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Theory Explosive Isnad and Isnad Family Nabia Abbott in Revealing The Authenticity of The Prophet Hadith

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Abstract

This article examines Nabia Abbott's theory and formulation in revealing the authenticity of Prophet Muhammad's Hadith. Nabia Abbott is one of the female orientalists who acknowledges the authenticity of Prophet Muhammad's Hadith. Nabia Abbott holds a different perspective from other orientalists, such as Joseph Schacht, who tend to be skeptical and do not acknowledge the authenticity of Hadith. Nabia Abbott rejects and criticizes some of Joseph Schacht's opinions on Hadith and seeks to objectively prove the authenticity of the Prophet's Hadith by creating an explosive isnad and isnad family theory. This paper examines the theory and formulation of the explosive Isnad and isnad family. The method used is qualitative-descriptive based on literature studies. The results of this study are as follows; The explosive isnad theory refers to the occurrence of explosive isnad narration involving many hadith narrations from the first to the third century of the Hijri calendar. Nabia used a geometric series formulation in applying the explosive isnad theory, with results indicating that it would be impossible for the Hadith to be inauthentic from the Prophet because it involved many people in the narration process with the same hadith editor. And the theory of the Isnad Family is divided into two categories: the family isnad and the non-family isnad. The family isnad refers to the transmission of Hadith narrated by certain people with blood relations or close connections (mawali). On the other hand, the non-family isnad theory pertains to the transmission between two individuals who do not have blood relations, such as family or relatives (mawali), such as the transmission of Hadith between a teacher and a student.

Kata Kunci: *Orientalist, Hadith Authenticity, Nabia Abbott.*

Abstrak

Artikel ini membahas teori dan formulasi Nabia Abbott dalam mengungkapkan keaslian Hadis Nabi Muhammad. Nabia Abbott adalah salah satu orientalis perempuan yang mengakui keaslian Hadis Nabi Muhammad. Nabia Abbott memiliki perspektif yang berbeda dari orientalis lainnya, seperti Joseph Schacht, yang cenderung skeptis dan tidak mengakui keaslian Hadis. Nabia Abbott menolak dan mengkritik beberapa pendapat Joseph Schacht tentang Hadis, dan berusaha membuktikan secara objektif keaslian Hadis Nabi dengan menciptakan teori isnad meledak dan isnad keluarga. Makalah ini menguji teori dan formulasi tentang isnad meledak dan isnad keluarga. Metode yang digunakan adalah kualitatif deskriptif berdasarkan studi pustaka. Hasil dari penelitian ini adalah Teori isnad meledak adalah kejadian isnad meledak yang melibatkan banyak narasi hadis dari abad pertama hingga abad ketiga Hijriyah. Nabia menggunakan formulasi deret geometri dalam menerapkan teori isnad meledak, dengan hasil yang menunjukkan bahwa mustahil jika Hadis tersebut tidak otentik dari Nabi karena melibatkan banyak orang dalam proses penyampaian dengan editor hadis yang sama. Dan Teori Isnad Keluarga dibagi menjadi dua, yaitu isnad keluarga dan isnad non-keluarga. Isnad Keluarga adalah transmisi Hadis yang disampaikan oleh orang-orang tertentu dengan hubungan darah atau kedekatan (mawali). Sementara itu, teori isnad non-keluarga adalah transmisi antara dua orang yang tidak memiliki hubungan darah, seperti keluarga atau kerabat (mawali), seperti transmisi Hadis antara guru dan murid.

Kata Kunci: *Orientalist, Hadith Authenticity, Nabia Abbott.*

INTRODUCTION

Hadith is the central guideline for Muslims after the Qur'an. All Muslims recognize the authenticity of Hadith as a second source of law and a solution to life's problems. However, several orientalist groups doubt the Hadith's authenticity as an authentic source of direction from the Prophet. Orientalists are a group of Westerners interested in Eastern nations by studying Islamic texts such as the Qur'an and Hadith. According to Herbert Berg, orientalist are divided into skepticism and non-skeptics.

