

## A CRITICAL ASSESSMENT OF *TAWHĪD AL-AFʿĀL* BY MUHAMMAD NAFIS AL BANJARI IN *AL-DURR AL-NAFĪS*

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### Abstract

The teaching of tawhīd embroidered with Sufi teaching is uncommon to be discussed in Malay world. But Muḥammad Nafīs al-Banjārī, a renowned Malay scholar who studied in Makkah, had discussed the tawhid from sufi perspective in his small epistle known as al-Durr al-Nafīs fī Bayān Wāḥid al-Afʿāl- wa al-Asmāʾ wa al-Ṣifāt wa Al-Dhāt al-Taqdīs. His exposition on the tawhid al-afʿāl (actions) from Sufi approach rises misunderstanding that leading to negative impact. The objective of this study is to evaluate critically tawhīd al-afʿāl as taught by him. The study applies historical and textual studies. Finally, Muḥammad Nafīs al-Banjārī exposition on tawhīd al-afʿāl is not contravened with the fundamental theological principles. His teaching of tawhīd al-afʿāl is consistent and well balanced between the requirements of the Islamic Law and the Divine reality on the basis of Tawhidic orientation.

Keywords: al-Banjārī, *al-Durr al-Nafīs*, *Tawhīd al-afʿāl*

### Abstrak

Pengajaran tauhid yang disulami dengan ilmu tasawuf jarang dibincangkan di Alam Melayu. Tetapi Muhammad Nafis al-Banjari, seorang ulama Melayu muktabar yang pernah menuntut ilmu di Mekah telah membincangkan tauhid daripada pandangan sufi di dalam risalah kecilnya tang bernama al-Durr al-Nafīs fī Bayān Wāḥid al-Afʿāl- wa al-Asmāʾ wa al-Ṣifāt wa al-Dhāt al-Taqdīs. Pendedahannya mengenai tauhid al-al-afʿal (perbuatan) daripada perspektif sufi menimbulkan salah faham yang boleh membawa kesan negatif. Objektif kajian ini ialah untuk menilai secara

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kritikal tauhid al al-af<sup>al</sup> yang diajarinya. Kajian ini menggunakan pendekatan sejarah dan kajian teks. Akhirnya, huraian Muhammad Nafis al-Banjari terhadap tauhid al-af<sup>al</sup> adalah tidak bertentangan dengan asas prinsip akidah. Pengajarannya adalah selaras dengan tuntutan syariah dan hakikah yang berasaskan orientasi tauhid.

Kata kunci: al-Banjari, *al-Durr al-Nafis*, *Tawhid al-af<sup>al</sup>*

### MUHAMMAD NAFIS AL BANJARI: HIS LIFE

Little is known about al-Banjari's life except what he mentioned in his book, *al-Durr al-Nafis*. Al-Banjari stated in the end of his book his real name is Muhammad Nafis b. Idris b. al-Husayn al-Banjari.<sup>2</sup> He was born around (1148H/1735M) in Martapura, South Kalimantan, and belonged to the Banjar royal family.<sup>3</sup> Based on his birth date, he is believed to be a contemporary to Muhammad Arshad al-Banjari (1122-1227H / 1710-1812M) and 'Abd al-Shamad al-Falimbani (1118-1203H / 1704-1789M). He lived during three of Banjar's Sultanates such as Sultan Tahliullah XIV (1707-1745M), Sultan Tamjidullah XV (1745-1778M) and Sultan Tahmidullah XVI (1778-1808M).<sup>4</sup>

Around 1210H/1795M al-Banjari returned to his hometown in South Kalimantan for an Islamic mission. He went to strategic places and villages to preach Islam such as Bali, Sumabawa, and Kelua. Al-Banjari passed away in his own land but the exact date and place of death are uncertain. There were many views about his place of death. He was reported to have died in Sigam or Pulau Laut.<sup>5</sup> Another view narrated that he died in Kusan, Kotabaru or Kelua or in Tunggaran Pleihari, which are located in South Kalimantan.<sup>6</sup>

2 Muhammad Nafis al-Banjari, *Al-Durr al-Nafis fi bayān Wāhid al-Afāl- wa al-Asmā' wa al-Şifāt wa al-Dhāt Dhāt al-Taqdīs*. Mişr: Dār Ihyā' al-Kutub al-'Arabiyyah, n.d., 2.

3 Azyumardi Azra, *The Transmission of Islamic Reformist to Indonesia: Networks of Middle Eastern and Malay-Indonesia 'Ulama' In the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> Centuries* (Ph.D. Dissertation, United States: Colombia University, 1992), 508.

4 H.Ahmadi Isa, *Ajaran Tasawuf Muhammad Nafis dalam Perbandingan*. Jakarta: SriGunting, 2001, 23.

5 Wan Muhammad Shaqir Abdullah, *Penyebaran Islam Dan Silsilah Ulama Sejagat Dunia Melayu*, vol.8, Kuala Lumpur: Khazanah Fathaniah, 1999, 49.

