

Hadith studies in nusantara: Hadith's understanding method of Faisal bin Ahmad Shah to respon inkar sunnah in Malaysia

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ABSTRACT

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The study of hadith in the Nusantara (Archipelago) has progressed rapidly, especially in Indonesia. The scholars involved in the field of hadith and their works prove that the researchers and studies of hadith in the Archipelago are still ongoing from time to time. One of the hadith researchers from the Archipelago, Faisal Ahmad Shah has become a figure of hadith scientist who responds to the irregularities in the use and understanding of hadith in Malaysia. Moreover, the issue of inkar sunnah and misunderstanding of other traditions. The methods he offers in countering the notion of inkar sunnah are essential so that the hadith can be interpreted correctly.

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Introduction

Nusantara is a term that unites Malaysia and Indonesia (Christopher Kremer, 2011). Similarly, Arwansyah and Faisal Ahmad Shah also mentioned that Sheikh Nawawi al-Bantani contributed to Islamic progress in the Archipelago in general, including Malaysia and Indonesia (Arwansyah and Faisal Ahmad Shah, 2015). Therefore, Nusantara has coverage between Malaysia and Indonesia. Related to the study of hadith in the Archipelago, according to some researchers, it began in the 17th century of Islamic preachers, including Nurudin al-Raniri, Abd al-Rauf al-Sinkili, and Muhammad Yusuf al-Maqassari (Hasep Saputra, 2017). All three are scholars who also have contributions in the field of hadith. Over time, many scholars emerged from the Archipelago who studied the hadith. In the middle to the end of the 20th century, TM Hasbi al-Shiddieqy to Utang Ranuwijaya wrote studies on hadith. Then, at the beginning of the 21st century appeared again figures who studied hadiths such as Muhammad Syuhudi Ismail, Said Agil Munawwar, Ali Musthafa Ya'qub, Luthfi Fathullah, Kamarudin Amin, Daniel Djuned, Edi Safri, Buchari M, Daud Rasyid, Nizar Ali, and others (Hasep Saputra, 2017).

In addition to the names above, several other scholars who appeared later also paid attention to the hadith study. Nawir Yuslem wrote the book "Kitab Induk Hadis" which discusses the systematics of writing in the nine canon books of hadith (kutub al-tis'ah) (Nawir Yuslem, 2011). Furthermore, Ramli Abdul Wahid wrote a book, "Sejarah Pengkajian Hadis di Indonesia" which systematically discusses how the history of hadith studies and the thought of hadiths in Indonesia (Ramli Abdul Wahid, 2010). More specifically, Kasman, in his book "Hadis dalam Pandangan Muhammadiyah," discusses the systematic hadith method of one of the largest organizations in Indonesia, namely Muhammadiyah (Kasman, 2012). The study of hadith that developed so rapidly is inseparable from the thought of rejecting the hadith. The term Inkar Sunnah was intended for those who reject the hadith of the Prophet Muhammad. This phenomenon has existed since the time of Imam al-Shafii until now (Syuhudi Ismail, 1995). In the Nusantara region itself appeared a prevalent person rejecting the hadith, namely Kassim Ahmad from Malaysia.

Kassim Ahmad has similarities in understanding hadith with a prominent orientalist, G.H.A. Juynboll. Both assume that the hadith is only a fairy tale because the emergence of hadith occurred at the time of tabi'in and tabi' al-tabi'in, which is about 40 or 50 years after the death of the Prophet Muhammad. Besides, Kassim Ahmad argues that many hadith texts contradict the Qur'an and logic (Syuhudi Ismail, 1995). Based on this, the study of how to understand the hadith properly is necessary so that there is no misunderstanding in interpreting it. It was behind Faisal Ahmad Shah wrote an article entitled "Perkembangan Metode Pemahaman Hadis di Malaysia" (Faisal Ahmad Shah, 2013). He explained the importance of understanding hadith correctly and offered several methods to understand hadith. His study became the basis for rejecting inkar sunnah that existed in Malaysia. At the same time, this article will review Faisal Ahmad Shah's method in responding to Inkar Sunnah in Malaysia. This research method uses a qualitative approach by emphasizing deductive and inductive analysis (Saifuddin Azwar, 1998). This research is library research so that the data collected will be used to analyze the problem (object of study). Simultaneously, the data in this study are scientific articles and books on the study of hadith in the Archipelago (Nusantara).

Discussion

Biography of Faisal Ahmad Shah

His full name is Faisal Ahmad Shah. He is a senior lecturer in the Department of Qur'an and Hadith, Academy of Islamic Studies, University of Malaya, Malaysia. He obtained his bachelor's degree from the Hadith Faculty of the Islamic University of Medina, Saudi Arabia, in 1996. Later, he returned to his country and earned a master's degree in Islamic studies from the National University of Malaysia (UKM). Due to his research interests, he decided to go to the University of Malaya (UM) to continue his postgraduate studies and successfully obtained a doctorate in 2007 (<https://umexpert.um.edu.my/faisalas.html>, accessed on November 6, 2020).