Some orientalist tend to be skeptical and assume that the central problem of Hadith lies in the writing, bookkeeping, and falsification of hadiths which, of course, can have implications for the validity of hadiths. In its early days, the process of transmitting the development of Hadith was done orally, unlike the Qur'an, which was done in writing. Some orientalist assume that there are many hadiths whose authenticity needs to be doubted. In determining the authenticity of Hadith, some orientalist tend to use rationality as a benchmark for whether a hadith is

accepted or rejected. Joseph Schacht was one of the Orientalists who doubted the authenticity of the Prophet's Hadith. According to Schacht's perspective of subjectivism, most hadiths are considered unauthentic because of specific insertions and motivations by the 2nd century Hijriyah scholars.

Based on the *Projecting Back theory*, Schacht argues that the Muslims made the hadiths at the end of the first and second centuries derived from tabi'in statements, which were then based on companions and the Prophet. The series of narrations in the hadith sanad is a form of engineering that took some of the most famous names then. So according to Schacht, the Hadith does not exist and does not come from the Prophet.

Although some orientalists are skeptical and tend to have a subjectivist perspective on the understanding of Hadith, some orientalists do not. Nabia Abbott is one of the female orientalists who rejects the skepticism of orientalists who doubt the authenticity of Hadith, especially Joseph Schacht. Nabia believes Hadith is a *reliable* originating from the Prophet Muhammad and acknowledges the existence of hadith narrations during the time of the Prophet Muhammad. More than that, Nabia also believed that hadiths had been written down since the Prophet was still alive. Even though the process of transmitting hadiths was done orally, his companions could document them in written form. They are departing from various perspectives of the subjectivism of the orientalists on the authenticity of Hadith. Then, Nabia tried to prove the authenticity of the Hadith and objectively criticized Joseph Schacht's thoughts by making theories. This paper will explain Nabia Abbott's thoughts on Hadith by formulating *explosive isnad* and *isnad family theories*.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study's methodology is a descriptive qualitative research methods and this research category is a library research. The research employs a qualitative description method because it corresponds with the research objective. This research was conducted by gathering relevant literature and information pertinent to Nabia Abbott's perspectives on the Authenticity of the Prophet's hadith. In addition, this research included three stages of analysis: data reduction, data presentation, conclusion drawing, and validation. At the data reduction stage, this research seeks to select data derived from relevant literature. Then, an interpretative analysis was conducted to discover meaning in the research objectives, followed by data testing based on the relevant literature or theory. The final step is to conclude data validation, which is the solution to the research problem formulation.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Biography of Nabia Abbott

Nabia Abbott is a female orientalist born in 1897 in Southwestern Turkey. Since childhood, Nabia and her family have been accustomed to living a nomadic life by moving from one country to another. Nabia studied at British schools, then continued his education in 1915 at the University of Cambridge. After that, in 1919, Nabia continued her education at Isabella Thorbom College, Lucknow, and graduated with an honors BA. In 1925, Nabia continued her education at Boston University and graduated with an MA. Then, in 1933, Nabia became one of the female professors teaching at the Oriental Institute, Chicago.

Nabia became one of the women who took a great interest in studying ancient Arabic texts and early Islamic culture. Departing from an interest in Islamic studies texts, in 1936, Nabia Abbott and Martin Spreling wrote a dissertation entitled "The Kurrah Papyri of the Oriental Institute. Some of her works can also prove Nabia Abbott's interest in studying Islamic texts. Such as *The Rise of The North Arabic Script and its Qur'anic Development*, *Studies in Arabic Literary Papyri Volume I: Historical and Texts*, *Studies in Arabic Literary Papyri Volume II: Qur'anic Commentary and Tradition*, *Studies in Arabic Literary Papyri Volume III: Language and Literature*, *Aisha: The Beloved Muhammad*

In 1950, Nabia criticized Joseph Sachth's subjectivism towards the Prophet's traditions and attempted to objectively prove the authenticity of the Prophet's traditions with several of his theories. Departs from an attitude that tends to be different from other orientalists. So according to Wael B. Nabia's perspective, it can be categorized as one of the female orientalists who seeks to reject Joseph Sachth's subjectivism departing from the great attention and interest in Islamic culture, the Qur'an, Hadith, and some of the works it produces. It can lead her to become a professor and pioneer of female orientalists in conducting studies in the Eastern world.

