

Event Contextualization in Hadith Interpretation: A Framework for Reassessing Problematic Hadith Narratives

Kontekstualisasi Peristiwa dalam Penafsiran Hadis: Kerangka untuk Menafsirkan Ulang Narasi Hadis Bermasalah

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Abstract

Certain prophetic traditions (*Hadīth*) are still read through a textual-absolutist lens that treats situational speech as timeless law, often generating interpretations that feel ethically troubling or socially unworkable today. This article proposes event contextualization as a practical framework for reinterpreting “problematic” *Hadīth* by reconstructing the triggering event and its immediate social setting (*asbāb al-wurūd*), mapping variant transmissions, and then reassessing the report’s normative force in light of Qur’anic moral horizons and *maqāṣid al-shari‘ah*. Using qualitative textual analysis and contextual hermeneutics—supported by *matn* and *sanad* checks—the study examines recurring clusters of narrations frequently invoked in contemporary debates, especially on gender, minority relations, apostasy, and political obedience. The analysis suggests that many interpretive dead-ends arise when context-bound directives are universalized without attending to the occasion, audience, and intent of the Prophet’s instruction. By operationalizing event reconstruction alongside purposive ethical reasoning, the article offers a replicable way to distinguish time-sensitive instructions from transferable moral principles. It argues that this approach strengthens contemporary *fiqh al-hadīth* by reducing interpretive overreach while preserving the Prophetic moral aim.

Keywords: Events Contextualization, *Asbab al-Wurud*, *Maqashid al-Shariah*, Problematic Hadiths, Hadith hermeneutics

Abstrak

Sebagian tradisi Nabi (hadis) masih dibaca dengan cara pandang absolutisme tekstual yang memperlakukan ujaran situasional sebagai hukum abadi, sehingga kerap melahirkan tafsir yang problematis secara etis maupun sulit diterapkan dalam konteks sosial kontemporer. Artikel ini menawarkan kontekstualisasi peristiwa sebagai kerangka kerja praktis untuk menafsirkan ulang “hadis bermasalah” melalui rekonstruksi peristiwa pemicu dan konteks sosial terdekatnya (*asbāb al-wurūd*), pemetaan varian transmisi riwayat, lalu penilaian ulang daya normatif hadis dengan mempertimbangkan horizon moral Al-Qur'an dan *maqāṣid al-syāri‘ah*. Dengan analisis teks kualitatif dan hermeneutika kontekstual—yang didukung pemeriksaan matan dan sanad—kajian ini menelaah narasi yang sering dipakai dalam perdebatan mutakhir, terutama terkait gender, relasi minoritas, apostasi, dan ketiaatan politik. Temuan menunjukkan bahwa kebuntuan tafsir sering muncul ketika petunjuk yang bersifat kontekstual diuniversalikan tanpa memperhitungkan situasi, audiens, dan maksud instruksi Nabi. Melalui operasionalisasi rekonstruksi peristiwa dan penalaran etis-teologis,



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artikel ini menawarkan cara yang replikatif untuk membedakan arahan yang terikat waktu dari prinsip moral yang dapat ditransfer lintas konteks. Pendekatan ini memperkuat *fiqh al-hadis* dengan menekan “overreach” penafsiran sekaligus menjaga tujuan moral profetik.

Kata kunci: Kontekstualisasi event, *Asbab al-Wurud*, *Maqashid al-Shariah*, *Hadits bermasalah*, *Hermeneutika Hadis*.

Introduction

The hadith of the Prophet Muhammad (SAW) is the primary source of Islamic teachings after the Qur'an, explaining, concretizing, and exemplifying the application of divine values in real life. Historically, hadith has played an essential role in forming Muslim society's law, ethics, and culture¹. However, contemporary cases demonstrate how literal interpretations have produced harmful outcomes. In Pakistan, rigid applications of the apostasy hadith (Bukhari 6922) have led to 1,862 blasphemy cases between 2011 and 2022, often targeting religious minorities². Similarly, Saudi Arabia's male guardianship system, rooted in literal readings of gender-related hadith, restricted women's travel and employment until the 2019 reforms³. These examples show why the modern socio-religious context demands nuanced approaches. Some hadiths appear to conflict with global values such as gender justice and religious freedom when interpreted literally⁴, creating a dilemma between preserving tradition and addressing contemporary challenges.

The main problem in contemporary hadith studies is the dominance of textual readings that ignore the context of events or the socio-historical background in which the Prophet's words were formulated. This oversight has real-world consequences. For instance, the hadith “Do not initiate greetings to Jews/Christians” (Muslim) has been misused to justify interfaith segregation in some communities, despite archaeological evidence of the Prophet's treaties with Christian Najran and Jewish Medina tribes⁵.

1 Abdul Kodir, “Integrating Hadith into Education: Bridging the Gap between Traditional Islamic Scholarship and Modern Learning,” *Diroyah: Jurnal Study Ilmu Hadis* 7, no. 2 (2023): 221–235.

2 Khadija Rashid, “Politicization of Islam and a Culture of Atrocities against Religious Minorities in Modern-Day Pakistan,” *Global Responsibility to Protect* 15, no. 2–3 (May 2, 2023): 246–291; Mashood A. Baderin, “Prophet Muhammad as ‘A Mercy for the Worlds’: A Human Rights Perspective in Relation to the Blasphemy Laws and Respect for the Rule of Law in Pakistan,” in *The Asian Yearbook of Human Rights and Humanitarian Law* (Brill | Nijhoff, 2022), 54–80.

3 Inmaculada Macias-Alonso, HaRyung Kim, and Alessandra L. González, “Self-Driven Women: Gendered Mobility, Employment, and the Lift of the Driving Ban in Saudi Arabia,” *Gender, Place & Culture* 30, no. 11 (November 2, 2023): 1574–1593; Wafa Alhajri and Barbara J. Pierce, “Saudi Women's Attitudes Toward Advocacy for Women's Rights,” *Affilia* 38, no. 1 (February 25, 2023): 111–126.

4 Zahra Ayubi, “Islamic Gender Ethics: Traditional Discourses, Critiques, and New Frameworks of Inclusivity,” in *The Routledge Handbook of Islam and Gender* (Routledge, 2020), 57–67.

5 Farouq Tahar, Asma Mehan, and Krzysztof Nawratek, “Spatial Reflections on Muslims' Segregation in

Such hadiths become “problematic” when detached from their original contexts of political conflict or security concerns. Classical scholars, such as Al-Shafi'i, emphasized *asbāb al-wurūd* (causes of revelation)⁶, but modern literalist movements often neglect this. Fuad Thohari et al (2023) study of Indonesian pesantrens found that 89% taught political obedience hadiths without historical context, reinforcing passive attitudes toward authoritarianism⁷. This demonstrates how inaccuracies in understanding context lead to errors in religious practice and public policy.

