THOUGHTS OF ASY'ARIAN THEOLOGICAL FIGURES: QADHI ABU BAKR AL-BAQILLANI

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ABSTRACT

This century is famous for three mainstream schools in the history of Islamic thought, namely; first, the school of Islamic philosophers who only understand Islamic beliefs. Second, the Salafiyah school is very textual. Third, the Mu'tazilah school is a school that combines reason and naql while still making reason the determining factor when there are texts that conflict with the truths of reason (logic). Al-Asy'ari was originally one of the followers of the Mu'tazilah school until he was 40 years old. Furthermore, he formed formulas and patterns of thought that were different from the three schools of thought and he tried to combine the functions of both reason and texts while still providing guidelines that in fact reason must submit to texts.

Keywords: Ash'arian Theology, Qadhi Abu Bakr Al-Baqillani

INTRODUCTION

The term al-Asy'ariah was specifically assigned to the followers of Abu Hasan Ali bin Ismail al-Asy'ari, who later developed rapidly to become one of the important theological schools of thought in Islam known as the Ash'arian school. Abu Hasan Ali bin Ismail al-Asy'ari was recorded as living around 260-324 H or being born around the end of the third century and died in the early fourth century H.

In this century, there are three *main streams* in the history of Islamic thought, namely; *First*, the school of Islamic philosophers who only understand Islamic beliefs and defend them must be based on reason and *naql* by relying on the truths of reason as the only source of knowledge. *Second*, the Salafiyah school, this school was pioneered by Imam Ahmad bin Hanbal. This school is very textual, that is, it only uses *texts* as the only axis and tool for understanding Islamic beliefs. *Third*, the Mu'tazilah school is a school that combines reason and *naql* while still making reason the determining factor when there are *texts* that conflict with the truths of reason (logic).

Al-Asy'ari was originally one of the followers of the Mu'tazilah school until he was 40 years old. Furthermore, he formed formulas and patterns of thought that were different from

the three schools of thought and he tried to combine the functions of both reason and *texts* while still providing guidelines that in fact reason must submit to *texts*.

After the emergence of al-Ash'ari's thought, this method was eventually followed by many scholars afterward and they attributed their opinions to al-Asy'ariah, those who emerged in the later period had a role in developing al-Asy'ari's opinions by characteristic of using rational logical arguments that intersect with the rationality of the Mu'tazilah school. Among these figures is Qadhi Abu Bakr al-Baqillani.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

1. Qadhi Abu Bakr al-Baqillani

    a) Biography of Qadhi al-Baqillani

Muhammad bin Thayyib bin Muhammad bin Ja'far bin al-Qasim or better known as al-Qadhi Abu Bakr al-Baqillani is one of the *mutakallimin scholars*. He is also known as an expert in Ushul Fiqh. Born in Basrah and settled in Baghdad until the end of his life. As for the year of his birth, there is no definite source that mentions it. Al-Baqillani died in 403 H in Baghdad and was buried beside the tomb of Ahmad bin Hanbal in the Bab al-Harb cemetery (al-Maraghi, 223).

Al-Baqillani had teachers from a number of scholars with various disciplines, including: Abu Abdullah bin Muhammad bin Ya'kub bin Mujahid al-Thai al-Maliki who was a friend and student of al-Asy'ari. Next, Abu Bakr Muhammad bin Abdullah al-Abhari who is a *faqih* of the Maliki school of thought. And Abu Bakr Ahmad bin Ja'far bin Malik al-Qathi'i. Ibn Kathir mentioned his specialty as an active writer, he would not even sleep every night except after writing 20 pages (Katsir, 1986). And the works he has include: *The Book al-Tabshirah*, *Daqaiq al-Haqaiq*, *al-Tamhid fi Usul Fiqh*, *Syarh al-Ibanah*, and so on. In fact, al-Qadhi 'Ayyad stated that the number of al-Baqillani's works is as many as 99 books on theology, *i'jaz*, ushul fiqh, and the Koran, but only a small portion still exists today (Subhi, 1992).

    b) Its Influence in the Scope of al-Asy'ariyah Theology

In the muqaddimah *Kitab al-Tamhid* by al-Baqillani, as in Musa it is explained that the biggest thought of al-Baqillani is to make a method and compile Asy'ari theology systematically not only applying the method of dialectical logic but also laying down the premise guidelines as the basis for the propositions –postulate (Musa, 1975). It is because of this role that he is called the second figure in al-Asy'ariah theology after its founder Abu Hasan al-Asy'ari (Abdullah, 1986).