Explosive Isnad and Isnad Family and Non-Family Theory in Revealing The Authenticity of The Prophet Hadith

Nabia Abbott researched Hadith due to her anxiety over several questions about the development of Hadith in the world. Starting from the question of time, the method of transmitting Hadith that has developed since the first century can spread widely to the continents of Africa and Europe. Finally, to answer these questions, Nabia formulated the theory

of the *explosive Isnad* and *isnad family*, which she described in her work entitled *Studies In Arabic Literary Papyri II: Qur'anic Commentary And Tradition*. Before that, it is necessary to know the definition of Isnad first. Isnad is relying on the hadith matan to the person who recites it.

A. *Theory Explosive Isnad*

Nabia Abbott states that the *explosive Isnad* is an isnad explosion. Where in the transmission of Hadith, there is a large-scale transmission involving many people from the first century to the third century of Hijriyah. According to Nabia Abbott, in the narration of the Hadith, there are one to two thousand names of companions and tabi'in who narrated the Hadith. Then, each of them narrated about two to five hadiths. Based on this, it indicates the number of hadith narrators codified in the third-century Hijriyah. Nabia considered that by involving many people who narrated Hadith, there would be *explosive isnads* in each generation of transmission.

Nabia Abbott describes the *explosive Isnad* using a geometric series arithmetic formulation, multiplying the two last numbers, such as 2, 4, 8, 16, 32, 64, 128, 256, 512, 1024, and so on. Based on the formulation of the geometric series, according to Nabia, it can be assumed that the process of transmitting Hadith starts from the person who first received the Hadith, namely a friend,

Then each friend narrates the Hadith to two generations below, tabi'in. The tabi'in then narrated it to the next generation so that four lines of hadith transmission were obtained. Furthermore, the third generation narrates to two people under him, and eight transmission lines are received in the fourth generation. This continues until the tenth generation, until 1024 transmission channels (*Isnad*) are obtained. As Nabia Abbott said:

"Let us return to the Companions for a starting point. Assuming that the average Companion transmitted one tradition to two transmitters of the next generation and assuming that this series was continued to the fourth and eighth, items-which would correspond to the fourth and eighth tabaqat of transmitters representing the generations of Zuhri and Ibn Hanbal, respectively we would have a geometric progression whose fourth and eighth terms are 16 and 256 respectively. In other words, the average Companion's original tradition could have been transmitted literally or according to sense through 16 different isnads or turuq in Zuhri's time and 256 in Ibn Hanbal's time. If we extend our hypothetical series to the tenth term, or the tenth tabaqah, the probable number of Isnads in the time of Ibn Hanbal and the next two generations of transmitters would be ten

percent of 256, 512, and 1024, that is, 26, 51, and 102 turns respectively."

Nabia used geometric series, assuming that between the time of Al-Zuhri and the time of Ibn Hanbal were as many as 16 to 256 lines of transmission. Then, Abbott assumed that the hadiths narrated by friends with geometric calculations contained 16 transmission lines and passed 256 traditions during Ahmad's time bin Hanbal. According to Nabia, if this hypothesis is extended to the tenth generation, it is possible that during the time of Ahmad bin Hanbal and the following two generations, it will reach 10% of 256, 512, and 1024 with the assumption that approximately 26, 51 and 102 narrations are involved. Sequentially. So, this is a very extraordinary number because it involves many people in transmitting Hadith. The following Hadith exemplifies the formulation of explosive Isnad by Mustofa A'azami:

حَدَّثَنَا عَبْدُ الرَّحْمَنِ بْنُ إِبْرَاهِيمَ الدِّمَشْقِيُّ قَالَ: حَدَّثَنَا الْوَلِيدُ بْنُ مُسْلِمٍ قَالَ: حَدَّثَنَا الْأَوْزَاعِيُّ قَالَ: حَدَّثَنِي الزُّهْرِيُّ، عَنْ سَعِيدِ بْنِ الْمُسَيَّبِ وَأَبِي سَلَمَةَ بْنِ عَبْدِ الرَّحْمَنِ أَكْثَمًا حَدَّثَاهُ: أَنَّ أَبَا هُرَيْرَةَ كَانَ يَقُولُ: قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ «إِذَا اسْتَيْقَظَ أَحَدُكُمْ مِنَ اللَّيْلِ، فَلَا يُدْخِلْ يَدَهُ فِي الْإِنَاءِ، حَتَّى يُفْرَغَ عَلَيْهَا مَرَّتَيْنِ أَوْ ثَلَاثًا، فَإِنَّ أَحَدَكُمْ لَا يَدْرِي فِيهِمْ بَاتَتْ يَدُهُ»

"If one of you wakes up from his sleep, don't dip his hand into the vessel before he has washed it three times because he doesn't know where his hand was last night."