This article proposes an *event-contextualization* approach as a solution for interpreting hadiths considered problematic in modern society⁸. The urgency of this approach is evident in cases like ISIS's literalist misuse of warfare hadiths, which contrasts with classical scholars' contextual restrictions⁹. By examining the Prophet's words through lenses of time, place, and socio-political conditions, we achieve two goals: 1) Preserving moral messages (e.g., Indonesia's Muhammadiyah reinterpreted “women's fitnah” hadith contextually to support female education [MUI Fatwa No.02/2023]), and 2) Preventing extremist interpretations (e.g., Morocco's 2016 Marrakesh Declaration used contextual analysis to promote interfaith tolerance). Its novelty lies in its methodological synthesis, which applies and transforms the philological tradition of hadith to address the challenges of today's global society, without losing its scientific authority. Unlike classical contextual approaches, like *asbāb al-wurūd* or *maqāṣid*-based reading, this article proposes a more integrated framework—event contextualization—that combines *matan-sanad* criticism with historical anthropology and real-world case studies. This method allows hadith interpretation to remain faithful to tradition while being socially transformative, offering practical tools for education, fatwa, and public policy. Its novelty lies in bridging academic rigor with contemporary application to address the widespread misuse of hadith in modern Muslim societies.

Britain,” *Religions* 14, no. 3 (March 6, 2023): 349; Halim Rane, “Interfaith Actor Reception of Islamic Covenants: How ‘New’ Religious Knowledge Influences Views on Interreligious Relations in Islam,” *Religions* 13, no. 9 (September 19, 2022): 873.

- 6 Abu-Alabbas, “The Principles of Hadith Criticism in the Writings of Al-Shāfi‘ī and Muslim.” *Islamic Law and Society* 24, no. 4 (October 3, 2017): 311–335.
- 7 Fuad Thohari et al., “The Implications of Understanding Contextual Hadith on Religious Radicalism (Case Study of Darus-Sunnah International Institute for Hadith Sciences),” *Samarah: Jurnal Hukum Keluarga dan Hukum Islam* 5, no. 2 (December 26, 2021): 710.
- 8 Muhamad Rozaimi Ramle and Miftachul Huda, “Between Text and Context: Understanding Hadith through Asbab al Wurud,” *Religions* 13, no. 2 (January 19, 2022): 92.
- 9 Muhammad Husni Abu Melhim et al., “ISIS’ Miscontextualization of Hadith through the Strategic Linguistic Propaganda: A Socio-Political Analysis,” *Journal of Islamic Thought and Civilization* 13, no. 1 (May 26, 2023): 90–102.

Event contextualization also bridges textual studies with modern disciplines, such as historical anthropology. Recent discoveries of manuscripts, such as the 7th-century Sana'a Quranic palimpsest, show that early Muslim communities adapted rulings to changing contexts¹⁰. This method avoids rigid formalism while remaining authentically responsive to contemporary realities.

This study employs qualitative analysis and contextual hermeneutics to reinterpret four controversial hadith clusters: gender, apostasy, interfaith relations, and political obedience. Case selection is based on their real-world impacts: 1) Gender hadiths affect women's rights in 12 OIC countries¹¹, 2) Apostasy rulings influence blasphemy laws in Pakistan and Egypt¹², 3) Interfaith hadiths shape Muslim-Christian relations in Indonesia¹³, and 4) Obedience to hadiths is politicized in Malaysia and Saudi Arabia¹⁴. The significance lies in providing a methodological framework that is both academically rigorous (integrating *sanad* criticism with historical context) and socially transformative.

A similar approach seems to be taken by Egypt's Dar al-Ifta (Fatwa No. 3561/2022). It has published a guide that uses a contextual-interpretive approach to reassess judgments on apostasy in non-conflict situations. This approach reflects a broader methodological trend in contemporary Islamic legal discourse¹⁵. In today's global digital environment, many young Muslims are increasingly exposed to the diverse – and sometimes contradictory – interpretations of hadith circulating online¹⁶. In this landscape, structured contextual approaches offer analytical tools for navigating the intersection between tradition and modernity without sacrificing Islamic ethical principles.

10 Yasser Ismail Abdel Salam and Adnan bin Mohammed Al-Harthy, "Early Manuscripts of Quran (Through Data of Hijazi Calligraphy and Archaeological Evidence)," *Journal of the General Union of Arab Archaeologists* 5, no. 1 (January 1, 2020): 1–26.

11 Richa Chaudhary, *The OIC and Women's Rights: Exploring the Dichotomy of Representation*, *J. Int'l L. Islamic L.*, no.17 (2021): 264.

12 Man Baker, "Capital Punishment for Apostasy in Islam," *Arab Law Quarterly* 32, no. 4 (November 9, 2018): 439–461.

13 Zailani Zailani et al., "Muslim and Non-Muslim Relations: A Comparative Analysis Between Hadith and Gospel Perspectives," *Pharos Journal of Theology*, no. 106.2 (2025): 1–14.

14 Nurul Ain Burhanuddin, "Religious Leader's Views Living Hadith Practices in Malaysia," *Jurnal Living Hadis* 5, no. 2 (October 23, 2020): 171–193.

15 Niyazi Kahveci, "Apostasy (Irtidâd) in Islamic Jurisprudence; Is It a Creedal or a Political Crime: Ibn al-Humam (d. 861/1457)," *Journal of History Culture and Art Research* 6, no. 2 (April 6, 2017): 1–12.

16 Abur Hamdi Usman, Rosni Wazir, and Mohd Norzi Nasir, "How to Deal with the Fabricated Hadith: Some Notes for Hadith Dispersion in Social Media," *Insaniyat : Journal of Islam and Humanities* 7, no. 1 (November 30, 2022): 29–41.

Events Contextualization in Contemporary Hadith Methodology

The study of contemporary hadith shows an increasing attention to contextual approaches that go beyond textual recitation or *sanad* criticism alone. Various established methodological frameworks—such as *asbāb al-wurūd*, *fiqh al-wāqi*¹⁷, *maqāṣid* approach¹⁸, as well as socio-historical readings of the Prophet's narration¹⁹ have made an important contribution to expanding the horizons of hadith interpretation. These approaches emphasize that understanding hadith requires tracing its historical, social, and ethical context, rather than simply treating it as a stand-alone textual unit. For example, *asbāb al-wurūd* highlights the immediate events that set the background to a Prophet's words, while *maqāṣid*-based readings prioritize sharia objectives in responding to contemporary moral dilemmas²⁰

Despite their methodological value, these approaches often operate as separate analytical tools and have not been integrated within a systematic framework. The existing literature generally provides a conceptual justification for the importance of context, but relatively few offer operational guidance on how such principles can be applied consistently to different categories of hadith²¹. This gap is evident when interpreting legally sensitive or ethically problematic hadiths—e.g., those related to violence, gender, or interreligious relations—where contextual insights are recognized but have not been translated into replicable analytical procedures²². As a result, much reasoning relies on ad-hoc considerations without a truly structured interpretive framework.

To address this gap, this study proposes an event contextualization approach as a more integrated and operational analytical framework. This approach is not a new paradigm that stands alone, but a synthesis of classical tools—including *sanad* and

17 Serdar Demirel, "Understanding the Spirit of Time and Interdisciplinary Perspective in the Interpretation of Hadith," July 2, 2014, <https://doi.org/10.16947/FSMIAD.32687>.

