within the West has emerged. Although it opposes extremist and revisionist ideas, it also criticizes the Hadith in a variety of ways that have nothing to do with the traditional methods. Among the scholars who embrace this approach are Fred Donner⁴⁵ and David S. Powers.⁴⁶ Muslim researchers specializing in Hadith should also be noted. Among them are converts like Jonathan A. C. Brown or the children of Muslim immigrants generally from South Asia, such as Yasir Qadhi. As Nasr puts it, young Muslim scholars who can say "the right things at the right times" are important in terms of Hadith studies.⁴⁷

The majority of the Muslim scholars in American academia, including those concerned with Hadith studies, have received training in the Islamic sciences for at least a short period of time in the Middle East.

Theses. Examining this area is important because it enables one to see the development of the Hadith studies subfield, for the number and subjects of theses are relevant to illustrating the existing interest. Most such theses were written at McGill, Harvard, Yale, the University of Chicago, Temple, and Columbia. Their topics fall within one of the following subjects: some terms of *uṣūl al-ḥadīth* (Hadith methodology), the history of Hadith, studies on *isnāds* from various practical or theoretical perspectives, research on Hadith literature, studies on *al-jarḥ wa al-ta'dīl* (the science of Hadith criticism) as regards biographical works, and biographical studies on some of this subfield's pioneers. Narrative studies about a given topic and research about women and their position in society are also common.

Figure 1: Dissertations on Hadith Studies



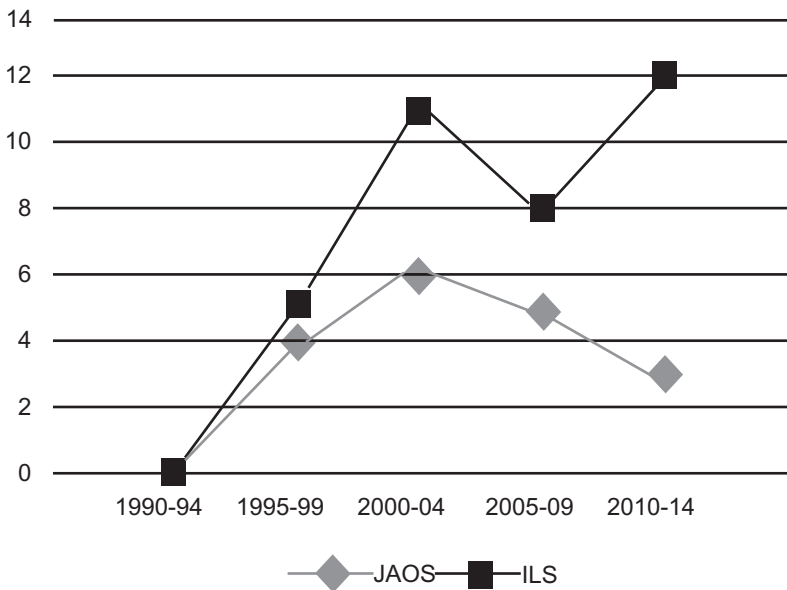
As figure 1 shows, such dissertations have generally increased, with the exception of the 2007-11 period. In the last three years, the number of dissertations reached its highest level. This can be perceived as a reflection of the increasing interest generally in Islamic studies and particularly in Hadith studies.

Articles. Academic articles are important sources for tracking the development and trends in any academic subject. In order to review the main issues in North American academia, I therefore examined four major academic journals,

namely, the *Journal of the American Oriental Society* (JAOS; 1843-2014), the *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* (JAAR; 1967-2014), the *International Journal of Middle East Studies* (IJMES; 1970-2014), and *Islamic Law and Society* (ILS; 1994-2014)).

JAAR, one of the country's most important journals for religious studies, contained no articles about Hadith studies; however, there were a few book reviews. Articles about Hadith studies were rare in IJMES because it mostly deals with current issues about the Middle East. JOAS published 17 (7 during 1990-2001 and 10 during 2002-14), and ILS published 36 (10 during 1990-2001 and 26 during 2002-14).

