

HISTORY OF ISLAMIC REVIVALISM IN SAUDI ARABIA SHAYKH MUHAMMAD BIN ABD. WAHHAB

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Abstract

Muhammad bin Abdul Wahab, is the founder of the Wahhabi movement in Saudi Arabia. The Wahhabi movement is one of the religious movements that seeks to purify Islam from all understandings and practices that have deviated from actual demands. According to him, the basic creeds of the Wahhabism are essentially no different from what was stated by Ibn Taimiyah. The difference is only in how to implement and interpret certain issues. The belief or monotheism of Muslims has been contaminated by various things such as superstition, bid'ah and khufarat which can lead an Muslim to syirik. The revivalist group considered that the monotheism taught by the Prophet Muhammad had been shrouded in khurafat and the ideology of Sufism. Many mosques were abandoned because people tended to decorate themselves with azimat.

Keywords. Abdul Wahab, Wahhabi Movement, Flow

INTRODUCTION

The process of Ijtihad was intensively no progression in the 18th century. In this condition, Muslims were in a state of stagnation in knowledge because of the rise of asceticism. On the other hand, traditions such as bidah and khufarat had developed which have become reigned and have taken root among the people.

The idea of renewal and the ideas proclaimed by Muhammad Wahhab, was motivated by the desire to make Muslims enlightened. Idea of Syekh Muhammad bin Abdul Wahhab was a response to the understanding of monotheism in society which had been mixed with the teachings of the tarekat which were born in the 13th century.

According to his understanding that the practice of Islam is a practice which is same with the early generations, namely the pious Salafuss. At that time the community was in a condition that was trapped in bid'ah and kufarat practices. On the basis of the practice of Islamic teachings that had been carried out by the salafuss salih, Shaykh Muhammad bin Abdul Wahab took up resistance against all renewal ideas that emerged after the salafuss salih. Some of the things that Shaykh Muhammad bin Abdul Wahab opposed were mystical, Sufi thoughts, practices of worshipping other Gods besides Allah and so on.

Muhammad bin Abdul Wahhab assumed that the purification of faith is the basis of Islamic education. He emphasized that the best and most effective method in the education system is to set an example or role model. The Call to Return to the Qur'an and the Sunnah of the Prophet was the main idea of the renewal brought by Shaykh Muhammad bin Abdul Wahhab, it was emphasized that what had been outlined by religion through the Prophet and his companions was a very good example.

The history of the Wahhabi movement in Saudi Arabia itself began in the mid-19th century with the emergence of an alliance between the chiefs of the Nejd Selatan tribe, Muhammad ibn Sa'ud and Muhammad ibn Abdul Wahhab. The term Wahabiyah itself is a name given by its opponents because its leader is named Muhammad bin Abdul Wahhab (Mufrodi, 1997)

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Short Biography of Muhammad Bin Abdul Wahab

Muhammad bin Abdul Wahab was born in Uyainah, Najed, Saudi Arabia 1115 H/1703 AD. His full name is Abu Abdullah Muhammad bin Abdul Wahhab bin Sulaiman bin Ali bin Muhammad bin Ahmad bin Rashid al-Tamimi. He memorized the Qur'an when he was ten years old. (Encyclopedia of Islam, 2001)

His father was a qadi in the city. Since his childhood, Muhammad Abd Wahab had a great interest in commentary books, hadiths and the principles of faith (aqeedah). He studied Hanbali school of jurisprudence from his father who was a scholar of the Hanbali school. When he was teenager, he argued the religious worship activities of the residents of the city of Najed as deviant. After making the pilgrimage to Baitullah and performing the rites, he continued his journey to Medina where the sheikh Muhammad challenged the Muslim practice of contemplating the Prophet which was located next to his holy tomb. Then he returned to Najed and then headed to Basrah. (Subhani, 2007).

Muhammad bin Abdul Wahab lived many years in Basrah and began to oppose the religious practices of the local population. However, the people of Basrah expelled him from their city. He was forced to continue his journey to the city of Zubair, then to Damascus. However, because he did not have enough money, he finally returned to the city of Ahsa. From there he decided to go to Huraymalah, one of the cities in the Najed area (Subhani, 2007).

In 1139 H, his father, Abdul Wahab was moved from the city of Uyainah to the city of Huraymalah. Shaykh Muhammad went to his father and studied the contents of the books from his father. He plans to start preaching by expressing his rejection of the faith of the people of Najed. For this reason, there are disagreements and heated arguments and debates between children and fathers. In the same matter, a serious and violent quarrel broke out between him and the people of Najd. This incident continued for several years until his father Abdul Wahab died in 1153 H. Because of that Muhammad bin Abd Wahab was classified as more extreme than his father because his refusal was categorized as extreme without considering the impact that would result from the refusal.

