

The Practice of Wuquf Qalbi in the Naqshabandiyyah Khalidiyyah Order and the Survey on its Practocele in Malaysia

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Abstract

Wuquf Qalbi in Naqshabandiyyah Khalidiyyah Sufi's order is mainly discussed on this article to evaluate either the practice of Naqshabandiyyah Khalidiyyah's order in the Malay Peninsula nowadays is coherence with the previous renown Naqshabandiyyah's scholars or not. The article also attempts to highlight if any revolution which related to the practice may occur particularly on the Khalidiyyah's order in Malaysia.

Keywords: Wuquf Qalbi; Naqshabandiyyah; Khalidiyyah

Introduction

The practice of wuquf qalbi is one of the eleven pillars of the Naqshabandiyyah Order which is the main guideline to achieve *ma`rifah* Allah. Eight of the eleven pillars has been presented by Shaykh `Abd al-Khaliq al-Ghujdawani (d.575/1179), while the other three pillars were perfected by Shaykh Baha' al-Din Naqshaband (d.791/1388) (Abu al-Zahra' 2002, pp. 37). This article will explain in specific the concept of this practice as portrayed by its figures, to see the importance of the practice in the order's institution. Apart from that, the article will identify its practical implementation in the Naqshabandiyyah Khalidiyyah Order in Malaysia to see the similarities and differences or innovations when compared to the Naqshabandiyyah figures of the past.

The Stature Of Wuquf Qalbi Practice In Naqshabandiyyah Khalidiyyah Order

The wuquf qalbi practice is a pillar introduced by Shaykh Baha' al-Din Naqshaband. He described wuquf qalbi as mandatory for it is the essence of every *dhikr* practice (Abu al-Zahra' 2002, pp. 39). Without the practice each *dhikr* performed will be an empty movement of the tongue and the heart chanting the *dhikr* will be void of any benefits to the chanters (Abu al-Zahra' 2002, pp. 63). Therefore, wuquf qalbi must be in existence throughout the *dhikr* process and in any activities outside the *dhikr* hours (Nizar 1994, pp. 30). As a matter of fact, wuquf qalbi which is also known as *al-hudur*, *al-shuhud*, *al-wusul*, and *al-wujud* among other Naqshabandiyyah figures (al-Harawi, pp. 32) is a practice that is closely related to other pillars introduced by Shaykh `Abd al-Khaliq al-Ghujdawani prior to Shaykh Baha' al-Din (`Abd al-Majid 1997, pp. 355). All terminologies have their own meanings and each is a condition in their own right to be fulfilled by disciples to obtain *ma`rifah* Allah in accordance to their convictions.

The pillars previously mentioned were firstly; disciples must remember Allah (*hudur*) in each exhalation of breath (*hush dardam*); second, the mind and thoughts are not influenced by other than Allah (*nazar bar qadam*); third, migration from condemned behavior to commendable behavior (*safar dar watan*); fourth, the heart must always *hudur* with Allah even when being with the community (*khalwah dar anjuman*); fifth, perpetual *dhikr* using prescribed *dhikr* (*yad kard*); sixth, constant supplication to Allah using a special prayer i.e. *Ilahi Anta Maqsudi wa ridaka matlubi* (*bazkusht*); seventh, protecting the heart from any intruding thoughts other than Allah (*nakah dashat*); eight, to be in constant *hudur* with Allah without being forced (*yad dashat*). Whilst the other two pillars introduced by Shaykh Baha' al-Din Naqshaband other than wuquf qalbi are *wuquf zamani* and *wuquf `adadi*. The meaning of wuquf zamani is a disciple must constantly check his beings every one or two hours, whether he is in the state of remembering Allah or otherwise. Wuquf `adadi is when any disciples performing the *dhikr al-Nafy wa al-'Ithbat*, it must always be in odd numbers (`Abd al-Majid 1997, pp. 355). In reference to various pillars mentioned, it can be said that all meant to fulfill the conditions of wuquf qalbi. Such is due to wuquf qalbi representing the meaning of perpetual remembering of Allah (*dawam al-hudur ma`a Allah*). Therefore, it is not surprising if it is deemed as a pillar of the Naqshabandiyyah Order.