Figure 1: Academic Articles on Hadith



As can be seen in the table above, the number of articles about hadith studies, especially for *ILS* is increasing. Articles about classical hadith issues deal with the following issues: various terms about hadith methodology, issues about *isnad* and *matn* criticism, biographies, problems concerning *fiqh* and hadith together, and mainly the approach to hadiths of Muslim scholars/jurists.

Presentations. Presentations given at the annual AOS and AAR are important for Hadith studies because they bring together pioneers of religious studies and

show the scholars' interest in this subfield. Many Hadith studies presentations have been made at the AOS,⁴⁸ and in 2007 the AAR held a seminar organized by Study of Islam section on "What Do You Do with Hadith? Approaching the Functions of Hadith in Islamic Civilization."⁴⁹

The pedagogical context can be divided into three categories: courses, course materials, and instructors.

Courses. Most of the courses in Islamic studies programs focus on actual and contemporary events related to Islam and the Islamic world. Especially after 9/11, courses began to concentrate on "Women's Position in Islam," "Jihad," "September 11 and Islam," and similar topics. Courses devoted solely to Hadith studies are rare. Most universities do not offer them, even when this particular subfield is defined as one of the program's main areas. These courses are often part of graduate programs due, at least in part, to the low number of undergraduates studying Islam and the Islamic tradition.⁵⁰ At that level, "Introduction to Islam,"⁵¹ "Classical Islam," "Muslims and the Quran,"⁵² and other introductory courses provide very basic information.

Courses about Hadith in the curriculum can be grouped as follows:

INTRODUCTION TO HADITH. These courses examine the emergence and development of Hadith science. Some of the main topics, about which basic information is provided, are *'ilm al-jarḥ wa al-ta'dīl*, main problems in Hadith criticism, and authenticity. These courses are offered at Georgetown and Harvard universities.⁵³

HADITH METHODOLOGY. This science is handled in introductory and Hadith methodology courses. It is sometimes examined along with the methodologies of other Islamic disciplines. For example, the University of Texas offers "Classical Islamic Studies,"⁵⁴ Hartford Seminary offers "Information Literacy for Islamic Studies,"⁵⁵ and the University of Arizona offers "Advanced Islamic Studies."⁵⁶

HADITH TEXTS. These courses are generally offered as part of language programs in which Qur'anic and *tafsīr* texts may be read alongside various hadiths. But there are some specific courses: The University of Georgia offers "Comperative Islamic Literature,"⁵⁷ Virginia University offers "Arabic of the Qur'an and Hadith,"⁵⁸ the University of California Berkeley offers "Islamic Religious and Philosophical Texts in Arabic,"⁵⁹ the University of California Santa Barbara offers "Readings in Tafsir and Hadith,"⁶⁰ and Hartford Seminary offers "Readings in Hadith."⁶¹

COURSES ABOUT THE PROPHET'S LIFE AND LEGACY. Some examples are "Muhammad: His life and Legacy,"⁶² "Images of the Prophet Muhammad in

Literature,”⁶³ “The Life and Image of Muhammad,”⁶⁴ and “The Life of the Prophet Muhammed.”⁶⁵ Other topics include the authenticity of Hadith.

COURSES ON THE HADITH IN RELATION TO THE QUR’AN. These courses focus on the state of Hadith and the Prophet in Islam. Typical ones are “Qur’an and Hadith”⁶⁶ and “Muhammad and the Quran.”⁶⁷

Course Materials. The following list of course materials mentioned above is presented as an example, for its contents may vary from year to year depending on the instructor.

Table 1: Course Materials

Books or Book Chapters (English)