6 H.Ahmadi Isa, *Ajaran Tasawuf Muhammad Nafis dalam Perbandingan*, 31.

## HIS EDUCATION

It is believed that al-Banjārī received his early education in his homeland South Kalimantan and then pursued his religious study extensively in Makkah and Madīnah. However, no historical record supports this statement. Al-Banjārī studied *‘ilm al-kalām* of the al-Ash‘arī’s school,<sup>7</sup> *‘ilm al-fiqh* from al-Shāfi‘ī’s School,<sup>8</sup> and *al-taṣawwuf* from al-Junayd’s school.<sup>9</sup> Al-Banjārī followed al-Junayd’s school because this school adheres the doctrine of sobriety (*ṣahw*)<sup>10</sup> rather than intoxication (*sakr*) or divinely ecstatic utterance (*shatahāt*). He then emphasized practicality to embark spiritually on several *ṭarīqāt*.<sup>11</sup> He primarily practiced the recognized orders such as al-Qādiriyyah order<sup>12</sup>, al-Shattāriyyah order,<sup>13</sup> al-Naqshabandiyyah

7 *‘Ilm al-Kalām* is the discipline which brings to the service of religious belief (*‘aqā‘id*) discursive argument; which provides a place for reflection and meditation and for reason in the elucidation and defenses of the content of the faith. See, *Encyclopedia of Islam*, vol 3, 1142. The founder of Asharaite school is ‘Alī b. Ismā‘il b. Ishāq Abū al-Hasan ,a descendent of Abī Mūsā al-Ash‘arī (260-324H/874-936M), Bassām b. ‘Abd al-Wahhāb al-Jābī, *mu‘jam al-A‘lām Mu‘jam Tarājum li Ashhur al-Rijāl wa al-Nisā’ min al-‘Arab wa al-Musta‘ribīn wa al-Mustashriqīn*. Cyprus:Al-Jaffan al-Jabi,n.d,510.

8 *‘Ilm al-Fiqh* is the law regulating ritual and religious observances (*‘Ibadat*) , it concerns performance and abstinence ,it includes *‘Ibādah, mu‘āmalāt, ḥudūd, siyāsah* etc, The founder of Shāfi‘ī’s school is Muḥammad b. Idrīs al-Shāfi‘ī al-Hashīmī al-Quraisyī(150-204H/767-820M).

9 *Al-Taṣawwuf* is the science to a direct knowledge of God, its doctrines and method are derived from the divine revelation. Cyrill Glasse, *Concise Encyclopedia of Islam*. London: Stacey International, 1989. , 375. Abu al-Qāsim,al-Junayd b. Muhammad al-Nihawandī al-Baghdādī (d.298H-910M). See, Bassām, *Mu‘jam al-A‘lām*, 174.

10 Wan Muhammad b. Wan Ali, “*Suntingan Dan Anotasi Sebuah Kitab Tasawwuf Melayu Kurun Ke 13 / 18 Masihi*: al-Durr al-Nafis, KAT 4LG 396.92 197315M79 (M.A dissertation, University Kebangsaan Malaysia: Institut Bahasa, Kesusasteraan Dan Kebudayaan,1973), 3.

11 *Tarīqah* is derived from Arabic term meaning ‘road’, ‘way’, ‘path’. It comes finally to mean a common life (*mu‘āshara*) founded on a series of special rules in addition to the ordinary observance of Islam, to become an adept (*faqīr*) the novice (*murīd*) receives initiation (*bay‘ah, talqīn*) before a hierarchy of witnesses (*shaykh*). See, H.A.R Gib and J.H Kramers, *Shorter Encyclopedia of Islam*. Netherland: Leidin E.J. Brill, 1973, 573.

12 This order belongs to Shaykh ‘Abd al-Qādir al-Jilāni (471-561H/1078-1166M). He was a preacher and Sufi following a school of Hanbalite Law and Shafite Law. See, *Shorter Encyclopedia of Islam*, 2002.

13 It relates to Shah ‘Abd Allah al-Shattārī (d.890H/1485M) a descendant of Shaykh Shihāb al-Dīn Suhrawardī. In his *Lata‘if Ghaybiyyah*,he explained the basic principles of Shattārī discipline which he considered to be the quickest way to attain gnosis. See, *Encyclopedia of Islam*, vol IX, (Netherland: Leidin E.J. Brill, 1997), 369.

order,<sup>14</sup> al-Khalwatiyyah order<sup>15</sup> and al-Sammāniyyah order.<sup>16</sup> Out of all disciplines, al-Banjārī was known as an expert in *al-kalām* and *al-taṣawwuf*. Since he follows these schools of thought and *ṭarīqāt*, he is still within the structure of *ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Jamā'ah*.