18 Mohd Manawi Mohd Akib, "The Integration of Sanad in the Contextual Interpretation of the Qur'an: A Maqasid-Based Perspective," Al Muahfidz: Jurnal Ilmu Al-Qur'an Dan Tafsir, August 26, 2025, <https://doi.org/10.57163/almuahfidz.v5i2.190>

19 Wasman Wasman, Mesraini Mesraini, and Suwendi Suwendi, "A Critical Approach to Prophetic Traditions: Contextual Criticism in Understanding Hadith," Al-Jami'ah: Journal of Islamic Studies, June 30, 2023, <https://doi.org/10.14421/ajis.2023.611.1-17>.

20 Nur Baety Sofyan, "The Contexts of Revelation: An In-Depth Study of Asbab Wurud Al-Hadith and Its Connection to Asbab Nuzul al-Quran," El-Sunan, October 30, 2024, <https://doi.org/10.22373/el-sunan.v2i2.6474>.

21 Muhammad Hilmi Syukri, Nur Hidayat, and Khayyu Anggun Maharani, "Implementation of Hadith Contextual Approach in Legal Istimabath," AJIS : Academic Journal of Islamic Studies, June 20, 2023, <https://doi.org/10.29240/ajis.v8i1.6376..>

22 Salsabila Najima Chaniago, "Debate on Patriarchal Interpretation of Misogynist Hadith," June 27, 2025, <https://doi.org/10.64691/al-qarawiyin.v1i2.27..>

matan criticism²³, methods of resolving contradictions by Imam al-Shāfi‘ī, and the concept of changing fatwas with the changing times²⁴, with contemporary tools such as social history, anthropology, and *maqāṣid*. Its central focus is the reconstruction of the “events” behind the hadith: the socio-political conditions, the character of the audience, the normative functions, as well as the temporal limitations that shape the articulation of the Prophet’s words and their legal acceptance.

This approach’s primary strength is its operational clarity, achieved through explicit steps: identifying textual variants, evaluating *sanad* and *matan*, reconstructing historical and anthropological context, assessing alignment with Qur’anic ethics and *maqāṣid*, and determining contemporary legal and ethical relevance²⁵. These procedures formalize contextualization into a replicable methodology, allowing scholars to empirically link context with modern interpretive outcomes rather than rely on vague assertions.

Event Contextualization in Hadith Studies: Bridging Prophetic Messages and Humanity in the Contemporary Era

The contextualization approach in hadith studies proves indispensable for achieving a nuanced interpretation of prophetic narrations. It prioritizes situating the Prophet’s statements within their specific historical and situational milieu, inextricably linked to *asbāb al-wurūd* (occasions of revelation for hadiths)²⁶. Within this framework, the hadith’s authority gains comprehensive interpretation, incorporating its interplay with the socio-economic realities prevailing at the time of its pronouncement²⁷. The context used as a foothold in understanding hadith is increasingly important, ensuring that the application of the messages aligns with the

23 Mohd Manawi Mohd Akib, “The Integration of Sanad in the Contextual Interpretation of the Qur'an: A Maqasid-Based Perspective,” *Al Muhafidz: Jurnal Ilmu Al-Qur'an Dan Tafsir*, August 26, 2025, <https://doi.org/10.57163/almuhafidz.v5i2.190>.

24 Fariz Pari, “Contextuality vs Universality of the Hadith: Methodological Problem,” 2018, <https://doi.org/10.2991/ICQHS-17.2018.16.--->

25 Mappasessu Mappasessu and Andi Muhammad Akmal, “Studying Fiqh Based on the Quran and Hadith in the Modern Era by Revisiting the Methodology of Legal Istimbāt,” *Nuris Journal of Education and Islamic Studies*, April 21, 2025, <https://doi.org/10.52620/jeis.v5i2.119..>

26 Ramle and Huda, “Between Text and Context: Understanding Hadith through Asbab al Wurud.” *Religions* 13: 92 (2022): 2-19.

27 Fuad Thohari et al., “The Implications of Understanding Contextual Hadith on Religious Radicalism (Case Study of Darus-Sunnah International Institute for Hadith Sciences),” *Samarah: Jurnal Hukum Keluarga dan Hukum Islam* 5, no. 2 (December 26, 2021): 710; Muhammad Masruri et al., “Asbab Al-Wurud as an Approach to Understanding the Purpose of Hadith (Maqasid Al-Sunnah) in a Wasatiyyah and Balanced Way That Is Practiced in Contemporary Society,” *Revista de Gestão Social e Ambiental* 18, no. 9 (May 3, 2024): e06208

needs of the times²⁸. Here is what we refer to as *fiqh al-hadith*.

An approach to contextualizing hadith, anchored in *maqāṣid al-shari‘ah* principles, proves essential for relevant and meaningful application of Islamic teachings in contemporary contexts.²⁹ This contextual approach starkly contrasts with textual literalism, which privileges the hadith's explicit wording devoid of historical or socio-political contextualization³⁰

The socio-cultural context behind the Prophet's words not only enriches the meaning of the hadith but also strengthens the essence of the prophetic message, ensuring it remains relevant amidst societal changes³¹. Through contextual studies, this approach aims to preserve and maintain the essence of the Prophet's message of advice, ensuring that the understanding and application of Islamic teachings remain relevant in constantly changing situations and conditions³².

Ushul al-fiqh methodologies, such as *al-‘ibrah bi-khuṣūṣ al-sabab lā bi-‘umūm al-lafz* (interpretation by specific cause rather than general wording), risk sidelining universal *maqāṣid*, whereas its converse—*al-‘ibrah bi-‘umūm al-lafz lā bi-khuṣūṣ al-sabab* (by general wording rather than specific cause)—overlooks vital contextual nuances essential to prophetic intent. Thus, regarding the event contextualization, the theory that can be offered is *al-‘ibrah bi-khuṣūṣ al-sabab al-muwassa* (interpretation by expanded specificity of causes) merits consideration as a third alternative framework. For instance, the Prophet's directive prohibiting women from departing the home without a mahram necessitates interpretation within its original historical milieu, as articulated in the hadith.³³

28 Ahmad Syukran Baharuddin, "Expanding Horizons In Syariah And Law Scholarship," *Malaysian Journal of Syariah and Law* 11, no. 1 (May 27, 2023): i–iv.

29 Agus Purnomo et al., "Characteristics of Hate Speech and Freedom of Expression in the Perspective of Maqāṣid Al-Shari‘ah," *Juris (Jurnal Ilmiah Syariah)* 22, no. 1 (2023): 171; Salah Alhammadi, Khaled O Alotaibi, and Dzikri F Hakam, "Analysing Islamic Banking Ethical Performance From<i>Maqāṣid al-shari‘ah</i>perspective: Evidence From Indonesia," *Journal of Sustainable Finance & Investment* 12, no. 4 (2020): 1171–1193; Zohora A Shompa, Mohamed A Akbar, and Hazwani M Mohadis, "Harmonizing Maqasid Al-Shari‘ah With Sustainable Waste Management Practices: A Conceptual Framework for Principles and Implementation," *International Journal of Islamic and Middle Eastern Finance and Management* 18, no. 1 (2024): 142–165.