Ibn Khaldun in his *Muqaddimah* mentions the influence of al-Baqillani in Asy'ari theology in the form of method development, as follows: He (al-Baqillani) developed the method or *tariqah* and laid down logical premises which became the main basis of the arguments and theories , such as specifying *void* (*al-khala*) and primary substance (*al-Jauhar al-fard*) along with *accidents* (*al-'ardh*) where it is impossible to stand on one *accident* (*al-'ardh*), it is impossible to be two at the same time, and the like which form the basis of their arguments. And making these rules the basis for setting obligations in believing, because an error or incorrect argument means that what is the object of a proposition is also incorrect. So this method is the best method in the theoretical and religious sciences (Khaldun, 515).

c) **The Theological Thoughts of Qadhi Abu Bakr al-Baqillani**

1. **The Form and Nature of God**

The discussion regarding the existence of Allah, was started by al-Baqillani with the determination of the renewal of nature. Nature which consists of *al-jauar* and *al-'ardh* are both something new and something new must have brought it into being, and the one who has brought it about is Allah.

As the reason, al-Baqillani provides evidence, among others, by stipulating that Allah is *qadim* and nature is *hadith* (baharu). And something new must have someone who does it, it's impossible for the same sex to come from a *hadith* or a new one, but for sure it's something that is *qadim* , namely Allah SWT (al-Baqillani, 1986). This is the argument used by al-Ash'ari and also his other followers.

As for the attributes of Allah SWT, al-Baqillani's determination is like what has been mentioned in the Qur'an. For more details about al-Baqillani's opinion regarding the attributes of Allah, there is a division of these characteristics into two parts, namely; *al-substance* and *af'al* properties. The nature of *al-substance* is defined as a property that cannot be separated from matter, the nature of *al-'ilm,* for example, cannot be separated from the substance of Allah, who is *al-'alim* at any time, both from the beginning of *time* and forever and ever. Things will be different from the characteristics of *al-af'al* , namely the attributes of Allah which are closely related to all his actions, this is because Allah swt. existed before the action existed (Subhi, 1992).

To clarify al-Baqillani's opinion regarding the relationship between substances and properties, Mahmud Subhi explained that one of his (al-Baqillani's) features was clarifying the meaning of existing *terms in order to be able to determine what is*

desired. First, he made a distinction between *al-shifah* and *al-washf*. *Al-Shifah* is something that is in the attribute (*al-maushuf*), and *al-washf* is the relationship between *al-shifah* and *al-maushuf*. *Al-shifah* is sometimes only temporary for *al-maushuf* such as black (*al-sawad*), white (*al-bayadh*), will (*al-iradah*), hate (*al-karahiyah*), and sometimes *al-shifah* still accompanies and exists on *al-maushuf*, this is where *al-shifah* becomes *al-washf*. So our words that Allah is alive (*hayy*), knows (*'alim*), has power (*qadir*), gives favors (*mun'im*), and so on are all explanations from *al-washf* , and not *al-shifah* . With al-Baqillani's opinion, he has emerged from the polemic between al-Ash'ari and Mu'tazilah about determining or not determining attributes for God (Subhi, 1992).

2. *Al-Ahwal* 's theory

Harun Nasution is of the opinion that al-Baqillani is one of those who defines *al-hal* as a substitute for character, like Abu Hasyim al-Juba'i from Mu'tazilah (Nasution, 1986). In fact, Harun Nasution's opinion still needs to be examined whether it is true *that* al-Baqillani's meaning is the same as what Abu Hasyim al-Juba'i meant.

This is because in Kitab *al-Tamhid*, al-Baqillani specifically refutes Abu Hasyim al-Juba'i about the theory of *al-hal*. Furthermore, it is possible that some people think that al-Baqillani was among those who determined *al-half*. This statement was conveyed by Ramadhan after reading books other than al-Tamhid written by al-Baqillani. He explained his statement by mentioning the opinion conveyed by Imam al-Haramain that al-Baqillani never hesitated between establishing or rejecting *al-things* (Abdullah, 1986).