Although he affiliated himself to many *ṭarīqāt*, he maintained and followed the original teachings of the orders as taught by his *shuyūkh*. No fact is found arguing that he intended to form a new order. Since he successfully embarked into many *ṭarīqāt* and had very deep knowledge in *al-taṣawwuf*, he was called as *Maulānā al-<sup>c</sup>Allāmah al-Fahhāmah al-Murshid 'ilā Ṭarīq al-Salāmah* (Our Master of the Outstanding Knowledgeable Spiritual Guider to a Safety Path) an appellation indicating his expertise and highly spiritual experiential achievement and knowledge in Sufism discipline by those who came after him.

### **TAWḤĪD AL-AF'ĀL (THE UNITY OF ACTIONS)**

The *tawḥīd al-af'āl* is rather difficult because it deals with the relationship between the actions of Allah and man. A number of theologians have different opinions on the issue of who is the real actor of all actions and effects, as well as his responsibility for the judgment in the Islamic law. The question arises on how these issues are explained in line with the *sharī'ah* and *al-tawḥīd* perspectives.

### **VIEWS OF FOUR SCHOOLS OF THOUGHT**

The first is al-Mu'tazilah who deny that Allah creates man's actions and they believe man has his own will and power within himself to control the action. By the 'created' power (*al-qudrah al-ḥādithah*) man can exert independently (*istiqlāl*) the impact (*āthar*) of his

14 The founder is Shaykh Muḥammad b. Muḥammad Bahā' al-Dīn (718-791H/1318-1389M). His name which signifies "painter" is interpreted as "drawing" incomparable picture of the Divine science. See, *Shorter Encyclopedia of Islam*, 436.

15 It connects to Shaykh Sidī 'Abū 'Abd Allāh Sirāj al-Dīn 'Umar al-Aḥjī or 'Umar al-Khalwātī (d.800H/1397M). The foundation of this order is voluntary hunger, silence, vigil, seclusion, *Dhikr*, mediations, maintaining a state of permanent ritual purity and binding one's heart to the spiritual master. See, *Concise Encyclopedia of Islam*, 221.

16 It relates to Shaykh Muḥammad b. 'Abd al-Karīm al-Madanī al-Shāfi al-Sammān al-Qādirī al-Ṣūfī (1130-1189H /1718-1776M).

actions without the interference of Allah.<sup>17</sup> The second is al-Jabariyyah who assert that all actions arise from and are predestined by Allah. Thus, man's actions are dictated absolutely by the Will and Power of Allah. In other words, he does not have any will, power and free choice. His actions are nothing except those which are predestined by Allah either good or bad. Hence, they do not attribute the origin or the execution of any action to man.<sup>18</sup>

The third is al-Ashā'irah who believe that all actions are originated from Allah but for man is acquisition (*kasb*) and free choice (*ikhtiyār*) through which man is accountable in the *sharī'ah*. They firmly believe that Allah exerts control over all the consequences of actions, not of their *al-kasb* (acquisition).<sup>19</sup> The fourth is the *ahl al-Mukashifīn* (people of unveiling) through direct vision, who believe that all actions come from Allah, and the action is only attributed to man as *nisbah / idāfah* (correlation concept). It is like a pen in a writer's hand which writes, but actually the writer of the words is the author, not the pen which is only a medium of attribution (*idāfah*) of the act of writing. Hence man is equated with a pen that has nothing in action and effect but indeed the real actor is Allah.<sup>20</sup>

Al-Banjārī comments that al-Mu'tazilah's view is innovation (*bid'ah*) and corruptive (*fāsiq*) because they believe that the action can give impact independently without interference of God. He also remarks that al-Jabariyyah's opinion is heretical because they disregard the religious judgment of the *sharī'ah* law on them. He observes al-Ashā'irah's view is acceptable and safe from danger

17 Al-Mu'tazilah believe that man exerts independently (*istiqlāl*) the impact (*āthār*) of his actions without the interference of Allah because man's action contains injustice and transgression. If God creates injustice, He would be injustice. In fact man is subjected for reward and punishment of his deed, not God. See, 'Abd al-Jabbar b. Ahmad, *Sharḥ al-Uṣūl al-Khamsah* n.p: Maktabah al-Wahbah, 1988, 345.

18 Al-Shahrastānī, Muhammad b. 'Abd al-Karīm, *Al-Milal wa al-Niḥal*, vol.1 .al-Qāhirah: Mu'assah al Ḥalbi wa shurakahu li al-Nashr wa al-Tawzī', n.d., 87.