30 Tawfeek A S Mohammed, "A Scientometric Study of Maqasid Al-Shariah Research: Trending Issues, Hotspot Research, and Co-Citation Analysis," *Frontiers in Research Metrics and Analytics* 9 (2024): 01-21.

31 Hanudin Amin, "Examining New Measure of Asnaf Muslimpreneur Success Model: A Maqasid Perspective," *Journal of Islamic Accounting and Business Research* 13, no. 4 (2022): 596–622.

32 Saheed A Ashafa and Lukman Raimi, "Exploring the Impact of Islam's Social Well-Being and Economic Justice on Peaceful Coexistence In Nigeria: Implications for Conventional Welfare Policy," *Journal of Entrepreneurship and Public Policy* (2025): 230–250.

33 Miski Miski, "Amplification of Islamic Doctrines in Hadith Memes Prohibition of Women Travels Without a Mahram on Indonesian Social Media," *Jurnal Studi Ilmu-ilmu Al-Qur'an dan Hadis* 22, no. 1 (2021): 230–254.

Methodologically, the event contextualization is constructed using the following pattern. *First*, identify hadiths prone to literal and rigid interpretation and ensure that it is a *sahīh* or *hasan* hadith. *Second*, examine the *asbāb al-wurūd* (circumstances of the hadith's emergence) to uncover its specific context. *Third*, analyze the particular elements within the hadith carefully. *Fourth*, use these elements and values as benchmarks to evaluate contemporary realities. *Fifth*, if the original values align with today's context, the hadith is deemed relevant and applicable. *Sixth*, if the values, goals, and situational conditions underlying a hadith differ significantly from the current context, its application must be approached with caution. The goals and circumstances under which the hadith was delivered by the Prophet remain the primary barometer for measuring current reality. If the motives for consideration are the same, then the appropriate response should be the same.

Illustrative Application of Event Contextualization

To illustrate the operational process of event contextualization, consider the paradigmatic case of the prohibition on women traveling without a mahram. The following example draws from a hadith narrated by Ibn Abbas (may Allah be pleased with him), which states as follows.: “*la tusafir al-maratu illa ma’ā dici mahramin, wala yudkhil ‘alaiha illa wama’aha mahramun. Faqala: Ya Rasullallah, inni an akhruja fi jisyin kadza wa kadza wa imroati turidu al-hajj? Faqala: Ukhruj ma’aha* (A woman should not travel except with her mahram, and no man should meet her except with her mahram. A man said, “O Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him), I should have gone to join the troops for war, and my wife wants to perform the Hajj.” Rasulullah said, “Go out (for Hajj) with her (Shahih Bukhori 3006 and Shahih Muslim 1341).

First, In addition to the narration via Ibn Abbas's chain of transmission, numerous other authentic hadiths on the prohibition of women traveling without a mahram are reported through the chains of Abu Hurairah, Abu Sa’id al-Khudri, and Ibn Umar. These narrations collectively affirm the hadith's authenticity (*sahīh*) status across major collections. In the *sanad* of Ibn Abbas, for example, there are Abu al-Nu’man al-Sadusi (d. 224 AH)³⁴, Hammad bin Zaid (d. 179 AH)³⁵, ‘Amr bin Dinar (d. 126 H)³⁶, Abi Ma’bad (d. 104 AH)³⁷, and Ibnu Abbas (d. 68 AH)³⁸. All narrators

34 Ibnu Hajar al-Asqalani, *Tahdzib al-Tahdzib*, (Beirut: Dar al-Kutub al-‘Ilmiyah, 1994) Juz IX: 347-349.

35 Ibnu Hajar al-Asqalani, *Tahdzib al-Tahdzib*, (Beirut: Dar al-Kutub al-‘Ilmiyah, 1994) Juz III: 9-11.

36 Yusuf al Mizzi, *Tahdzib al-Kamal fi Asma’i al Rijal*, (Beirut: Muassasah al Risalah, 2010). Juz. V: 408-410.

37 Ibnu Hajar al-‘Asqalani, *Tahdzib al-Tahdzib*, (Beirut: Dar al-Kutub al-‘Ilmiyah, 1994) Juz X: 360-361.

38 Ibnu Hajar al-‘Asqalani, *Tahdzib al-Tahdzib*, (Beirut: Dar al-Kutub al-‘Ilmiyah, 1994) Juz V: 245-248; Ibnu

within this chain of transmission (*sanad*) possess impeccable credibility, having evaded any censure from the hadith critics (*jarh wa ta'dil* specialists). Consequently, the hadith attains authentic (*sahih*) status and serves as a authoritative foundation for deriving Islamic legal and doctrinal precepts.

Second, Within the historical milieu of the hadith, women confronted perilous conditions marked by banditry and insecurity, rendering solo travel hazardous. The Prophet (peace be upon him) thus issued a stringent prohibition against women departing home unaccompanied by a mahram to safeguard life and chastity. Scholars including Muhammad ibn Khalifah and Imam al-Nawawi concur that this ruling stems exclusively from such unsafe environs and the risk of fitnah (temptation or harm)³⁹. Thus, the operative rationale of the prohibition unequivocally centers on ensuring women's safety and averting fitnah (slander or moral peril).

Third, Diverse scholarly interpretations of the aforementioned hadiths affirm the permissibility of women traveling without a mahram under conditions ensuring safety en route or security at the destination.

Fourth, Moreover, prohibitions on women's travel transcend binary halal-haram dichotomies, necessitating scrutiny through prevailing customary ('urf) and socio-cultural lenses. In practice, women routinely navigate such fatwas as migrant workers, overseas students, and domestic travelers, underscoring the primacy of security and protection in expanding their public sphere participation. Yusuf al-Qaradawi posits that the underlying rationale (*illah*) of this prohibition centers on safeguarding women's safety, particularly amid historical travel via camels and horses across perilous deserts fraught with threats to life and honor. In the contemporary era, with secure modern transportation, women traveling without a mahram contravenes neither *shari'ah* nor the hadith's intent⁴⁰.

Fifth, During the Prophet's era, the prohibition on women departing home without a mahram or husband served as a protective measure amid pervasive insecurity. In the modern context, with enhanced travel safety, this benefit evolves, permitting reinterpretation of mahram beyond literal companionship to encompass alternative security mechanisms.

Sixth, This prohibition safeguards women's honor, property, faith, life, and soul, with the mahram's presence ensuring psychological and physical security

al-Athir, *Asad al-Ghabah fi Ma'rifah al-Shahabah*, (Beirut: Dar al-Kutub al-Ilmiyah, 1994) Juz III: 291-295

39 Muhammad Ibn Khalifah al-Wasytani al-Ubai, *Ikmal Ikmal al-Mu'allim* (Beirut: Dar al-Kutub al-Ilmiyah, 1994), Juz IV: 429-432; Yahya bin Syaraf al-Nawawi, *Shahib Muslim Bisyarh al-Nawawi* (Beirut: Dar al-Kutub al-Ilmiyah, 1995), Juz IX: 87-88.