The following figure: Assumptions of the *explosive Isnad* from the Hadith exemplified above: The visualization of the Isnad above indicates that in the narration of the Hadith, there were explosions of Isnad involving many people in each generation. The *explosive Isnad* initiated by Nabia Abbot has relevance to Mustafa's research A'zami of the hadith text in the classical manuscript by Suhay bin Salih (student of Abu Hurayrah). The manuscript of Suhay bin Salih contains 49 traditions which, after research by Mustafa A'azami, the narrators reached the third generation.

Through this research, A'zami found 20-30 narrators in the third generation living in India, Turkey, Morocco, and Yemen. So, according to A'azami, it was impossible with the conditions and situation at that time for them to come together and produce a similar editorial. Based on Mustafa A'zami's research on the Manuscript of Suhay bin Salih. The text explains that the Hadith was narrated by five friends, including Abu Hurairah, Jabir, Aisyah, 'Abdullllah bin Umar and Ali bin Abi Talib. Then Abu Hurayrah narrated it to thirteen Tabi'in. The thirteen Tabi'in were scattered to various regions, including one in Kuffah, two in Basrah, one in Yemen, and one in Sham. The thirteen tabi'in then narrated the Hadith to the next generation of no less than

sixteen people. Four people are in Basrah, one in Mecca, six in Medina, two in Kuffah, one in Yemen, one in Sham, and one in Khurasan. The sixteen narrations are from the Abu Hurairah route alone, so the number will increase when added to the narrations of other companions. Based on this explanation, it indicates that it would be impossible if, under the conditions of different regions, hadith narrators had gathered together to fabricate fake hadiths. Departing from the *explosive Isnad* formulated by Nabia Abbott, it indicates that Nabia Abbott's thoughts on the concept of *Isnad* are not much different from those of hadith scholars, where the sanad originates from the Prophet Muhammad and then branches to the next generation.

B. Theory and Formulation of Family and Non-Family Isnad

Nabia Abbott assumes that in the transmission of Hadith, there are two types of transmission: *family isnad* and *non-family Isnad*. In *family* history, referred to by Nabia Abbott, is the narrative between family members using the so-and-so formula. Formula *so-and-so* is the narration of Hadith originating from the father or grandfather so that this narration occurs within the scope of family members. *Isnad family* took place since the time of the companions who then narrated the Hadith three generations later continuously or sometimes skipping one generation afterward. As Nabia Abbott said:

"The "family" in this connection includes blood members and intimate mawali such as Nafi', the client of Ibn 'Umar, and Muhammad ibn Sirin, the client of Anas bin Mālik. Family isnad that starts with famous Companions and continues for three generations, usually with the formula "so-and-so on the authority of his father on the authority of his grandfather," is the most frequent. Sometimes a family isnad skipped a generation when older traditionists found a grandson eager to follow in his footsteps or crossed over to a collateral branch when a nephew proved to be an apt pupil."

Based on Nabia Abbott's thoughts, the transmission of the *isnad family* is the transmission of Hadith by certain people as follows:

1. The transmission is carried out from top to bottom due to family or lineage relations, such as the transmission of Hadith from father to child, or it can also be a transmission that skips one generation below, such as grandfather to grandson.
2. Transmission from sideways, not from top to bottom. Such as transmission from a father to a nephew.

3. Transmission is carried out by people who have a particular affinity but are not related by blood, such as passing from an employer to his slaves (*mawali*).

One example of *family isnad* transmission is hadith transmission between Nafi' (117 H/735 AD), a close friend (*mawali*) of Ibn Umar, and Muhammad Ibn Sirin is *mawali* Anas bin Malik. As for *Isnad non-family* is narration Hadith carried out by two people who are not related by blood or special closeness to hadith narrators, such as narrations between teachers and students. So, according to Nabia Abbott, one example of a *non-family Isnad* is someone who collects hadiths by doing rihlah to various countries to study and receive hadiths from hadith narrators. So that the two do not have blood relations and closeness (*mawali*). Thus, the formulation of *explosive isnad* and *isnad family* objectively proves that authentic Hadith originates from the Prophet Muhammad and can break Schatch's

Criticism of The Explosive Isnad and Isnad Family

Based on the Explosive Isnad and Isnad Family Theories initiated by Nabia Abbott indicate that Nabia Abbott's thoughts on the Hadith of the Prophet Muhammad tend to follow the thoughts of hadith scholars. So it can be said that Nabia Abbott has different thoughts from other orientalist such as Josep Schatch, Ighnaz Goldziher, and G.H.A Juynboll.