19 Ibid., 98.

20 Al-Ghazzālī illustrates that one is released from prison because the King writes signature in the letter to free him. He then claims that the pen that is used by the King causes his release. Al-Ghazzālī regards this claim as ignorant of the truth. In fact the pen has no property in itself, it is exploited in the hand of writer. Therefore, one should thanks to the King as the real writer who frees him, not to his signature or pen. See, Al-Ghazzālī, *Iḥyā' 'Ulūm al-Dīn*, vol.4, 212.

in this world and hereafter but they do not attain unveiling stage (*martabah al-kashf*) as there is belief that “*kasb*” (acquisition) and “*ikhtiyār*” (free choice) are still from man not from Allah. The last, *ahl al-Mukāshifin*’s view, al-Banjārī verifies as the perfect and pure *al-tawhīd* that free from hidden associations ascribing partner to God (*al-shirk al-khafī*), which posits partnership in Allah’s actions and the consequences<sup>21</sup>.

Al-Banjārī believes the *tawhīd al-af’āl*, is that one who believes that through his direct vision that the created things do not possess an act either in form of “*tawallud*” (begotten action) i.e., a stone falls down from the hand or “*mubāsharah*” (immediate action), i.e., a pen moved by the power of the writer’s hand, actually Allah is the creator of the acts of created things<sup>22</sup>, as evident from the al-Qur’ān. Allah says: “And Allah has created you and what you do.”<sup>23</sup> “And you (Muhammad) threw not when you did throw but Allah threw.”<sup>24</sup> In this *al-tawhīd*, al-Banjārī admits that God is the real Creator of all actions and consequences. His action is one not many, and man is in fact, only the manifestation of God’s action. In this regard, al-

21 Ibrahim al-Bayjūrī (d. 1277H/1861M) describes the unity of God’s action. He explains that God’s action is one, not many. Thus, only God acts and exerts the consequence. He divides this issue into four views: the first believes only God can absolutely exert impact of all actions, is the true believer. The second believes the created thing can exert impact through the common law of necessary relation of cause and effect such as knife can slice a thing because the act of cutting contact to it, is unbeliever. Such belief shows the ignorant of the reality of both connections. The third believes the created thing can exert impact through its nature such as fire burns cotton by its nature or water satisfies the thirsty by its nature is an unbeliever by the agreement of scholars. The forth is who believes the created thing can exert impact by power (*qudrah*) granted in it by God, is disagreement on charging as disbeliever, but rather as corrupter (*fāsiq*). See, Ibrāhīm al-Bayjūrī, *Hāshiyah bi tahqīq al-maqām ‘alā kifāyah al-‘Awwām*. Semarang: Kiryāt Putera, n.d, 41.

22 Al-Ghazzālī views that one who believes that the wind assists him from danger at sea falls into association even though he does not obviously worship idols. This is because the wind is a material thing (*al-jamādāt*), cannot move by itself but actually the prime mover of wind is Allah as Allah says in the al-Quran, : And when they embark on ship they invoke Allah making their faith pure for Him only, but when he brings them safely on land behold they give a share of their worship to other (al-Anfāl: 17). See, *Ihyā’ ‘Ulūm al-Dīn*, vol.4, 212.

23 Al-Sāffāt: 96. Muhammad b. Sulaymān al-Jazūlī interprets the verse as no word, action, movement and silent originate from one except they have been previously determined within Allah’s knowledge, His degree and ruling on how (what manner or mode) they will be. See, *Dalā’il al-Khayrāt ma’a al-Aḥzāb*. Indonesia: Maktabah wa Matba’ah Tāhā Putera Semarang, n.d, 185.

24 Al- Anfāl: 17.

Banjārī's view seems in the middle between the al-Ashā'irah and the al-Jabariyyah's position.

### THE CONCEPT OF GOOD AND EVIL'S ACTION

Relating to the issue as who determines good and evil action, three viewpoints of schools are mentioned. Al-Mu'tazilah believe that man is the one who decides upon and creates his actions of both good and evil because he deserves to receive the reward or the punishment in the next world for what he does. In this way Allah is safeguarded from association with any evil and wrong or any act of unbelief or transgression. For, if He created the wrong, He would have been wrong or unjust and if He created justice, He would have been just. By this view, they acknowledge that a wise being that is God can only do that which is the best (*al-aṣlah*) and good and that His wisdom keeps in view what is the best for His servant.<sup>25</sup> Thus, they believe that the good only comes from God and the evil comes from man.

Al-Jabariyyah groups however believe that all good and evil are absolutely determined and decided by Allah. Man is enforced strictly to do what is determined in His Ruling regardless of good or evil without taking into account the judgment of the Islamic law. Man is likened to a feather in the sky floating according to the direction of the wind. Although man does an evil deed, his action belongs to Allah, not him. They reject the concept of *kasb* (acquisition) and *ikhtiyār* (free choice).<sup>26</sup> They probably overly misinterpret the revelation and the concept of *al-tawḥīd* within the Islamic context.

