

## Tawheed Thought of Al-Imam Al-Qushayri In the Book of *Al-Tahbīr Fi Al-Tadhkīr*

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### ABSTRACT

Islamic religion is founded based on faith in unseen things that are worshiped through the words of Allah s.w.t. and the words of the Messenger of Allah s.a.w.. The understanding and correct i'tiqad of the ghaibiyah cannot be achieved through superficial reasoning but only with the guidance of the scholars. In this current era of globalization, many understandings and ideologies are attacking the Muslims. In addition, the situation of the Muslim community nowadays that easy to take any information without carefully understanding where the source of the declaration is obtained and whether the agenda on the other side causes more and more people to be influenced by the understanding that are contrary to the right aqidah while at the same time improving the class of society whose thinking style is not parallel with the shariah. This article tries to introduce the concept of monotheism according to the thought of al-Imam Abd al-Karim Bin Hawazin al-Qushayri in the book al-Tahbīr fi al-Tadhkīr as a reference to monotheistic thought. Qualitative studies that use content analysis method examine the definition of monotheism described by al-Imam al-Qushayri in the book al-Tahbīr, the explanation regarding the nature of recognizing Allah Almighty, as well as the appreciation of Ism al-Dhat, the nature of al-Dhat and the nature of al- Fi'il in al-Asma 'al-Husna through al-Tahbīr fi al-Tadhkīr. From the conclusions, the concept of monotheism that al-Qushayri brought seen suitable to be used as a guide and reference of thought for the Muslims and can act as shield for the Muslim's aqidah. Al-Qushayri was wisely established understandings upon the ideologies that contradicted to the right aqidah especially that related to the dhat and nature of the Almighty God. He was also seen as having succeeded in diverting the readers' goals rather than knowledges solely to the realization of monotheism through the education of manners among a servant to Allah s.w.t.

**Keywords:** Al-Qushayri, Tawheed Thought, Aqidah, al-Tahbīr fi al-Tadhkīr

## Introduction

*Aqidah* is a justification in the heart of something that is believed with certainty without the slightest feeling of doubt (Hamat, 2015, 14). Every practice in one's life is an impression rather than a comprehension, a pattern of thought and belief in a case which is a reflection and a measure of the *aqidah* that is brought. Therefore, guarding the *aqidah* is the main concern in order maintaining the monotheistic purity because the acceptance of one's practice and worship depends on the correct *aqidah*. Allah s.w.t. said, "*Whoever expects an encounter with his Lord let him do good deeds and do not associate anything with Him in worshipping Him.*" (Surah al-Kahfi: 110)

In the era of technological explosions and times of transmission of the culture of global thought nowadays, the aspect of purification of *aqidah* becomes an important matter to be taken in order to fend off the attacks which eradicate the Muslim's *aqidah* and ideological that contrarily with the will of *shariah's* law. In addition, the community is now easy to take understanding without carefully assessing where the source of the declaration is obtained and whether the agenda is the opposite. This case has become one of the factors causing the deterioration of the *aqidah* of the community while at the same time birthing the groups that take the wrong understanding of religious and radical concepts and also realize new cases that are far from the will of religion (Long, 2015). Mardzelah (2017), based on her study states that the group of peoples that are most easily influenced by their thoughts and beliefs are the younger generation that are from primary school students until the higher learning institution students. Actually, education about *aqidah* and correct application from early can help children to form identity, positive characters and also nurture noble qualities (Ismail, 2012).

The author sees the studies and investigations on Islamic scholars are important because they are implements that have been instrumental in contributing solemnly to religion and Muslims in forming communal societies in accordance with religious teachings and instructions (Ab Rahim, 2014). Their views and thoughts related to the *aqidah*, especially the monotheism aspects, are necessary to be studied, researched, and given attention to be used as examples and models for the present society. This is because the true concept of *aqidah* and understanding can be used as a shield to fend off degenerate schools of thought besides adding to the public's belief in practicing religion completely based on true Islamic teachings. This case is among the main aspects that influence the birth of advanced and highly motivated people (Omar, 2018).

