

The Thoughts of Sheikh Abdul Qadir Bukit Bayas in the Book *Mir'at Al-Mu'minin Wa Tadhkirah Li Al-Ghafilin*

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Abstract

The rapid development of Islam in the Malay Archipelago has been supported by various dominant factors. Among these is the active and comprehensive writing activities, encompassing religious works known as literary manuscripts such as books on tauhid, fiqh, tasawuf, and others. This literary writing plays a crucial role in shaping the culture and Islamic identity within Malay society through the manuscript heritage that remains today. One notable work is *Mir'at Al-Mu'minin Wa Tadhkirah Li Al-Ghafilin* by Sheikh Abdul Qadir bin Abdul Rahim Bukit Bayas, an Islamic scholar from Pattani who migrated and settled in Terengganu until his passing. This work is an important reference in the fields of fiqh and tasawuf, yet it remains relatively unknown. Interestingly, only one manuscript has been found to date, classifying it as a rare text. This study aims to introduce the prominent figure of Sheikh Abdul Qadir Bukit Bayas and the profile of his work, as well as to highlight several of his thoughts that can be drawn from this text. Data for the study were collected through documentation methods and analyzed using content analysis. The study finds that Sheikh Abdul Qadir was one of the significant Malay scholars who contributed to the dissemination of religious knowledge, particularly in fiqh and tasawuf. He was highly influential in Terengganu, producing several works and mentoring many scholars such as Tok Ku Tuan Besar and Tok Syekh Duyung. Some of his thoughts in this work are very interesting and relevant for contemporary study and application as guidance for today's generation. Research on this figure and his work should be strengthened for the benefit of all members of society.

Keywords: Sheikh Abdul Qadir Bukit Bayas, *Mir'at Al-Mu'minin Wa Tadhkirah Li Al-Ghafilin*, fiqh and tasawuf thoughts

Introduction

Sheikh Abdul Qadir Bukit Bayas is one of the notable Malay scholars from Patani. He later migrated to Terengganu, where he became highly influential in the 19th century, although he is not widely recognized. His prominence is highlighted through his da'wah activities, scholarship, teaching endeavors, and the beneficial works he produced. His writings encompass various fields of knowledge, including fiqh and tasawuf. While many studies have been conducted on his stature and literary contributions, there is a lack of specific research focusing on Sheikh Abdul Qadir's thoughts in the book *Mir'āt Al-Mu'minīn Wa Tadzkirah Li Al-Ghāfilīn*. Therefore, this study aims to explore Sheikh Abdul Qadir's thoughts on religious matters through this work, in order to elevate his significance in both fiqh and tasawuf.

Brief Biography of Sheikh Abdul Qadir

Sheikh Abdul Qadir Bukit Bayas was a highly respected scholar in the field of religion. His full name is Wan Abdul Qadir bin Abdul Rahim bin Wan Deraman bin Wan Bakar bin Wan Ismail bin Faqih Ali. He is said to be a scholar of the lineage of Faqih Ali Malbari, the son of a Bugis king who traveled to seek knowledge in Malabar, India, and later settled in Patani (Abdullah, 1997). Another perspective suggests that he descended from Champa through a Chinese navigator who settled in Patani and converted to Islam (Mohd, 2014). Therefore, he is believed to have origins in Patani. There are claims that he is a descendant of the Prophet Muhammad (SAW), but this cannot be verified. Sheikh Abdul Qadir was the third of six siblings (Mohamad, 2023), with his other siblings being Wan Naji, Wan Safiah, Wan Ali, Wan Osman, and Wan Omar (Ahmad, 2011). He was born in Patani, though the exact date of his birth is unknown (al-Fatani, 2002). Zarif (2018) posits that a suitable date would be around 1770-1780, as it is common for teachers to be born before their students, considering that his student, Tok Ku Tuan Besar, was born in 1795. Additionally, he likely studied under Sheikh Daud bin Abdullah al-Fatani (d. 1847) in Mecca at the end of that century (Zarif, 2017).

Sheikh Abdul Qadir received his early education in Patani before continuing his studies in Mecca, and he is also believed to have studied in Medina (Mohd, 2017). Upon returning to his homeland and migrating to Terengganu, he was already recognized as a scholar. The names of the figures identified as Sheikh Abdul Qadir's teachers were likely contemporaries of his (al-Fatani, 2002). In Terengganu, he taught Islam according to the Shafi'i school of thought and adhered to the beliefs of Ahli al-Sunnah wa al-Jamaah. He taught various subjects, including tauhid, fiqh, tasawuf, and more. Additionally, he established a mosque in Kampung Bukit Bayas and initiated a pondok educational institution, following the scholarly tradition he inherited from Patani. Due to his concentration of scholarly activities in Bukit Bayas, he became widely known by the title Sheikh Abdul Qadir Bukit Bayas or Tuan Bukit Bayas (Mohd, 2014).