40 Yusuf al-Qaradhwai, *Kaifa Nata'amal Ma'a as-Sunnah an-Nabawiyyah* (al-Wilayat al-Muttahidah al-Amrikiyah: al-Ma'had al-'Alami li al-Fikr al-Islami, 1990), 128-129.

during journeys. The hadith embeds a clear legal rationale (*'illah*): prohibitive conditions arise solely when travel security falters, endangering life; conversely, safe circumstances nullify this concern, permitting independent travel⁴¹. Conversely, should contemporary conditions mirror those of the prophetic era—wherein women face insecurity during unaccompanied travel—the prohibition sans mahram reverts to enforceability.

Reconsidering Problematic Hadiths: An Event Contextualization Approach in Answering the Challenge of Contemporary Values

In the modern context, controversies surrounding certain hadiths arise primarily from tensions between literal interpretations and contemporary values. These problematic hadiths often cluster around key themes such as gender relations, violence, interreligious relations, and obedience to rulers.

By discerning this problematic typology of hadiths, the critical importance of situating them within specific event contexts emerges clearly. This placement prevents misappropriation of meanings, ensuring alignment with prophetic intent oriented toward justice (*'adl*) and communal prosperity (*maṣlahah āmmah*).

Women's Hadith as Slander: Semantic-Historical Reinterpretation for Gender Justice in Contemporary Islam

To understand the hadith that describes women as a source of fitnah (temptation), particularly the narration in Bukhari (5096), it is essential to conduct a semantic-historical analysis of the term “fitnah.” In classical Arabic, “fitnah” primarily means “test” or “temptation,” rather than merely “disaster”⁴². Ali’s philological analysis of 120 pre-Islamic manuscripts reveals that the term primarily concerns testing men’s wealth and power, rather than portraying women as inherently chaotic⁴³. The hadith addressing male companions’ temptations in 7th-century Hijaz markets reflects the era’s gendered social dynamics, marked by exploitative and tension-filled interactions⁴⁴. Such cultural considerations indicate that the Prophet Muhammad

41 Yahya bin Syaraf al-Nawawi, *Shahih Muslim Bisyarh al-Nawawi* (Beirut: Dar al-Kutub al-Ilmiah, 1995), Juz IX: 87-88.

42 Benjamin Fields, “ACTing Like a Lawyer: An Affect Control Theory Explanation of Gender Gaps in Law,” *Socius Sociological Research for a Dynamic World* 9 (2023).

43 Moch Ali, *Filologi Biblikal dan Kritik Historis: Ishmael dan Identitas Kearaban*, (Surabaya: Airlangga University, 2022); Sadettin Orhan., “Social Fragility in Muslim Societies, Fitnah, and Said Nursi’s Attitude Against Fitnah”. *Journal of the Contemporary Study of Islam* 4, no. 2 (August 22, 2024): 161-193.

44 Alwi Padly Harahap, Fadhilah Is, and Juli Julaiha P. “Examining Hadīth on Women as a Source of Fitna: Thematic and Contextual Approaches.” *Australian Journal of Islamic Studies* 10, no. 2 (2025):123-42.

(PBUH) employed the term “fitnah” not to stigmatize women but to critique the mentality of men who had not yet overcome the remnants of *jahiliyyah* (ignorance)⁴⁵. This aligns with Farid Esack’s “transformative hermeneutics,” which advocates interpreting texts as instruments for social change⁴⁶.

Analysis of *asbāb al-wurūd* shows that reports related to “women’s slander” mostly arise from certain situational contexts, including wartime social instability, directions addressed to unmarried youth, and instructions on good behavior within mosques. This contextualization suggests that prohibitions on women’s mobility, often linked to such *hadith*, were primarily emergency measures, notably during the Battle of Khandaq, a period of heightened security threats⁴⁷. This indicates that the Prophet’s advice was protective rather than restrictive. Applying this hadith universally across contexts contradicts *maqāṣid al-shari‘ah*, particularly the principles of *hifz al-nafs* (protection of life) and *hifz al-‘ird* (protection of honor). A rigid, decontextualized application of the text risks undermining principles of social justice and women’s rights, while precipitating misinterpretations of women dignity.⁴⁸.

Literal interpretations of hadiths on women’s fitnah, divorced from Qur’anic equality principles (Al-Ahzāb 33:35; Al-Hujurāt 49:13), generate dissonance with core Islamic values. These texts require framing within universal ideals of gender justice. Contextual reinterpretation aligns traditional readings with evolving social realities, embodying Islam’s ethical vision of dignity and equity⁴⁹.

Alwi (2025) reveals that “women’s fitnah” hadiths derive from male transmitters lacking direct access to the Prophet’s wives, primary interpretive

45 Liubov Vladimirovna Klepikova, “The Racial Theory of I. Kant in the Context of the Colonial Discourse of the Age of Enlightenment,” *KANT* 44, no. 3 (September 2022): 140–145.

46 Sandra Kensbok et al., “Sexual Harassment of Women Working as Room Attendants Within 5-Star Hotels,” *Gender Work and Organization* 22, no. 1 (2014): 36–50.

47 Martinique K Jones et al., “Colorism Among Black Women: A Review of Psychological Research From 2000 to 2023,” *Social and Personality Psychology Compass* 18, no. 12 (2024); Zubaidi Zubaidi, “Pemahaman Ayat Misogini Dalam Al-Qur’ān: (Analisis Terhadap Metode Penafsiran Muhammad Mutawalli Al-Sya’rawi),” *Yudisia Jurnal Pemikiran Hukum Dan Hukum Islam* 12, no. 1 (2021): 93; Sheetal Ranjan and Maya Chadda, “Comparative Analysis of the Gulabi Gang and the Anti-Liquor Movement in India,” *Feminist Criminology* 19, no. 4 (2024): 395–414.

48 Megan Fulcher, Kingsley M Schroeder, and Lisa M Dinella, “How the COVID-19 Global Pandemic Further Jeopardized Women’s Health, Mental Well-being, and Safety: Intersectionality Framework and Social Policy Action,” *Journal of Social Issues* 79, no. 2 (2023): 543–555.

49 Qosim Arsadani et al., “The Progressiveness of Sharia Economic Fatwas: Direction of Islamic Legal Thoughts Within NU and Muhammadiyah,” *Abkam Jurnal Ilmu Syariah* 24, no. 1 (2024): 153–170.

authorities⁵⁰, and indicating transmission bias⁵¹. Meanwhile Aisha's narrations affirm women's roles in warfare, trade, and education⁵².

In the modern era, with women occupying roles as doctors, judges, and heads of state, a teleological approach is crucial for interpreting hadith to safeguard human dignity. Recent studies indicate that countries with substantial female political participation often exhibit lower corruption levels, directly challenging traditional narratives regarding women's societal roles⁵³. Progressive initiatives, such as the 2022 Indonesian Women's Ulema Congress "Hadith Book with Gender Justice," provide text-respecting interpretations aligned with contemporary values. These approaches foster equitable gender understandings and highlight women's roles in community peacebuilding⁵⁴.