Al-Banjārī admits that the *ahl al-Mukāshifīn*'s point of view that all good and evil come from Allah.<sup>27</sup> He believes that all actions such as belief or disbelief, and obedience or disobedience are essentially

25 A.J.Wensick, *Muslim Creed*. German: Franks Cast of Co. Ltd, 1965, 62.

26 Sirāj al Dīn 'Abbās, *I'tiqād Ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Jamā'ah*. Kota Baru: Pustaka Aman Press, 1996, 315. See also, Abū Zahrah, *Tārīkh al-Mazāhib al-Islāmiyyah fī al-siyāsah wa al-'aqā'id wa tārīkh al-mazāhib al-fiqhiyyah*. Al-Qahirah: Dār al-Fikr al-'Arabī, n.d., 98,157.

27 This is affirmed by al-Ghazzālī that the good, evil, benefit, harm, belief and unbelief are originated from Allah. See, Ihsān b. Muhammad Dāhlān al-Kediri, *Sirāj al-Ṭālibīn sharḥ 'alā Minhāj al-'Ābidīn*, vol,1 .Indonesia : al-Haramayn, n.d .,136.

good in the light of divine reality (*ḥaqīqah*)<sup>28</sup> because they originated from God, in the sense that God creates them<sup>29</sup> which is called the “*irādah al-kawniyah*” (will of creation) or “*amrun takwīniyyun*” (creative command) as evident from al-Qur’ān, Allah says: “And if some good reaches them, they say:” This is from Allah”, but if some evil befalls them, they say: “This is from you (o Muhammad)”. Say: “All things are from Allah.”<sup>30</sup>

Nevertheless al-Banjārī believes that disbelief and disobedience from the light of divine reality are good but Allah prescribes (*ḥūkm*) them from the light of divine revelation as the evil object. Hence, man should avoid committing such evil object as following His Will which is called as “*irādah al-shar‘iyyah*” (will of legislation) or “*amrun tashrī‘iyyun*” (legislative command).<sup>31</sup> This is proved by Quranic verse that holds that many prohibitions of doing evil actions like killing, fornication, disobedience etc. Allah says: “Therefore remember Me, I will remember you and be grateful to Me and never be ungrateful to Me”.<sup>32</sup> Allah also says: “And these who invoke not any other God along with Allah, nor kill such life as Allah has forbidden except for just cause nor commit illegal sexual intercourse and whoever does this shall receive the punishment.”<sup>33</sup> Allah says: “If you disbelieve, then verily Allah is not in need of you. He likes not disbelief for His slaves. And if you are grateful by being believer, He is pleased therewith for you.”<sup>34</sup>

28 *Ḥaqīqah* is truth or reality, cognate with *Ḥaqq*, reality, and absolute. The esoteric truth transcends human and theological limitation. In the sense that *Ḥaqīqah* is the third element of the ternary *Sharī‘ah* (Law) that is exoterism, *Tarīqah* path esoterism and *Ḥaqīqah* essential truth. See, Cyrill Glosse, *The Concise Encyclopedia of Islam*. London: Stacey International, 1989.378.

29 This doctrine is similar to that of al-Nasafī who is of the opinion that Allah may He be exalted, is the Creator of all action of His servant regardless of the action of unbelief or belief, of obedience or of disobedience. They are subjected by the Will, Ruling and Decree of God. See, Muhammad Naquib al-Attas, *The Oldest Known Malay Manuscript: A 16<sup>th</sup> Century Malay Translation of the ‘Aqā’id of al-Nasafi*. Kuala Lumpur: University of Malaya, 1988. 68.

30 Al-Nisā’: 78.

31 Ibn ‘Arabī explains clearly that the wickedness (*fāḥishah*) is good in the light of Divine reality because it subsisted as an ideal form in His eternal knowledge. What prescribes it as the evil is not due to its substance but due to Allah’s prescription to determine it as the evil object from the light of revelation. So, what is of good and bad quality of object is prescribed in the revelation, not reason. See, Ibn ‘Arabī, *al-Futūḥat al-Makkiyyah*, vol.1, 84.

32 Al-Baqarah: 52.

33 Al-Furqān: 68.

34 Al-Zumar: 7.



This account is important for one to understand the relation between the “*sharī‘ah*” (Islamic law) and “*haqīqah*” (Divine reality) contained in the revelation. If not, one is unable to differentiate between the good and the bad from the entirety of the Islamic perspective and theological aspects. The Islamic Law in fact has strong religious authority in prescribing the good and bad. Even though all actions concerning good and bad qualities are determined and prescribed by Allah, al-Banjārī strongly stresses that when one commits an evil action, he must attribute his evil performance to himself whereas pious deeds to Allah as the courtesy (*ādāb*) to Him and the lesson (*ta‘līm*) from Him as evident from the Quranic verse, where He says: “Whatever of good reaches you is from Allah, but whatever of evil befalls you is from yourself.”<sup>35</sup>

