

Dhabt al-Shahabiyyah: A Study on The Early and Contemporary Hadith Literature

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Abstract

This article examines scholarly views on the precision (*ḍabt*) of the Prophet's Companions in narrating hadiths by comparing early and contemporary hadith literature. The aim of this research is to reveal whether the quality of precision is truly guaranteed in the Prophet's Companions as is their integrity (*ʿadālah*), and to explain various arguments related to this matter. This research also attempts to address criticisms questioning the validity of Companions' narrations on the grounds that they are not *maʿṣūm* (infallible); as ordinary humans with the potential for error and forgetfulness, and not all Companions having the same level of intelligence (*ḍabt*). This research is library-based with a qualitative method that conducts in-depth analysis of authoritative works in hadith literature, covering phases from early to contemporary. The research finds that Imam al-Ḥāfiẓ Ibn Ḥajar al-ʿAsqalānī is among the scholars who explicitly state that all Companions possess the quality of *ḍabt*, placing the status of Companions at the highest position in the levels of *al-taʿdīl* (authentication). Meanwhile, the opinion initiated by Imam al-Ṣanʿānī and followed by several contemporary scholars states that the guarantee of Companions' integrity does not automatically guarantee their precision, with various arguments including the fact that some Companions had erred and forgotten when conveying hadiths. However, after conducting in-depth research on the texts of both opinions, the researcher concludes that the difference between the two groups of scholars is verbal in nature. The first group does not deny the possibility of forgetfulness

and errors among the Companions, while the second group does not explicitly determine which individual Companions are considered to lack the quality of *ḍabt*. Both groups agree that errors that occurred among the Companions can still be tolerated and do not damage their overall precision.

Keywords: *Ḍabt* (Precision), *Ṣaḥābī* (Prophet's Companion), Hadith Literature, *Jarḥ wa Ta'dīl* (Criticism and Authentication)

Introduction

In the tradition of Islamic scholarship, hadith holds a position as the second source of law after the Qur'an, making the authenticity of hadith a primary concern for scholars since the early period. Unlike the Qur'an, whose transmission is *qat'i* (definitive), hadith is generally *ẓannī* (presumptive), especially the majority of hadiths with *aḥād* status (narrated by few narrators) which require critical study of their authenticity, both in terms of *sanad* (chain of narrators) and *matan* (text).¹

In the discipline of hadith, experts have established criteria to measure the validity of hadith through two main components: *sanad* (chain of narrators) and *matan* (text). For *sanad*, there are three criteria that must be met: continuity of transmission, narrators who are just and precise, and being free from *shādh* (anomalies) and *'illah* (hidden defects). For *matan* criticism, there are two variables used: being free from *shādh* and *'illah*.² This division of criteria provides an understanding that *sanad* and *matan* have their own criteria in determining the validity of hadith, so a hadith with a sound *sanad* does not automatically have a sound *matan*, and vice versa.³

Sanad as the chain that connects hadith from the current generation to the previous generation places the Companions as the pinnacle generation after Prophet Muhammad. The function of Companions as the pinnacle generation in receiving hadith is very important⁴, considering they were living witnesses to the speech,

¹ Muḥammad 'Ajjāj al-Khaṭīb, *Uṣūl al-Ḥadīth: 'Ulūmuhu wa Muṣṭalaḥuhu* (Beirut: Dār al-Fikr, 2006), 302.

² Ṣubḥī al-Ṣāliḥ, *'Ulūm al-Ḥadīth wa Muṣṭalaḥuhu* (Beirut: Dār al-'Ilm li al-Malāyīn, 2009), 279.

³ M. Syuhudi Ismail, *Metodologi Penelitian Hadis Nabi* (Jakarta: Bulan Bintang, 1992), 73-74.

⁴ Imam Musbikin and Miftahul Asror, *Membedah Hadits Nabi SAW: Kaedah dan Sarana Studi Hadits Serta Pemahamannya* (Madiun: Jaya Star Nine, 2015), 194.

actions, and behavior of Prophet Muhammad. Not infrequently, the Prophet conveyed messages or hadiths directly to the Companions, who then conveyed them to the Tabi'in or other Companions who could not witness or directly hear the news from the Prophet, thus forming a chain called sanad. The study of sanad becomes important for testing the justice and precision of hadith narrators.⁵

The study of the precision (*ḍabt*) of hadith narrators, especially at the level of Companions, becomes an important theme that has not been widely explored. Unlike the attribute of justice (*ʿadālah*) of the Companions, which has been agreed upon by Ahlul-sunnah scholars based on textual and rational evidence, the attribute of precision of the Companions is still debated. This debate arises because of the reality that not all Companions have the same level of intelligence, and some of them have experienced errors in narrating hadiths. The fundamental question that arises is: does the guarantee of Companions' justice automatically also guarantee their precision? This question becomes very important considering precision is one of the requirements for accepting hadith, as is the attribute of justice.

The study of Companions' precision has attracted the attention of several researchers. Ahmad Zuhri⁶ discussed the position and justice of Companions, concluding the importance of Companions' precision and justice in narrating hadiths. Nur Kholis⁷ studied the forms of Companions' errors according to al-Idlibī and their relevance to the discourse on Companions' justice, concluding that Companions' justice is not affected by their errors. Muhammad Infithar al-Ahqaf⁸ researched the principles of justice and precision of hadith narrators, revealing that scholars have established techniques and theories to ensure objectivity in the study of hadith narrators. Ach. Zayyadi⁹

⁵ M. Hasbi Ash-Shiddieqy, *Pokok-pokok Ilmu Dirayah Hadits* (Jakarta: Bulan Bintang, 1976), 18.

⁶ Ahmad Zuhri, "Kedudukan dan Keadilan Sahabat," *Wahana Inovasi: Jurnal Penelitian dan Pengabdian Masyarakat UIISU* 11, no. 1 (2022): 64-71.

⁷ Nur Kholis, "Bentuk Waham Aṣ-Ṣaḥābah Menurut Al-Idlibī dan Relevansinya dengan Wacana Keadilan Sahabat," *AL QUDS: Jurnal Studi Alquran dan Hadis* 5, no. 1 (2021): 51-78.

⁸ Muhammad Infithar Al Ahqaf, "Kaidah Ke'adilan dan Kedhabitan Perawi Hadist," *Academia*, 2020, https://www.academia.edu/download/64762808/Kaidah_Keadilan_dan_Kedhabitan_Perawi_Hadis.pdf.

⁹ Ach Zayyadi, "Sahabat yang Diterima Riwayatnya: Kajian tentang Kualitas Pribadi dan Kapasitas Intelektual (Ke-dlabit-an dan 'Adalat al-Shahabah)," *At-Tajdid: Jurnal Pendidikan dan Pemikiran Islam* 1, no. 02 (2019): <https://doi.org/10.24127/att.v1i02.855>.

examined the personal quality and intellectual capacity of Companions, emphasizing the importance of Companions' justice and precision to guarantee the authenticity of hadith.

A more specific study was conducted by 'Alawī ibn Ḥāmid in his book *"Adālatu aṣ-Ṣaḥābah lā Tastalzīm Ḍabṭahum,"*¹⁰ concluding that the guarantee of Companions' justice does not automatically guarantee their precision. However, from a review of various studies, no research has been found that specifically compares the views of early and contemporary hadith scholars on the guarantee of Companions' precision, as is the guarantee of their justice.

This research is present to fill that void, by studying in depth the views of hadith scholars, both from the early to contemporary era, along with various textual and rational arguments about the presence or absence of a guarantee of precision for the Companions. This study becomes important given the position of Companions as the first chain in hadith transmission after the Prophet. If the status of Companions as precise narrators is questioned, this can affect the status of the hadiths they narrate, which in turn has implications for the derivation of Islamic law.

Furthermore, this research will explore how the epistemology of hadith scholarship handles the issue of Companions' precision, which shows the complexity of hadith criticism methodology. The concept of precision is not only a technical aspect in hadith science but also reflects how Muslim scholars develop empirical and rational verification methods to maintain the authenticity of religious teachings. In the contemporary era, where orientalist criticism of hadith methodology is increasingly intense, a comprehensive understanding of Companions' precision becomes increasingly relevant to strengthen the epistemological foundation of hadith science.