1. Berg, Herbert, *The Development of Exegesis in Early Islam: The Authenticity of Muslim Literature from the Formative Period* (London: Curzon, 2000.)
2. Berg, Herbert, ed., *Method and Theory in the Study of Islamic Origins* (Leiden: Brill, 2003).
3. Brown, Daniel W., *Rethinking Tradition in Modern Islamic Thought* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996).
4. Brown, Jonathan A. C., *Hadith: Muhammad’s Legacy in the Medieval and Modern World* (Banbury: Oneworld, 2009).
5. Burton, John, *An Introduction to the Ḥadīth* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1994).
6. Denny, Frederick, *Islam and the Muslim Community* (San Francisco, Harper-Collins, 1987).
7. Denny, Frederick, *An Introduction to Islam* (Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Prentice Hall, 2006).
8. Dickinson, Eerik, *The Development of Early Sunnite Hadith Criticism: The Taqdimā of Ibn Abi Hatim al-Razi* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 2001).
9. Ernst, Carl W., *Following Muhammad: Rethinking Islam in the Contemporary World* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina, 2003).
10. Goldziher, Ignaz, *Muslim Studies* (London: Allen and Unwin, 1971), Cilt:2.
11. Juynboll, G. H. A., *The Authenticity of the Tradition Literature: Discussions in Modern Egypt* (Leiden: Brill, 1969).
12. Juynboll, G. H. A., *Muslim Tradition: Studies in Chronology, Provenance, and Authorship of Early Ḥadīth* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983).
13. Kamali, Mohammad H., *A Textbook of Hadith Studies: Authenticity, Compilation, Classification, and Criticism of Hadith* (UK: The Islamic Foundation, 2005).
14. Leder, Stefan, *Story-Telling in the Framework of Non-Fictional Arabic Literature* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1998).
15. Lucas, Scott, *Constructive Critics Hadith Literature and the Articulation of Sunni Islam: The Legacy of Generation of Ibn Sa’d, Ibn Main, and Ibn Hanbal* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 2004).
16. Motzki, Harald, *Ḥadīth: Origins and Developments* (Aldershot: Variorum, 2004).

17. Powers, David S., *Studies in Qur'an and Ḥadīth: The Formation of the Islamic Law of Inheritance* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1986).
18. Schacht, Joseph, *The Origins of Muhammadan Jurisprudence* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1950).
19. Şentürk, Recep, *Narrative Social Structure: Anatomy of the Hadith Transmission Network, 610-1505* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2005).
20. Shahab, Ahmed, "Hadith," *Encyclopaedia Iranica* (New York: Routledge and Kegan Paul, Cilt: 9, 442-47).
21. Siddiqi, Muhammad Z., *Hadith Literature: Its Origin, Development, Special Features, and Criticism* (Calcutta: Calcutta University Press, 1961).

Courses for Reading Hadith Texts (Arabic)

1. *Book of Interpretation of Dreams.*
2. *To Make the Heart Tender (Al-Riqaq).*
3. *Good Manners (Adab) from Şaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī.*
4. *Book of Dreams from Şaḥīḥ al-Muslim.*
5. *Book of Dress and Drinks from Şaḥīḥ Abu Dāwud.*
6. *Nawawi's Forty Hadith* or its translation is used in almost all Hadith courses.⁶⁸

Courses for Reading Sharhs (Arabic)

1. *Ibn Hajar al-Asqalani's Faḥ al-Bārī.*
2. *Imam Nawawi's Al-Minhaj.*
3. *Bagavi's Sharḥ al-Sunnah.*

Hadith Methodology Courses (Arabic)

1. *Al-Suyuti's Tadrīb al-Rāwī.*
2. *Ibn al-Salah al-Shahrazuri's Muqaddimah ibn al-Şalāḥ fi 'Ulūm al-Ḥadīth (Introduction to the Science of Hadith).*
3. *Qawā'id fi 'Ulum al-Ḥadīth by Thanawi.*
4. Chapters from Imam al-Shafi'i's *Al-Risālah.*

Courses about the Prophet's Life and Legacy (Arabic)

1. *Şaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī, Kitāb al-Imān and Kitāb al-Faḍā'il.*

Periodicals (English)

1. Brown, Jonathan A. C. "How We Know That Early Ḥadīth Critics Did Matn Criticism and Why It's So Hard to Find," *ILS* 15 (2008): 143-84.
2. Cook, Michael, "Eschatology and the Dating of Traditions," *Princeton Papers in Near Eastern Studies* 1 (1992): 23-47.
3. Dickinson, Eerik, "Ibn al-Salah al-Shahrazuri and the Isnad," *JAOS* 122 (2002): 481-505.
4. Graham, William A., "Traditionalism in Islam: An Essay in Interpretation," *Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 23 (1993): 495-522.
5. Hallaq, Wael B., "The Authenticity of Prophetic Ḥadīth: A Pseudo-Problem," *Studia Islamica* 89 (1999): 75-90.
6. Juynboll, G. H. A. "Muslim's Introduction to his *Şaḥīḥ*, translated and annotated with an excursus on the chronology of *fitna* and *bid'a*," *Jerusalem Studies in Arabic and Islam* 5 (1984): 263-311.