Al-Banjārī’s exposition in this issue is similar to the Ibn ‘Arabī’s teaching that he says: “When bad qualities are decided either from the Islamic Law or custom, one must relate them to himself as *adab* (courtesy) to Allah just as the Prophet al-Khiḍr relates his act of destroying a ship to himself by saying, ‘So I wished to make defective damage in it’<sup>36</sup>, and to the act of goodness relates to Allah as He says ‘and your Lord intended that they should attain their age of full strength and take out their treasury as a mercy from your Lord’<sup>37</sup>. The same case applies to Prophet Ibrāhīm when he was sick, he says it is not Allah that cause the sickness but he mentions ethically, ‘And when I am ill, it is He who cures me’<sup>38</sup>. All of these are in the aspect of lesson (*ta‘līm*) and courtesy (*adab*) to Allah. Therefore the Prophet calls to Allah to show his ‘*ādāb*’ as ‘And all goods from Your hands and the bad is not from You.’”<sup>39</sup>

This concept has been simplified by Shaykh Iḥsān Muḥammad Daḥlān (d. 1952M) in another terminology such as *iḍāfah al-taḥqīq* (direct verifiable attribution) and *iḍāfah al-ikrām* (ennoble attribution) The reference of good and evil both are originated from

35 Al-Nisā’: 79.

36 Al-Kahf: 19.

37 Al-Kahf: 20.

38 Al-Shu‘arā’: 80.

39 See, Ibn ‘Arabī, *al-Fūṭūḥāt al-Makkiyyah*, vol.1, 313.

God is called *idāfah al-tahqīq* (direct verifiable attribution) and the evil is from man's action, not from God which is called *idāfah al-ikrām* (ennoble attribution).<sup>40</sup>.

Since evil also originates from God in the aspect of His creation, the way to avoid from committing it is through supplication.<sup>41</sup> Thus al-Banjārī seeks to find protection of committing evil from Allah as the Prophet said: "I seek refuge in Yourself (Essence of God) from the acts of evil that come from you".<sup>42</sup> Even though in the reality, Allah creates all good and bad action, He mentions clearly that He is free from any judgment He made. Allah says: "He cannot be questioned as to what He does while they will be questioned".<sup>43</sup>

In this issue, al-Banjārī tries to find a middle way between the Islamic sects about who determines good and evil. He reconciles all views in line with the requirement of the revelation by introducing terminology like *adab* (courtesy) and *ta'lim* (lesson) particularly relating the evil action by man, without denying its source that is Allah. And Ibn 'Arabi's notion and other scholars support his idea.

40 Ihsān b. Muhammad Daḥlān, *Sirāj al-Ṭālibīn*, 136.

41 It is better to note down important facts from al-Ghazzālī that the calling (*du'ā'*) is a useful way to apply amendment in God's decree. This is because repelling trial and evil by praying also decided its possible way in God's decree. It becomes a reason to repel disaster and invite grace likened to armor to protect from an arrow attack Allah says: *O You who believe! Take your precaution* (al-Nisā':71), and in fact, the correlations between causes and its effect in divine reality is already well-orderly determined in the first decree, and all the detailed serial sequences of effects is already determined by its particular causes by degrees and estimations that is God's ruling, whom determines good, its causes also be decided and who determines bad, its avoidance cause also be decided. These matters do not contradict each other for one whose his soul opened to know the truth. Supplication is core of worship that direct to God's remembrance (*al-zikr*) which is considered the noblest worship to Allah. See, al-Ghazzālī, *Iḥyā' 'Ulūm al-Dīn*, vol.1, 298. This statement is supported by al-Ḥadīth that 'Ā'ishah said, "Precaution has nothing against the decree, the praying gains benefit of what arrives and of what does not arrive. In fact, when the trial (*al-bala'*) arrives, so the praying will encounter it, and both have mutual treatment of each other until the Day of Judgment (Narrated by al-Ḥākim). Ibn Mas'ūd recites, "Oh Allah If you determine me in your preordain that I am within the displeasure situation, so erase it, cease my name from misfortune and persist me in your decree as fortune with doing the goodness due to your saying [ Allah blots out what He wills and confirms (what He wills). And with Him is the mother of the Book (*al-Lawh al-Mahfuz*) (al-Ra'd: 33). See, Ibn Kathīr, Abū al-Fidā' Ismā'īl b. Kathīr, *Tafsīr al-Qur'an al-'Azim*, vol.2 .Bayrūt: Dār Iḥyā' al-Turath al-'Arabī, n.d. 515.

42 The body of Hadith is, "*Allāhuma innī a'ūdhu bika minka*". Muslim, *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, vol.1 .Bayrūt: Dār Iḥyā' al-Turath al-'Arabī, n.d., 352.