This article that uses the method of text content analysis is an inspiring study of the concept of monotheism from the thought of a prominent ulama figure in the fifth period, namely al-Imam Abd al-Karim Bin Hawazin al-Qushayri in his book *al-Tahbīr fī al-Tadhkīr*. He is a cleric who is not only great in the field of tasawwuf, but also in the field of *aqidah* and monotheism. His works such as *al-Risalah al-Qushayriyyah*, *al-Syikayah Ahlussunnah and Lathaif al-Isyarah* contain many valuable knowledges especially related to the problem of *aqidah*. The strengths and heights of the knowledge that he had in this field also made him a strong fortress in maintaining the right *aqidah* in his time. In addition to that, he is among the many figures who have fallen apart and explained the complex problems in the science of *tasawwuf* which involve *l'tiqad* and the handle of the *aqidah* such as talking about *karomah*, dignity, seeing of Allah Almighty, *iradah* and other more (Bissiuni 1972). In the book *al-Tahbīr fī al-Tadhkīr* itself, al-Imam al-Qushayri has made description the names of Allah s.w.t. the

noble as the best field to straighten out the understanding of vanity *aqidah* for example with regard to the problem of *dhat* and nature (Bissuini 1972). This article will examine a little as much about his monotheism thoughts through his work at *al-Tahbīr fī al-Tadhkīr*.

### **Explanation of Al-Imam Al-Qushayri Regarding the Definition of *Tawheed* In the Book of At-Tahbir**

The word '*tawheed*' can be interpreted as oneness, that is believing that Allah s.w.t is single or the only one. All ideas and theories related to discussion that bring about the enmity of God are the same with regard to *dhat* as well as the nature may be called the Knowledge of *Tawheed* (Zainuddin 1992). Shaykh Ibn Ataillah also explained that *tawheed* is faith about knowing and believing that everything is from Allah s.w.t., and the one who speaks the words of *tawheed* which is '*La ilah illa Allah*' should believe that everything comes from Allah s.w.t. (Ibn Ataillah, n.d.). In the book of *al-Tahbir*, al-Imam al-Qushayri translated the word of Allah which meant "Nothing equals him" (Surah al-Shura: 11) by picking the words of al-Wasithi that there is no *dhat* similar to His *dhat*, there is no actions that equals His actions and there are no qualities that are similar to His nature except only in terms of words.

Between the essence of monotheism that emphasized by al-Imam al-Qushayri is also regarding the belief and *i'tiqad* of a person towards Allah s.w.t. and His attributes. According to al-Imam, creatures may not be intermittent by the attributes of Allah's *dhat*, because the nature of *qadim* is impossible with the new nature. With that, the creatures are not knowledgeable with His knowledge, do not rule with His power, do not hear with His hearing and are not in the nature of His attributes. Those who have a belief with other than the above have been expelled from religion and regardless of their Islam (Al-Qushayri 1968).

### **ABOUT RECOGNIZING ALLAH S.W.T**

Al-Imam al-Qushayri explained in the book *al-Tahbir* that the meaning of the word '*ism*' in Arabic comes from the words of *al-summū* or *al-sima* (which is high or higher). So that, anyone who has recognized names of Allah s.w.t, it is obligatory for him to cultivate in himself the nature and personality that are appropriate to these names. That person also needs to enslave himself only to Allah s.w.t. with that his servitude is perfect. Al-Imam also said, a sign of someone who knows the rights of his master Allah s.w.t., it will not reduce the sharia laws that have been ordered in every time and circumstance and will always keep the time for the *fardh* worships that has been ordered by the Lord. (Al-Qushayri 1968).

Apart from that, al-Imam tells that someone who has recognized Allah s.w.t. will see that there is no destiny other than His destiny, that is, the state of a person will always be redeemed and put his trust in Allah s.w.t. God who is Living and always takes care of His creatures. This case is between aspects of profound submission in Islamic *aqidah* (Al-Nursi 2005). Likewise, for anyone who has recognized Allah, will surely always remember Him and will eventually sink into longing and loving Him.

