

SUFISM AS THE CORE OF ISLAM: A Review of Imam Junayd Al-Baghdadi's Concept of Tasawwuf

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Abstract:

This paper studies the thoughts of Abu 'l-Qasim al-Junaid ibn Muhamad ibn Al-Junayd al-Khazzaz al-Qawariri Nihawandi al-Baghdadi, one of the prominent figures during the early development of Sufism, or also known in Arabic as tasawwuf. This study attempts to find a confluence between tasawwuf and Islam, on the basis that Islamic teachings are going through degradation in meanings and tasawwuf is often considered as a bid'ah (heresy) in Islamic studies. This research used a library research method and Junayd al-Baghdadi's treatise, Rasail Junaid, as the primary data source. This study concludes that tasawwuf is not only an aspect or a segment of Islamic teachings, but it is the core of Islam itself as a religion. There are three central theories of tasawwuf by Junayd al-Baghdadi: mitsaq (covenant), fana (annihilation of self), and tawhid (unification). Based on these three theories, we can conclude that Junayd al-Baghdadi succeeded in conciliating the debate among tasawwuf and fiqh scholars. He also managed to knock down the stigma of tasawwuf as a heresy. His thoughts redefine tasawwuf into a simple and acceptable teaching for Muslims.

Keywords: *Sufism, Islam, Imam Junayd Al-Baghdadi*

A. Introduction

In the present climate, Islamic teachings are experiencing degradation in meanings. The reason stems from the inclination to study Islam only from the aspect of law or *fiqh* (jurisprudence).¹ This phenomenon is contradictory with the circumstance during the growth period of Islam in Indonesia, when cultural and *tasawwuf* (sufism) aspects of the religion were more preeminent. It is even more in contrast compared to

¹ Moh Mukri, "Dinamika Pemikiran Fikih Mazhab Indonesia (Perspektif Sejarah Sosial)," *Analisis* 11, no. 2 (2011): 189–218, <http://ejournal.radenintan.ac.id/index.php/analisis/article/view/608/0>.

the situation during the Prophet's time when He spread Islamic teachings in the two sacred places, Mecca and Medina. The Prophet prioritized *akhlak* (moral) in his preach. The Prophet said: *I was only sent to perfect moral character.*² By understanding and practicing *tasawwuf*, an intimate relationship between men and God will form, and consequently through the intimacy men will experience a moral transformation.

Although *tasawwuf* teaching has existed since the Prophet's era, there is still a stigma around it even within the Muslim society. Several parties condemn *tasawwuf* as a passive, fatalist, and ignorant action, and moreover as the cause of a long and continuing decline of Islam.³ For instance, the criticism toward *tasawwuf* came from Sayyid Jamāl al-Dīn al-Afghānī al-Asadabādī (1838-1897). According to al-Afghānī, the Sufis in his era are traditional religious leaders responsible from the decline of Islam. They failed in several areas, including making false interpretations of Islam which consequently dissociates Islam from its nature and defies rationality, and supporting a fatalist attitude toward God's predestination which leads to human inactivity.⁴ There are also differences among Muslim intellectuals in describing *tasawwuf*, whether as a spiritual expression, a way of life, or as a field of study.⁵ Abdul Qadir Jailani views *tasawwuf* as a way toward the pinnacle of a servant's sincerity toward God, which leads the servant to a *fana* (annihilated) and *ma'rifat* (knowing) states. In addition, Muhamad Alif explains that *tasawwuf* is a way of men to know God.⁶ Although there are many different descriptions, they have a common sentiment and vision, which is to become close with God.

The term *tasawwuf*, or also known as Sufism and Islamic mysticism, first emerged in the early third century of the Hijri (the Islamic calendar). During the period, the Sufis utilized *tasawwuf* to change bad morals into the good ones.⁷ Sufis from this era put emphasis toward issues of morality, as well as other related matters such as *riyadhah* (soul training), *maqamat* (spiritual stages) and *ahwal* (states of consciousness).⁸ The first Sufi to discuss *tasawwuf* was al-Harits ibn Asad al-Muhasibi, born in 165 AH in Bashrah, Iraq, and died in 243 AH. Sufis from the third century of the Hijri are classified into two groups. First, those who held firmly to the sharia laws, such as Abu Sa'id al-Kharraz and Abu al-Qasim al-Junaid. Second, those who gravitated toward the extreme since they publicly declared their unification with God, such as Abu Yazid al-Bustwahami and Al-Hallaj.⁹

² Komaruddin Hidayat, *Agama Punya Seribu Nyawa* (Bandung: Noura Books, 2012).

³ Mohammad Dawami, *Tasawuf Positif Dalam Pemikiran Hamka* (Yogyakarta: Fajar Pustaka Baru, 2000).

⁴ Sulaiman Al-Kumayi, "Gerakan Pembaruan Tasawuf di Indonesia," *Jurnal Theologia* 24, no. 2 (2013): 247–78.

⁵ Muhammad Hafiun, "Teori Asal Usul Tasawuf," *Jurnal Dakwah*, 2012.

⁶ Muhammad Alif, "Tauhid Dalam Tasawuf," *Aqlania* 8, no. 2 (2017): 97–129.

⁷ Abu Al-Wafa, *Sufi Dari Zaman Ke Zaman* (Jakarta: Pustaka, 1985).

⁸ Al-Wafa.

⁹ Al-Wafa.

This paper reviews the *tasawwuf* concepts of Junayd al-Baghdadi. Junayd al-Baghdadi, who has a title of *Imam* (leadership position in Islam), explains *tasawwuf* in a simple way so there is no contradiction between Islam and *tasawwuf*. His concepts of *tasawwuf* are derived from the Quran and Sunnah, hence there are no opposition from other Sufis, even among those who disapprove of *tasawwuf* itself.¹⁰ Imam Junayd is a Sufi who did not marginalized himself. He lived in the center of Baghdad as a glass trader and was active in intellectual discussion forums. Thus, the Sufis gave him the title *Sayyid al-Thaifah*. Albeit it does not rule out the possibility that there existed Sufis with more extensive knowledge and in-depth spiritual experiences than him, such as Ma'rif al-Kharki, al-Sari al-Saqathi, and al-Harist ibn Hasad al-Muhasibi, who were teachers of Imam Junaid.¹¹ In addition, Imam Junayd also teaches us to view *tasawwuf* from two perspectives. First, to view *tasawwuf* as a religious experience, a unification between The Creator and its creation. Through this perspective, *tasawwuf* is regarded as a process of *tawhid* (oneness). This viewpoint also cannot be argued since each unification experience will be subjective. Second, to view *tasawwuf* as a field of study. In this perspective, *tasawwuf* describes methods and procedures which can be learned and obtained from the previous Sufis.¹²

There are several studies on Imam Junayd Al-Bahgdadi. Muhammad Nursamad Kamba studies the concept of *ma'rifat* by Imam Junayd,¹³ Muhammad Abdu-r-Rabb analyzes the concept of *tawhid*,¹⁴ Muhammad Nur studies the Sufistic works of Imam Junayd,¹⁵ Nor Ipansyah discusses the development of Junaidia *tariqa* (order) in South Kalimantan,¹⁶ Nadiya Febriyanti, Abubakar, and Muhammad Husni studies the existence of Junayd al-Baghdadi's *tariqa* and its effect toward the development of Islamic society in Majelis Darul Ikhlas, in Palangka Raya,¹⁷ and Subaidi studies the economic concept of Imam Junayd al-Baghdadi.¹⁸ In this paper, the author affirms that Sufism is not a part or aspect of Islamic teachings, but Sufism is the core of Islam itself. Syaikh Nur Samad Kamba said that "Sufism is Islam itself". Thus, to dissect the research theme, the author uses the hadith of the prophet Muhammad SAW about three

¹⁰ MN. Kamba, *Kids Zaman Now Menemukan Kembali Islam* (tangerang: iman, 2018).