43 Al-Anbiyā':23.

## THE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THE ACTIONS OF GOD AND MAN

Al-Banjārī believes that Allah is the real creator of all actions and its effect. Thus, man's action is only the manifestation of God's action and is the subject to receive the religious judgment (*ḥukm*) of Islam as prescribed on him. In this regard, although man assumes that he is the actor of his action, the truth is that he is an agent who does not have any effect on his action. In fact, the creature and man himself are the veil, which hinders one from witnessing God who is the real Creator of all things or phenomena. Al-Banjārī illustrates that oneself and the creature just as an image of a tree reflected on the water, but it never can stop a boat from moving across it. The belief that the image can stop the boat is only man's assumption and illusion (*ẓan / khayal*). If the veil is lifted, one in reality will witness that Allah does all things.<sup>44</sup>

It relates with the concept of one's self-annihilation (*fanā'*) in action through directly witnessing the action of Allah. From a Sufi context, man's actions and choices are dependent completely on the Help, Will and Power of Allah. This is hard to understand rationally except by spiritual taste and awareness of God's presence in the heart. The action is attributed to God as a reality and to man as allegorical.<sup>45</sup> The Quranic verse also employs metaphorical language where Allah says: "So invoke your lord for us to bring forth for us what the earth grows, its herbs, its cucumber".<sup>46</sup> The Prophet said to a person whom a piece of date reaches him, "Take a piece of date, for if you do not take it, it will come to you."<sup>47</sup> Since the word that the piece of date will come is allegorical, so it should not be understood in the manner like man comes.

44 Al-Banjārī, *al-Durr al-Nafis*, 6.

45 Al-Ghazzālī says that in linguistic approach whatever names and words in the revelation ascribes to Allah is the reality and for other than Him is allegorical. Who relates all actions to Allah, he obtains the reality and truth. In fact, one who expresses the attribution of action to other than Allah (*makhḷūq*), his expression is metaphorical in his words. See, al-Ghazzālī, *Iḥyā' Uḷūm al-Dīn*, vol.4, 220.

46 Al-Baqarah: 61. Concerning the words 'earth grows', al-Bayḍāwī comments that the act of growing connects to earth, as only an allegorical connection while the earth is an inorganic thing that has no real power to grow plants by itself. See, Al-Bayḍāwī, 'Abd Allāh b. 'Umar, *Tafṣīr al-Bayḍāwī al-Musammā al-Anwār al-Tanzil wa al-Asrār al-Ta'wīl*, vol.1, Bayrūt: Dar al-Fikr, 1996, 331.

47 Ibn Ḥibbān, *Ṣaḥīḥ Ibn Hibban*, vol.8 .Bayrūt: Mu'assah al-Riṣālah, 1993, 33.

Al-Banjārī reminds that even though Allah creates and determines everything, it cannot become a reason to disregard the implementation of religious duties abided on him, as he does not have power and will to establish them. Due to this reason, one who believes that all religious duties are no longer abided on him from being implemented, he will be heretical (*zindīq*).<sup>48</sup> In order to show that this faith is harmful, al-Ghazzālī stated that one who believes in such manner that he has attained the highest spiritual station, and can disregard religious duties like praying or legalizing the prohibition e.g. drinking liquor and eating the wealth of the Sultan. In such a situation; he is depicted as heretical which will lead to the death penalty as punishment.<sup>49</sup>

### RESPONSES TOWARD AL-BANJĀRĪ

Some researchers respond to the exposition of *tawḥīd al-af'āl* taught by al-Banjārī as generating a negative impact on the mind of society. The example would be one who is jobless and effortless towards his worldly affairs still will not seek to fulfill his daily physical needs because he has a creed that his need was already predetermined by Allah. One will neglect or leave the performance of religious duties because of believing his heart yet guided to do them. Since the creed of all obedience and disobedience are good before Allah in reality, one who commits sin and mistake will not repent of his bad deeds.<sup>50</sup> The consequences are Muslims become backward, jobless, indolent, passive and unmotivated. The above statements are untrue and inaccurate. This is because they cannot understand properly in detail the principles of this *tawḥīd al-af'āl*.

This kind of *tawḥīd* deals with the inner spiritual state (*ḥāl*) and knowledge (*'ilm*) of man to perceive that all things are unable to move by themselves unless by Allah's Will and Power. Although Allah creates all actions in accordance to His Will and Power, He still orders

48 *Zindīq* is to Muslim criminal law to describe heretic teaching becomes a danger to the state, this criminal is liable to capital punishment. See, *Shorter Encyclopedia of Islam*, 659.