Methodology

This research examines the historical discourse on the precision (*ḍabṭ*) of the Prophet's Companions through an in-depth investigation of Islamic scholarly tradition, both from early and contemporary periods. This study uses a comprehensive qualitative methodology based on textual analysis and hermeneutical interpretation of

¹⁰ 'Alawī ibn Ḥāmid ibn Muḥammad ibn Shīḥāb al-Dīn, *'Adālatu aṣ-Ṣaḥābah lā Tastalzīm Ḍabṭahum* (San'a: Darul Kutub Bil Jumhuriyah al-Yamaniyah, 2013), 26.

authoritative Islamic sources.

The methodological framework begins with an extensive literature review covering primary hadith collections, including canonical works of Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī (edited by Muṣṭafā Dīb al-Bughā)¹¹ Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim (edited by Muḥammad Fu'ād 'Abd al-Bāqī)¹², and Sunan compilations. These fundamental texts become important references for understanding how early hadith scholars approached the question of Companions' precision in transmitting hadiths. Additionally, researchers also consulted biographical dictionaries (kutub al-rijāl) that document narrator criticism, providing valuable insights into how classical scholars evaluated the reliability and precision of hadith narrators, including special considerations given to the Prophet's Companions.

In examining the scholarly discourse on the concept of ḍaḥṭ applied to Companions, this research refers to classical treatises on hadith methodology (uṣūl al-ḥadīth) written by prominent scholars such as al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī (d. 463 H/1071 CE) in *al-Kifāyah fī 'Ilm al-Riwāyah*¹³, Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ (d. 643 H/1245 CE) in *Muqaddimah*¹⁴, al-Dhahabī (d. 748 H/1348 CE) in *al-Mūqīzah fī 'Ilm Muṣṭalah al-Ḥadīth*¹⁵, and Ibn Ḥajar al-'Asqalānī (d. 852 H/1449 CE) in *Nuzhat al-Naẓar*¹⁶. These works articulate the theoretical foundations for narrator criticism and establish parameters for evaluating precision in hadith transmission.

This research also includes contemporary scholarly contributions that revisit or reaffirm classical positions regarding the status of Companions in hadith transmission, including works by Muḥammad 'Ajjāj al-Khaṭīb in *al-Sunnah Qabl al-Tadwīn*¹⁷ and Uṣūl al-Ḥadīth¹⁸, Ṣ

¹¹ Muḥammad ibn Ismā'īl al-Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, ed. Muṣṭafā Dīb al-Bughā, 6 vol. (Beirut: Dār Ibn Kathīr, 1987).

¹² Muslim ibn al-Ḥajjāj, *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, ed. Muḥammad Fu'ād 'Abd al-Bāqī, 5 vol. (Beirut: Dār Iḥyā' al-Turāth al-'Arabī, n.d.).

¹³ Al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī, *al-Kifāyah fī 'Ilm al-Riwāyah*, ed. Māhir Yāsīn al-Faḥl (Riyadh: Dār Ibn al-Jawzī, 2009).

¹⁴ Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ, *Ma'rifat Anwā' 'Ulūm al-Ḥadīth*, ed. Nūr al-Dīn 'Itr (Damascus: Dār al-Fikr, 1986).

¹⁵ Al-Dhahabī, *al-Mūqīzah fī 'Ilm Muṣṭalah al-Ḥadīth*, ed. 'Abd al-Fattāḥ Abū Ghuddah (Aleppo: Maktabat al-Maṭbū'āt al-Islāmiyyah, 1405 H).

¹⁶ Ibn Ḥajar al-'Asqalānī, *Nuzhat al-Nazar fī Tawḍīḥ Nukhbat al-Fikar*, ed. 'Abdullāh ibn Daifullāh al-Raḥīlī (Riyadh: Maktabat al-Malik Fahd, 2001).

¹⁷ Muḥammad 'Ajjāj al-Khaṭīb, *al-Sunnah Qabl al-Tadwīn* (Cairo: Maktabah Wahbah, 2008).

¹⁸ Muḥammad 'Ajjāj al-Khaṭīb, *Uṣūl al-Ḥadīth: 'Ulūmuhu wa Muṣṭalahuhu* (Beirut: Dār al-Fikr, 2006).

ubhī al-Ṣāliḥ in *‘Ulūm al-Ḥadīth wa Muṣṭalahuhu*¹⁹, Muṣṭafā al-A’zamī in *Manhaj al-Naqd ‘ind al-Muḥaddithīn*²⁰, Muḥammad Syuhudi Ismail in *Kaedah Kesahihan Sanad Hadis*²¹, and contributions from contemporary Indonesian scholars such as Mustafa Ali Ya’qub²².

The analytical approach used in this research involves critical examination of textual evidence and scholarly arguments regarding Companions’ precision. Through careful textual analysis, researchers identify key terminology, concepts, and theoretical frameworks used by scholars to describe and evaluate the precision of hadith narrators in general and Companions in particular. Critical engagement with these texts allows for a nuanced understanding of how classical and contemporary scholars have conceptualized *ḍabt* in relation to the special status of Companions in hadith transmission.

This study also adopts a comparative methodology to juxtapose various scholarly positions from different time periods and intellectual traditions. This comparative approach illuminates the evolution of scholarly discourse on Companions’ precision and highlights areas of consensus and disagreement among hadith authorities. By comparing classical and contemporary viewpoints, this research identifies continuities and changes in scholarly attitudes toward the evaluation of Companions as hadith narrators.

This research also pays attention to the contributions of orientalist thought on the concept of precision and hadith criticism methodology. Works such as Ignaz Goldziher in *Muslim Studies*²³, Joseph Schacht in *The Origins of Muhammadan Jurisprudence*²⁴, and Harald Motzki in *The Origins of Islamic Jurisprudence*²⁵ are analyzed to understand methodological challenges to the concept of *ḍabt* in the hadith scholarly tradition, as well as the responses of contemporary

¹⁹ Ṣubḥī al-Ṣāliḥ, *‘Ulūm al-Ḥadīth wa Muṣṭalahuhu* (Beirut: Dār al-‘Ilm li al-Malāyīn, 2009).

²⁰ Muḥammad Muṣṭafā al-A’zamī, *Manhaj al-Naqd ‘ind al-Muḥaddithīn: Nash’atuhu wa Tārīkhuhu*, 3rd ed. (Riyadh: Maktabat al-Kawthar, 1990).

²¹ Muḥammad Syuhudi Ismail, *Kaedah Kesahihan Sanad Hadis: Telaah Kritis dan Tinjauan dengan Pendekatan Ilmu Sejarah* (Jakarta: Bulan Bintang, 1988).

²² Ali Mustafa Ya’qub, *Kritik Hadis* (Jakarta: Pustaka Firdaus, 2008).

²³ Ignaz Goldziher, *Muslim Studies*, trans. C.R. Barber and S.M. Stern (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1971).

²⁴ Joseph Schacht, *The Origins of Muhammadan Jurisprudence* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1950).

²⁵ Harald Motzki, *The Origins of Islamic Jurisprudence: Meccan Fiqh Before the Classical Schools*, trans. Marion H. Katz (Leiden: Brill, 2002).

Muslim scholars to these criticisms.

An interpretive hermeneutical framework guides this research, which is situated within traditional Sunni hadith criticism methodology while being attentive to the complexities of narrator evaluation. This interpretive approach acknowledges the special reverence accorded to Companions in Islamic tradition, while also acknowledging scholarly debates surrounding their capacity for precision in hadith transmission. This framework allows for a balanced assessment that honors traditional reverence for Companions while critically engaging with textual evidence and scholarly arguments.

Throughout the research process, this study maintains methodological rigor through careful documentation of source materials and transparent presentation of scholarly positions. Researchers pay special attention to distinguishing between substantive disagreements and verbal or apparent differences among scholars. This careful distinction helps clarify whether scholars truly differed on fundamental principles regarding Companions' precision or merely emphasized different aspects of the same basic understanding.