¹¹ Kamba.

¹² Kamba.

¹³ Dr. Muhammad Nursamad Kamba, "Nadhariyah Al-Ma'rifah Inda Al-Junaid AL-Baghdadi" (Prodi Aqidah dan Filsafat Fakultas Ushuluddin Universitas Al-Azhar, 1994).

¹⁴ Muhammad Abdu'r-Rabb, "Al-Junayd's Doctrine of Tawhîd," 1967.

¹⁵ Teks-Teks Sufistik Junaid Al-Baghdadi, "MuhammadNur," 2013.

¹⁶ Nor Ipansyah, "Tarekat Junaidiyah Di Kalimantan Selatan," *Al-Banjari: Jurnal Ilmiah Ilmu-Ilmu Keislaman* 10, no. 1 (2017): 1–18, <https://doi.org/10.18592/al-banjari.v10i1.929>.

¹⁷ Nadiya Febrianti, Abubakar Abubakar, and Muhammad Husni, "Eksistensi Tarekat Junaidi Al-Baghdadi Terhadap Pembinaan Masyarakat Islam Di Majelis Darul Ikhlas Kota Palangka Raya," *Jurnal Studi Agama Dan Masyarakat* 15, no. 2 (2019): 118–32, <https://doi.org/10.23971/jsam.v15i2.1622>.

¹⁸ Subaidi Subaidi, "Teori Ekonomi Junaidi Al-Baghdadi," *At-Taahdzib: Jurnal Studi Islam Dan Muamalah* 2, no. 1 (2014): 138–48.

dimensions of religion; Islam, Iman, and Ihsan¹⁹ as theoretical foundations for studying the Sufism thought of Imam Junaid Al-Baghdadi. The type of this research is library research with the primary source of the book *Rasail Junaid*.

B. A Biography of Imam Junayd Al-Baghdadi

His full name was Abu 'l-Qasim al-Junayd ibn Muhammad ibn al-Junayd al-Khazzaz al-Qawariri Nihawandi al-Baghdadi. He has three *nisba* in his name: Al-Qawariri, Niwahandi, and al-Baghdadi. In Arabic tradition, *Nisba* is any attribution added at the end of a person's name to indicate his place of origin, tribal affiliation, or ancestry. "Al-Qawariri" was given to him by Imam Hujwiri, Ibn Subki, and Ibnu Katsir. "Al-Baghdadi" was derived from his place of origin, as described by Imam Qusyairi. Meanwhile, "Nihrawandi" seldom appears in studies on Imam Junayd, since it came from his ancestor's place of origin, Nihawan.²⁰ Nihawan was located in the province of Jibal, Persia (now in Iran). This city was regarded as the oldest one Jibal. However, the current consensus is that Imam Junayd was born in 215 H in Baghdad. As explained by Abu Qasim an-Nasrabadzi, although he was descended from people of Nihawan, he was born and raised in Baghdad.²¹

Imam Junayd was born in the western part of Baghdad. He was born in the early third century of the Hijri. At that time in Baghdad, there were many revolutions in various aspects, including economy, politics, and spirituality.²² His mother was a sister of his later teacher, Imam Sari as-Saqati. Her father was Muhammad ibn Junayd, a glass maker.²³ In his childhood, Imam Junayd often followed his father to sell glasses in order to learn from him. His father made glasses used for ornaments and show windows of cupboards. Junayd's biographers gave him a *nisba*, "Al-Qawariri", because he was a "Qawarirah" (trader), a synonym for "Tajirah",²⁴ as described by Imam Hujwiri and Imam Dzahabi. There are also some who say that during his adolescence, he made and sold silk. Therefore, he was given a *nisba* "Al-Khazzaz", as mentioned by Ibnu Jauzi and Manawi. However, a stronger view suggests that he did not make, and only sold silk. As the *nisba* "Khazzaz" means "a cloth spinner".²⁵

Imam Junayd learned directly from his uncle, Sari as-Saqati. His uncle was a seasoning and spice trader. Sari was known for his discipline in religious worship and avoidance of sin and immorality. There was an occasion when the market where he sold his goods was on fire and someone reported that his shop was also affected, he made a

¹⁹ Syekh Islam Muhyiddin Abu Zakariya Yahya bin Syarif An-Nawawi, *Riyadhus Shalihin* (Al-Haramain, n.d.).

²⁰ Muhammad Musthafa, *Tajul Arifin* (Cairo: Darut Thabah al-Mhammaiah, 1987).

²¹ Musthafa.

²² Musthafa.

²³ Musthafa.

²⁴ Musthafa.

²⁵ Musthafa.

comment, “Then I don’t have to take care of it anymore.” However, later he found out that his shop was not affected.²⁶ Besides from Sari as-Saqati, Imam Junayd also learned from Ma’ruf al-Karkhi. In Philosophy, we recognize three prominent Greek philosophers: Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle. Socrates was the teacher of Plato, and Plato was the teacher of Aristotle.²⁷ The case is the same in *tasawwuf*. There are three prominent Sufis from Baghdad: Ma’ruf al-Karkhi, Sari as-Saqati, and Imam Junayd al-Baghdadi. Ma’ruf al-Karkhi was the teacher of Sari as-Saqati, and Sari as-Saqati was the teacher of Imam Junayd al-Baghdadi.²⁸ Ma’ruf al-Karkhi was the teacher of Sari as-Saqati. The proof is a saying of Sari as-Saqati which mentions his teacher, “*my current knowledge is a blessing from my association with Ma’ruf al-Karkhi.*”²⁹ Ma’ruf was from a region called Karkh, in the corner of Baghdad. Hence, he received a *nisba* indicating his origin at the end of his name, Ma’ruf al-Karkhi. Ma’ruf was a descendant of the Saba tribe. Muslims from his time gave him a title of *mughtasilah*, which means a person who religiously conduct rituals to purify his mind.³⁰

There are some considerable influences of Ma’ruf al-Karkhi and Sari as-Saqati on the *tasawwuf* concept of Imam Junayd. Hence, these three figures have similarities in attitude, disposition, and objective in their spiritual journeys. The similarity is especially apparent in their views on *tawhid* (the Oneness of God). For an instance, when an acquaintance asked Ma’ruf on his motivation to worship Allah as God, Ma’ruf was silent for a moment. When the acquaintance asked further whether the reason lays on his fear of hell and desire of heaven, Ma’ruf then answered: “Whatever it is, it lays in God’s hand. When you love Him, He will make you forget everything else except Him. If you know Him, then He will protect you from everything.”³¹ Imam Junayd also shares a similar idea. He argues that when someone has experienced a true love toward Allah, he will experience a self-transformation, in which he will adopt the characters of his loved one. As the Prophet said in a *hadith qudsi*, “*Therefore I love him. If I love him, then I will become the eyes he uses to see, the ears he uses to hear, and the hands he uses to hold.*”³² Therefore, we can conclude that Ma’ruf al-Karkhi and Imam Junaid a similar view on *mahabbah* (love towards Allah). This also proves the influence of Ma’ruf Al-Karkhi towards the thoughts of Imam Junayd al-Baghdadi.