7. Kister, M. J., "...*Lā taqra 'ul-qur'āna 'alāl-muṣḥafīyyīn wa-lā taḥmilu l-'ilma 'ani l-ṣaḥāfiyyīn* ... Some Notes on the Transmission of Ḥadīth," *Jerusalem Studies in Arabic and Islam* 22 (1998): 127-62.
8. Kohlberg, Etan, "*Al-Uṣūl al-Arba'umi'a*," *Jerusalem Studies in Arabic and Islam* 10 (1987): 128-66.
9. Melchert, Christopher, "Bukhari and Early Hadith Criticism," *JAOS* 121 (2001): 7-19.
10. Mitter, Ulrike, "Unconditional Manumission of Slaves in Early Islamic Law: A Ḥadīth Analysis," *Der Islam* 78 (2001): 35-72.
11. Motzki, Harald, "The Prophet and the Cat: On Dating Mālik's *Muwattā'* and Legal Traditions," *Jerusalem Studies in Arabic and Islam* 22 (1998): 18-83.
12. Powers, David, "The Will of Sa'd b. Abī Waqqāṣ: A Reassessment," *Studia Islamica* 58 (1983): 33-53.
13. Robson, James, "The Form of Muslim Tradition," *Transactions of the Glasgow University Oriental Society* 16 (1955-56) 38-50.
14. Robson, James, "The *Isnād* in Muslim Tradition," *Transactions of the Glasgow University Oriental Society* 15 (1953): 15-26.
15. Robson, James, "The Material of Tradition I," *The Moslem World* 41 (1951) 166-80.
16. Robson, James, "The Transmission of Nasa'i's '*Sunan*,'" *Journal of Semitic Studies* 1 (1956): 38-59.
17. Rosenthal, Franz, "Muslim Social Values and Literary Criticism: Reflections on the Ḥadīth of Umm Zar'," *Oriens* 34 (1994): 31-56.
18. Rubin, Uri, "'*Al-walad li-l-firāsh*': On the Islamic Campaign against *Zinā*," *Studia Islamica* 78 (1993): 5-26.
19. Schacht, Joseph, "A Revaluation of Islamic Traditions," *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* (1949): 143-54.
20. Zaman, Iftikhar. "The Science of *Rijāl* as a Method in the Study of Ḥadīths," *Journal of Islamic Studies* 5 (1994): 1-34.

Some web-sites were also used as course materials.⁶⁹

As seen above, the English-language material is typically written by non-Muslim scholars. As for the works of respected Muslim scholars, they usually spent at least some time training in North America or Europe.

Instructors. According to a 2005 survey conducted in North American universities, instructors who teach in Islamic studies programs and are also experts in Islamic studies are rare (a 12.63 percent ratio). Generally scholars' research interests are religions rather than Islam (48.42 percent).⁷⁰ the introduction to Hadith and methodology courses are given by scholars whose principal research interests are Hadith and Islamic law; there are, however, some exceptions. Hadith reading courses are generally given by instructors of language programs. Courses about the Prophet's life and legacy and those that examine hadiths with relation to the Qur'an are taught by instructors whose research interests are Hadith, *fiqh*, Islamic history, and Sufism.

Conclusion

Islamic studies departments in North American universities have increased in recent years; however, Sufism, Islamic law, and other disciplines have received far more attention than Hadith studies. Even among the other subfields of Islamic studies, this particular subfield should be considered “neglected” and in need of improvement. The factors responsible for this deplorable situation need to be studied.

At the academic level, the Hadith’s status within Islam is problematic within western academic settings and thus cannot flourish. Until recently, Hadith studies were mired in authenticity problems due to certain assumptions and other factors. Muslim scholars now tend to shift the problem of Hadith authority away from the authenticity problem, although this does not appear to be an easy task. The approach of western-educated Muslim scholars to Hadith studies and their acceptance among western academics is a promising sign for the subfield’s future. However, such scholars remain few in number.

