

The Concept of *Fana* and Its Relevance deep Prevention of Religious Radicalism

(Study of the Thoughts of Imam Junaid Al-Baghdadi in the Book of Rasail Junaid)

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Abstract

This study examines the concept of mortality from the perspective of Imam Junaid Al-Baghdadi and its relevance in counteracting religious radicalism. This research is library research using primary data from the book of Rasail Junaid and using descriptive-analytical techniques in analyzing the data. This research found that there are three levels of mortality in the view of Imam Junaid Al-Baghdadi; first, mortal towards morals through persistence against lust and consistently avoiding actions that violate norms, second, mortal in worship by not being transactional when worshipping Allah, third, mortal towards self, so that Allah dominates in him, thus it can be concluded that if a person succeeds in reaching these three mortal levels, then he will give birth to goodness in his behavior, sincerity in his life, and always feel supervised by God in all aspects of his life. So that through the understanding and experience of the three mortal levels, religion is not used as a source of violence, but religion is a source of goodness and sincerity. This research is expected to be able to add to scientific treasures about the thoughts of Imam Junaid Al-Baghdadi and to contribute knowledge in preventing religious radicalism in Indonesia.

Keywords: *Fana*, Imam Junaid Al-Baghdadi, Religious Radicalism

INTRODUCTION

Religious radicalism is the impact of a misunderstanding of understanding religious teachings. One of the mistakes that often occurs among Muslims is always prioritizing only formal legal or fiqh aspects, without paying attention to the elements of sincerity and kindness in carrying out religious routines. Such a paradigm will give birth to a rigid understanding of the meaning of religious texts. A rigid understanding of religious teachings will lead a person to formalistic Islam or religious formalism. Religious formalism is characterized by; textual understanding, rejecting local traditions, and rejecting other people's beliefs. (Hidayat, 2012).

In order to avoid religious formalism, it is necessary to discuss and carry out aspects of Sufism in religious life. Because with tasawuf a person will be able to be sincere and voluntary in carrying out God's commands. Sufism is a spiritual experience obtained through religious teachings with the aim of getting closer to Allah SWT. (Simuh, 1999) Dadang Kahmad further explained that by being close to God, a person will reach the level of self-melting or mortal *fana fi al-haq*. (Kahmad, 2002).

Given the importance of the Sufism aspect in religious life and as a forerunner to preventing religious radicalism, Imam Junaid Al-Baghdadi in his book Rasail Junaid offers a mortal concept which can then be implemented by religious people in their

religious life. Therefore, specifically this paper will discuss the concept of fana and its relevance to religious radicalism from the perspective of Imam Junaid Al-Baghdadi.

Research on the thoughts of Imam Junaid Al-Baghdadi has been carried out by many previous researchers. As did Cucu Setiawan in his writing entitled *Sufism as The Core of Islam* (Setiawan et al., 2020), Imam Junaid's thoughts have also been carried out by Sholahuddin Ashani in his writing entitled *Trilogy of Sufism of Imam Junaid Al-Baghdadi's Thoughts* (Ashani et al., 2021). These two papers find that Sufism is not only an aspect or part of the Islamic scientific tradition, but Sufism is the core of Islamic teachings themselves. This opinion is in line with the opinion of Muhammad Nursamad Kamba in his dissertation entitled *Nadhariyah Al-Ma'rifah Inda Al-Junaid Al-Baghdadi* and his book entitled *Kids Zaman Now Rediscovering Islam*. In this research, Shaykh Kamba is of the view that by understanding the teachings of Imam Junaid Al-Baghdadi, one will be able to rediscover the essence of Islam as taught by the Prophet Muhammad. (Nursamad Kamba, 2018). However, these various studies do not specifically explain the thoughts of Imam Junaid Al-Baghdadi and their relevance in preventing religious radicalism. So this research is important to do to add to the scientific treasures about the thoughts of Imam Junaid Al-Baghdadi and to contribute knowledge in the field of religion for religious people.