In addition to Sari as-Saqati and Ma’ruf Al-Karkhi, Imam Junayd also learned from Abu Jafar Muhammad ibn Ali al-Qashshab. Imam Junayd says, “Many assume that my true teacher is Sari as-Saqati. However, my real true teacher is Abu Jafar

²⁶ Ali Hasan Abdel Kader, *Imam Junaid Al-Baghdadi* (Yogyakarta: Diva Press, 2018).

²⁷ Abu Mujahid, *Pemuja Filsafat* (Bandung: Toobagus Publishing, 2011).

²⁸ Ali Hasan Abdel Kader, *Imam Junaid Al-Baghdadi*.

²⁹ Ali Hasan Abdel Kader.

³⁰ Ali Hasan Abdel Kader.

³¹ Ali Hasan Abdel Kader.

³² Abu Nashr as-Saraj ath-Thusi, *Al-Luma*, trans. Wasmukan dan Samson Rahman (Surabaya: Risalah Gusti, 2002).

Muhammad ibn Ali al-Qashshab³³,³⁴ Yet, Imam Junaid does not provide that many quotations or stories about Muhammad al-Qashshab, in comparison to the considerable amount of them about Sari as- Saqati dan Ma'ruf Al-Karkhi. Imam Junayd explains the two reasons he only quotes a few from Muhammad al-Qashshab. First, Allah does not desire equality in front of Him between His chosen ones and regular people. As he says, "... Surely the most noble of you in the sight of Allah is the most righteous among you".³⁵ Second, Imam Junayd views Abu Jafar Muhammad ibn Ali al-Qashshab as someone who lived only for Allah. Therefore, Allah hides him from everything except from Himself, and He made him only for Himself.³⁶

C. *Rasail Junaid: The Phenomenal Treatise of Imam Junaid Al-Baghdadi*

As a phenomenal Sufi, Imam Junayd never wrote a specific book on *tasawwuf*. However, he wrote his spiritual experiences and Sufistic thoughts in the form of treatise, which he shared to his colleagues and students. For instances, Imam Junayd's treatise for his friend Yahya ibn Mu'adz Ar-Razi,³⁷ his treatise to Umar ibn Usman al-Makki,³⁸ and his treatise to Abi Yaqub Yusuf ibn Husein Ar-Razi.³⁹ In 1988, Ali Hasan Abdul Qadir initiated to collect the treatises and writings of Imam Junayd al-Baghdadi, which were then published in Cairo by Bura'I Geddawi, entitled *Rasail Junaid* ("Treatises of Imam Junayd").

Junayd's extensive spiritual experiences and deep knowledge allow his works to be the references for *tasawwuf studies* for many great Sufis after him. For instances, Abu Nashr as-Sarraj ath-Thusi wrote a considerable amount of Junayd's teachings in his book, *Al-Luma'*,⁴⁰ Imam Al-Hujwiri also wrote about his thoughts in *Kasyful Mahjub*,⁴¹ and Imam Al-Qusyairi in *Risalah Qusyairiyah*.⁴² Translations of these books were published by various publishers in Indonesia.

D. The Tasawwuf Concept of Imam Junayd Al-Baghdadi

Among the first observations of the Sufis was the existence of a great distance between Allah and mankind. This realization allowed them to sense a vast "desert"

³³ There was no credible reference on the birth of Muhammad al-Qashshab. Although, he died in 275 AH.

³⁴ Ali Hasan Abdel Kader, *Imam Junaid Al-Baghdadi*.

³⁵ Q. S. Al-Hujurat:13.

³⁶ Ali Hasan Abdel Kader, *Imam Junaid Al-Baghdadi*.

³⁷ Imam Abu Al-Qasim Al-Junaid, *Rasail Junaid*, ed. Ali Hasan Abdul Qadir (cairo: Bura'I dan Geddawi, 1988).

³⁸ Imam Abu Al-Qasim Al-Junaid.

³⁹ Imam Abu Al-Qasim Al-Junaid.

⁴⁰ Abu Nashr as-Saraj ath-Thusi, *Al-Luma'*.

⁴¹ Al-Hujwiri, *Kasyful Mahjub*, trans. Abdul Hadi Suwardjo Muthary (Bandung: Mizan Pustaka, 2015).

⁴² Abul Qasim Abdul Karim Hawazin Al-Qusyairi, *Risalah Al-Qusyairiyah*, trans. Umar Faruq (Jakarta: Pustaka Imani, 2013).

between the helpless mankind and Allah the Almighty. This further creates a deep longing toward God, thus they attempted to bridge the distance between God and mankind through *tasawwuf*. To understand and practice the *tasawwuf* teachings of Imam Junayd al-Baghdadi, we have to learn its three main theories: the theory of *mitsaq* (covenant), the theory of *fana* (annihilation of self), and the theory of *tawhid* (unification).

1. *Mitsaq* (Covenant)

In the chapter on *mitsaq*, Imam Junayd believes that before acquiring a physical body, a human being already has their own existence (soul). This conclusion arrives from the following words of God: “*And recall, when your Lord brought forth descendants from the loins of the children of Adam, and made them witness against their ownelves, (asking them): “Am I not your Lord?” They said: “Yes (You are our Lord), we do testify”*.”⁴³

Imam Junayd’s interpretation of the above verse is as follows:

أليس تعلم أنه عز وجل قال " وإذ أخذ ربك من بنى آدم " الى قوله " شهدنا " فقد أخبرك عز وجل أنه خاطبهم وهم غير موجو دين إلا بوجوده لهم , إذ كان واجدا بغير معنى وجوده لأنفسها , بالمعنى الذى لا يعلمه غيره , ولا يجده سواه , فقد كان واجدا محيطا شاهدا عليهم بديا فى حال فنائهم عن بقائهم , الذين كانوا فى الازل للأزل , فذلك هو الوجود الربانى والأدراك الإلهى الذى لا ينبغى إلا له جل وعز.⁴⁴

“*Don’t you know that Allah said when He took children of Adam, (he then quotes the verse until “we do testify”). In this verse, Allah explains to you that He had a conversation with mankind before they had a form and was inside Him. The existence of mankind in that time did not have the kind of attributes they have today. It’s an existence only Allah knows. Allah knows their existence. He saw them when they didn’t have a form and didn’t know their forms in the following time on earth. Their existence was before time. It was a divine form and concept which only He possesses.*”

If a servant of Allah has afforded to return to their primordial existence, then *shahada*, the creed declaring the oneness of God and the acceptance of Muhammad as God’s messenger, is no longer a testimony of a servant toward God, but it becomes a testimony of God himself on his Oneness through the means of his servants. As He mentions, “*Allah Himself bears witness that there is no God but He, and likewise do the angels and the men possessed the knowledge bear witness in truth and justice that there is no God but He, the All-Mighty, the All-Wise*”.⁴⁵

Sufis yearn for this kind of experience, in which Allah has taken over their own selves and they drift in a divine atmosphere (*ilahiyah*).⁴⁶ This experience is the last

⁴³ Q.S. Al-A’raaf: 172.