In American universities, the academic study of Hadith tends to be found in either area studies or religious studies programs. Those located in the latter are higher in quality as regards syllabi and instructors. Studies on Hadith in non-accredited universities are similar to classical Hadith studies. Activities of voluntary organizations are generally oriented toward informing Muslims rather than meeting any academic interest.

The number of theses, articles, and presentations about this subfield is growing. Articles and theses about classic Hadith issues have begun to appear. Even though this is a positive development, it seems that institutionalizing and developing Hadith as a separate discipline will take time.

In North American universities, specific Hadith studies courses are very rare and, when offered, are generally taught by non-specialized scholars. Course materials are usually written by western scholars, and the materials typically focus on authenticity problems. The best contribution that Muslim scholars could make in this regard would be to write academically qualified and analytical articles in English.

Endnotes

1. Marcia Hermansen, “The Academic Study of Sufism at American Universities,” *The American Journal of Islamic Social Sciences* 24, no. 3 (2007): 25.
2. <http://search.proquest.com/pqdtglobal/index>.
3. *Journal of American Oriental Society* (1843-2014), *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* (1967-2014), *International Journal of Middle East Studies* (1970-2014), and *Islamic Law and Society* (1994-2014).

4. <http://www.jstor.org/>.
5. <http://www.umich.edu/~aos/>.
6. <https://www.aarweb.org>.
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8. Seyyid Hossein Nasr, "Origins and Development of Islamic Studies in the U.S.: A Historical Overview of Trends and Institutions," in *Observing the Observer: The State of Islamic Studies in American Universities*, ed. Mumtaz Ahmad, Zahid Bukhari, and Sulayman Nyang (Herndon, VA: International Institute of Islamic Thought, 2009), 19.
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10. Philip K. Hitti, "Arabic and Islamic Studies in Princeton University," *The Muslim World* 31, no. 3 (1941): 292-94.
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12. Although some of these centers have closed their doors, especially after September 11, a growing number of new centers have opened, among them the Duncan Black Macdonald Center for the Study of Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations (Hartford Seminary, 1973), the Center of Arabic and Islamic Studies (University of Villanova, 1983, and the Center of Islamic Studies (Graduate Theological Union, 2007).
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16. <http://mideast.unc.edu/jobs/> and <http://makkah.wordpress.com/job-openings>.
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19. For a list of departments offering doctorates in Islamic studies, see <http://www.unc.edu/~cernst/reliprograms.html>. For those offering masters in Islamic studies, see <http://www.unc.edu/~cernst/maprograms.html>.
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23. C. Kurzman, "Islamic Studies and the Trajectory of Political Islam," *Contemporary Sociology* 36, no. 6 (2007): 519-20.
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48. Presentations of the last 10 years: **2000:** Michael Cooperson, "Social Space and Religious Authority in 3rd/9th Century Baghdad" (University of California, Los Angeles); Joseph E. Lowry, "Calder, Shafi'i and Ibn Qutayba: On the Relative Sophistication of Hermeneutic Techniques" (University of Pennsylvania); Christopher Melchert, "How Hadith and Jurisprudence Came to be Complimentary Disciplines" (School of Historical Studies, Institute for Advanced Study, Princeton); Heather N. Keaney, "Muslim Martyr? A Historiography of the Revolt against the Caliph Uthman" (University of California, Santa Barbara). **2001:** Christopher Melchert, "The Holy Man in Early Islam" (Oxford University); R. Kevin Jaques, "How to Read Tabaqat: Their Structure, Modes of Argumentation,