In analyzing the collected data, researchers use content analysis to identify themes, patterns, and conceptual categories in scholarly discourse on Companions' precision. This analytical process reveals how scholars have approached questions about potential errors in Companions' narrations, the relationship between justice ('adālah) and precision (ḍabt), and the practical implications of these attributes for accepting or rejecting hadith transmissions.

The methodological approach adopted in this research ultimately aims to present a comprehensive and balanced view of scholarly perspectives on Companions' precision, elucidating both the theoretical principles articulated by scholars and their practical application in hadith criticism. This methodological framework provides the foundation for a nuanced understanding of how the concept of ḍabt has been applied to the special case of the Prophet's Companions across various periods of Islamic intellectual history.

Results and Discussion

a. Definition of Companions According to Hadith Scholars

Etymologically, the word "صَحَاب" (ṣaḥība) in Arabic means to accompany or to befriend, and "صُحْبَة" (ṣuḥbah) means friendship or

companionship. The word “الصَّحَابَةُ” (al-ṣaḥābah) is the plural form of “صَاحِبٌ” (ṣāḥibun), like the word “رَاكِبٌ” (rākib) and “رَكْبٌ” (rakb), while “الأَصْحَابُ” (al-aṣḥāb) is a group of people who are friends together. In addition, there are several other plural forms, such as “أَصْحَابٌ” (aṣḥāb), “أَصْحَابٌ” (aṣāḥib), “صَحْبَانٌ” (ṣaḥbān), “صَحَابٌ” (ṣaḥāb), and “صَحَابَةٌ” (ṣaḥābah), as explained by Imam al-Akhfash.²⁶

The word has various meanings, including:

1. *al-Mu'āsharah* (interaction or association), as Ibn Manẓūr states: “and he accompanied (صاحبه), means he associated with him.”
2. *al-Murāfaqah* (friendship or companionship), which is usually found in prayers, for example “صحبك الله” (may Allah accompany you), which means may Allah protect you and accompany you with His protection.
3. *al-Mulāzamah* (togetherness). Ibn Manẓūr says: “and to accompany someone means to invite them to associate, and anything that accompanies something means it accompanies it.”²⁷
4. *al-Mujālasah* (gathering). It is said: “I befriended so-and-so,” meaning I sat with him.
5. *al-Ḥifẓ* (protection), and from here Ibn Manẓūr says: “and someone guards (صحب) another person, meaning he guards and preserves him.”
6. *al-Istihyā'* (shame), and from here Ibn Manẓūr's statement: “and people who always accompany us are people who feel ashamed.”
7. *al-Inqiyād* (obedience). Ibn Manẓūr says: “and in a hadith, it is mentioned: ‘then the camel followed (أصحبت) me,’ meaning it obeyed and followed its owner.”
8. *al-Man'u* (prevention), from Allah's statement in Surah al-Anbiya' verse 43: “وَلَا هُمْ مِنَّا يُصْحَبُونَ”, meaning “they will not be accompanied or helped.”²⁸

Sheikh Nūr al-Dīn 'Itr in his book *Manhaj al-Naqd* mentions that the origin of the word “*al-Ṣuḥbah*” (companionship) in language refers to mere togetherness or meeting, without requiring a long duration, and based on this understanding, some hadith scholars adhere to this meaning.²⁹

²⁶ Ibn Manẓūr, *Lisān al-'Arab*, vol. 1 (Beirut: Dār Ṣādir, 1414 H), 519-521.

²⁷ Muḥammad bin 'Abdullāh al-Hākim, *al-Mustadrak 'alā al-Ṣaḥīḥayn*, ed. Muṣṭafā 'Abd al-Qādir 'Atā (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyyah, 1990), hadith no. 2483.

²⁸ Ibn Manẓūr, *Lisān al-'Arab*, vol. 1, 522.

²⁹ Nūr al-Dīn 'Itr, *Manhaj al-Naqd fī 'Ulūm al-Ḥadīth*, 3rd ed. (Damascus: Dār al-Fikr,

In the Encyclopedia of Islam, it is stated that: “The Companions of the Prophet are followers of Prophet Muhammad who always accompanied him and earnestly implemented the Prophet’s teachings. They memorized and narrated the Qur’an and Hadith before both were written and then collected.”³⁰

There are differences of opinion among scholars regarding who is considered a Companion of the Messenger of Allah. The most common opinion among hadith scholars is that a Companion is anyone who ever met or saw the Messenger of Allah. However, there are also stricter and more cautious opinions, such as the opinion of Sa’id bin al-Musayyab, who states that only those who lived with the Prophet for one or two years and participated in battles with him can be considered Companions. Here are some opinions of hadith scholars regarding the definition of a Companion:

1. Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ (d. 643H/1245CE) said that a Companion is anyone who narrated a hadith or one sentence from the Prophet or just saw him. This is because of the nobility possessed by the Prophet, so even if someone just saw him and believed, they could already be called a Companion.³¹
2. Sa’id ibn al-Musayyab said that a Companion is someone who lived with the Prophet for one year or several years, or fought in one battle or several battles.³²
3. Al-Ḥāfiẓ Ibn Ḥajar al-’Asqalānī (d. 852H/1449CE) said that a Companion is a person who met the Prophet in a state of faith and died in a state of Islam.³³
4. Imam Bukhārī, Abū Zur’ah, Ibn ‘Abd al-Barr, Ibn al-Athīr, and Abū Mūsā al-Madīnī said every person who ever saw the Prophet and believed could already be called a Companion.³⁴
5. Some scholars say that Companions are those who received narrations from the Prophet, and Companions constitute one *tabaqat* (level) of narrators in the hadith narration system.

1997), 116.

³⁰ Cyril Glasse, *Ensiklopedi Islam Ringkas*, trans. Ghufroon A. Mas’adi (Jakarta: Raja Grafindo Persada, 1999), 358.

³¹ Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ, *Ma’rifat Anwā’ ‘Ulūm al-Ḥadīth*, 118.

³² Muḥammad ‘Ajāj al-Khaṭīb, *al-Sunnah Qabl al-Tadwīn*, 388

³³ Ibn Ḥajar al-’Asqalānī, *al-Iṣābah fī Tamyiz al-Ṣaḥābah*, ed. ‘Alī Muḥammad al-Bijāwī, 1st ed. (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-‘Ilmiyyah, 1415 H), vol. 1, 8.

³⁴ Ibn Kathīr, *Ikhtisār ‘Ulūm al-Ḥadīth*, ed. Aḥmad Muḥammad Shākir (Riyadh: Dār al-Maymān, 1431 H), 120.

Companions are also the main and primary chain in the hadith narration system. Therefore, not everyone who lived during the Prophet's time but did not receive narrations from the Prophet can be called a Companion.³⁵

From the several different definitions above, the most sound and adopted by the majority of scholars is the definition put forward by Ibn Hajar al-'Asqalānī, namely that what can be called a Companion is those who met the Prophet in a state of faith and being Muslim, and died with their faith and Islam still intact.³⁶ This definition becomes standard in hadith studies because of the clarity of its criteria and its proper placement in the hierarchy of hadith narrators.

b. The Concept of Precision (Ḍabṭ)

In the discipline of hadith science, ḍabṭ is one of the requirements for accepting hadith. The presence of the ḍabṭ quality in hadith narrators is very important because the narrated hadith will be accepted if the hadith narrator can convey the hadith without errors in words, phrases, or meanings. Therefore, in assessing the quality of a hadith, a muḥaddith (hadith expert) will pay attention to whether the narrator has the quality of ḍabṭ or not, and this can be traced by looking at the track record of the accuracy of the narrator's memorization and writing.³⁷

According to Zayn Muḥammad, ḍabṭ in the Arabic dictionary has several meanings, including keeping something carefully. Ḍabṭ can also be interpreted as the ability to keep something tightly and control it, or someone's ability to hold and restrain something. In addition, ḍabṭ can also be interpreted as strength or firmness, as in the phrase "a strong and tough man." The word ḍabṭ is also used to describe the act of detention or restraint, as in the phrase "ضبط الشخص", which means to detain or imprison him.³⁸

While according to terminology, hadith scholars differ in their opinion regarding the definition of ḍabṭ. Nūr al-Dīn 'Itr explains that what is meant by ḍabṭ is a fully mindful attitude and not being negligent, in the form of strong memorization if the narrated hadith

³⁵ Muḥammad Muṣṭafā al-A'zamī, *Manhaj al-Naqd 'ind al-Muḥaddithin: Nash'atuhu wa Tārīkhuhu*, 30.