⁴⁴ Imam Abu Al-Qasim Al-Junaid, *Rasail Junaid*.

⁴⁵ Q.S. Al-Imran:18.

⁴⁶ Kamba, *Kids Zaman Now Menemukan Kembali Islam*.

stage of being a servant of God, which is to return to their origin,⁴⁷ or what Muhammad Nursamad Kamba called as their *fitrah* (innate nature).⁴⁸ After mankind took on a form, their pre-form *fitrah* went through a spiritual degradation as this secondary form (body) tends to prioritize worldly matters. The existence of their secondary form in this world is the only reason for their inexistence in front of Allah, and vice versa, their inexistence in this world means the existence of their selves in front of Allah. As Imam Junayd elaborates that:

ثم فرقهم ثم غيهم في جمعهم وأحضرهم في تفريقهم، فكان سبب حضورهم و حضورهم سبب غيهم⁴⁹
“He separates them from Him (and return their individualities to them). Then He will make them disappear (from this world) when they become one with Him, and make them return (to this world) when He separates them again from Him (and return their individualities once again). Thus, their inexistence in this world is a form of existence in front of Allah, while their existence in this world is the only reason of their inexistence in front of Allah.”

Imam Junayd’s further explanation on a spiritual existence is as follows:

التي لا يشارك فيها، كان ذلك الوجود أتم الوجود وأمضاء لا محالة، وهو أولى و أغلب و أحق بالغلبة والقهر و صحة الاستلاء على ما يبدو عليه، حتى يمحي رسمه عامة ويذهب وجوده، إذ لا صفة بشرية ووجود ليس يقوم به لما ذكرنا، تعالينا من الحق وقهره⁵⁰.

“Without any doubt, this (spiritual) existence is the most impeccable and sharpest of all. This existence is the most important, the most dominant, the purest, and the most abandon, compared to the visible form of human body. In this spiritual form, mankind’s individualities completely vanish as their physical form disappears. No human nature can survive and the normal form of man is inexistent, like what we have discussed before in the explanation regarding the divine nature of the trueness and greatness of Allah.”

In conclusion, there are two forms of an individual’s existence according to Imam Junayd. The first is an eternal divine form (the existence inside of Allah) which has already existed since before our existence in this world. The second one is a temporary physical form we live in this world.⁵¹ Imam Junayd’s view on the existence of pre-form is in accordance with the view of Plotinus. Plotinus believes in the existence of another form before our form in this world. The form has a pure soul where every reality unites with everything.⁵²

⁴⁷ Ali Hasan Abdel Kader, *Imam Junaid Al-Baghdadi*.

⁴⁸ Kamba, *Kids Zaman Now Menemukan Kembali Islam*.

⁴⁹ Imam Abu Al-Qasim Al-Junaid, *Rasail Junaid*.

⁵⁰ Imam Abu Al-Qasim Al-Junaid.

⁵¹ Ali Hasan Abdel Kader, *Imam Junaid Al-Baghdadi*.

⁵² Ali Hasan Abdel Kader.

Mitsaq is not a stage anyone can achieve without God's help. Mankind can return to this stage only because of God's blessing toward His chosen servants. Imam Junayd corroborates this concept further through the following *hadith qudsi*:

عن النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم أنه قال : قال الله عزّ وجلّ " لا يزال عبدى يتقرب إليّ بالنوافل حتى أحبه فإذا أحببته كنت سمعه الذى يسمع به وبصره الذى يبصر به " ⁵³

"The Messenger of Allah said: Allah has said: "...My servant keeps on coming closer to Me through performing Nawafil (prayer or doing extra deeds besides what is obligatory) till I love him. When I love him I become the ears he uses to hear, and the eyes he uses to see..."

Imam Junayd states that we cannot interpret the above hadith literally. Thus, Imam Junayd interprets it as follows:

وإنما معنى ذلك أنه يؤيده ويوفقه ويهديه ويشهده ما شاء كيف شاء بإصابة الصواب وموافقة الحق، وذلك فعل الله عزوجل فيه ومواهبه له، منسوبة إليه لا الى الواجد لها، لأنها لم تكن عنه ولا منه ولا به، وإنما كانت واقعة على شيه من غيره، وهى لغيرها أولى وبه أخرى، وكذلك جاز أن تكون بهذه الصفة الخفية، وهى غير منتسبة به على النحو الذى ذكرناه ⁵⁴

"The only way to interpret the hadith is by understanding that Allah has made His servant strong. He made His servant able to achieve the abilities (of hearing and seeing). Allah guides him and gives him a knowledge based on what He allows and by the means which He desires, so he can obtain the truth and act according to His will. Those are Allah's gifts to him and only to him. The abilities cannot be attributed to His servant entirely since they do not originate from within himself. They originated from the outside, a possession of another entity (God). This interpretation regarding the secret and independence of these abilities is the most rational one."

In this condition, God is a direct actor, acting according to His perfection, while men's actions and desires are within the will and act of God. In conclusion, the theory of *mitsaq* shows how mankind return to their primordial state before their creation. This implies that they are separated from their physical body as their spiritual existence is absorbed within God. This is an achievement of a God's servant toward a true *tawhid* (oneness). However, he can only achieve this stage after detaching his human nature.

Imam Junayd had achieved this stage, proven by his following statement:

وفى متعتهم بالمشاهدة كمال الجهد، لأنه قد معى عنهم كل رسم ومعنى يجدونه بهم: ويشهدونه من حيث هم لما استولى عليهم فمحاهم وعن صفاتهم أفناهم ⁵⁵

⁵³ Imam Abu Al-Qasim Al-Junaid, *Rasail Junaid*.

⁵⁴ Imam Abu Al-Qasim Al-Junaid.

⁵⁵ Imam Abu Al-Qasim Al-Junaid.

“In this new state, He truly possesses them (his servants) and destroys their individualities (and disposes their human nature).”

فوجد النعيم من غير جنس النعيم ووجد البلاء في معلوم النعيم ووجد الوجد الوجود في غير سبيل الوجود، باستتار الحق واستيلاء القهر⁵⁶

“Happiness, as the result, is not the same happiness they experience as ordinary people. In the happiness lays a test. This is because their form, after going through pressures, is no longer the ordinary form of human. The highest truth of Allah now shines on him and His glory has become perfect.”

Furthermore, Imam Junayd elaborates:

ولذلك قلنا إنه إذا كان واجدا للعبد يجرى عليه مراده من حيث يشاء بصفته المتعالية⁵⁷.

“Because of this reason, we continuously say that when Allah gifts a form to His servants, He lets His passion floods them as it should be.”

When Allah created men, He had embodied himself in them and made Himself one with them. Even in this world, if God chooses a man and the man lives by His choice, He will wipe out his individualities and give him an awareness of His Oneness. As Imam Junayd explains:

ولهذا قلنا إن الحق أفنى ما بدا علشيه وإذا إستولى كان أولى بالاستيلاء وأحق بالغلبة والقهر⁵⁸.