Therefore, the explosive Isnad that Nabia Abbot made looks no different from the isnad system put forward by hadith scholars. The theory of Nabia Abbott and Hadith scholars states that Hadith originates from the Prophet Muhammad and is getting increasingly branched in every era. Nabia Abbot believes that hadiths have been written down since the Prophet Muhammad was still alive, although they are still non-massive among some of his companions. At that time, Hadith tended to develop rapidly through a system of transmitting Hadith from word to word, and this activity continued until the Prophet Muhammad died.

Nabia Abbott's opinion contradicts the orientalist opinion in several theories, such as the projecting back theory initiated by Josep Schatch. Schatch argues that the Hadith did not appear at the time of the Prophet Muhammad but emerged during the generation of Muslims at the end of the Hijri's first and early second centuries. So that according to Schatch, the Hadith does not exist, and the Hadith is only the statement of the tabi'in, which is based on the Prophet Muhammad, which is called projecting *back*.

Joseph Schatch's opinion is historically considered incorrect because there are several manuscripts of companions who lived with the Prophet Muhammad, such as 'Abd Allah ibn Amr

al-'As, Abu Hurairah, Anas Ibn Malik, 'Abd Allah ibn Abbas and other companions. If the Hadith was codified at the time of tabi'in, it is not possible that it was written during the Companions' time. The manuscripts of the Companions are continuously preserved for the next generation. This argument about Isnad is what is meant by explosive Isnad. This method is proven by applying the *isnad* geometric formula in the Hadith. As Nabia Abbott's statement is as follows:

“Using geometric progression, we find that one to two thousand Companions and senior Successors transmitting two traditions each would bring us well within the range of the total number of traditions credited to the exhaustive collections of the third century. Once it is realized that the Isnad did, indeed, initiate a chain reaction that resulted in an explosive increase in the number of traditions, the huge numbers that are credited to Ibn Hanbal, Muslim, and Bukhari seem not so fantastic after all”.

Joseph Schacht also criticized the isnad family theory initiated by Nabia Abbott. According to Schacht, the family history (Isnad family) is fake and inauthentic. He stated:

“There are numerous Traditions which claim an additional guarantee of soundness by representing themselves as transmitted among members of one family, for example, from father to son (and grandson), from aunt to nephew, or from master to freedman. Whenever we come to analyze them, we find these family traditions spurious, and we are justified in considering the existence of a family isnad, not an indication of authenticity but only a device for securing its appearance.”

James Robson argues that the existence of a family isnad is a guarantee and a valuable contribution to hadith documentation. However, it should be realized that the existence of the isnad family transmission model can undoubtedly have implications for the falsification of Hadith because the quality of transmission cannot be equated between one narrator and another narrator. One example of a dubious family isnad is Ma'mar bin Muhammad and narrations from his father, Isa bin 'Abd Allah from his father, Katsir bin 'Abdullah from his father, Musa bin Matir from his father, and Yahya bin 'Abd Allah from his father. The isnad family theory developed by Nabia Abbott has the consequence that Nabia does not only acknowledge and accept *the isnad family*. However, more than that, Nabia praised the existence and guaranteed the authenticity of the Hadith of the Prophet Muhammad.

CONCLUSION

Nabia Abbott tries to create an *explosive isnad* and *isnad family* to prove the authenticity of the Prophet's Hadith. Explosive isnad theory is an isnad explosion, wherein the transmission of narration involves many people. The *isnad family* is divided into the *isnad family* and *Isnad Non-Family*. *Isnad Family* is a transmission of Hadith between narrators who are related by blood (family) or have closeness (*mawali*), and *non-family Isnad* is transmission between people who do not have blood relations (family) or familiarities, such as transmission between teachers and students. Through the theory initiated by Nabia Abbott, it can be represented that authentic Hadith originates from the Prophet.

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