³⁶ Al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī, *al-Kifāyah fī 'Ilm al-Riwāyah*, 51.

³⁷ Muḥammad Syuhudī Ismail, *Metodologi Penelitian Hadis Nabi*, 71.

³⁸ Zayn ibn Muḥammad ibn Ḥusayn al-'Aydūs, "Ḍabṭ al-Ṣaḥābah al-Kirām li al-Marwiyyāt," 236.

is based on memorization, and in the form of correct writing if the narrated hadith is based on the narrator's writing or notes. Meanwhile, if the hadith narrator narrates according to meaning, then he must fully understand things that can change the meaning.³⁹

According to Ibn Ḥajar al-'Asqalānī and al-Syarqāwī, as explained by Syuhudi Ismail, *ḍabṭ* is the quality of strong memorization of what is heard and the ability to convey it according to its original wording and meaning whenever he wishes.⁴⁰ From both definitions above, it can be understood that *ḍabṭ* refers to the ability of a hadith narrator to remember and convey hadith accurately. Overall, *ḍabṭ* emphasizes the importance of accuracy and consistency in narrating hadith, whether through memorization, writing, or understanding meaning.

In the treasury of hadith science, scholars recognize two types of *ḍabṭ*: *ḍabṭ al-ṣadr* (precision in memorization) and *ḍabṭ al-kitāb* (precision in writing). *Ḍabṭ al-ṣadr* refers to narrators who have the ability to memorize hadith perfectly from hearing it to conveying it to others. While *ḍabṭ al-kitāb* refers to narrators who maintain their hadith writings well, free from errors, changes, reductions, or additions.⁴¹

However, in practice, errors in narration sometimes cannot be avoided, even by hadith narrators known to have high quality and credibility. Therefore, it is important to understand how an error that occurs to a hadith narrator does not automatically damage the overall reputation or credibility of the narrator. In this context, hadith critics play an important role in analyzing each narration carefully and fairly, and not quickly drawing conclusions based only on small errors that may occur.

Muḥammad Tonang states that if a hadith narrator makes one or two errors in narration, this does not necessarily reduce his status as a hadith narrator who possesses the quality of *ḍabṭ*, nor does it destroy his credibility as a *thiqah* (just and precise) narrator. However, if such errors occur, the hadith he narrates must be rejected and considered *ḍa'īf* (weak). This is the important role of hadith critics; they must conduct analysis with precision and caution, avoiding generalizing all narrations of *thiqah* narrators as sound hadith, or conversely, judging

³⁹ Nūr al-Dīn 'Itr, *Manhaj al-Naqd fi 'Ulūm al-Ḥadīth*, 80.

⁴⁰ Muḥammad Syuhudi Ismail, *Kaedah Kesahihan Sanad Hadis: Telaah Kritis dan Tinjauan dengan Pendekatan Ilmu Sejarah*, 119.

⁴¹ Muḥammad ibn 'Alawī al-Mālikī, *al-Manhal al-Laṭīf fi Uṣūl al-Ḥadīth al-Sharīf* (Jeddah: Dār al-Shurūq, 1982), 94-95.

all their narrations as flawed because of one small error in narration.⁴²

A hadith narrator, in narrating hadith, does not have to have one hundred percent accuracy of memorization, or never experience errors and forgetfulness at all. This is impossible because human nature has been given information by Allah as creatures who mostly have the quality of forgetfulness, and it is impossible for everything done to be in accordance with the truth. Even Companions who became hadith narrators with such amazing accuracy of hadith memorization are not free from forgetfulness and errors. However, if a hadith narrator's errors are too many, this will damage the quality of *ḍabṭ* he possesses.

Luqmān al-Ḥakīm in his book *Imdād al-Mughīth* says: "if the memorization of a *thiqah* narrator is compared with another *thiqah* narrator and harmony is found, even if only in terms of meaning, then he is still considered to have the quality of *ḍabṭ*. However, if what is narrated has many differences with other *thiqah* narrators, then his hadith will be rejected.⁴³ The damage to the *ḍabṭ* status of a hadith narrator has various causes, such as the loss of the book or notes of the narrated hadith for narrators who are *ḍabṭ al-kitābah* (narrating and preserving hadith with notes or writing), or the weakening of their memorization due to old age if they are narrators who are *ḍabṭ al-ṣadr* (narrating hadith based on the strength of memorization).

According to Ibn Ḥajar al-'Asqalānī, whose opinion is also explained by Mullā 'Alī al-Qārī, there are five types of behavior or conditions that can damage the precision of a hadith narrator, including:

1. More errors than correct narrations, for example, in narrating 4,000 hadiths, there are about 2,100 errors, then such a person can be said to not have the quality of *ḍabṭ*.
2. Forgetfulness that is more prominent than memorization.
3. Narrations that are highly suspected to contain errors.
4. Narrations that contradict narrations conveyed by other *thiqah* narrators.
5. Weak memorization, although there are also some correct narrations.⁴⁴

⁴² Muḥammad Tonang and Andi Rasdiyanah, "Sistem Isnad dan Kriteria Kesahihan Hadis," *Ihyaussunnah: Journal of Ulumul Hadith and Living Sunnah* 1, no. 1 (2021): 71.

⁴³ Luqmān al-Ḥakīm, *Imdād al-Mughīth bi Tashīl 'Ulūm al-Ḥadīth*, 1st ed. (Cairo: Dār al-Ṣāliḥ, 2017), 29.

⁴⁴ Ibn Ḥajar al-'Asqalānī, *Nuzhat al-Nazar fī Tawḍīḥ Nukhbat al-Fikar*, 134-135.

c. Methods for Determining the Precision of Hadith Narrators

Hadith scholars have various ways to determine the level of *ḍabt* (accuracy and reliability of memorization) of hadith narrators. Here are some commonly used methods:

1. **Based on Scholars' Testimony:** Hadith scholars who have deep knowledge of hadith narrator criteria will provide assessment or testimony regarding the *ḍabt* of a hadith narrator. This testimony becomes one of the important references in assessing the quality and credibility of hadith narrators.⁴⁵
2. **Conformity of Narration:** The *ḍabt* of a hadith narrator can also be assessed based on the conformity of the narration he conveys with narrations from other hadith narrators whose *ḍabt* has been proven. If there is significant alignment between the two narrations, this indicates that the hadith narrator has strong and reliable memorization, meaning his quality of *ḍabt* can be proven.⁴⁶
3. **Tolerance for Errors:** A hadith narrator does not automatically lose his status of *ḍabt* just for making one or two errors in narration. However, if such errors occur repeatedly and significantly, this can remove or damage his status of *ḍabt*.⁴⁷

Based on the three methods above, we can know that in providing testimony, hadith scholars use various criteria and assessment methods. They examine the track record of hadith narrators, including teachers who have narrated hadith to them, as well as students who have received hadith from them. They also compare narrations conveyed by one narrator with narrations from other reliable hadith narrators. In addition, they also pay attention to the personal integrity of hadith narrators, including honesty, justice, and piety.

As for the conformity of narrations between narrators, or what is known as *ittifāq al-riwāyah*, in the treasury of hadith science, it becomes one of the important indicators in assessing the *ḍabt* of a hadith narrator. This method not only relies on the testimony of scholars but also on empirical verification of existing narration data. Imam al-Tirmidhī, for example, extensively uses this method in his *Sunan* book to assess the quality of hadith, by comparing narrations

⁴⁵ Muḥammad 'Ajjāj al-Khaṭīb, *Uṣūl al-Ḥadīth: 'Ulūmuhu wa Muṣṭalahuhu*, 232-233.

⁴⁶ Al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī, *al-Kifāyah fī 'Ilm al-Riwāyah*, 232.