“Even through any perspective, when we say that Allah has erased everything inside a man, and when Allah embodies him, therefore Allah will show Himself as the only One, the Almighty, the True Lord, and the Real Champion.”

These states mentioned by Imam Junayd is “*tasawwuf*”. *Tasawwuf* according to him is when Allah eliminates a man from himself and revive the man within Him.⁵⁹ Then, Imam Junayd further explains the ability of men to abandon their own selves and live within God through the theory of *fana*.

2. *Fana (Annihilation of Self)*

The discussion on *fana*, or the annihilation of self, among the Sufis emerged in the third and fourth centuries of the Hijri. Therefore, to understand better about *fana* we should study the Sufis from that period,⁶⁰ such as Abu Nashr as-Saraj ath-Thusi, Abu Yazid al-Bustami, and Imam Junayd al-Baghdadi. Etymologically, *al-fana* is derived from ‘*faniya-yafna-fana*’, which means *destroyed, perished, annihilated, and*

⁵⁶ Imam Abu Al-Qasim Al-Junaid.

⁵⁷ Imam Abu Al-Qasim Al-Junaid.

⁵⁸ Imam Abu Al-Qasim Al-Junaid.

⁵⁹ Ali Hasan Abdel Kader, *Imam Junaid Al-Baghdadi*.

⁶⁰ Al-Wafa, *Sufi Dari Zaman Ke Zaman*.

disappeared. Based on its etymology, a lot of scholars define *fana* terminologically as the annihilation of immoralities.⁶¹

Abu Nashr as-Sarraj at-Thusi describes *fana* as the vanishing of men's desires and the permanent obedience toward God's wills.⁶² Al-Qusyairi also defines *fana* as the annihilation of immoralities and the birth of moral virtues.⁶³ Abu Yazid al-Busthami also explains *fana* as the annihilation of everything except God. Thus, a Sufi no longer witnesses anything except one, God. He will no longer even see himself since he becomes integrated in Him whom he only sees.⁶⁴ In other words, someone who has experience *fana* will no longer has immoralities within himself. He will only show good moral characters.

Based on the reading of Imam Junaid al-Baghdadi's concepts, both *mitsaq* (covenant) and *fana* (annihilation of self) suggest the same objective, which is *tawhid* (oneness/unification). *Mitsaq* and *Fana* employ different approaches to achieve *tawhid*. *Mitsaq* restates the primordial condition of a servant, while *Fana* explains the method, training, and steps toward the primordial condition. Thus, a *muwahhid* as someone who practice *tawhid* have to erase his human nature, his secondary form, in order to achieve his divine form, or his primary form. Albeit fundamentally, the two theories complement one another in achieving *tawhid* (unification).

Imam Junaid argues that:

توحيد الموحد باق ببقاء الواحد, وان فنى الموحد, فحينئذ انت انت, اذ كنت بلا انت, فبقيت من حيث
فانيت.⁶⁵

"A tawhid (unification) of a true muwahhid is when he becomes immortal through the immortality of God. Although at that exact time, he also ceases to exist. In this condition, you are you, and at the same time you are no longer you. You become immortal the moment you cease to exist."

The above argument is in accordance with God's words, "Everyone upon the earth will perish, And there will remain the Face of your Lord, Owner of Majesty and Honor."⁶⁶ Therefore, *tawhid* causes an annihilation of self or what Sufistic traditions called as *fana*. Furthermore, Muhammad Nursamad Kamba explains that *tawhid* is *fana*. He came to this conclusion because it is impossible to understand and realize the oneness of God without annihilating everything but God. Through their self-annihilation, God will approach His servants. In other words, when He approaches

⁶¹ Al-Jurjani, *Al-Ta'rifat* (Beirut: Dar al-Kutub al-Imiyah, 1988).

⁶² Abu Nashr as-Sarraj ath-Thusi, *Al-Luma*.

⁶³ Al-Qusyairi, *Risalah Al-Qusyairiyah*.

⁶⁴ Al-Wafa, *Sufi Dari Zaman Ke Zaman*.

⁶⁵ Imam Abu Al-Qasim Al-Junaid, *Rasail Junaid*.

⁶⁶ Q.S. Ar-Rahman: 26-27.

someone, everything except Himself becomes perished.⁶⁷ According to Imam Junayd al-Baghdadi, *fana* has three levels.

والفناء ثلاثة: فناء عن الصفات والأخلاق والطباع , بقيامك بدلائل عملك , ببذل المجهود و مخالفة النفس, وحبسها بالمكروه عن مرادها. والفناء الثاني فنا ثوك عن مطالعة حظوظ , من ذوق الحلاوات واللذات في الطاعات , لموافقة مطالبة الحق لك , لانقطاعك اليه , ليكون بلا واسطة بينك وبينه. والفناء الثالث فنا ثوك عن رؤية الحقيقة من مواخيتك بغلبات شاهد الحق عليك , فاءنت حينئذ فان باق , وموجود محقق لفنائك , بوجود غيرك عند بقاء رسمك بذهاب اسمك.⁶⁸

“Fana has three levels. First, fana in the level of character, ethic, disposition or behaviour. Someone can achieve this level by doing good deeds, being tenacious to fight his lust and consistent to avoid immoralities. Second, fana in the level of transaction in the worship of God. To achieve this level, one must annihilate his own hopes and desires for the sake of God. Then, he will be released of lusts, the cause of distance between him and God. Third, fana in the level of seeing and witnessing the true form of your own self. To achieve this, one must let Allah dominates him. Therefore, in that moment there will be no manifestation of self, except those of Allah. He will perish, and at the same time become immortal in the true form because of his perish. His physical form will still exist, but his individualities will cease.”

The first level *fana* has a relation with the objective of mankind, which is *vita activa* atau an active life. Imam Junaid called this level as a character or quality of self which men yearn to achieve. In obtaining the character and quality, someone needs a continuous moral training and an ascetic lifestyle. He also must act in opposition of the desires which can harm the purity of his objective. This is *fana* in the moral level.⁶⁹ The second level implies that men have to abstain themselves from worldly pleasures and cease to expect reward when they obey God’s command, so that the barrier in the communication with God will disappear. Expecting rewards will not draw Allah closer, but instead will keep men far from Allah. It is a form of religious practice which belittle the value of worship. God does not seek benefits from any kind of worships by His servants. Instead, the worship men do will nurture them into having good moral characters. This is *fana* in the mental level.⁷⁰

The third level indicates that men will experience lost of consciousness when they achieve *tawhid*. In front of God, the consciousness of their own selves will perish. It is a state where God truly embraces him. In this level, individualities of men will disappear although their physical body still exists.⁷¹

⁶⁷ Kamba, *Kids Zaman Now Menemukan Kembali Islam*.

⁶⁸ Imam Abu Al-Qasim Al-Junaid, *Rasail Junaid*.

⁶⁹ Ali Hasan Abdel Kader, *Imam Junaid Al-Baghdadi*.

⁷⁰ Ali Hasan Abdel Kader.

⁷¹ Ali Hasan Abdel Kader.