Sheikh Abdul Qadir made significant contributions to both the general public and the government at that time. His contributions to the state government were especially notable when he was appointed as the Mufti of Terengganu during the reign of Sultan Omar (Talib, 1995). Under his guidance as mufti and with Sultan Omar's interest in religion, the state laws were aligned with the spirit and demands of Islam. Sheikh Abdul Qadir passed away in 1864 and was buried in the Sheikh Ibrahim cemetery in Kuala Terengganu. Other accounts state that he died in 1853 and was buried in Bukit Bayas (Mohd, 2014 & Yusoff, 2019).

Brief Introduction to the Book *Mir'at Al-Mu'minin Wa Tadhkirah Li Al-Ghafilin*

Mir'at al-Mu'minin wa Tadhkirah li al-Ghafilin is a work attributed to Sheikh Abdul Qadir Bukit Bayas. This attribution is noted at the beginning of the book:

هذه الرسالة المسمى مِرَاةُ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَتَذْكِرَةٌ لِلْغَافِلِينَ تَأْلِيفُ شَيْخِنَا الْعَلَامَةِ الْفَاضِلِ الشَّيْخِ عَبْدِ الْقَادِرِ ابْنِ الْمَرْحُومِ عَبْدِ الرَّحِيمِ التَّرْقَانُوعِيِّ غَفَرَ اللَّهُ لَهُ وَلِوَالِدَيْهِ وَجَمِيعِ الْمُسْلِمِينَ

Meaning: This is a treatise titled *Mir'at Al-Mu'minin Wa Tadhkirah Li Al-Ghafilin* authored by our teacher, the knowledgeable and virtuous Sheikh Abdul Qadir ibn Al-Marhum Abdul Rahim of Terengganu. May Allah forgive him, his parents, and all Muslims.

This book is said to be his second work, with his first being *Risalah Fi Bayan Hukm Al-Bay' Wa Al-Riba* in the field of muamalat. The second book remains relatively unknown to the public and exists as a single manuscript, preserved by his heirs in Yala, southern Thailand. In the study and edited manuscript by Zarif (2018), he discusses the contents of *Mir'at Al-Mu'minin wa Tadhkirah Li Al-Ghafilin* and its significance to the community of Terengganu. He provides a comprehensive overview of the book, detailing its condition based on his visit to the place where it is stored.

Mir'at Al-Mu'minin wa Tadhkirah Li Al-Ghafilin is a work that encompasses fiqh and aspects of tasawuf, evident from its contents. Generally, the book is divided into five major chapters based on the discussions it covers:

- i. Chapter on the reminder of death
- ii. Chapter on the creation of the sun and moon and their movements
- iii. Chapter on the rulings of zakat on gold and silver and prohibited clothing
- iv. Chapter on the encouragement of charity and its benefits
- v. Chapter on etiquette during eating and drinking

At first glance, the connection between the topics may not seem apparent, as it transitions from death to celestial matters and then to fiqh. The practices that benefit the deceased relate to acts of worship performed by the living, which can yield rewards for those who have passed away. These include giving charity in the name of the deceased, such as donating to orphanages, funding mosque development, or helping those in need, all of which can serve as rewards for the deceased. Furthermore, the righteous deeds performed during one's life continue to earn rewards as long as they provide ongoing benefits, such as disseminating beneficial knowledge, publishing books, or engaging in charitable contributions. These actions not only benefit the deceased but also assist the living in drawing closer to Allah SWT and earning divine rewards (Zarif, 2018).

Thus, the rationale behind Sheikh Abdul Qadir's arrangement of chapters becomes clear: everything living will perish, including this world. To prepare for the hereafter, one must accumulate good deeds performed in this life.

The Thoughts of Sheikh Abdul Qadir Bin Abdul Rahim Bukit Bayas in the Book *Mir'at Al-Mu'minin Wa Tadhkirah Li Al-Ghafilin*

In *Mir'at Al-Mu'minin Wa Tadhkirah Li Al-Ghafilin*, Sheikh Abdul Qadir emphasizes the importance of thinking guided by revelation and Islamic law, aimed at enhancing faith. He includes a discussion on the benefits of reflection, indicating that in Islam, thought

encompasses not only intellectual processes but also spiritual ones. The intellect is utilized to draw closer to Allah and achieve eternal happiness.