RESEARCH METHODS

This research is categorized into library research or what is often known as library research (Arikunto, 1993). The approach used is a theological approach using qualitative methods (Fadli, 2021). The main source or primary data in this article is the book *Rasail Junaid* which is the phenomenal work of Shaykh Abu Al-Qasim Al-Junaid Al-Baghdadi. Data is collected through documentation techniques (Harsono, 2008), and data analysis was done by descriptive-analytical (Sugiyono, 2015).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The Origin of Sufism Thought Imam Junaid Al-Baghdadi

Imam Junaid has the full name Abu Al-Qasim Al-Junaid bin Muhammad bin Al-Junaid al-Khazzaz al-Qawariri Nihawandi Al-Baghdadi. Imam Junaid was born in the city of Baghdad in 215 H (Musthafa, 1987). Since childhood, Imam Junaid has been accustomed to the experience of Sufism, because he was raised directly by his uncle Sari as-Saqati, who is also a well-known Sufi in the city of Baghdad. (Abdel-Kader, 2018). Not only taught directly by Sari as-Saqati, Imam Junaid was also guided by Sari as-Saqati's teacher, Ma'ruf al-Kharki (Abdel-Kader, 2018).

Although much literature reveals that Imam Junaid Al-Baghdadi's tasawuf teachers were Sari as-Saqati and Ma'ruf al-Karkhi. However, Imam Junaid explicitly said that his true teacher was Abu Ja'far Muhammad bin Ali al-Qashshab (Abdel-Kader, 2018). However, Imam Junaid did not present much of Al-Qashshab's thoughts on his Sufism theories. Imam Junaid gave two reasons for not citing Muhammad al-Qashshab's thoughts; first, for Imam Junaid Allah does not want the same degree between His chosen people and ordinary people. Second, for Imam Junaid Allah hid his true teacher Muhammad al-Qasashab from everything except Himself, and Allah made Muhammad al-Qasashab only for Himself (Abdel-Kader, 2018).

Fana in Conversation of the Sufis

Fana is an important theme in the study of Sufism. Thus, discussions about the concept of fana have been carried out since the beginning of the birth of the science of Sufism around the 3rd and 4th centuries H. The following are early figures of Sufism who have discussed fana; Abu Yazid Al-Bustomi, Imam Junaid Al-Baghdadi, Abu Nasr as-Sarraj ath-Thusi and so on (Al-Taftazani, 1976).

Fundamentally, fana can be understood by the disappearance of human traits (evil) and the active divinity (good) in humans. (Al-Jurjani, 1988). This opinion is supported by Sufism leaders, such as; Abu Nasr As-Sarraj At-Thusi, Al-Qusyairi, and Abu Yazid Al-Bustomi. According to Sarraj ath-Thusi, mortality is the transfer of human desires (desires) to things that are eternal based on God's will. (Nashr & As-Sarraj, 2002). Imam al-Qusyairi also believes that mortality is the loss of despicable qualities and the appearance of praiseworthy qualities (Al-Qusyairi, 2007). Abu Yazid al-Busthami explains that mortality is the disappearance of everything from a person other than Allah, even someone who has succeeded in reaching the mortal stage no longer remembers himself, but what lives in him is only Allah SWT. Abu Yazid Al-Bustomi is not only limited to being able to explain the concept of mortality, but al-Bustomi has also experienced the mortal condition itself, as the expression "Ana Al-Haq" came out of al-Bustomi when he was experiencing a mortal condition. (Al-Taftazani, 2003).

William James in his book *The Varieties of Religious Experience* explains that the mortal condition is a common thing that happens to humans. However, a transient situation or transiency cannot last long, only one to two hours. Even though this mortal situation has disappeared, the nature of the situation remains in the person who

experiences it. For William James all of these events are called inner or spiritual experiences (James, 2015).

According to various experiences of the Sufis, the atmosphere of mortality is not the culmination of Sufi experience, but mortality is the beginning of the birth of *baqa* (eternal in divine qualities). *Baqa* is the result of the emptiness or disappearance of the servant. So that the disappearance of the human side results in the life of the divinity in man himself. Therefore, Abu Nasr as-Sarraj ath-Thusi said that true mortality is not just emptying oneself, but a continuous process to the eternal nature of Allah within. (Nashr & As-Sarraj, 2002).

***Fana* as an Effort to Prevent Religious Radicalism Perspective of Imam Junaid Al-Baghdadi**

Religious radicalism is a religious ideology or movement that tends to be rigid and extreme in spreading its religious understanding (Bakri, 2004). Religious radicalism has a paradigm that is exclusive, closed, and militaristic (Zuhdi, 2017). The rise of religious radicalism has resulted in religion no longer being interpreted as God's teachings that prioritize love, but rather as a source or reference for committing violence in the name of God. Teachings or understandings like this are very contrary to the principles of Sufism, even one of the Sufism experts in Indonesia, Shaykh Muhammad Nursamad Kamba, is of the view that committing crimes in the name of God is an act of *shirk*. (Maulani, 2020).