Imam Junaid illustrates the state of *fana* in the below paragraph:

نطقت بغيبتي عن حالى ثم أبدى علىّ من شاهد قاهر وظاهر شاهر. أفنا نى بإنشائى كما انشائى بد يا فى حال فنا نى , فلم أوتر عليه لبراءته من الآثار , ولم اخبر عنه إذ كان متوليا للإخبار. أليس قد مى ر سى بصفته , وبامتجائى فات على فى قربه , فهو المبدىء كما هو المعيد.⁷²

“I’m speaking about the time when I disappeared from my ordinary condition. Then, an amazing power and a blinding light dominated me and inserted fana in me, so I became a new creature like when Allah created me for the first time out of nothing. I was unable to shake Him off as nothing has the power to affect Him. There is also nothing known about Him, as He himself is already aware of this knowledge. He annihilated my identity and replaced it with His own traits. In this process, my own perception disappeared as I become very close with Him. He is the One who creates and re-creates.”

To further prove his view on *fana*, Imam Junayd quotes the following *hadith qudsi*:

عن النبى صلى الله عليه وسلم أنه قال : قال الله عزّ وجلّ " لايزال عبدى يتقرب إليّ بالنوافل حتى أحبه فإذا أحببته كنت سمعه الذى يسمع به وبصره الذى يبصر به "⁷³

The Prophet said: Allah SWT has said: “...My servant keeps on coming closer to Me through performing Nawafil (prayer or doing extra deeds besides what is obligatory) till I love him. When I love him I become his hearing with which he hears, his seeing with which he sees...”

In Psychology, Wiliam James through his book, *The Varieties of Religious Experience*, argues that *transiency* or the state of *fana* cannot be long-lasting. The experience can only occur around half an hour. One or two hours is the maximum time until the feeling disappears. Moreover, after it disappears, the person usually does not remember clearly the occurrence. However, when the experience re-appears, then the person can feel the sensation again. We can understand this condition as a continuous development of what we feel as a spiritual enrichment and contemplation.⁷⁴

Since this condition is temporary, therefore *fana* is enshrouded by *baqa* or the immortality of God. *Fana* and *baqa* are the same condition from two different aspects. When a person has achieved a complete *fana*, then he becomes immortal in Allah. A complete *fana* is not only an annihilation of self, but also a process of self-sustainability in the immortality of God.⁷⁵

⁷² Imam Abu Al-Qasim Al-Junaid, *Rasail Junaid*.

⁷³ Imam Abu Al-Qasim Al-Junaid.

⁷⁴ William James, *The Varieties of Religious Experience, Pengalaman-Pengalaman Religius*, ke-1 (Yogyakarta: IRCiSoD, 2015).

⁷⁵ Abu Nashr as-Saraj ath-Thusi, *Al-Luma*.

3. *Tawhid (Unification)*

Throughout Imam Junayd's life in the third century of the Hijri, *tawhid* was a popular discourse among religious groups, especially the Mu'tazilah whose power was great that they were dubbed as "the expert of *tawhid*". They understood *tawhid* through the means of rationality only. Using that method, they deemed to have obtained a complex understanding of *tawhid*.⁷⁶

On the other side, the Sufis were not satisfied with the Mu'tazila's conclusion. Hence, they strived to experience a unification with God through a disclosure of heart, or *mukasyafah*. According to them, *tawhid* or the unification with God is impossible to define. As Imam Junayd states below:

أعلم أن أول عبادة الله عزّوجلّ معرفته, وأصل معرفة الله توحيده, ونظام توحيده نفي الصفات عنه
بالكيف والحيث والأين, فيه استدلالٌ عليه, وكان سبب استدلاله به عليه توفيقه, فيتوفيقه وقع التوحيد
له⁷⁷

"You have to know that the beginning of worship toward Allah Azza Wajalla is through the knowledge of ma'rifat. The basis of Ma'rifat is tawhid (accepting His Oneness). The systematics of tawhid is to erase His nature from His descriptions, location, and the questions of how regarding Him. By liberating His nature and the concept of Him, therefore one will receive a guidance about Him. The guidance towards Him is the gathering (of those who accept) God. Through the tawfiq (the will) of Allah, tawhid (the unification) then will occur."

Furthermore, Imam Junayd believes that the most reasonable explanation of *tawhid* is that of Abu Bakar, "All praises to Allah who has blessed His creations with the inability to understand everything about Him, except through their inability to obtain any knowledge about Him".⁷⁸ Imam Junayd has similar explanation when he says: "*Tawhid* is a reality where all signs and trails disappear, while Allah is constantly Himself."⁷⁹ From these two explanations, it is crystal clear that *tawhid* is beyond the capacity of human's mind.

Someone who truly experiences *tawhid* will obtain the knowledge that his natures and actions are absorbed into the essence of Allah. As Imam Junayd elaborates further:

توحيد الموحد باق ببقاء الواحد, وان فنى الموحد, فحينئذ انت انت, اذ كنت بلا انت, فبقيت من حيث
فنيته.⁸⁰

"A tawhid (unification) of a true muwahhid is when he becomes immortal through the immortality of God. Although at that exact time, he also ceases to exist. In this

⁷⁶ Ali Hasan Abdel Kader, *Imam Junaid Al-Baghdadi*.

⁷⁷ Imam Abu Al-Qasim Al-Junaid, *Rasail Junaid*.

⁷⁸ Al-Qusyairi, *Risalah Al-Qusyairiyah*.

⁷⁹ Al-Qusyairi.

⁸⁰ Imam Abu Al-Qasim Al-Junaid, *Rasail Junaid*.

condition, you are you, and at the same time you are no longer you. You become immortal the moment you cease to exist.”

In his treatise, Imam Junayd classifies *tawhid* into four levels and elaborates in details the characteristics of each detail. As he mentions in one of his treatises:

إعلم أن التوحيد في الخلق على أربعة أوجه, فوجه منها توحيد العوام , ووجه منها توحيد أهل الحقائق بعلم الظاهر, ووجهان منها توحيد الخواص من أهل المعرفة⁸¹.

“You should know that tawhid has four levels. First is the tawhid of ordinary people. Second is the tawhid of those who master religious teachings. Meanwhile, the third and fourth levels are the tawhid experienced by chosen individuals with the knowledge of ma’rifat”.

To classify the levels of *tawhid*, Imam Junaid employs the perspective of psychology and ethics. Each level of *tawhid* affects the personality of the experiencers. Therefore, the levels of *tawhid* proposed by Imam Junayd is not a mere speculative statement, but it’s the result of a series of experiences and understandings. This approach is new in teaching of Islamic thoughts.⁸²

The description about the first level of *tawhid* is as follows:

فأما توحيد العوام فالإقرار بالوحدانية بذهاب رؤية الأرباب والأنداد والأضداد والأشكال والأشباه والسكون إلى معارضات الرغبة والرغبة ممن سواهم فإن له حقيقة التحقيق في الأفعال ببقاء الإقرار⁸³.

“The tawhid of ordinary people lays in their affirmation of the Oneness of God and rejection towards all forms of polytheism. However, they still have hopes and fears for other powers beside Allah. This kind of tawhid has its own measure since there is still an acceptance of the Oneness of Allah.”