When discussing Islamic law, a clear understanding of the methods of legal reasoning or deriving rulings according to the established evidences, particularly the agreed-upon sources, is essential. Sheikh Abdul Qadir extensively employs verses from the Quran and hadith in his writings. For example, he references the Quranic verse about giving charity from the wealth that one cherishes most and the hadith of the Prophet Muhammad (SAW) about repenting one hundred times a day, as narrated by Imam Muslim, when addressing the topic of repentance. In his writings, Sheikh Abdul Qadir also employs qiyas (analogical reasoning) regarding the transmission of the rewards of Quranic recitation to the deceased. He stated:

لَنْ تَتَّالُوا إِلَهًا حَتَّى تُنْفِقُوا مِمَّا تُحِبُّونَ

"You will not attain righteousness until you spend from that which you love" (Surah Ali Imran, Verse 92).

He also uses a valid Hadith that encourages people to repent:

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ تَوُوبُوا إِلَى اللَّهِ، فَإِنِّي أَنُوبُ، فِي الْيَوْمِ إِلَيْهِ مِائَةٌ مَرَّةٍ

"O mankind, repent to Allah, for indeed I repent to Him one hundred times a day" (Hadith narrated by Muslim).

Sheikh Abdul Qadir employs a systematic method of deriving legal rulings, beginning with the Quran, followed by Hadith, consensus (ijmak), and analogy (qias). He demonstrates carefulness in selecting the Hadith used, including sahih, hasan, and daif Hadith, particularly in the context of virtuous deeds, which is permitted in the Shafi'i school of thought.

He exhibits a wise approach in using daif Hadith, leveraging them to motivate good deeds, in line with the views of scholars like Imam Ahmad, Imam al-Nawawi, and Ibn Hajar, who allow their use under certain conditions.

As a prominent scholar, Sheikh Abdul Qadir established a pondok (Islamic boarding school) in Bukit Bayas, which became a center for Islamic education, teaching theology, jurisprudence, and Sufism based on the Shafi'i school. His works in the Malay language made this knowledge more accessible to the local community.

Sheikh Abdul Qadir also admonishes society in a gentle and wise manner, demonstrating a deep understanding of human psychology. He employs a tarjih (preferential) approach in teaching and writing, considering various scholarly opinions before providing fatwas.

In the issue of whether the reward of reading the Quran reaches the deceased, he tends to favor the view that affirms this, referencing the opinions of other schools of thought, even when there are contradictions with the Shafi'i position.

Sheikh Abdul Qadir's approach of using the tarjih methodology in this book reflects his meticulousness in referring to the primary sources of the Shafi'i school, considering the context of the local community. This demonstrates his commitment to ensuring that the rulings given are relevant and effective in the daily practices of Muslims.

In his work, Sheikh Abdul Qadir often encounters differences of opinion among scholars regarding specific issues. He employs a *tarjih* (preferential) approach to select what he considers the strongest opinion based on available evidence, while also taking into account the suitability for the local community context. In matters of *fiqh* related to the daily practices of Muslims, such as worship, transactions, and ethics, Sheikh Abdul Qadir examines various perspectives from different schools of thought. He tends to favor opinions supported by strong evidence that are most relevant to the circumstances in the Malay world, which may differ from those in the Middle East.

Regarding the issue of whether the reward for reading the Quran reaches the deceased, Sheikh Abdul Qadir chooses the opinion that affirms it, despite it being contrary to the Shafi'i school. He states:

"As for reading the Quran for the deceased or at the grave, there is a difference among scholars on whether the reward reaches the deceased. In *Sharh al-Sudur fi Ahwal al-Mawtā wa al-Qubur*, it is mentioned that the majority of the early scholars and the three Imams—Imam Hanafi, Imam Malik, and Imam Ahmad ibn Hanbal—say that the reward of the Quran does reach the deceased. This is contrary to the view of our Imam, Shafi'i, who based his opinion on the verse:

وَأَنْ لَّيْسَ لِلْإِنْسَانِ إِلَّا مَا سَعَىٰ

"And that there is not for man except that [good] for which he strives." (Surah An-Najm, Verse 39)

They have responded to this verse in various ways. One argument is that this verse has been abrogated by the verse:

وَالَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا وَاتَّبَعَتْهُمْ ذُرِّيَّتُهُمْ بِإِيمَانٍ أَلْحَقْنَا بِهِمْ ذُرِّيَّتَهُمْ وَمَا أَلَتْنَاهُمْ مِّنْ عَمَلِهِمْ مِّنْ شَيْءٍ ۗ

"And those who have believed and followed their descendants in faith - We will join their descendants with them..." (Surah At-Tur, Verse 21)

This verse indicates that children are judged according to the faith of their parents, and thus, the faith of the parents can elevate the children to the same level in paradise, regardless of their own deeds.