⁴⁷ Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn al-Idlibī, *Manhaj Naqd al-Matn 'ind 'Ulamā' al-Ḥadīth al-Nabawī*, 1st ed. (Cairo: Mu'assasat Iqra' al-Khayriyyah, 2013), 105-107.

from one chain with others.⁴⁸

Regarding the concept of tolerance for errors, this has direct implications for the status of hadith narrated by narrators. If a hadith narrator makes a non-fatal error, the hadith he narrates can still be accepted. However, if a hadith narrator makes repeated and fatal errors, the hadith he narrates will be rejected. The purpose of the concept of tolerance for errors is to maintain fairness and objectivity in assessing the quality of a hadith narrator. Hadith scholars do not want to be too rigid in assessing hadith narrators, so that small errors that are human in nature can be forgiven. However, they also do not want to give excessive tolerance to errors that can damage the authenticity and validity of a hadith.

These methods are part of a comprehensive epistemology of hadith scholarship, which has developed over centuries and provides a strong methodological foundation for hadith criticism. In facing the challenges of modern orientalisists who often question traditional hadith criticism methodology, a deep understanding of these methods becomes very important.⁴⁹

d. Scholarly Views on the Precision of the Prophet's Companions

In the chain of narrators, the Prophet's Companions are the end of the chain that conveys hadith to the next narrator, so with this very important position, if the status of a Companion is tarnished, either in the quality of their memorization (*ḍabt*) or their justice, it can be certain that the chain of narrators becomes weak (*ḍa'if*). Therefore, scholars have special attention in studying the trustworthiness status (just and precise) of Companions in many works in the discipline of *muṣṭalah* hadith. What the researcher wants to emphasize in this discussion is regarding how classical and contemporary scholars view the guarantee of the *ḍabt* quality of hadith narrators at the level of Companions, considering their just status has been agreed upon by Ahlul-sunnah wal Jama'ah scholars based on textual and rational evidence. In this discussion, the researcher will investigate in depth the views of scholars regarding the *ḍabt* status of Companions. Regarding this, 'Alawī ibn Hāmid says: "The discussion about the *ḍabt* of Companions is not to

⁴⁸ Al-Tirmidhī, *Sunan al-Tirmidhī*, ed. Aḥmad Muḥammad Shākir et al. (Cairo: Maktabat Muṣṭafā al-Bābī al-Ḥalabī, 1975), vol. 5, 738-739.

⁴⁹ Harald Motzki, *The Origins of Islamic Jurisprudence: Meccan Fiqh Before the Classical Schools*, 25-30.

criticize or demean them. However, examining the issue of their ḍabt is necessary to assess and safeguard the nobility of the hadith they have narrated to us.⁵⁰

After reviewing several classical and contemporary books and conducting in-depth research, while still acknowledging the researcher's limitations, at least in this regard, two opinions from scholars, both classical and contemporary, have been found. The first opinion, which is the opinion of jumhur or majority of scholars, states that there is a guarantee of the ḍabt quality in Companions. Although we do not find this statement textually, several jumhur opinions substantively point to this statement. The second opinion states that there is no guarantee about the ḍabt quality in Companions, and this opinion was pioneered by Imam al-Ṣan'ānī and followed by several subsequent researchers, but not as many as the first opinion. The following is a more detailed presentation of the views of classical and contemporary scholars on the ḍabt quality of Companions.

1. Opinions that Substantively Point to the Guarantee of Ḍabt Quality in Companions

Zayn bin Muḥammad says, "scholars say that all Companions are just people, but it is not enough to understand justice as a requirement for accepting hadith narrators, but it also includes their ability to preserve and narrate hadith accurately. This is a quality inherent in Companions. Meanwhile, for others, such as Tabi'in and so on, the two things above - justice and preservation of hadith (ḍabt) - must exist together, because justice is one thing, while ḍabt is another. However, sometimes both can be mentioned together with the same intent, and this can be recognized through certain indications. Sometimes, scholars state that Companions are just and thiqah, where the meaning of thiqah (trustworthy) is someone who has two main criteria, namely justice and ḍabt.⁵¹ From the statement conveyed by Zayn bin Muḥammad, it can be concluded that the justice of Companions or the trustworthiness of Companions also ensures that they are people who are ḍabt, so the statement that all Companions are guaranteed to have the quality of justice also indicates that they have the quality of ḍabt. The opinion

⁵⁰ 'Alawī ibn Hāmid ibn Muḥammad ibn Shihāb al-Dīn, *ʿAdālatu aṣ-Ṣaḥābah lā Taṣtalzim Ḍabṭahum*, 26.

⁵¹ Zayn ibn Muḥammad ibn Ḥusayn al-'Aydūs, "Ḍabt al-Ṣaḥābah al-Kirām li al-Marwiyyāt," 251.

promoted by Zayn bin Muḥammad is not a personal assumption and without evidence, but many classical scholars long before him had the same opinion as Zayn bin Muḥammad.

a. Ibn Ḥibbān (d. 354 H)

Ibn Ḥibbān, who is famous for his work “*Ṣaḥīḥ Ibn Ḥibbān*” (d. 354 H), in the introduction to his book says, “we accept hadiths narrated by the Companions of the Messenger of Allah even though there is no explicit mention of who heard directly from the Prophet. With full confidence, we know that some of them may have heard news from other Companions, and narrated it from the Prophet without mentioning who conveyed it to them. This is because they - may Allah be pleased with them - are respected leaders, just people, who have been purified by Allah from all deficiencies. In the Prophet’s saying: ‘Let those present among you convey to those absent,’ there is the strongest evidence that all Companions are just people, none of them is reprehensible or weak. Because, if there were among them who were reprehensible or weak, or if there were among them who were not just, surely this would have been excluded in the Prophet’s saying, peace be upon him. Perhaps the Prophet would have said, ‘Let so-and-so and so-and-so among you convey to those absent.’ When he mentioned them generally in the command to convey to people after them, this shows that they are all just people. And it is enough for someone who has been verified by the Messenger of Allah as an honor.⁵² In this statement, Ibn Ḥibbān emphasizes that hadith experts accept narrations from Companions, even though sometimes there is no explicit mention of who listened directly from the Prophet. This is because of their justice, which proves that they could not possibly deliberately forget or make mistakes in narrating hadith. Therefore, Ibn Ḥibbān gives the reason that their high position prevents the occurrence of weakness or negligence in their memory and caution, because Allah has purified their degree.

b. Ibn Shāhīn (d. 385 H)

Ibn Shāhīn says, “and the authentic sunnah from the Messenger of Allah is conveyed by trustworthy (thiqah) narrators from trustworthy narrators, from Tabi’in to the end of the hadith chain. Because Companions - may Allah be pleased with them - are higher

⁵² Ibn Ḥibbān, *Ṣaḥīḥ Ibn Ḥibbān*, ed. Shu’ayb al-Arna’ūṭ (Beirut: Mu’assasat al-Risālah, 1988), vol. 1, 162.

in degree than merely being called 'thiqah'. They are just people in religion, they are witnesses to the revelation.⁵³

Ibn Shāhīn's statement clearly illustrates that Companions have a higher degree than just the title of thiqah (trustworthy). As known in the previous discussion, thiqah refers to someone who has a combination of justice and accuracy in narrating hadith (ḍabt).

Imam al-Bayhaqī (d. 458 H), after mentioning the chain of narrators of a hadith regarding the determination of the beginning of the month in his book, says, "from Abū Umayyah bin Anas, from his uncles who were Companions of the Prophet, he said, 'on the last day of Ramadan, the people of Madinah fasted during the time of the Prophet, then a group of people came at night and they testified to the Messenger of Allah that they had seen the crescent yesterday. So the Messenger of Allah ordered Muslims to break their fast and return to their prayer places.' This hadith is also narrated with a similar meaning by Shu'ba' and Hāshim bin Bashīr, Hāshim bin Bashīr from Ayyūb bin Abī Ṭufayl. This is a hasan (good) chain. Abū Umayyah narrates this hadith from his uncles who were Companions of the Prophet, and all Companions of the Prophet are trustworthy (thiqah) people, so it does not matter whether they are mentioned or not."⁵⁴

This statement by al-Bayhaqī is also quoted by al-Zayla'ī (d. 762 H), Ibn al-Mulaqqin (d. 804 H), and both agree that all Companions of the Prophet are trustworthy (thiqah) people.⁵⁵

c. al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī (d. 463 H)

Al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī says, "I heard from 'Abd al-'Azīz bin Ja'far, he said, 'I heard Aḥmad bin Muḥammad bin Hārūn al-Khallāl, he said, "I heard Abū Bakr al-Athram say, 'I asked Abū 'Abdillāh (i.e., Aḥmad bin Ḥanbal), "if a Tabi'in says, 'I heard from a Companion of the Prophet,' is the hadith I heard sound?' He answered 'yes, right.'" Abū Bakr al-Barqānī informed us, he said, 'I heard Muḥammad bin 'Abdillāh bin Ḥamīruwah al-Harawī, he said, "I heard from al-Ḥusayn bin Idrīs and I asked him about hadith from a Companion of the Prophet, can it be accepted? He answered, 'yes, even if (the name of the Companion) is not explicitly mentioned. All Companions of the

⁵³ Abū Ḥafṣ 'Umar bin Aḥmad bin Shāhīn, *Sharḥ Madhāhib Ahl al-Sunnah* (Cairo: Maktabat Qurṭubah, 1415 H), 45.