The first level of *tawhid* is a fundament for every believer of Islam. However, the *muwahhid* does not consider this level as a true form of belief towards Allah, since there still exists a fear and a worry for something other than Allah. The fear and worry will hinder the establishment of true belief towards Allah. If someone has achieved a true *tawhid*, the fear and worry will disappear through time.⁸⁴

Meanwhile, the second level of *tawhid* is as follows:

وأما توحيد حقائق علم الظاهر فالإقرار بالوحدانية بذهاب رؤية الأرباب والأنداد والإشكال والأشباه مع إقامة الأمر والانتفاء عن النهز في الظاهر, مستخرجة ذلك منهم من عيون الرغبة والرغبة والأمل والطمع, فإقامة حقيقة التحقيق في الأفعال لقيام حقيقة التصديق بالإقرار⁸⁵.

⁸¹ Imam Abu Al-Qasim Al-Junaid.

⁸² Ali Hasan Abdel Kader, *Imam Junaid Al-Baghdadi*.

⁸³ Imam Abu Al-Qasim Al-Junaid, *Rasail Junaid*.

⁸⁴ Abu Nashr as-Saraj ath-Thusi, *Al-Luma*.

⁸⁵ Imam Abu Al-Qasim Al-Junaid, *Rasail Junaid*.

“The tawhid of those who master religious teachings also depends on the affirmation of the Oneness of God and rejection towards all forms of polytheism, combined with the implementation of God’s commands and the avoidance of His prohibitions. All of them are manifestations of their expectations, fears, and desires. This level of tawhid has its own measure since there is a verification of the affirmation on the Oneness of Allah.”

People in the second level of *tawhid* conduct good deeds out of their fear toward God as well as their own desires. Therefore, Imam Junayd argues that this level of *tawhid* is still not the level of *tawhid* a servant of God should strive for. Hence, he further introduces the further levels of *tawhid*. These levels are the third and fourth level, or the *ma’rifat* levels, where only the chosen individuals who have the knowledge of *ma’rifat* can experience them.

The explanation on the third level of *tawhid* is as follows:

وأما الوجه الأول من توحيد الخاص بالإقرار بالوحدانية بذهاب رؤية هذه الأشياء مع إقامة الأمر في الظاهر والباطن بإزالة معارضات الرغبة والرغبة ممن سواه، مستخرجة ذلك من عيون الموافقة بقيام شاهد الحق معه مع قيام شاهد الدعوة والاستجابة⁸⁶

“The first ma’rifat level of tawhid manifests in the the affirmation of the Oneness of God and rejection towards all forms of polytheism, combined with both the internal and external implementation of God’s commands and the eradication of fear and expectation towards everything except Allah. All of them arise from a person’s awareness of Allah’s existence within himself, as well as the call from God towards himself and his answer towards Him.

In the third level of *tawhid* still, the individualities of men still exist. Someone in this level still does not possess a true *tawhid*, since he still accepts the existence of something besides God, which is his own self.

Meanwhile, the true level of *tawhid* according to Imam Junayd is as follows:

والوجه الثاني من توحيد الخاص، فشبح قائم بين يديه ليس بينهما ثالث، تجرى عليه تصاريف تدييره، في مجارى أحكام قدرته، في لجاج بحار توحيده، بالفناء عن نفسه وعن دعوة الحق له، وعن استجابته له، بحقائق وجود وحدانيته في حقيقة قلبه، بذهاب حسه وحركاته، لقيام الحق له فيما أراده منه، والعلم في ذلك أنه رجع آخر العبد الى أوله، و أن يكون كما كان إذ كان قبل أن يكون، والدليل في ذلك قول الله عز وجل "وإذ أخذ ربك من بنى آدم من ظهورهم ذرياتهم وأشهدهم على أنفسهم ألست بربكم قالوا بلى"⁸⁷

“Meanwhile, the second ma’rifat level of tawhid manifests in the existence of a man without his individualities directly in front of Allah without using a third party. This is the level where a servant of God achieves the true form of tawhid within the true intimacy with Him. Someone who achieves this level will lose his awareness and actions as Allah blesses him with everything He wills. In this level,

⁸⁶ Imam Abu Al-Qasim Al-Junaid.

⁸⁷ Imam Abu Al-Qasim Al-Junaid.

a servant of God returns to his initial state, or the state before form. As the Quran mentions: "And recall, when your Lord brought forth descendants from the loins of the children of Adam, and made them witness against their ownelves, (asking them): "Am I not your Lord?" They said: "Yes (You are our Lord), we do testify."

People who experience this level are under the will of Allah. Therefore, they no longer have individual desires. This state surpasses the previous levels where the individualities of men still dominate their selves. Meanwhile, in this last level of *tawhid*, the individualities vanish among the immortality of God.

Imam Junayd gave a term "*Dakhil Qa'im*" (a person who has entered and settled in Allah) for a servant of God who has achieved the fourth level of *tawhid*. This type of men is in the highest level among all of the other levels.

إعلم أن الناس ثلاثة : طالب قاصد, ووارد واقف, أو داخل قائم, أما الطالب الله عز وجل فإنه قاصد نحو, باستر شاد دلائل علم الظاهر, معام الله عز وجل بجد ظاهره, أو وارد للباب واقف عليه, متبين لمواضع تقريبه إيام, بدلائل تصفيه باطنه, وإدرا الفوائد عليه, معام الله عز وجل في باطنه, أو داخل بهمه, قائم بين يديه, منتف عن رؤية ما سواه ملاحظا بإشرته , مبادرا فيما يأمره مولاه فهذه صفة الموحد الله عز وجل.⁸⁸

"You should know that there are three types of men. The first is the Thalib Qasid (a seeker who is still on the way). The second is the Warid Waqif (a person who has arrived and stopped). The third is the Dakhil Qa'im (a person who has entered and settled). A Thalib Qasid is a seeker who is still on a journey towards Allah and always asking for guidance through spiritual teachings. He communicates with Allah through the physical and spiritual perseverance. Meanwhile, a Warid Waqif is a person who has arrived in front of Allah and places himself in the proximity toward Him through propositions which cleanse his mind. He always motivates his heart to continuously surrender himself to the proximity of Allah. He communicates with Allah through his mind. (Warid Waqif). Meanwhile, a Thalib Qasid is a person who has entered and settled inside Allah. He no longer sees anything except Him, and always focuses on the signs and symbols of Allah. He always scurries over to carry out every order of his Lord. This is the true nature of someone with a tawhid towards Allah Azza Wajalla."

At the end of his treatise on *tawhid*, Imam Junaid concludes that people with *tawhid* conducts their worship with a final objective of "subjugating of their own selves."

سئل الجنيد رحمه الله إلى أين تنتهي عبادة أهل المعرفة بالله عز وجل, فقال: إلى الظفر بنفوسهم, نصب الحق لهم أعمال أدلة العمال, فوقف مع ماله دون التعرّيج على مالهم, فشوق إليهم الأنبياء, وانتسب بهم

⁸⁸ Imam Abu Al-Qasim Al-Junaid.

للأولياء، وسبحت لهم الملائكة، فتركوا مالهم ووقفوا مع الله عز وجل عليهم، وسائر الناس وقف مع مالهم وتركوا مالهم عز وجل عليهم فرد الله عز وجل كلا إلى قيمته.⁸⁹

“Imam Junaid was asked about the final objective of the worship done by people with the knowledge about Allah. He answered, “A subjugation of their own selves”. He explains that Allah has prepared a mission for them to conduct religious responsibilities, so they arrive in a level where they don’t pity themselves. Even the prophets yearn for them. Allah chooses them as His representatives, while the angels praise them for abandoning their material wealth. They arrive in front of Allah only through Allah. The cease of all mankind in front of Allah is through their own achievements only without the benevolence He gifted to them. This is a responsibility Allah gave to each individual according to their own ability.”