Al-Imam al-Qushayri tells again that anyone who has known Allah s.w.t. will always be polite and watch out for Him because nothing escapes His sight and hearing. Actually, this is an *ihsan* dignity which is the highest dignity (Al-Haddad 2012). Jibril a.s. once asked the Prophet s.a.w. about *ihsan*, then the Prophet s.a.w. tell that *ihsan* is worshiping Allah s.w.t. as if seeing Him or if not, then surely Allah s.w.t. see you (Al-Bukhari 1987). This is the situation

that will take control of someone who has recognized God s.w.t. so that if you want to break his command, in your heart will say, "You should be ashamed of me" (Al-Qushayri 1968)

### ***Al-Ism Al-Dhat, The Nature of Al-Dhat And the Nature of Al-Fi'il In Al-Asma 'Al-Husna As the Shield for Tawheed***

#### ***Al-Ism al-Dhat***

In Arabic, *al-Ism* intends 'name' and *al-Dhat's* words may be interpreted as the nature of something. The words of *al-Ism al-Dhat* from the aspect of language may be defined as the name for the nature of things. Islamic scholars have dedicated the use of these words only for of Allah s.w.t. (Omar, 2018). There is nothing worthy of being given the name of God because the word of '*Allah*' itself refers to *dhat* and all the qualities of His perfection that are impossible to be shared by others. Allah s.w.t. himself said in al-Quran, "Say He is Allah, the One and Only" (Surah Al-Ikhlās: 1).

Al-Qushayri argues that the word '*Allah*' is a special name only for Allah s.w.t. and not published rather than other basic words. Although it does not deny that there is an opinion which says that the word of '*Allah*' comes from other words, but he says that the purpose of the words has many fragments and denials that lead to conflicting answers (al-Qushayri 1968). In the study regarding the origins of *al-ism al-dhat* carried out by Omar (2018), it was found that the arguments which support this opinion are stronger and it can be concluded that the word of '*Allah*' is a typical name word rather than a published word.

Apart from that, between the important cases touched by this character regarding *al-ism al-dhat* that is every name rather than the names of '*Allah*' may be used as *takhalluq* except the word of '*Allah*' itself that only for *ta'alluq* (al-qushayri 1968). *Takhalluq* with the names of Allah s.w.t. meaning that anyone who has studied the names of Allah s.w.t. need to try to do good deeds with each of the names of the glorious God by imitating him as well as civilized as well as possible *adab*. As for *al-ism ad-dhat*, the *tasawwuf* scholars suggested to repeatedly reciting *Allah..Allah..Allah..* to connect the heart with feelings of love and it will lead to the dignity of *ihسان*. This is the meaning of *ta'alluq*.

According to al-Qushayri, the practice of *dhikr ism al-dhat* is the beginning of the journey towards getting to know Allah s.w.t. (al-Qushayri n.d.). In his work entitled *Tartib al-Suluk fi Tariq Allah Ta'ala*, al-Qushayri has detailed the method of practicing *the Dhikr Ism al-Dhat* for the students who took the path of Sufism. Some pre-conditions have been outlined, for example a student needs to eliminate dependence on worldly aspects, master the science of *fard ain*, always in a holy state rather than a small or large tradition, having a mentor teacher and others. After fulfilling the pre-conditions, the *tariqa shaykhs* (spiritual teachers) will begin to teach the disciples (*murid*) that all matters of the self, as well as the *hidayah* (guidance) received, are essentially from Allah. Thereafter the *murid* is taught to invoke *Allah* repeatedly as a means to train the mind and the inner sight to focus only on Allah. Should the *murid's* mind become side-tracked, he must regain his focus immediately (Omar, 2018).

#### ***The nature of al-Dhat***

The nature of *al-dhat* is the attribute which is issuance to the *dhat* itself and must not be separated at all from that *dhat* (Engku Ali 2011). Indeed, between the position of *al-Khaliq*

and beings there is a boundary of faith and kufr. Those who believe in equating between the two positions will fall to Kufr. Each one has special rights. It is not permissible at all to make a creature with divine attributes either as something that is worshiped or who consecrates this nature, or is able to hold or give something, give benefits or harm absolutely without being associated with the influence of Allah Almighty. (Ibn 'Alawi, 2014)

Recognize the *dhat* of Allah s.w.t. it is not like recognizing the *dhat* of creatures which can be achieved through the senses, but the *dhat* of Allah s.w.t can be recognized through the attributes of His Perfectness. Allah SWT. said, "*He cannot be attained by all visions, even He can see all that is seen*" (Surah al-An'am: 103). Likewise, from the hadith issued by al-Baihaqi, the Prophet s.a.w. said, "Think about His creation and do not think about the (*dhat*) of the Creator because actually it cannot be recognized by the mind".