⁵⁴ Abū Bakr Aḥmad bin al-Ḥusayn bin 'Alī al-Bayhaqī, *al-Sunan al-Kubrā*, 3rd ed. (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyyah, 2003), vol. 4, 249.

⁵⁵ 'Umar bin 'Alī bin al-Mulaqqin, *al-Badr al-Munīr fī Takhrij al-Aḥādith wa al-Āthār al-Wāqī'ah fī al-Sharḥ al-Kabīr* (Riyadh: Dār al-Hijrah, 2004), vol. 5, 94.

Prophet are trustworthy (thiqah) people and constitute hujjah (valid proof or reason).⁵⁶ Hujjah is a term for someone who has a high position in terms of justice and precision (ḍabt).⁵⁷

Al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī also says, “there is no doubt regarding them (the Prophet’s Companions). However, what needs to be considered is narrators other than them. Any hadith that has a chain of narrators that is well connected between the narrator and the Prophet should not be accepted first, unless its justice and quality have been confirmed. As for the Companions of the Prophet, their justice is clear and has been established by Allah in the Qur’an, which affirms their purity and chooses them as the best people.”⁵⁸

d. Ibn ‘Abd al-Barr (d. 463 H)

Ibn ‘Abd al-Barr says, “all Companions are just and trustworthy people in all their narrations, and this is ijma’ (consensus) among hadith experts.⁵⁹ He also says: “the hadith of the Messenger of Allah which says: ‘My Companions are like stars in the sky, whomever among them you follow, you will receive right guidance’ means in terms of accepting narration, as explained by al-Māzinī and others that it relates to narration because they are all trustworthy and just people, so it is obligatory to accept what each of them conveys.”⁶⁰

e. al-Nawawī (d. 676 H)

Al-Nawawī says, “ahl al-ḥaqq (people of truth) and those who are accepted in ijma’ agree to accept their testimony and narration (Companions), because they have perfect justice - may Allah be pleased with them all.”⁶¹ And it is mutually known that accepted narration is narration from someone who is just in their religion and guards well what they narrate.”

f. al-Ḥāfiẓ al-Dhahabī (d. 748 H)

Al-Ḥāfiẓ al-Dhahabī says, “I have written in my work, ‘al-Mīzān’, about many trustworthy people who are used as hujjah by

⁵⁶ Al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī, *al-Kifāyah fi ‘Ilm al-Riwāyah*, 415

⁵⁷ Shams al-Dīn al-Sakhāwī, *Fath al-Mughīth bi Sharḥ Alfīyyat al-Ḥadīth*, 1st ed. (Riyadh: Maktabat Dār al-Minhāj, 1426 H), vol. 4, 117.

⁵⁸ Al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī, *al-Kifāyah fi ‘Ilm al-Riwāyah*, 46.

⁵⁹ Ibn ‘Abd al-Barr, *al-Tamhīd li-mā fi al-Muwāṭṭa’ min al-Ma’ānī wa al-Asānīd* (Rabat: Wizārat ‘Umūm al-Awqāf wa al-Shu’ūn al-Islāmiyyah, 1387 H), vol. 1, no. 2287.

⁶⁰ Ibn ‘Abd al-Barr, *al-Istidhkār* (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-‘Ilmiyyah, 2000), vol. 8, 7.

⁶¹ Abū Zakariyyā Yahyā ibn Sharaf al-Nawawī, *al-Minhāj fi Sharḥ Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim ibn al-Ḥajjāj* (Beirut: Dār Iḥyā’ al-Turāth al-‘Arabī, 1392 H), vol. 15, 149.

al-Bukhārī, Muslim, or other hadith scholars, because their names are recorded in books that discuss defects in narration. I do not mention them not because of their weakness in my eyes, but for it to be known as a scholarly study. Often I find trustworthy narrators, but there are negative comments from people who do not need to be paid attention to. If we open this door, many from among the Companions, Tabi'in, Followers of Tabi'in, and other great imams will enter into it. Some Companions even considered each other kafir because of differences in interpretation, but Allah is pleased with them all and forgives them. They are not ma'sūm (not guarded from error),⁶² and differences and warfare among them do not become the basis that we must use as a standard. With accusations of kufr from the Khawarij group, for example, against them, their narrations become distorted. Even the words of the Khawarij and Shi'a groups about them become defects for those who criticize them." And this is most of the words that criticize each other among them, which should be hidden and not spread, not used as a form of criticism, and someone must be treated with justice and wisdom. As for the Companions - may Allah be pleased with them - their affairs must be kept in the heart, even though there are differences and errors that occur, just like errors experienced by other trustworthy people. No one can avoid errors, but their errors are very rare and do not harm at all. Because, based on their justice, the acceptance of what they narrate is the foundation of our actions and with it we worship Allah ta'āla."⁶³ Based on the truth of the data conveyed by al-Dhahabī, that the practice or behavior of the majority of Muslims is to accept their narrations and not criticize what they convey. In fact, accepting this narration is part of the religion that we practice in worshipping Allah ta'āla. And this is enough, especially if it has been proven and clearly proven based on the texts of the wise Sharia and also the wisdom in it which explains the perfection of their justice and caution.

g. al-Ṭibī (d. 743 H)

Al-Ṭibī says, "all Companions are absolutely just, based on texts of the Qur'an, Sunnah, and consensus of trustworthy people."⁶⁴ His

⁶² Ma'sūm means being guarded from committing sins, and this is only possessed by a Prophet.

⁶³ Al-Dhahabī, *al-Ruwāt al-Thiqāt al-Mutakallam fihim* (Beirut: Dār al-Bashā'ir al-Islāmiyyah, 1992), 240.

⁶⁴ Al-Ṭibī, *Sharḥ al-Ṭibī 'alā Mishkāt al-Maṣābiḥ* (Mecca: Maktabat Nizār Muṣṭafā al-Bāz,

statement about “absolute justice” becomes strong evidence that they are trustworthy people and this is the truth that is agreed upon by the majority of Ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Jamā’ah scholars.

h. Ibn Hajar al-’Asqalānī (d. 852 H)

Ibn Hajar al-’Asqalānī says, “based on the explanation I have mentioned, I classify the conditions of hadith narrators into twelve levels. And the most superior or first is Companions, followed by the second level, namely those who receive strong praise, for example with expressions like ‘awthāq al-nās’ (most trustworthy people), then followed by the next level, namely thiqah and so on.⁶⁵ Based on Ibn Hajar al-’Asqalānī’s words, hadith scholars at the level after him follow Ibn Hajar’s classification in the concept of al-jarḥ wa al-ta’dīl levels until now, and what Ibn Hajar said in the concept of placing the status of Companions at the highest level of hadith narrators is truly a very noble breakthrough, thus somewhat closing the space for discussing the justice and credibility of narrators at the Companions level.

i. Ibn Hajar al-Haytamī (d. 974 H)

Ibn Hajar al-Haytamī says “Know that what has been agreed upon by Ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Jamā’ah scholars is that everyone is obliged to state that all Companions are just people, by establishing justice for them, and staying away from criticizing or demeaning them, and must praise them because Allah Himself has praised them in several of His verses in the Qur’an.⁶⁶

j. Mullā ‘Alī al-Qārī (d. 1014 H)

Mullā ‘Alī al-Qārī says: “Indeed, all Companions are just and thiqah (trustworthy).⁶⁷ With this expression, it can be generally stated that Mullā ‘Alī al-Qārī states that all Companions have the quality of ḍabṭ, with his statement in the form of the word thiqah, because generally the meaning of this word is trustworthy, which is a combination of the terminology of justice and ḍabṭ as explained in the previous discussion.