E. The Urgency of Imam Junayd al-Baghdadi’s Teachings in Islam

Ali Hassan Abdel-Kader in his book states that Imam Junayd was a classic witness, teacher and interpreter of *tawhid* with an in-depth and discipline interpretation. This interpretation later influenced Islamic teachings, specifically in the development of Islamic mysticism. Imam Junayd was not the first to teach the concept of *tawhid* since his teachers, Sari as-Saqati and Ma’ruf al-Kharki also developed similar concepts. However, Imam Junayd established *tawhid* as the central of *tasawwuf*. He left a legacy for the generations after him a clear and vivid doctrine of *tawhid*. Although not all his students and Sufis after him were able to absorb the entire essence of his *tawhid* doctrine.⁹⁰

Imam Junayd had experienced as well as analyzed the highest level of *tawhid* by conceptualizing two stages before *tawhid*, which are *mistaq* and *fana*. He did not fall into pantheism, a concept which eliminates the awareness of God and human beings and only accepts one form. Therefore, he did not position human beings as equal to Allah.⁹¹ However, *tawhid* as the central of *tasawwuf* teachings as proposed by al-Junayd is seldom adopted entirely by his students and the Sufis after him. They adopted his concept partially, hence the results tend to be exaggerated and fallacious.

Imam Junayd’s concept of *tawhid* as the central of *tasawwuf* teachings has a crucial role in the Islamic world after his generation. His teachings succeeded in conciliating the debate among *tasawwuf* scholars and *fiqh* scholars regarding the concept of *tawhid*, proven by the fact that there is no rejection found towards al-Junayd’s teachings. Thus, al-Junayd’s teachings managed to influence Islamic scholars after him to not view *tasawwuf* as a teaching deviated from Islam.

Imam Junayd’s thoughts on *tawhid* also play an important role in the development of Islamic teachings. Al-Junayd presents an unconventional discourse on *tawhid*,

⁸⁹ Imam Abu Al-Qasim Al-Junaid.

⁹⁰ Ali Hasan Abdel Kader, *Imam Junaid Al-Baghdadi*.

⁹¹ Ali Hasan Abdel Kader.

compared to other discourses on *tawhid* in the contemporary world. In general, most discussions about *tawhid* only explains the Oneness of God through the means of rationality. Meanwhile, al-Junayd does not only discuss *tawhid* through the means of rationality, but also considers the spiritual aspect and experiences in the process of *tawhid*, as well as tests of life as the verification of someone's *tawhid*.⁹²

Al-Sarraj in his book, *al-Luma'*, a staple book for Muslims who wish to study *tasawwuf*, also took an inspiration from al-Junayd, as the central figure in his discussion of *tawhid*. This fact is not bewildering as we all are aware that al-Junayd is considered as the center of the early development of *tasawwuf*. Many representatives of *tasawwuf* orders named al-Junayd as their teachers. Therefore, we can conclude that al-Junayd influenced the *tasawwuf* orders which emerged after him.⁹³

The *tasawwuf* teachings of al-Junayd also greatly influenced al-Hujwiri in writing *Kasyfal-Mahjub*, proven by many references of al-Junayd found in the book. Although the structure of *Kasyfal-Mahjub* appears like a discussion to explain other Sufistic doctrines, al-Hujwiri still uses al-Junayd's views on several occasions.

Imam Junayd's concept of *tawhid* as the core of *tasawwuf* teachings greatly influenced the Islamic scholars and teachings after him. In addition, some suggest that al-Junayd succeeded in making a conciliation between *tasawwuf* and *fiqh* scholars since his concept is accepted by both sides. The acceptance erased a stigma that *tasawwuf* deviates from Islam. Through his concept, al-Junayd redefines *tasawwuf* into a more simple and acceptable teaching among Muslims.

Additionally, the *tasawwuf* concept of Imam Junayd juga influenced Islamic scholars, notably in the field of *tasawwuf*. He determined the golden pinnacle of *tasawwuf* studies. Muslim intellectuals, especially in the field of *tasawwuf*, have a consensus that the golden era of *tasawwuf* was between the third and fourth century of the Hijri. However, as Imam Junayd concludes, people with *tawhid* worship Allah with the final objective of "subjugating their own selves".⁹⁴ Based on this conclusion, the time when our Prophet Muhammad struggled to spread Islam in Mecca and Medina is more suitable to be deemed as the peak of Sufistic behaviors. Although we cannot deny that *Tasawwuf* as a field of study was indeed striving around the third and fourth century. Still, fundamentally *tasawwuf* is not limited to a field of study or a collection of theories, or a mere discourse or concept. More than that, *tasawwuf* to live with a continuous relation and intimacy with Allah,⁹⁵ as His Messenger exemplified throughout his life.

This view is in accordance Ibn Khaldun's thought who believes that Sufistic behaviors are traditions maintained from the characters of the Prophet Muhammad. However, through time Sufism has become a minority among Muslims who lose

⁹² Ali Hasan Abdel Kader.

⁹³ Annemarie Scimmel, *Dimensi Mistik Dalam Islam* (Jakarta: Pustaka Firdaus, 2000).

⁹⁴ Imam Abu Al-Qasim Al-Junaid, *Rasail Junaid*.

⁹⁵ Kamba, *Kids Zaman Now Menemukan Kembali Islam*.

themselves in worldly matters. The term *tasawwuf* only became popular in the third century of the Hijri, because previously the terms *sahabat* and *tabi'in* are more preferred.⁹⁶

F. Conclusion

The concept of *tasawwuf* by Junayd al-Baghdadi consists of three main elements: *mitsaq* (covenant), *fana* (annihilation of self), and *tawhid* (unification). Both the theories of *mitsaq* and *fana*, have a common objective, which is *tawhid*. However, each of them employs a different approach to achieve *tawhid*. *Mitsaq* explains our return to a primordial state as a servant of God, meanwhile *fana* elaborates on the methods, trainings, and steps to achieve the primordial state. In the theory of *mitsaq*, Imam Junayd believes in the existence of mankind before creation of their physical form. A servant of God will not achieve this holy state except through God's help. Thus, mankind can return to their true state only by the blessing gifted by God toward the men He chooses. Imam Junayd corroborates his belief through the following *hadith qudsi*: The Messenger of Allah said: Allah has said: "Therefore I love him. If I love him, then I will become the eyes he uses to see, the ears he uses to hear, and the hands he uses to hold." Meanwhile, in the theory of *fana*, Imam Junayd elaborates that when a person achieves their true form, he will lose his consciousness. In this state, he will be fully embraced by Allah and his individualities will cease to exist, even though he still has his physical form. When a person has achieved this state, therefore he perished and then lives in the immortality of God. This is what Junayd al-Baghdadi called as a true *tawhid*.

Last but not least, based on the *tasawwuf* concepts of Imam Junayd al-Baghdadi, we can conclude that to practice *tasawwuf* is to practice Islam itself. *Tasawwuf* is not an aspect of Islamic teachings, but it is the core of the religion itself.

⁹⁶ Kamba.

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