After his father died, Muhammad Abd Wahab began preaching, conveying his own religious beliefs and rejecting the religious practices of the residents. A group of Huraymalah people followed him and his proselytizing activities gained popularity and fame. Then he left Huraymalah for the city of Uyainah. At that time, Usman bin Hamid was the regional head of the city of Uyainah. Usman received Muhammad bin Abd Wahab and respected him and made the decision to help him. On the other hand, Muhammad bin Abd Wahab also promised that the entire population of the city of Najd would obey Usman bin Ahmad. News of Muhammad Abdul Wahab's calls and activities reached the ruler of the city of Ahsa. Finally the authority of Ahsa wrote a letter to Usman. The consequence of the letter was that Usman ordered Muhammad bin Abdul Wahab to stop his da'wah activities. Muhammad bin Abd Wahab in his reply commented that "if you help me, then you will become the leader of the entire Najd area". However, Usman avoided him and asked him to go out from Uyainah. At that time Muhammad bin Mas'ud (grandfather of the Saud family) was the authority of the city of Dariyyah. He went to

meet Muhammad and glorified and was very kind to him. Muhammad bin Abd Wahab also promised to Abdullah bin Mas'ud ifto give him power and dominance over all cities in the Najed region. In this way the relationship between Muhammad bin Abd Wahab and Saud occurred. With this agreement, the teachings of Ibn Abdul Wahhab were strengthened by the support of political forces initiated by Muhammad ibn Sa'ud. The unification of religion and politics resulted in the great state of Saudi Arabia. Abdul Wahhab himself died in 1792 in Dar'iyah, who had also witnessed the da'wah carried out by his followers.

Revivalism Movement of Muhammad bin Abd Wahab

The defilement of Islamic teachings began during the reign of the Abbasid Muslims in Baghdad. The progress of knowledge in science in this era has dragged Muslims to become follower of the teachings of Greek and Roman philosophy. In addition, the Platonic mystical influence of Russian culture contributed to a negative influence on Islamic teachings. The climax is the various kinds of sleaze and stakhayul practiced by the Hindus, which are followed by the Muslims. The Arab region, as the birthplace of Islam, was not spared from this bad influence. The Arabs were divided due to strife and rivalry among tribes, experiencing decline in various aspects of life. It was at times like these that Muhammad bin Abdul Wahab appeared to clean up foreign elements that had infiltrated the purity of Islam (Muhammad, 2006).

The idea that was pioneered by Muhammad bin Abd Wahab make the position of the Muslim community arose not as a political reaction to the political atmosphere as existed in the Ottoman and Mughal empires, but as a reaction to the monotheism ideology that existed among Muslims at that time. The purity of their monotheism ideology has been damaged by the teachings of the tarekat since the thirteenth century have been widespread in the Islamic world.

In every Islamic country he visited, Muhammad bin Abd Wahab saw scattered graves of the sheikhs of the tarekat. Every city, even the villages, have their respective sheikh or guardian graves. To these graves, Muslims go on pilgrimage and ask for help from the sheikh or saint who is buried in it, to solve the problems of their daily lives such as people asking given children, given a mate, to be cured of their illness and to be given wealth.

Therefore, the revivalist group considers that the monotheism taught by the Prophet Muhammad has been shrouded by khufarat and understanding of Sufism. Many mosques were abandoned because people tended to decorate themselves with azimat, antidotes for diseases and prayer beads. They studied with a fakir or dervish and worshiped them as saints and as mediums to reach God.

The society thought that the God cannot be reached through adoration directly. Not only to teachers who are still alive, even to the dead they ask for intercession. Some Muslim have abandoned the morals taught by the Qur'an, and many even ignore them anymore. The holy cities of Mecca and Medina have become places full of deviations from the creed, while the pilgrimage has become an easy and light practice.

Likewise, Muhammad bin Abd Wahab saw that the purity of Tawhid was damaged not only by the worship of sheikhs and saints, but also animism still influenced the beliefs of Muslims. In one place he saw people making pilgrimages to a date palm tree, because the tree was believed that it had good powers. Elsewhere he saw a large rock that was worshiped. Muslims go to such places to ask for help in overcoming their life problems. Allah, to whom one must pray and supplicate, has been forgotten. (Nasution, 1975)

The Concept of Wahhabi Teachings

The main point of Abdul Wahhab's teachings is based on the teachings of Ibn Taimiyah and the Hambali School. The basic principles of these teachings are: First, One and absolute divinity (hence the adherents call it al-Muwahhidun). Second, return to the true teachings of Islam, as contained in the Qur'an and Hadith. Third, actions cannot be separated from belief, such as prayer and charity. Fourth, believe that the Qur'an is not a

human creation. Fifth, the belief is only from the Qur'an and Hadith. Sixth, condemn all views and actions that are not true. Seventh, establish an Islamic state based exclusively on Islamic law.

The main purpose of Abdul Wahhab's teachings is to purify the monotheism of people who have been influenced. For this reason, he was very serious in eradicating bid'ah, khufarat and superstition that developed among the people. He was against the worship of saints, visiting sacred places to seek blessings. Abdul Wahhab considers that all objects of worship, except for Allah, are false. According to him, seeking help from anyone except Allah is shirk.