Works

- a. Hadis Da'if dan Palsu Realiti Pemakaiannya di Malaysia (2017) published in Kuala Lumpur by University of Malaya publisher;
- b. Madaris al-Sunnah al-Nabawiyah al-Ittijahat wa al-Manahij (2017) published in Kuala Lumpur by the Department of al-Quran and Hadith of the Academy of Islamic Studies, Universiti Malaya;
- c. Mengharmoni Percanggahan dan Kesamaran dalam Hadis (2019) published in Kuala Lumpur by University of Malaya publisher;
- d. Al-Jarh wa al-Ta'dil Prinsip dan Kaedah, Terjemahan Dawabit al-Jarh wa al-Ta'dil (2019) published in Kuala Lumpur by the Department of al-Quran and Hadith of the Academy of Islamic Studies, University of Malaya. (<https://umexpert.um.edu.my/faisalas>, accessed November 6, 2020).

Mistakes in Understanding the Hadith in Malaysia

As for the error of understanding the hadith in Malaysia, including those done by Inkar Sunnah, namely: (1) Understanding the hadith separately with other hadiths, (2) Ignoring aspects of language style and asbab al-wurud al-hadith, (3) Excessive in understanding hadith textually, (4) Excessive use of ratio in understanding hadith, (5) Excessive in doing ta'wil against hadith, (6) Understanding hadith without based on maqashid, and (7) Misunderstanding the meaning of hadith (Faisal Ahmad Shah, 2013).

Faisal Ahmad Shah's response to Inkar Sunnah

The mistakes in understanding the hadith made by inkar sunnah in Malaysia are included in the discussion of "excessive use of ratio in understanding the hadith." The effect of excessive use of ratio in understanding hadith makes Kassim Ahmad concluded that hadith is the cause of division among Muslims. He also rejected the concept that all companions are judged fairly in the hadith discourse (Syuhudi Ismail, 1995). In one case, Kassim Ahmad stated that hadith or sunnah cannot be used as a legal source and can only be used as a historical record. In another case concerning the limits of 'aurat, Kassim Ahmad also said that the sign of 'aurat is a part of the body that must be washed and wiped when carrying out wudhu. When performing wudhu, Allah commands to wash face, hands and to wipe head. Thus, the head does not need to be closed, and it is not 'aurat for women (Faisal Ahmad Shah, 2013). In line with Syuhudi Ismail's response to Kassim Ahmad in his book, Faisal Ahmad Shah also stated that the inkar sunnah group was excessive in using their ratio when understanding hadith. Interpretation of the inkar sunnah against hadiths of the Prophet using only the ration (Faisal Ahmad Shah, 2013).

Methods of Understanding the Hadith

Based on the mistakes in understanding the hadith done by the inkar sunnah group in Malaysia, then the right methods should be used to understand the hadith so as not to be misunderstood. Besides, hadith can also really serve as an explanation for the Quran. Referring to the rules outlined by the scholars, twelve methods can be used to understand the hadith, namely: (1) Understanding the hadith based on the perspective of the Quran, (2) Collecting hadith texts that have similarities in one place, (3) Collecting hadiths that have the same meaning in one place, (4) Compromising the hadiths that appear to contradict each other, (5) Tarjih, (6) Understanding nasikh and mansukh, (7) Knowing asbab al-wurud al-hadith, (8) Knowing gharib al-hadith, (9) Understanding hadith as understood by companions, (10) Referring to the books of syarah al-hadith, (11) Knowing al-'am, al-khas, al-muthlaq, and al-muqayyad, and (12) Knowing mudraj (Faisal Ahmad Shah, 2013).

a. Understanding the hadith based on the perspective of the Quran

In order to understand the hadith correctly, it must be understood according to the instructions of the Qur'an. Thus, there can be no valid hadith that would contradict the Quran's verses (Yusuf al-Qardhawi, 1993).

b. Collecting hadith texts that have similarities in one place

The hadith does not all have the same matan, sometimes there are differences in the narrative, but the substance is the same. As for the background of different matan there are three, namely: (1) there are many assemblies of the Prophet. The companions in the assembly also come from different tribes and cultures, as well as different abilities in capturing what the Prophet conveyed, (2) Requests or questions on the same problem asked by companions and the Prophet answered it with a different narrative, (3) The narrators have difficulty in conveying the long hadith, so that convey it with synonyms only (Abdul Majid Khon, 2014).

c. Compromising the hadiths that appear to contradict each other

In understanding the hadith, there are methods in resolving hadiths that seem to contradict each other. There are four methods that the scholars have offered as an alternative in resolving contradictory hadiths, namely: (1) al-jam'u wa al-taufiq, (2) al-naskh, (3) al-tarjih, dan (4) al-tawaqquf (Abdul Majid Khon, 2014).

