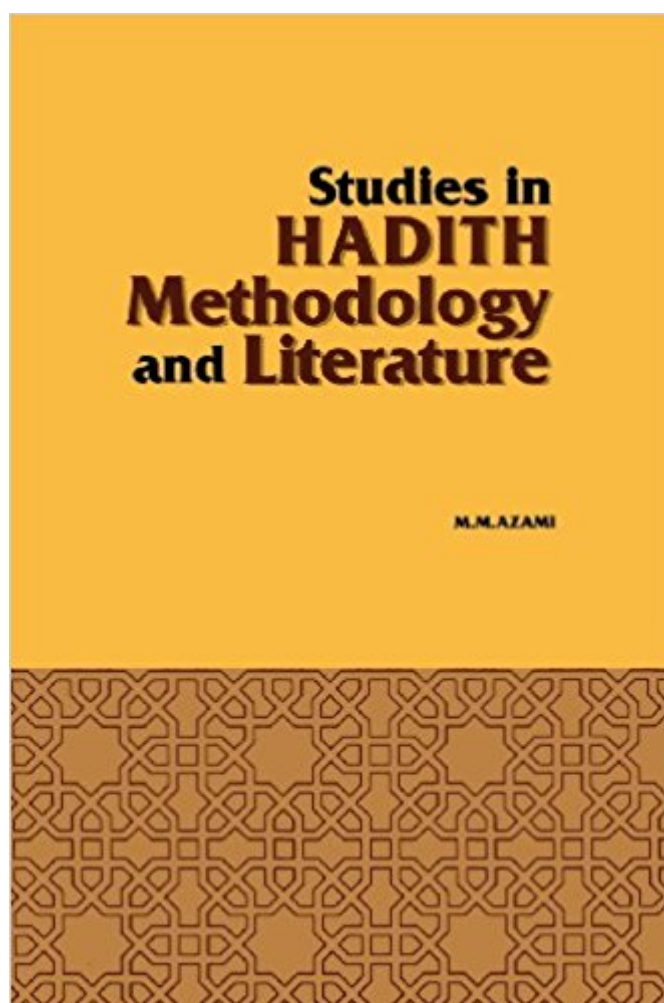


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Studies In Hadith Methodology And Literature



Synopsis

An introduction to the science of Hadith and methodology, it traces the evolution of Hadith. An essential reading for the students of Islam, its history and Hadith.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

This is quite a useful little book. But it's definitely not something I would recommend to someone who hasn't read anything on Hadith at all. Azami doesn't teach the hadith methodology in any systematic way. He spends more time on its history and demonstrating its early origins. His few chapters on the methodology isn't something I didn't know from Brown's work, mostly he just gives examples of a scholar talking about his critical methodology in a few short paragraphs. For example, he tells us about how Ibn Ma'in used to go around to the different students of a scholar looking to corroborate a story that he heard to check whether it was Hammad (the scholar) or his students who added mistakes to the story. He goes through the basics of rijaal criticism too, but again, it's really not that great. Azami is a muhaddith. I think he should have really just taught the subject like he'd sit down and teach one of his students. He doesn't need to quote early scholars except as a part of the historical development. What would have been really useful is if he could just devote a few chapters to some case studies. He could have shown us an isnaad diagram of some simple hadith example. Then he could have gone through every chain, given us biographical information on the transmitters, told us whether they could have met (and how we know), then look at the chains as a whole to see whether there is corroboration and why we can have confidence in the report. That would have been great. Unfortunately it's not included in this book. Azami's book is, however, good

for other stuff. His first section on "Tahammul al-Ilm (the transmission of knowledge)" is good. He details how scholars taught students and what they did to ensure the authenticity of documents and their teaching. Looks like early Muslim scholars were super strict about transmitting documents and oral information. His "literature" part of the book is also quite nice. He goes through the major works and talks a little bit about each scholar; their birth and the age they started studying hadith, some interesting stories from their lives, and (just a little) their critical methodology. And finally, the book is useful for getting definitions of hadith terminology, even though at times he is a bit vague. I still don't really understand what it means if a hadith is authentic/agreeable "li dhaatih" ("authentic by itself") and if it is so "li ghayrih" (authentic by something other than it)... even though these definitions are supposed to be central to the methodology.

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