1997), vol. 12, hadith no. 3840.

⁶⁵ Ibn Hajar al-’Asqalānī, *Taqrīb al-Tahdhīb* (Riyadh: Bayt al-Afkār al-Dawliyyah, 2000), 17.

⁶⁶ Ibn Hajar al-Haytamī, *al-Ṣawā’iq al-Muḥriqah ‘alā Ahl al-Rafḍ wa al-Ḍalāl wa al-Zandaqah* (Beirut: Mu’assasat al-Risālah, 1997), 603.

⁶⁷ Mullā ‘Alī al-Qārī, *Mirqāt al-Mafātīḥ Sharḥ Mishkāt al-Maṣābīḥ* (Pakistan: Al-Maktabah al-’Imādiyyah, n.d.), vol. 10, 255.

Scholars who state that all Companions have the quality of *ḍaḥḍ* do not deny that there are some Companions who experience forgetfulness or make mistakes in narrating hadith from the Prophet several times. However, they believe that such things do not affect their ability to maintain their memorization, due to their closeness to the Prophet and the way they received knowledge from him, either through direct hearing or sight, with knowledge that was often conveyed to them. This reduces the possibility of errors among Companions, unlike people after them who have gone through many intermediaries and various channels.

Apart from the above reasons, if a Companion makes a mistake, other Companions will correct and explain the mistake or doubt. Also, historical facts explain that if a Companion or narrator at the Companion level makes a mistake or negligence in narration, unless there is evidence or indication that explains the existence of correction from other Companions to other Companions, as happened with criticism from ‘Ā’ishah to Abū Hurayrah, Ibn ‘Umar, even to her own father Abū Bakr and several other Companions. And such things should not be left to conjecture or speculation, such as if a Companion narrates something, then another Companion narrates a theme that contradicts the narration of the previous Companion, and surely the second Companion shows what is wrong with the narration of the first Companion. This is a process and historical fact that occurred among Companions, because they were very careful in ensuring and affirming the truth of a legal product, including among them in the transmission of hadith narration.⁶⁸

From the opinions that the researcher has conveyed, it can be concluded that scholars who believe that all Companions are proven to be *ḍaḥḍ*, no longer provide space for criticism of Companions, and there is not a single Companion whose narration credibility is doubted, which will affect and impact the weakness of the chain of narrators. Therefore, according to scholars in this line, the opportunity for criticism of the chain of narrators only applies to narrators after the era of Companions, namely from among Tabi’in and Followers of Tabi’in and so on.

⁶⁸ ‘Abd al-Raḥmān bin Aḥmad, *‘Awāmil Ḍaḥḍ al-Ṣaḥābah li al-Sunnah al-Nabawiyyah* (Madinah: Majma’ al-Malik Fahd, 2012), 39.

2. Opinions Stating There is No Guarantee of Ḍabt Quality in Companions

After in the previous discussion the researcher presented the views of scholars who affirm that all Companions have the quality of Ḍabt, the following will explain opinions that contrast from the first view, both from classical and contemporary scholars. They argue that not all Companions have the quality of Ḍabt, with various arguments put forward to reject the arguments of the first group.

a. al-Amīr al-Ṣan'ānī (d. 1182 H)

al-Ṣan'ānī says, "Know that al-Ḥāfiẓ Ibn Ḥajar makes the highest position in the classification of levels of hadith narrators as the status of a Companion. Ibn Ḥajar explains that 'based on the explanation I have mentioned, I classify the conditions of narrators into twelve levels. The first level is Companions and the second level is those who receive strong praise, for example with expressions like 'most trustworthy people' (awṡaḡ al-nās),' so, the highest position in the credibility of hadith narrators is the status as a Companion of the Messenger of Allah.

Based on the information above, it seems that Ibn Ḥajar has considered sufficient and even praised the status as a Companion as already including the qualities of justice and strong memorization (Ḍabt). I have no problem if viewed from the aspect of justice according to the principles of hadith scholars. However, if viewed from the aspect of memorization and caution, this still needs to be reviewed, because the nature of memory and forgetfulness is part of human nature. In fact, the nature of prophethood does not negate the possibility of forgetfulness, as has been included in authentic information that the Messenger of Allah himself once experienced forgetfulness in prayer and other matters.

Then, how could the status as a Companion automatically make someone more reliable than someone who receives praise like awṡaḡ al-nās (most trustworthy people)? Isn't being a Companion not eliminating the possibility of forgetfulness and lack of caution? In fact, in Ṣaḥīḡ al-Bukhārī in hadith No. 331 it is narrated that 'Umar bin al-Khaṭṭāb once forgot about the law of tayammum, until he was reminded by 'Ammār bin Yāsir. Moreover, the Messenger of Allah himself once said, 'May Allah have mercy on so-and-so, because he has reminded me of a verse that I forgot last night.'⁶⁹

⁶⁹ Al-Ṣan'ānī, *Tawḍīḡ al-Afkār li Ma'ānī Tanqīḡ al-Anẓār* (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-

b. 'Alawī ibn Ḥāmid (hadith expert from Yemen)

Unlike Zayn Muḥammad who agrees with the majority of salaf scholars, who consider that Companions as a whole have the quality of ḍabt, 'Alawī ibn Ḥāmid, one of the contemporary scholars, argues that the quality of justice of Companions does not automatically make them ḍabt. The thinking of 'Alawī ibn Ḥāmid is a continuation of al-Amīr al-Ṣan'ānī. One of the arguments put forward to support his opinion is also similar to what was conveyed by al-Amīr al-Ṣan'ānī in his book *Tawḍīḥ al-Afkār*, namely the existence of various events that occurred from Companions who experienced forgetfulness in narrating hadith from the Messenger of Allah. 'Alawī ibn Ḥāmid says in his book "Adālatu al-Ṣaḥābah lā Tastalzim Ḍabṭahum," "in the book *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī* it is narrated that 'Umar bin al-Khaṭṭāb once forgot about the law of tayammum, he was then reminded by 'Ammār bin Yāsir, here is a more complete explanation.

Imam al-Bukhārī in *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī* no. 331 narrates from 'Abd al-Raḥmān bin Abzā that a man came to 'Umar bin al-Khaṭṭāb and said, 'I am in a state of junub (major ritual impurity) but cannot find water.' Then 'Ammār bin Yāsir said to 'Umar, 'Don't you remember when we were on a journey together? You did not pray, while I rolled in the dust then prayed, then I informed the Messenger of Allah about it, and he said, 'It is sufficient for you to do like this,' then the Messenger of Allah struck the earth with both his palms, blew on them, then wiped them on his face and both his palms.⁷⁰

From this story, it appears that 'Umar bin al-Khaṭṭāb forgot the law of tayammum that the Messenger of Allah had taught him, and he was reminded by 'Ammār bin Yāsir. In another incident, there is also forgetfulness experienced by Zayd bin Arqam. It is narrated in *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* that Zayd bin Arqam said to Ḥuṣayn bin Sabrah, when he asked him to narrate hadith, "O my nephew! By Allah, my age has become old, my time with the Messenger of Allah has long passed, and I have forgotten some of what I used to memorize from the Messenger of Allah. So what I tell you, accept it, and what I do not tell you, do not force me to convey it."⁷¹

From this statement, Zayd bin Arqam acknowledges that as an ordinary human, he experiences forgetfulness of some of the Prophet's

⁷⁰ 'Ilmiyyah, 1997), vol. 2, 161.

⁷⁰ Muḥammad ibn Ismā'īl al-Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, hadith no. 331.

⁷¹ Muslim ibn al-Ḥajjāj, *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* (Beirut: Dār al-Ta'ṣīl, 2014), hadith no. 2408.