In order to avoid religious formalism, it is necessary to discuss and carry out aspects of Sufism in religious life. Sufism cannot be understood as a mere theological conception, because God cannot be conceptualized. However, Islam can be understood by carrying out God's teachings voluntarily and sincerely, and with that sincerity *tasawwuf* will become a means of self-transformation (mental, spiritual, moral) for those who practice it. (Nursamad Kamba, 2018). Sincerity is the most important element in worshipping Allah SWT, because in truth God does not receive any benefit from any form of worship of His servants. However, it is from this worship that we can educate ourselves to become human beings with good personalities (Nursamad Kamba, 2018). The way to cultivate sincerity in worship is by *tasawuf*, therefore Sufism is an important element in religion.

Given the importance of aspects of Sufism in religious life and as a means of preventing the birth of religious radicalism, Imam Junaid Al-Baghdadi in his book *Rasail Junaid* offers a concept of mortality which can then be implemented by religious people in their religious life. According to Imam Junaid Al-Baghdadi mortal is divided into three levels; First, mortal from character, ethics, and character or behavior, by carrying out good deeds, persistence against lust and consistently avoiding actions that violate norms. Second, it is transient from the transactional nature of worshiping Allah. Eliminate hopes and desires only for pleasure to Allah. In doing this kind of mortal, you will be released from lust which is a distance between you and God. Third, being blind from sight, witnessing the essence that exists within you, by incorporating God's dominion within you. So at that time there was no existence other than the form of Allah. Everything that you thought existed immediately vanished because of the domination of Allah's form. At that time, you disappeared and became a true being because of your disappearance. Your physical form is still there but your individuality is gone.

The first stage or first level of *fana* relates to the purpose of human life, namely *vita activa* or active life. This is what Imam Junaid calls the nature and quality of self that humans want to achieve. In achieving these qualities and qualities, a person needs ongoing moral training, an ascetic lifestyle, and must act contrary to the desires and desires of his soul which can injure and tarnish the purity of his ideals. This is the mortal stage of the moral level (Abdel-Kader, 2018).

The second stage implies that humans must be able to distance themselves from the pleasures of the world and be selfless towards God when carrying out God's commands, so that there are no more intermediaries to take humans to communicate with Him. Because being selfless in worship will not be able to bring people closer to God, it will actually keep people away from God. This kind of religious way actually greatly dwarfs the value of worship itself, even though God does not receive any benefit from all forms of worship of His servants. However, it is from this worship that we can educate ourselves to become human beings with good personalities. This stage is the mortal stage of the mental level (Abdel-Kader, 2018).

The third stage shows that humans will experience a loss of consciousness because they have reached the level of monotheism. In the presence of God, self-awareness will vanish. This is the condition when a human being is completely

engulfed and drowned by God. At this stage, human individuality disappears even though the physical form is still there (Abdel-Kader, 2018).

Imam Junaid describes the state of mortality as follows: "I spoke as I disappeared from my normal state and then an extraordinary power and a resplendent light possessed me and infused mortal inside me, making me a new being as Allah created me the first time from nothing. I also can't shake Him because nothing has the power to affect Him. Nor do you know anything about Him, for He Himself already knew this knowledge. He did not remove my identity and replace it with His own attributes and in this process my perceptions also disappeared from me, because I was very close to Him. It is He who creates and who creates again".

In order to strengthen this view of the mortal condition, Imam Junaid quoted the hadith *qudsi* as follows. The Prophet Muhammad SAW said: Allah SWT said: "My servant immersed himself to worship Me, so that I also love him, and when I love him, then I become his ears, so that he can hear through Me, and become his eyes, so that he sees through me."

CONCLUSION

Based on the data obtained in the book of *Rasail Junaid* and based on the results of analysis through descriptive-analytical techniques, it was found that there are three levels of mortality in the view of Imam Junaid Al-Baghdadi; first, mortal towards morals through persistence against lust and consistently avoiding actions that violate norms, second, mortal in worship by not being transactional when worshiping Allah, third, mortal towards self, so that Allah dominates in him. Thus it can be concluded that if a person succeeds in reaching these three mortal levels, then he will give birth to goodness in his behavior, sincerity in his life, and always feel supervised by God in all aspects of his life. So that through the understanding and experience of the three mortal levels, religion is not used as a source of violence, but religion is a source of kindness and sincerity.

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