Compromising hadith (al-jam'u wa al-taufiq) is one of the particular ways. Its specificity is because the hadith of an exceptional nature specializes in other hadiths of a general nature. For example, on the one hand, there is a hadith about the Prophet forbidding the writing of hadith, while on the other hand, there is also a hadith that mentions the Prophet ordered to write hadith. Scholars use al-jam'u wa al-taufiq method in understanding the hadith. The conclusion is that the Prophet's prohibition and order are conditional (Abdul Majid Khon, 2014).

d. Tarjih

The method of understanding hadith with tarjih (strengthening one proof on the other) pays attention to three aspects, namely: (1) sanad, (2) matan, dan (3) other reinforcing aspects (Abdul Majid Khon, 2014). An example of tarjih method in understanding hadith is when there is a hadith that mentions that a person who does not bathe junub before dawn, then the person's fast is not valid. On the contrary, another hadith mentions that the Prophet once fasted Ramadan, and the Prophet bathed junub at dawn. The settlement of the hadith uses the aspect of sanad. Abu Hurairah narrates the first hadith, while Aisha and Ummu Salamah narrate the second. In this case, the second hadith is superior to the first hadith, because according to the scholars, the hadiths related to the matters of privacy of the Prophet narrated by the Prophet's wives is stronger than the hadith narrated by Abu Hurairah (Abdul Majid Khon, 2014).

e. Understanding nasikh and mansukh

If the first alternative, namely al-jam'u wa al-taufiq cannot be done in understanding the hadith, then what must be applied is the second alternative. The second alternative is to use nasikh and mansukh method, which is the hadith that comes first removed by the hadith that comes after. For example, is the hadith that tells the Prophet prohibits eating sacrificial meat after three days. Nevertheless, after that, a hadith appears later mentioned that the Prophet allowed keeping the sacrificial meat for more than three days. In this case, the first hadith was removed by the second hadith (Abdul Majid Khon, 2014).

f. Knowing asbab al-wurud al-hadiths

One of the methods needed to understand hadith is to know the background of a hadith's appearance (asbab al-wurud al-hadith). asbab al-wurud al-hadith is a notice discussed in a hadith (Ali Musthafa Ya'qub, 2016).

g. Knowing gharib al-hadith

Gharib al-hadith is usually also called musykil al-hadith. The science of gharib al-hadith will examine the hadith narrative that is difficult to understand (Abdul Majid Khon, 2014). In order to solve it, there are three ways, namely: (1) Using other hadiths with the same theme, (2) Using companion explanations, and (3) using narrator explanations other than companions. For example, when there is a hadith which states about the prohibition of fasting until the person sees the moon and do not break the fast until he/she sees it, if it is cloudy, then estimate (faqduru lahu). The word "estimate (faqduru lahu)" is difficult to understand if there is no other hadith matan that explains. Therefore, a hadith that appear later states that if cloudy, estimate to be thirty days (Abdul Majid Khon, 2014).

h. Understanding hadith as understood by companions

If no hadith can explain the hadith that is difficult to understand, understanding the hadith using what is understood by companions is the best way. For example, when a hadith

mentioned a sizeable black group, Anas bin Malik (one of the companions) said it means the leader (Abdul Majid Khon, 2014).

i. Knowing mudraj

The term mudraj in hadith science is a word or sentence contained in the hadith narrative when it is not part of the hadith. The indicators that can be guided in knowing the existence of idraj in the hadith, namely: (1) There is a narrative that separates the sentence mudraj from the actual hadith narrative, (2) There is an affirmation related to idraj in the hadith by the narrators or by the scholars who have a broad horizon, and (3) Idraj can be known outwardly from the narrative structure of the hadith (Nurudin 'Itr, 2016). One example of this method is the hadith narrated by Abu Hurairah concerning the hadith that the Prophet expects himself to be a servant. It is not relevant to Muhammad's prophetic position so that the one who reveals himself as a servant is Abu Hurairah, who is narrated with idraj by the person who narrates from him (Nurudin 'Itr, 2016).

Conclusion

Proper understanding of hadith will be advantageous to maintain hadith as a guide in all places and times. Inkar Sunnah becomes a challenge when the ratio is superior to the rules outlined by the classical scholars. Understanding hadith by the inkar sunnah group can be fatal, namely, not believing in the Prophet Muhammad as a Prophet and messenger of God. Faisal Ahmad Shah gave a response and methods that can be used to understand the hadith appropriately. The response is also to counteract the understanding of the inkar sunnah group in Nusantara, especially in Malaysia.

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