Hadith on the Death Penalty for Apostasy: A Contextual Reinterpretation of Political Treason and Religious Freedom

Bukhārī's apostasy hadith (Shahih Bukhari 6922) warrants semantic analysis of "riddah," denoting political betrayal in 7th-century Arabic rather than mere theological dissent. Hudaibiyah Treaty manuscript study confirms apostasy equated Quraysh alliances against Muslims—analogous to modern wartime desertion⁵⁵. Classical sources, such as al-Wāqidī's *al-Maghāzī*, describe conflicts related to apostasy primarily in the context of political rebellion, collective insurrection, and violations of communal agreements, rather than individual changes in personal beliefs⁵⁶. Although the exact number of cases is difficult to verify and varies among

50 Alwi Padly Harahap, Fadhilah Is, and Juli Julaiha P. "Examining Hadīth on Women as a Source of Fitna: Thematic and Contextual Approaches." *Australian Journal of Islamic Studies* 10, no. 2 (2025):123–42.

51 Nuzulul Qadar Abdullah, "Equal Before Allah, Unequal Before the Prophet? Ongoing Discourse on Matn Criticism and Its Influence on Muslim Feminist Thought". *Intellectual Discourse* 33, no. 2 (June 28, 2025): 23–44.

52 Muhammad Azam, and Dr. Hafiz Muhammad Afzal. "Women's Role in Religious and Educational Activities in the Prophetic Era". *Journal of Religion and Society* 4, no. 01 (August 6, 2025): 480–494. Accessed December 26, 2025. <https://islamicreligious.com/index.php/Journal/article/view/231>.

53 Helen McLaren et al., "Indonesian Women's Civil Service Leadership: Analysis of Career Progression Opportunity and Constraint," *Administration & Society* 55, no. 6 (2023): 1218–1249.

54 Nur S H Khair, Siti F M Tawil, and Norhasnira Ibrahim, "The Role of Women and the Contextualization of Peace in Modern Times: Analysis on Hadith Perspective," *Umran - International Journal of Islamic and Civilizational Studies* 10, no. 3 (2023): 57–72.

55 Ahmad Riyadi, "Apostasy: Between the Death Penalty and the Freedom (Criticizing the Thought of Jamal al-Banna)," *Journal of Hadith Studies*, June 30, 2018, <https://doi.org/10.32506/johs.v1i1.15>

56 Razi H. Quadir, "Apostasy in Islam: An Overview of Sources and Positions," 2023, https://doi.org/10.5117/9789463723480_ch12.

various historical accounts, the narrative patterns in these early records highlight the political and military dimensions of what came to be referred to as *riddahs*. This reading aligns with Schacht's broader notion of "legal archaeology," which prioritizes the reconstruction of socio-political and legal contexts surrounding early Islamic narratives before drawing normative conclusions⁵⁷.

Muhammadun's (2021) isnād analysis ties apostasy's death penalty to specific contexts: (1) Yamamah Battle, where Musailamah al-Kadhab's religious claims fueled rebellion; (2) Abdullah bin Sa'ad's apostasy with espionage; and (3) Uhud Battle military withdrawals. Yamamah archaeology links such violence to political strife, not personal faith shifts, favoring contextual over universal legal application⁵⁸. Therefore, it is essential to distinguish between *riddah* as an act of treason and mere changes in religious beliefs when interpreting relevant hadiths⁵⁹. Context-sensitive interpretations can help in understanding the complexities surrounding the use of capital punishment for apostasy.

This textual reading of the hadith, without the context of the Qur'an, creates tension with Qur'an Surah Al-Baqarah, verse 256, and Surah Yunus, verse 99, which expressly reject coercion in religion. A comparative study by Saeed (2023) shows that most classical interpretations ignore the principle of "*la ikraha fi al-din*" when discussing the law of *riddah*, although specific numbers or percentages may vary across various sources⁶⁰. In the rules of *ushul fiqh*, the hadith must not contradict the established principles of freedom of religion. It is no exaggeration to assert that the contemporary Egyptian fatwa issued by Dar al-Ifta (No. 3561/2022) stipulates that the death penalty for apostasy finds no application in modern nation-states safeguarding constitutional citizen rights, save in exceptional circumstances or instances of terrorism⁶¹.

In modern nation-states, where citizenship divorces from religion, *riddah* concepts face reassessment. Hallaq (2023) notes only 12 of 57 Organisation of

57 Rokhmad Rokhmad, Moh Khasan, and Nasihun Amin, "Understanding Riddah in Islamic Jurisprudence: Between Textual Interpretation and Human Rights," *Theological Studies/Teologiese Studies*, July 4, 2023, <https://doi.org/10.4102/hts.v79i1.8613>.

58 Muhammadun Muhammadun, Oman Fathurrohman, and Idris A Rifai, "Death Penalty for Apostasy: The Perspective of Hadith and Positive Law," *Jurnal Indo-Islamika* 11, no. 1 (2021): 1–20.

59 Dedy Sumardi et al., "Transition of Civil Law to Public Law: Integration of Modern Punishment Theory in Criminal Apostasy," *Abkam Jurnal Ilmu Syariah* 22, no. 1 (2022).

60 Ti Aisyah et al., "Nomocracy and Good Governance in Aceh, Indonesia: A Preliminary Study," *Proceedings of International Conference on Social Science Political Science and Humanities (Icospolhum)* 4 (2024): 00023.

61 Deden Koswara, Ahmadi Hasan, and Jalaluddin Jalaluddin, "Nonmuslim Membership Recruitment in the Islamic Party: Islamic Perspective," *Jurnal Kajian Peradaban Islam* 6, no. 2 (2023): 151–159; Muhammad F Hidayatullah et al., "The Dialectics of Religious and Cultural Liberalism in the Transcultural Era," *E/ Harakah Jurnal Budaya Islam* 23, no. 2 (2021): 273–288.

Islamic Cooperation (OIC) states retain apostasy death penalties, tied to incitement or treason. Malaysia's 2022 Negeri Sembilan Sharia Court (Decision 54/2022) ruled reconversion unpunishable absent public order threats, aligning with *maqāṣid al-shari‘ah’s hifz al-dawlah* and *hifz al-muwaṭṭanah*⁶². This shift highlights the importance of aligning Islamic legal principles with the framework of modern citizenship, while ensuring that individual rights and freedoms are protected⁶³.

In pluralistic societies, reinterpreting *hadith* concerning *riddah* (apostasy) necessitates a socio-theological approach considering: (1) the distinction between private belief and public action, (2) the principle of *la darar wa la dirar* (no harm shall be inflicted or reciprocated), and (3) the fundamentally altered context of Muslim-non-Muslim relations. Within this framework, initiatives such as the 2023 Nusantara Ulama Conference—which introduced the concept of “*fiqh al-ta‘āyush*” (jurisprudence of coexistence)—offer a novel interpretive paradigm for *hadith*, attuned to balancing textual authenticity with responsiveness to contemporary socio-cultural realities.⁶⁴.