Sunnah, especially after old age.⁷² And there are many other cases that prove that Companions experience forgetfulness and make mistakes in understanding a hadith, and this is what underlies that not all Companions have the quality of *ḍabt*, and actually the argument from the second group has been responded to and negated by scholars from the first group.

One such response was conveyed by Imam al-Dhahabī in his work *al-Mūqīzah*, where he states that forgetfulness or errors that occur in some Companions are normal in human nature. However, unlike other narrators, the Companions have the privilege of collective justice given by Allah to them, and these errors do not reduce their status as the pinnacle of reliability in hadith transmission. He also shows that the correction system among Companions is very effective and has been well documented, where a Companion will immediately be corrected by another Companion if there is an error in narration.⁷³

3. Meeting Point Between the Two Opinions

After presenting views from each group, the researcher finds that the difference between the two parties is merely a verbal difference. This is because the group of scholars who hold the view that all Companions are ensured to have the quality of *ḍabt* do not deny the possibility of forgetfulness and errors that occur among Companions. Although their errors do not at all affect their *ḍabt* status, and they still place them as the highest level in the concept of *al-ta'dīl*.

Meanwhile, the second group, who argue that the guarantee of Companions' justice does not automatically guarantee their quality of *ḍabt*, is not found to have statements that - if not brave - determine which individual Companions are considered to no longer have the quality of *ḍabt*. This second group only conducts theory and explains that there may be a lack of *ḍabt* among Companions, with evidence of errors and forgetfulness in narrating hadith that occurred among Companions, such as 'Umar bin al-Khaṭṭāb and others. However, this also does not automatically indicate that Companions who have been proven to experience errors in narrating hadith damage their quality of *ḍabt*, because small errors that are relatively few compared to their entire narration are still tolerated and do not damage their *ḍabt*.

⁷² 'Alawī ibn Hāmid ibn Muḥammad, *Adālatu aṣ-Ṣaḥābah lā Tastalzīm Ḍabṭahum*, 38.

⁷³ Al-Dhahabī, *al-Mūqīzah fī 'Ilm Muṣṭalaḥ al-Ḥadīth*, 82-83

This is reinforced by Ibn Ḥajar's opinion stating that small and rare errors do not reduce the *thiqah* status of a narrator. He writes in *Nuzhat al-Nazar*: "If a narrator is generally careful (*ḍābiṭ*) and only occasionally makes mistakes, then his hadith is accepted because no human is free from errors. If his errors are rare, then his status as a *thiqah* and trustworthy person is not lost."⁷⁴

Imam al-Sakhāwī also provides a similar explanation in *Fath al-Mughith*, affirming that "The Companions have specificity in hadith narration, where they directly witnessed the revelation and understood its context well. If forgetfulness occurs in one of them, this does not reduce their status as *ḍābiṭ* narrators, because they have a mechanism of reminding each other."⁷⁵

Interestingly, al-Ṣan'ānī himself, who is the pioneer of the second group, does not reject all hadiths narrated by Companions who have experienced forgetfulness. He only highlights that errors and forgetfulness can happen to any human, including the Companions, and this is normal.⁷⁶ This shows that practically, both groups do not have significant differences in accepting or rejecting hadith based on Companions' precision.

In the context of hadith criticism methodology, the meeting point between these two opinions has important implications. Hadith critics from both groups still acknowledge the authority of Companions' narration as the main source in hadith transmission, and still treat Companions specially compared to other narrators. The difference in views is more on the theoretical aspect of precision, not on the practice of accepting or rejecting hadith from Companions.

Muṣṭafā al-A'zamī, a contemporary scholar who has responded much to orientalist criticism of hadith, affirms that the Companions' narration system has a very strict verification and correction mechanism. According to him, Companions' precision should be seen in the context of the collective narration system, not just on individual narrators. Thus, small errors that may occur in individual Companions do not affect the reliability of the narration system as a whole.⁷⁷

⁷⁴ Ibn Ḥajar al-'Asqalānī, *Nuzhat al-Nazar fi Tawḍīḥ Nukhbat al-Fikar*, 89.

⁷⁵ Al-Sakhāwī, *Fath al-Mughith bi Sharḥ Alfiyyat al-Ḥadith*, vol. 4, 99.

⁷⁶ Al-San'ānī, *Tawḍīḥ al-Afkār li Ma'ānī Tanqīḥ al-Anzār*, vol. 2, 163-164.

⁷⁷ Muḥammad Muṣṭafā al-A'zamī, *Studies in Early Hadith Literature* (Indianapolis: American Trust Publications, 1978), 58-60.

The response to orientalist criticism such as Ignaz Goldziher and Joseph Schacht, who question the reliability of Companions' narration, also becomes an important part in modern discussions about Companions' precision. Harald Motzki, a contemporary Western scholar, has shown that classical hadith criticism methods, including the assessment of Companions' precision, have a strong historical basis and cannot be easily ignored.⁷⁸

Thus, although there are differences of opinion about the concept of Companions' precision, both groups agree that Companions occupy a special position in the hierarchy of hadith narrators, and their narrations have a very high level of reliability. Differences in views are more on theoretical aspects than practical, and both accept the existence of tolerance for small errors that are human in nature in Companions' narrations.

Conclusion

This research has examined in depth the discourse on the precision (ḍabt) quality of the Prophet's Companions in hadith narration through the perspective of early and contemporary hadith literature. Based on the analysis that has been conducted, several important conclusions are found:

First, the concept of ḍabt in hadith science refers to the ability of a narrator to preserve and convey hadith accurately, either through strong memorization (ḍabt al-ṣaḍr) or through well-maintained notes (ḍabt al-kitāb). This quality, along with justice ('adālah), becomes the main requirement for accepting a hadith narrator's narration.

Second, there are two main views regarding Companions' precision. The first view, adopted by the majority of classical scholars such as Ibn Ḥibbān, al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī, Ibn 'Abd al-Barr, al-Nawawī, al-Dhahabī, and Ibn Ḥajar al-'Asqalānī, states that all Companions collectively have the quality of ḍabt as they have the quality of 'adālah. The second view, pioneered by al-Ṣan'ānī and followed by several contemporary scholars such as 'Alawī ibn Ḥāmid, argues that the guarantee of Companions' justice does not automatically guarantee their precision, considering that forgetfulness and error are part of human nature.

⁷⁸ Harald Motzki, *The Origins of Islamic Jurisprudence: Meccan Fiqh Before the Classical Schools*, 25-30.

Third, although they seem contradictory, both views actually have a substantial meeting point. The first group does not deny the possibility of errors or forgetfulness that occur in Companions, but considers that these do not reduce their overall *ḍaḥṭ* status. Meanwhile, the second group does not specifically determine which Companions are considered to lack the quality of *ḍaḥṭ*, and still acknowledges that the errors that occur are within the limits of tolerance that do not damage the credibility of their narration.

Fourth, the difference between the two groups is more theoretical than practical. In the practice of hadith criticism, both groups still place Companions at the highest position in the hierarchy of hadith narrators, and their narrations are accepted with a very high level of trust. The collective narration system and correction mechanism among Companions become additional guarantees of the reliability of their narration.

Fifth, the discourse on Companions' precision has experienced developments in responding to the challenges of modern criticism, especially from orientalist who question traditional hadith criticism methodology. Contemporary Muslim scholars such as Muṣṭafā al-A'zamī and Muḥammad Syuhudi Ismail have made significant contributions in strengthening the epistemology of hadith criticism and maintaining the authority of Companions' narration.

Sixth, a comprehensive understanding of Companions' precision has important implications in the broader epistemology of Islamic scholarship. Precision is not only a technical concept in hadith science, but also reflects how Muslim scholars develop empirical and rational verification methods to maintain the authenticity of religious teachings.

Thus, it can be concluded that although there are differences of opinion about the guarantee of Companions' precision, these differences are verbal and do not reduce the status of Companions as the pinnacle of reliability in the chain of hadith narration. Errors and forgetfulness that may occur in some Companions are still within the limits of tolerance that do not damage the credibility of their narration as a whole, and the collective narration system and correction mechanism among Companions become additional guarantees of the reliability of hadith transmission in the first generation of Islam.

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