All the attributes of Allah s.w.t. either the nature of *ad-dhat* or the nature of the deeds must be attributed to Allah s.w.t. with proper understanding as appropriate to the perfection of Allah Almighty. In writing the book of *al-Tahbir*, al-Imam al-Qushayri has used the opportunity very well to describe about the right *aqidah* and correct the misunderstandings and wrongly perceptions especially regarding the *dhat* of Allah s.w.t. The wrong understanding like saying that Allah is s.w.t. armed, legged, bodied as human being is contrary to the *i'tiqad* held by *Ahl Al-Sunnah wal Jamaah* and misleading. It is because of Allah s.w.t. totally not similar with anything and cannot be compared to any creatures. (Mufti Selangor 2010).

Al-Qushayri said the book, the answer to the principal issues of monotheism is pure belief that nothing resembles Allah's s.w.t. attribute or actions and nothing resembles His nature except in term of word or pronunciation. (al-Qushayri 1968). He also stated in his *Lathaif* book that the worst word is word that affirming and comparing the *dhat* of Allah s.w.t. with the creatures.

### ***Al-Fi'il (Acts)***

The creation of this world is like the earth, sky, human, angel, jinn, heaven, hell, every act of creature and so on is from the act or *af'al* Allah s.w.t. The nature of deeds (of Allah s.w.t.) is the attributes conquered by the will of Allah s.w.t. like creating, making, giving sustenance and others like (Yasin, M. N. 2010). In the al-Quran Allah s.w.t. said, "*Allah the Lord who created the heavens and the earth and all that is between them in six times, then He dwells on the Throne; you will not get any helper and intercessor apart from God; by that you do not want to convert and take lessons*" (Surah as-Sajadah: 4). In another verse Allah s.w.t. says, "*Allah who made you and what you did*" (Surah as-Soffat: 96).

Every Muslim must believe that Allah s.w.t. who makes and creates all things without help and intercession, and does not take anything from His actions because of Allah, the Lord is the Almighty but all the creatures belong to Him. Allah s.w.t said in the al-Quran, "*Allah the God who depends on Him all things*" (Surah al-Ikhlâs: 2). Allah s.w.t. does not need and depend to anything but He become the purpose of every creature and place of asking their need and necessity.



Between the sign of someone who has reached the maqam of *Tawheed* and the firm belief in the nature of the deeds of Allah s.w.t is the real belief in the sustenance of Allah give it. Al-Qushayri said, whoever gets happiness with the testimony of *al-Razzaq*, there is nothing that can make him doubt with sustenance than Him. Allah s.w.t. has devoted sustenance to the rich and the poor with the testimony of His name, *al-Razzaq*, the Supreme Giver of sustenance.

Another case that was highlighted by al-Qushayri about the nature of God's deeds s.w.t., is in God's right s.w.t. does not manifest in His creatures except what Allah s.w.t. want them to be or not. What al-imam said was indirectly become the best refutation for a part of the class that said Allah s.w.t. did not create good deeds or bad deeds of man. Truly, Allah s.w.t. who created good deeds as well as bad deeds for humans. Even so, Allah s.w.t. giving human reason and mind to choose which way to be occupied is the same as doing good and vice versa (Engku Ali 2011).

## CONCLUSION

Knowledge or *ilm* is the main aspect in achieving *Tawheed*. Even though, understanding and purpose that are truly followed by appreciation will determine that the knowledge will bring benefits or vice versa. From the study of the concept of monotheistic thought of al-Qushayri through the book *al-Tahbīr fi al-Tadhkīr*, it is found that al-Qushayri was wisely cultivates the perverted understandings, especially relating to *dhat* and nature. He was also seen as having succeeded in diverting the readers' goals rather than knowledge solely to the realization of monotheism by educating on how to be civilized to Allah Almighty. The concept of monotheism which he brought seen suitable to be a guide and reference for the Muslim nowadays and becomes the shield to protect the Muslim's *aqidah* from any dangerous ideological that contradict to the right *aqidah*.

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