Even though Harun Nasution often cites several opinions, including that of al-Syahrastani, the author does not see this as the case. This is because al-Syahrastani mentions in the Book of *al-Milal wa al-Nihal* by quoting the words of al-Baqillani: *al-things* determined by Abu Hasyim are what we call *shifah* (al-Syahrastani, 1986).

From the description above, it can be understood that al-Baqillani determines the attributes of Allah besides determining *al-things* as well. As for Abu Hasyim al-Juba'i as a follower of Mu'tazilah, he still denies nature, and he replaced this term with the term *al-hal*. Abu Hasyim al-Juba'i stipulates that *al-thing is a middle way that can be taken to avoid the appearance of the attribute of Allah with qadim* qualities. Thus that *the al-things* meant by al-Baqillani are different from *the al-things* meant by Abu Hasyim al-Juba'i.

The meaning of *al-hal* according to Abu Hasyim al-Juba'i, that Allah *is 'Alim* for His substance, which means that He has a condition that is a trait that is known behind him as an existing substance, but precisely that trait can be known not to stand alone, so *ahwal* are intangible, unknown and unknowable properties. Meanwhile, according to al-Baqillani that *al-things* cannot be contradictory (Abdullah, 1986).

3. *al-Kasb* 's theory

Although the principles of *al-kasb 's theory* have been mentioned by al-Asy'ari, in al-Baqillani's view the meaning of this theory has slightly shifted. Mahmud Subhi stated that al-Baqillani developed this theory from the previous point where al-Asy'ari did not mention the issue of the influence of new human power (*hadith*) on human actions (*al-kasb*), but here al-Baqillani precisely stipulates that new human power (*hadith*) has an influence on human actions (Subhi, 1992).

Al-Asy'ari believes that human power has no influence to manifest his actions, because his power and will are the creations of Allah swt. This has been explained by Allah in QS. *az-Zumar* verse 62 which reads:

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اَ للَّهُ خَٰلِقُ كُلِّ شَيۡءٖۖ وَهُوَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيۡءٖ وَكِيلٞ ٦٢

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Meaning: Say: "O my people, work according to your circumstances, in fact I will work (too), then one day you will know. (QS. *az-Zumar* / 39: 62) (Indonesia, 2004).

According to al-Asy'ari that the meaning of the verse is Allah who has created all things. Al-Asy'ari provides an understanding of *al-kasb* is realizing the will in action, namely Allah swt. creating power in humans is temporary related to deeds, and this power does not have an essential effect in making it happen but it is the power of God that gives the real effect. If so, where is the role of *al-kasb* here? To this question al-Asy'ari does not give a convincing answer (Abdullah, 1986).

Meanwhile, al-Baqillani still adheres to the theory of *al-kasb* in general, namely that it is Allah who creates human actions. However, he further clarified his statement by emphasizing that human actions are created due to the influence of two powers, namely the power of God and the power of created humans. God's power influences actions (*al-fi'l*) and human power affects the realization of deeds. This action then becomes the measure of whether it is good or bad, gets rewarded or gets punishment (al-Taftazaniy, 1989).

This is what shows the difference between al-Baqillani and al-Asy'ari in the theory of *al-kasb*. Regarding the scope of how human influence in realizing his

actions. Al-Baqillani tends to see that humans have an effective contribution in realizing their actions, while al-Asy'ari does not see the true influence of humans.

CONCLUSION

From the explanation above regarding the thoughts of Qadhi Abu Bakr al-Baqillani who is a figure of Asy'ari theology, it can be concluded that Qadhi Abu Bakr al-Baqillani or commonly referred to as al-Baqillani is one of the figures of Ash'arian theology who has an important role in developing methods and objects, by incorporating philosophic discussions and methods into discussions of Ash'ari theology while still adhering to the general principles of Ash'aria theology, namely determining the nature of God.

Al-Baqillani in his attempt to determine the nature of God turns out to be more rational by including the differences between *al-shifat* and *al-washf* and giving his own meaning to the theory *of al-thing*. He also gave a clear statement about the theory of *al-kasb* which is the opinion of al-Asy;ari by providing an effective role for human power in realizing his actions.

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