Another response is that this verse applies specifically to the communities of Ibrahim and Musa. As for the rest of humanity, they will receive the rewards for their own efforts and those done on their behalf.

The third response is that the verse is specifically referring to disbelievers. As for believers, they receive rewards for their own efforts and for what is done on their behalf.

The fourth response explains that the phrase "for man" refers specifically to his own just actions, but God can grant additional rewards as He wishes.

The fifth response interprets "for man" as meaning "upon," meaning that there is nothing upon man except what he strives for.

They support the idea that the reward of the Quran reaches the deceased through analogy with other acts like prayer, charity, fasting, and pilgrimage, asserting that there is no difference among them.

Sheikh Abdul Qadir then presents several opinions from scholars within the Shafi'i school stating that the reward of the Quran reaches the deceased, noting:

"Indeed, Sheikh 'Izz al-Din ibn Abd al-Salam had previously issued a fatwa that the recitation of the Quran does not reach the deceased. However, when he passed away, some of his companions remarked on his previous stance. Sheikh 'Izz al-Din then admitted that he had stated this while alive, but upon witnessing the grace of God in the afterlife, he retracted his previous fatwa, acknowledging that the reward of the Quran does indeed reach the deceased."

Regarding the reading of the Quran at graves, he confirms that it is encouraged by all of our companions and others. Za'faran reported that he asked Imam Shafi'i about reading the Quran at graves, to which he replied: "There is no harm in it." Imam Nawawi in *Sharh Muhadhdhab* stated that it is sunnah for those visiting graves to read whatever they can from the Quran and pray for them, while emphasizing that if they were to complete the recitation of the Quran at the grave, it would be even more virtuous. Initially, Imam Ahmad ibn Hanbal opposed this notion, believing it had no basis. However, he later retracted his stance upon receiving evidence to the contrary.

Sheikh Ibn Hajar mentioned in his *Tuhfah* that Imam Shafi'i and all his companions agreed on the sunnah of reading the Quran as much as possible for the deceased and accompanying it with prayers, as it is hoped that their supplications will be answered and that the deceased benefits from the blessings of the Quran as if they were present.

Ultimately, Sheikh Abdul Qadir Bukit Bayas favors the opinion that the reward of the Quran does reach the deceased, but requires intention, aligning with the views of scholars within the Shafi'i school. He states:

"As for Imam Nawawi in *Sharh Muslim* stating that the reward of the Quran does not reach the deceased, some scholars have contended that if the deceased is not present and the reader does not intend for the reward to reach them, or if they intend but do not pray for the deceased, then no reward will reach them. However, if the deceased is present, then the reward of their recitation will reach them if accompanied by a prayer. Thus, reading at the grave is akin to being present in terms of the mercy that descends while reciting the Quran for them. In conclusion, reading the Quran for the deceased without following it with a prayer will not result in the reward reaching them, even if they are present. However, the intention of sending the reward does make a difference."

Sheikh Abdul Qadir Bukit Bayas's method of tarjih in *Mir'at Al-Mu'minin Wa Tadhkirah Li Al Ghafilin* emphasizes a careful approach grounded in primary sources of the Shafi'i school. He tends to utilize a thorough method in selecting the most robust and contextually appropriate views. This approach not only relies on strong evidence from the Quran and Hadith but also considers consensus (ijmak), analogy (qiyas), and other established principles of fiqh within the Shafi'i school. Although initially he references Imam al-Suyuti's writings on the differing opinions regarding whether the reward of reading the Quran reaches the deceased,

ultimately, Sheikh Abdul Qadir presents arguments affirming that the reward does reach the deceased through quotations from later Shafi'i scholars, as stated above.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the thoughts of Sheikh Abdul Qadir Bukit Bayas are seen as progressive in addressing the spread of Islam in Terengganu and the Malay world through writing. He is not only recognized as a scholar with profound knowledge but also as a significant figure in disseminating Islamic teachings according to the Shafi'i school. His thoughts, reflected in his works, demonstrate his firm adherence to the principles of legal reasoning based on the Quran, Sunnah, consensus (ijmak), and analogy (qiyas).

As the Mufti of Terengganu, he successfully integrated Islamic teachings into the state governance system, establishing himself as a respected authority in religious and legal matters. The educational institution he founded in Bukit Bayas became a center for the dissemination of knowledge, further solidifying his role in educating and guiding the local community. His contributions continue to be remembered as a testament to the remarkable leadership of scholars who have greatly benefited the religion, nation, and country. The legacy of his thoughts remains relevant, inspiring future generations to uphold the pure teachings of Islam.

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