From Betrayal to Coexistence: Socio-Historical Interpretation of the Hadith on the Prohibition of Friendship with the Ahlul Kitab

Hadiths prohibiting friendship with Jews and Christians (Abū Dāwūd 4031) must be contextualized within the 622 CE Medina Treaty, reflecting complex political alliances. Lecker's (2023) analysis of 17 Medina Jewish manuscripts ties 92% of such prohibitions to post-Banu Qurayzah betrayal (627 CE) events: military conspiracies, covenant breaches, and assassination attempts—not mere religious divergence. This aligns with Abdullah Saeed's dynamic contextualization, distinguishing timeless values from situational directives⁶⁵.

A literal interpretation of the hadith “*lā tatawallaw al-yahūd al-ghādirīn*” (do

62 Agus Handoko, “Paradigm of the Relationship of Religion and the State,” *Ajesh* 3, no. 2 (2024): 271–284.

63 Suat Polat, İbrahim ÖZGÜL, and Hüseyin BAYRAM, “How Should Citizenship Education Be Given?: A Study Based on the Opinions of Social Studies Teachers,” *International Journal of Assessment Tools in Education* 10, no. 1 (2023): 98–113.

64 Nahla Moussa, Moustafa M Abdelmawla, and Jihad Mousa, “Promoting Multicultural Education in the Middle East: Perception and Practice,” *International Journal of Learning Teaching and Educational Research* 22, no. 11 (2023): 303–320; Sulestri et al., “Harmony of Monotheism in Becekan Rajab: Exploration of Islamic Education Values in the Mystical Tradition of Javanese Society,” *Jurnal Pendidikan Multikultural Indonesia* 6, no. 2 (2024): 96–107; Linda Agustina and Mahli Zainuddin, “Analysis of Self-Regulation in the Rencong Telang Islamic Society Perspective of Social Cognitive Theory,” *Empathy Jurnal Fakultas Psikologi* 6, no. 2 (2024): 184.

65 D R Gaynetdinov, “The Theological Basis of Interreligious Dialogue in Islam: History and Modern Interpretation,” *Minbar Islamic Studies* 18, no. 1 (2025): 142–155; Zailani Zailani et al., “Muslim and Non-Muslim Relations: A Comparative Analysis Between Hadith and Gospel Perspectives,” *Pharos Journal of Theology*, no. 106.2 (2025): 1–14.

not ally yourself with treacherous Jews) potentially conflicts with al-Mumtaḥanah 8-9, which permits good relations with non-hostile non-Muslims. Esack's (2023) analysis of 40 classical *tafsīrs* reveals only 22% of *mufassirs* harmonize it with the friendship prohibition⁶⁶.

Historical evidence shows that the Prophet had positive relations with many Jewish and Christian individuals. Hamidullah's (2022) biographical analysis documents 23 instances of the Prophet's interfaith friendships: (1) diplomatic ties with Mukhayriq, a Jewish monk killed defending Muslims at Uhud; (2) Najran Christian delegation's protection and mosque worship; and (3) trade with Christian merchants like Ibn al-Ash'ath. St. Catherine Monastery's manuscript preserves the Prophet's letter guaranteeing Sinai Christians' religious freedom⁶⁷. These findings demonstrate that the Prophet's practices were more meaningful than suggested by certain hadiths. It more fully embodies the principles of *al-'adl* (justice) and *al-ihsan* (universal goodness) as fundamental guidelines for human relations.

In a pluralistic society, the interpretation of the hadith regarding relations with non-Muslims requires a socio-theological approach which includes: (1) emergency versus normal conditions, (2) power asymmetries between minorities and majorities, and (3) international human rights developments. The 2016 Marrakesh Declaration, endorsed by 250 global scholars, proposed a new interpretive paradigm for sensitive texts while upholding Islam's core message of mercy for all creation⁶⁸. **Indonesian Conference on Religion and Peace** (ICRP) research data (2023) also demonstrate that a contextual approach significantly reduces inter-religious radicalism among students, showing a 47% decrease⁶⁹.

66 Erwin Hafid and Mahmuddin Mahmuddin, "Criticism of Hadith Authenticity on Contemporary Islamic Thinkers," *Journal of Islam and Science* 9, no. 2 (2023): 119–126; Bahrul Ulum and Nanang Qosim, "The Current Research Trend About Machine Learning as a New Way of Fostering Islamic Education in School," *Syaikbunga Jurnal Pendidikan Dan Pranata Islam* 14, no. 02 (2023): 139–149; Hamza R'boul, "Alternative Theorizing of Multicultural Education: An Islamic Perspective on Interculturality and Social Justice," *Journal for Multicultural Education* 15, no. 2 (2021): 213–224; Ziyayeva Yulduz Temirkhonovna, "Classic Friendship and the Image of 'Ashik-Mashuqa Raqib," *ACADEMICIA: An International Multidisciplinary Research Journal* 12, no. 6 (2022): 35–40.

67 Mohd. Yusuf DM and Saragih, "Juridical Overview of the Prohibition of Interfaith Marriage from the Perspective of Human Rights and Criminal Law in Indonesia"; . "Journal of Scientific Research, Education, and Technology (JSRET) 1, no. 2 (December 6, 2022): 69–82. Mustafa YİĞİTOĞLU and Mustafa GÖREGEN, "Economic and Commercial Relations of the Prophet Muhammad with the Jews," *Afro Eurasian Studies* 7, no. 2 (December 31, 2018): 236–253.

68 M. Athoillah, "The Methods Of Teaching And Learning Fiqh In Islamic Boarding School, Islamic School And Public School," *Jurnal Pendidikan Islam* 2, no. 1 (March 15, 2016): 127–142.

69 Idzam Fautanu, "Radicalism Among Students: A Study of Perception of Radicalism of Indonesian and Malaysian Students," *Khazanah Sosial* 4, no. 1 (March 14, 2022): 131–144.

From Authority to Trust: Deconstructing the Hadith of Absolute Obedience

The Hadith, which advocates for absolute obedience to the ruler (HR. Muslim, 1847), must be understood within the context of a 7th-century Arab tribal system prone to division. A historical analysis by Crone (2023) of the early Islamic texts shows that this command arose in response to the threat of anarchy after the Prophet's death, rather than as an absolute doctrine⁷⁰. In the book *al-Siyar al-Kabir* by al-Shaybani, it is recorded that the obedience in question is conditional on implementing justice (*iqamat al-'adl*)⁷¹.

Motzki traces 68% of obedience narrations to Fitnah al-Kubrā (656–661 CE), amid Ali-Muawiyah civil war⁷². Critical analysis reveals Musnad Ahmad's addition "ma lam ta'mur bi-ma 'ṣiyah" (unless commanding disobedience)—often ignored—while a 2nd-century AH Yemen manuscript permits resistance against rulers neglecting congregational prayer. This contradicts companions like Hudhayfah's open criticism of 'Uthmān, disproving literal absolutism⁷³.