and Purposes” (Indiana University); Suleiman A. Mourad, “In Search of a Master: The Sufis’ Misappropriation of al-Hasan al-Basri” (Yale University); M. Amin Mahdavi, “A Computational Model of Islamic Codicology” (Institute of Ismaili Studies); Sebastian Guenther, “Muhammad the Illiterate Prophet? An Islamic Creed in the Quran and Quranic Exegesis” (University of Toronto). **2003:** Joseph E. Lowry, “Ibn Qutayba: An Early Witness to al-Shafi’i’s Legal Doctrines” (University of Pennsylvania); Christopher Melchert, “The Musnad of Ahmad ibn Hanbal” (Oriental Institute, Oxford). **2004:** Steven Judd, “The Muhaddith’s Diet: An Apple a Day Makes You Stupid” (Southern Connecticut State University). **2005:** Christopher Melchert, “The Musannaf of Ibn Abi Shaybah” (University of Oxford); Recep Gurkan Goktas, “‘Asbab Wurud al-Hadith’: A Literary Approach” (Harvard University). **2006:** Christopher Melchert, “The Ten Books Compared” (University of Oxford); Christian Lange, “Where on Earth is Hell? A Reconsideration of Jahannam in the Medieval Muslim Imaginaire” (Harvard University); Niall Christie, “University of British Columbia/Corpus Christi College”. **2007:** Hanaa Kilany, “Uns in the Quran and Hadith” (Georgetown University); Aisha Geissinger, “‘Mothers of the Believers’: A Re-examination of a Controversial Title” (University of Toronto); Ikram Masmoudi, “Analysis of al-Hadith as Seen by Abu Hayyan al-Tawhidi in His Book *Al-Imta’awa-l-Mu’anasa*” (Middlebury College). **2008:** Christopher Melchert, “Nasai’s Travels” (University of Oxford); Yasir Kazi, “Contextualizing al-Muhasibi’s (d. 243/857) View of ‘Aql” (Yale University); Jens Scheiner, “Isnad-cum-Matn-Analysis and Historical Akhbar. The Case of the Conquest of Damascus” (Hamburg University). **2009:** Youshaa Patel, “Whoever Imitates a People Becomes One of Them”: Tracing the Interpretation of a Hadith (Duke University); Christopher Melchert, “God Created Adam after His Image” (Oriental Institute, University of Oxford); Kevin Jaques, “‘Prophet of God and Warrior of God’: A Comparative Study of Ibn Ishaq’s Depiction of the Relationship between Muhammad and Hamza ibn ‘Abd al-Muttalib” (Indiana University); Sean W. Anthony, “The Prophecy and Passion of al-Harith b. Said: Narrating a Syrian Revolt from the Caliphate of Abd al-Malik b. Marwan” (University of Chicago); Maya Yazigi, “The Kitab al-Ansab of Abd al-Karim al-Samani in Context” (University of British Columbia); Scott C. Lucas, “Al-Hakim al-Naysaburi and the Companions of the Prophet: An Original Sunni Voice in the Shi’i Century” (University of Arizona); Jonathan Brown, “A Man for All Seasons: Ibn ‘Uqda and Transcending the Sunni/Shiite Divide of the Fourth/Tenth Century” (University of Washington); Kenneth Garden, “Invocation of the Mujaddid Hadith in Islamic Thought” (Tufts University); Sara Omar, “Treatments of Liwat and Sihaq in Medieval Islamic Jurisprudence (The 10th–14th Centuries A.D.)” (Harvard University); Krisztina Szilagyi, “A Prophet like Jesus? Muslims and Christians Debate Muhammad’s Death” (Princeton University). **2010:** Behnam Sadeghi, “The Traveling Tradition Test: A New Method of Dating Traditions” (Stanford University); Mark S. Wagner, “The Problem of Non-Muslims

- Who Insult the Prophet Muhammad” (Louisiana State University); James E. Lindsay, “Ibn ‘Asakir’s Distinctive Vision of Jihad in His Forty Hadiths for Inciting Jihad” (Colorado State University). **2011**: Steven Burge, “Ahadith and Tafsir: The Case of Falaq” Q113:1 (Institute of Ismaili Studies Lexicology); Scott C. Lucas, “Disciplinary Specialization among the Companions and Successors: Evidence from the Musannaf of Ibn Abi Shayba and al-Tabari’s Quran Commentary” (University of Arizona); Felicity Opwis, “The Role of the Biographer in Constructing Identity and School Doctrine: Al-‘Abbadī’s *Kitab Tabaqat al-Fuqaha’ al-Shafi’iyya*” (Georgetown University); Garrett Davidson, “The Ijzat al-Riwaya and Post-Classical Hadith Transmission” (University of Chicago).
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