49 Muhammad al-Sharbīnī al-Khatīb, *Al-Iqnā' fī ḥal al-fāz Abī Shujā'*. Bayrūt: Dār al-Fikr, n.d, 251.

50 H.Ahmad Isa, *Ajaran Tasawuf Muhammad Nafis Dalam Perbandingan*, 42.

man to work and obey His Religious Laws. In Sufi's understanding one has been required to abide and perform religious duties because he is created as the vicegerent of Allah who has to worship Him. In performing the duties of worship within the Tawhidic paradigm, one should understand that the external Islamic Law (*sharī'ah*) orders one to work, exert effort and plan to fulfill his worldly need and religious responsibilities. Allah says: "(O Muhammad) "Do deeds! Allah will see your deeds and His Messengers and the believers."<sup>51</sup> In other verses Allah says: "And work you righteousness. Truly I am All-Seer of what you do."<sup>52</sup> And He says: "Enter you paradise because of the good which you used to do in the world."<sup>53</sup> Similarly, the Prophet said: "Work, Allah has made everything easy for you in line with His decree."<sup>54</sup>

But at the same time from the internal Islamic Law, the divine reality (*ḥaqīqah*) prevents one from absolutely depending on himself, energy and causes for all the results. In fact, one must realize in his bottom part of the heart that all motivation of action and the consequences come from Allah through His Blessing. Allah says: "Say: in the Bounty of Allah and His Mercy, therein let them rejoice that is better than what the wealth they amass"<sup>55</sup>. The Prophet said: "No one enters into Paradise by his deeds. The companions ask: And so you are o the Messenger of Allah? Also me but Allah shelters me with His grace."<sup>56</sup>

This shows that the researchers do not understand the relationship between the Islamic Law (*sharī'ah*) and the Divine reality (*ḥaqīqah*)<sup>57</sup> both are interconnected to each other and never contradicted. This fact is supported by Ibn 'Ajībah's (d. 1224H) explanation that in

51 Al-Tawbah: 105.

52 Al-Sabā': 11.

53 Al-Nahl: 32.

54 Muslim, *Saḥīḥ Muslim*, vol.4, 2040.

55 Yunus: 58.

56 Muslim, *Saḥīḥ Muslim*, vol.4, 2169.

57 For the Sufis the Islamic law (*sharī'ah*) is a starting point on the path of the Sufi. It can be regarded as an indispensable basic for the further religious life by which the fulfillment of the Islamic law has to be refined. The *sharī'ah* and *ḥaqīqah*, the mystical reality then form a correlated pair. See, *Encyclopedia of Islam*, Vol.IX, 525.

the revelation (al-Qur'ān and al-Ḥadīth), the teaching of Islamic Law (*sharī'ah*) is revealed on one side and the teaching of Divine reality (*ḥaqīqah*) is exposed on another side. In other words, al-Qur'an mentions the order of the Islamic Law (*sharī'ah*) in one part and al-Ḥadīth describes that order from the aspect of Divine reality (*ḥaqīqah*) in another part and vice versa.<sup>58</sup>

As has been observed, the researchers are ambiguous on the fact who is actually the receiver of the religious judgment in the sense of getting the reward or punishment and who the creator of the consequences. There is a consensus agreement among scholars of *ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Jamā'ah* that man is responsible for his detailed action and he will be rewarded and will be punished. The misconception is clearly mentioned by al-Sha'rānī (d. 973H/1575M) as quoted from Ibn Arabī (d. 638H/1240M) as saying, "the created being cannot exert impact on their actions through their hands forever in creation. In fact, they deserve to receive reward and punishment from religious Judgment (*al-Ḥukm*), not creating the impact but many people cannot differentiate between the aspects of receiving the judgment and creating the impact."<sup>59</sup>

Al-Banjārī's teaching never asked one to observe the substance of work but not to the negligence in performing the work. He remained one cannot acts except with the assistance of Allah. When one attains this level of *al-tawḥīd*, he is known as the *al-ʿĀrif* (gnostic). He knows his God is the Creator and he himself is the servant to worship Him and to preserve the Islamic Laws.

## CONCLUSION

Therefore, to learn this *tawḥīd*, one should have prerequisite knowledge of the Islamic Law (*sharī'ah*) and the Divine reality (*ḥaqīqah*). If one can comprehend this *tawḥīd* properly, it will lead him to purify *al-tawḥīd* from any hidden association (*al-shirk al-khafī*). Tawhid from Sufi's perspective never taught one to be a

58 Ibn ʿAjībah, Ahmad b. Muhammad, *Īqhāz al-Himam fī Sharḥ al-Ḥikam*. Misr: Matba'ah Muṣṭafā al-Babī al-Halabī wa Auladuhu, 1972. 14.

59 Al-Sha'rānī, ʿAbd al-Wahhāb, *al-Yawāqīt wa al-Jawāhir fī bayān ʿAqā'id al-Akābir*, 257

workless, inactive and lazy or transgress from the Laws of Allah but rather instructing him to be productive, proactive, brave, and committed to the Religious duties and always conscious of the Willingness and Powerfulness of Allah in his heart. Therefore, it denies the negative accusation that Sufi teaching of *tawhīd al-af'āl* causes backwardness or neglecting the Islamic Laws. This shows that al-Banjārī's teaching of *tawhīd al-af'āl* is consistent and well balanced between the requirements of the Islamic Law (*sharī'ah*) and the Divine reality (*haqīqah*) on the basis of Tawhidic orientation.

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