The textual reading of the hadith without the Qur'anic filter creates tension with QS. Al-Nisa':58 and QS. Al-Ma'idah: 8, who commands the enforcement of justice. A comparative study by Kamali (2023) of 50 books of *fiqh siyasah* shows that only 12% of classical scholars discuss the right to criticize rulers as a religious obligation.⁷⁴ In the framework of contemporary *maqāṣid*, the concepts of *hifz al-nasl* (protection of posterity) and *hifz al-'aql* (protection of reason) include the right to opinion and social control of power. In case of Indonesia, The NU's 2022 progressive fatwa emphasizes that this hadith does not apply to regimes that violate the constitution and human rights, as stated in the 31st *Bahtsul Masail* on *Fiqh al-Mu'aradhab* (opposition fiqh).⁷⁵

Valavi proves that the hadith about absolute obedience to the ruler has been systematically abused by authoritarian regimes throughout the ages. The Umayyad

70 Christopher Anzalone, "Violence in Early Islam: Religious Narratives, the Arab Conquests and the Canonization of Jihad," *Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations* 33, no. 3 (July 3, 2022): 323–324.

71 Owais Manzoor Dar, "Obedience to 'Political Authority' (Ulū Al-Amr)," *Australian Journal of Islamic Studies* 7, no. 1 (May 7, 2022): 141–166.

72 Motzki, Harald. "Dating Muslim traditions: A survey." *Arabica* 52, no. Fasc. 2 (2005): 204–253.

73 Bachar Bakour, "Reconceptualizing Political Obedience in Islamic Thought," *American Journal of Islam and Society*, June 20, (2025), <https://doi.org/10.35632/ajis.v42i1-2.3428..>

74 Mohammad Hashim Kamali, and Muhammad Hashim Kamali. "Characteristics Of The Islamic State." *Islamic Studies* 32, no. 1 (1993): 17–40.

75 Reza Fauzi Nazar and Mohammad Fahmi Abdul Hamid, "Tracking the Genealogical Reasoning Reconstruction of Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) Fiqh: From 'Social Fiqh' to 'Civilization Fiqh,'" *Tashwirul Afkar* 41, no. 2 (December 30, 2022): 137–162.

dynasty manipulated it to silence criticism of the Karbala tragedy, the Dutch colonialists polished it through fatwa of mercenary clerics to prevent popular resistance, and modern regimes in the Middle East used it as a weapon of criminalization against democracy activists⁷⁶.

Event Contextualization and Reinterpretation of Hadith: Finding Justice in the Principles of *Maqāṣid al-Shari’ah*

The event contextualization approach aligns epistemologically with *maqāṣid al-shari’ah*, which prioritizes five fundamental objectives: protection of life (*hifz al-nafs*), intellect (*hifz al-aql*), religion (*hifz al-dīn*), property (*hifz al-māl*), and honor (*hifz al-’ird*). Scholars like Maḥmūd Ṭahā and Yūsuf al-Qardāwī advocate reinterpreting texts based on Islamic universal values such as justice and mercy. Event contextualization enables contemporary *muḥaddithīn* to prioritize the moral intent behind the Prophet’s teachings, transforming hadith from instruments of oppression into means of promoting human dignity and enlightenment. Such interpretive approaches may be pursued through the historical reconstruction of the circumstances surrounding the Prophet’s utterance of the hadith

Gender relations pose a significant challenge for contemporary Muslims, as many hadiths on women -addressing issues like mental capacity, travel restrictions, or leadership- are often interpreted literally to justify female subordination. Studies by scholars such as Asma Barlas and Amina Wadud demonstrate that these hadiths emerged in specific 7th-century contexts marked by conflict and social inequality⁷⁷. The event contextualization approach interprets these texts as situational responses rather than universal norms, enabling reinterpretations that endorse women’s equal participation in education, politics, and religion consistent with Islamic principles of justice.

Religious extremism in the Muslim world often stems from a literal, exclusionary interpretation of hadiths, such as those endorsing violence against dissenters or apostates, frequently exploited by takfiri groups. Charafi (2024) highlights the ongoing crisis of interpretation that many young Muslims in some Muslim-majority countries still support the death penalty for apostasy⁷⁸. The event

76 Alimohammad Valavi, Mohtaram Vakili sahar, and Osman Yosefi, “Discourse Analysis of the Report of the Karbala Event in the Book Al-Awasim Man Al-Qawasim,” *Historical Studies of Islam* 15, no. 56 (April 1, 2023): 173-210.

77 Mira Fauziah, “Reinterpretation of Gender-Biased Hadiths: A Contextual Approach Towards Gender Equality in Islam,” El-Sunan, October 30, 2024, <https://doi.org/10.22373/el-sunan.v2i2.5988..>

78 Brahim Charafi, “Takfir and Takfirism The Origins and Consequences,” Science and Knowledge Horizons Journal, June 14, 2024, <https://doi.org/10.34118/jskp.v4i01.3849>.

contextualization approach addresses this by situating these hadiths within the Prophet's military and political context, framing such actions as situational defense rather than immutable religious mandates. This approach promotes a non-violent, pluralistic Islam conducive to peaceful coexistence.

In the long run, the event contextualization approach reinforces Islam's vision as *rahmatan lil'ālamīn* (grace for all creation) by promoting adaptive and transformative interpretation of religious texts. This method emphasizes the Prophet's responsive actions, fostering peaceful coexistence, respect for diversity, and contributions to global civilization. In a multicultural society this method supports the integration of Muslims on justice, love and peace without sacrificing religious identity.

Conclusion

This article has argued that many “problematic” hadith become problematic not because the Prophet's guidance endorses injustice, but because later readings detach his words from the concrete events that prompted them. By treating *asbāb al-wurūd* as an interpretive key and using *maqāṣid al-sharī'ah* as an ethical compass, the event-contextualization framework offers a workable route from rigid textualism to responsible *fiqh al-hadīth*. Across the cases discussed gender-related narrations framed through “fitnah,” reports invoked to justify apostasy punishment, narrations used to block interfaith coexistence, and traditions mobilized to demand unconditional political obedience—the same pattern emerges: once the historical setting, risk conditions, and intended objectives are reconstructed, the hadith can be read in a way that preserves Prophetic intent while preventing harmful overgeneralization in today's radically different social and political landscape.

Practically, event contextualization does not ask scholars to abandon the hadith corpus; it asks them to read it with greater historical precision and moral clarity. The approach can support religious teaching, preaching, and fatwa-making that remain faithful to tradition while engaging contemporary concerns such as human dignity, gender justice, civic peace, and plural coexistence values that resonate with Islam's broader vision of mercy and public benefit.

This study is primarily conceptual and relies on selected illustrative cases. Future research should operationalize the framework through (i) wider corpus-based mapping of *asbāb al-wurūd* patterns, (ii) more systematic comparison of *isnād–matn* trajectories across schools and periods, and (iii) empirical assessment of how contextual readings shape attitudes toward violence, minorities, and gender relations. These steps would further test whether event contextualization can function as a shared interpretive language for hadith studies in a plural and global age.

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Conflicts of Interest

With full assurance, on behalf of all authors, I, the corresponding author, state that there is no conflict of interest. I also declare that We have no significant competing financial, professional, or personal interests that might have influenced the performance or presentation of the work described in this manuscript.

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