The question of monotheism is indeed the most basic teaching in Islam, and therefore it is not surprising that Muhammad bin Abdul Wahab focused his attention on this issue. He argues that:

1. Only Allah may and must be worshiped, and those who worship other than Allah have become polytheists and may be killed.
2. Most Muslims are no longer as true adherents of monotheism because they no longer seek help from Allah, but from sheikhs or saints and from supernatural powers, and such Muslims have also become polytheists.
3. Mentioning the name of a prophet, angel or sheikh as an intermediary in prayer' is shirk.
4. Asking for intercession other than Allah is also shirk.
5. Making vows other than Allah is also shirk.
6. Obtaining knowledge other than the Qur'an and Hadith and qiyas (analogy) is kufr.
7. Not believing in Allah's Qada and Qadar is also kufr
8. Interpreting the Qur'an with takwil (free interpretation) is infidel.

All of the above are considered as bid'ah, and bid'ah is misguidance. To release Muslims from this misguidance, he argues that Muslims must return to the original Islam. The origin of Islam as adhered and practiced at the time of the Prophet, companions and tabi'in, that is, until the third century of Hijriyah. (Nasution, 1975)

Other beliefs and practices that arose after that time were not the original teachings of Islam and had to be abandoned. Thus, taklid and adherence to the opinion of the clergy after the third century is not justified. Opinions and interpretations of theologian are not a source of Islamic teachings. The only sources that he accepted are the Qur'an and Hadith. And to understand the Quran and Hadith is by Ijtihad. For him the door of Ijtihad is not closed. (Nasution, 1975).

What was initiated by Muhammad bin Abd Wahab in accordance with Q.S Ali 'Imran (3:64).

O People of the Scripture! Come to an agreement between us and you: that we shall worship none but Allah, and that we shall ascribe no partner unto Him, and that none of us shall take others for lords beside Allah. And if they turn away, then say: Bear witness that we are they who have surrendered (unto Him)."

And in interpreting the verses of the Quran, Muhammad bin Abdul Wahab impressed mujassimah (anthropomorphic) because he did not allow takwil, and also rejected tajassum (understanding of anthropomorphism). He only accepts the Qur'an literally (as is) and does not inquire further. Regarding the nature of Allah, he denied that Allah has a nature apart from Allah, but don't ask what that attribute is. With this monotheistic principle, Muhammad bin Abdul Wahab attacked and eradicated all the customs of the Arabs. According to him, people who worship other than Allah SWT have become polytheists and may be killed. (Encyclopedia of Islam, 2001)

In order to strengthen the Islamic creed, al-Gazali also in his book "Ihya Ulum al-Din, states that the Islamic creed should be taught from an early age through several processes, it should start with memorizing, then followed by a process of understanding, after which it is intended with full confidence, and then confirmed with full confidence. (Al Gazali, 1967.)

In the view of Ibn Taimiyah it is stated that, what is meant by tawassul (intercession

held between Allah and the servant) there are three kinds. Two of them are recognized by all Muslims. First, related to faith and Islam. Bertawassul with faith means with Rasulullah saw. Second, pray and ask for intercession, having tawassul with the Prophet when praying' and asking for intercession. People who deny the intercession with the Prophet SAW, then that person is a disbeliever or an apostate, and therefore must repent. If you do not repent, then that person may be killed as an apostate. (Taimiyah, 2001). Therefore, Muhammad bin Abd Wahab in Arabic is known as a very radical person, who does not know the compromise of un-Islamic teachings, and the superstitions associated with popular Sufism. (Jainuri, 2002)

CONCLUSION

Based on some of the descriptions mentioned above, it can be concluded several things as follows: Muhammad bin Abdul Wahab, was the founder of the Wahhabism in Saudi Arabia. The Wahhabi movement is one of the religious movements that seeks to purify Islam from all understandings and practices that have deviated from the actual demands. The difference is only in how to implement and interpret certain issues. The belief for monotheism of Muslims has been contaminated by various things such as superstition, bid'ah and khufarat which can lead the perpetrators to shirk. the revivalist group considered that the monotheism taught by the Prophet Muhammad had been shrouded in khurafat and the ideology of Sufism. Many mosques were abandoned because people tended to decorate themselves with amulets. The birth of the Wahhabi ideology by Muhammad bin Abd Wahab was inseparable from the pro and contra attitudes. The pro group considers this to be careful in practicing religion, especially worship (devotion) to Allah as the purpose of life. On the other hand, those who are against consider it as an extreme thing because many things related to social affairs have been neglected because of bid'ah and polytheistic considerations.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

In accordance with the publishing of this prosiding, I would like to take this opportunity to thank for my lecturer of history of the modern Islamic world, Prof. Dr. Hasaruddin, MAg for his correction and suggestion.

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