The Concept Of Wuquf Qalbi

The word *wuquf* in Arabic refers to stopping from a walk or standing up (Ibrahim 1987, pp. 356), while the word *qalbi* originates from the word *qalb* which is the heart, then it is connected to *ya' nisbah* to connect the verb stop to the heart. In term of Terminology, *wuquf qalbi* is a symbolic to remembering Allah to a stage of non alertness to other intruding thoughts other than Him (ʿAbd al-Majid 1997, pp. 357). *Wuquf Qalbi* refers to two things done by the disciples. First, the disciples called upon the meaning of each name of Allah chanted, that is He is the Ultimate and Incomparable (al-Baghdadi 2004, pp. 79, al-Khani 1987, pp. 49). The action is to eliminate the intrusion of other thoughts other than Allah. The second step in *wuquf qalbi* is for the disciples to focus all his senses towards his inner heart which is located under the left breast towards the left side (ʿAbd al-Majid 1997, pp. 357). Focusing to the heart does not mean the disciple visualizing the shape of an imaginary heart and facing it (al-Sirhindi 2004, vol. 1, pp. 353). In other word, the sight, hearing, smell, taste and the sense of touch are seem to be focusing on the behavior of the heart drowning in *dhikr*, severing all ties with mundane matters (ʿAbd al-Majid 1997, pp. 357).

Hence, the perfection in the practice of *wuquf qalbi* depends on the ability of the disciple practicing the two actions simultaneously before, during and after the *dhikr*. This is because, to achieve perpetual remembering of Allah in the heart which becomes the talent of a personnel (*nisbah al-hudur*), is unattainable by the disciple without going through *wuquf qalbi* which encompass the two meanings (ʿAbd al-Majid 1997, pp. 357). Therefore, Shaykh ʿUbayd Allah ʿAhrar (d. 895/1489) had concluded that the quintessence of *dhikr* practice is constant remembrance of Allah (*hudur al-qalb ma`a Allah*) (al-Harawi, pp. 49) and the movement of the heart during *dhikr* due to movement or the throbbing of the heart is not the conditions according to Naqshabandiyyah figures. In this case, Shaykh Ahmad al-Faruqi al-Sirhindi (d.1034/1624) affirm that if the *dhikr* of the heart mentioned is the movement of the heart chanting the *dhikr*, then it does not become the prescribed condition, be it during *fana'* or otherwise. In fact the actual must to be in perpetual condition is the presence of the heart in remembering Allah (*hudur al-qalb*) and focusing only on Him, with or without the throbbing of the heart (al-Khani 1989, pp. 49). If the aftermath of *wuquf qalbi* or *hudur al-qalb* is unattainable after *dhikr*, then the disciple must continue with the *dhikr* until the goal is achieved (al-Harawi, pp. 30).

It must be stressed that the concept of perpetual *wuquf qalbi* or *hudur al-qalb* according to Naqshabandiyyah figures, is not total ignorance to other matters other than Allah at all times. What is actually meant is the thought of Allah is the only thought dominating other matters. If indeed there are other thoughts intruding, it does not settle in the heart lest disturbing the disciples focus towards Allah. This is personally admitted by Naqsyabandiyyah figures of the past such as Shaykh ʿAla' al-Din al-ʿAttar (d.898/1492) (ʿAbd al-Majid 1997, pp. 352), Shaykh ʿUbayd Allah ʿAhrar and al-Sirhindi (al-Sirhindi 2004, vol. 1, pp. 159) who described focusing thoughts towards Allah without any other intrusion is really difficult, and may only happen at certain intervals, but never constant (al-Harawi, pp. 33).

The Practical Form Of Wuquf Qalbi According To Naqshabandiyyah Khalidiyyah Order

Shaykh Khalid al-Uthmani (d.1242/1826) who steer the leadership of Naqshabandiyyah Order in the thirteenth century of Hijrah, has introduced a practical form of *wuquf qalbi* in one of his notes that has become a reference of the disciples after his departure. According to him, a disciple whilst starting the *dhikr*, must focus all his senses towards the inner heart known as *latifah al-Qalb*, located at the breadth of two fingers under the left breast. Apart from that, the disciple must also empty their heart to focus their thoughts only towards the meaning of the *dhikr* chanted which is *Allah*, carrying the meaning of *Dhat bila mithal* (Dhat Allah that does not resemble anything). While Muhammad al-Baghdadi (d.1230/1814) and Muhammad al-Khani (d.1279/1862) described it as *Dhatuh Ta`ala al-sarf al-baht* (purely essence divine of Allah Ta'ala) (al-Baghdadi 2004 pp. 80, al-Khani 1989, pp. 49), al-Sirhindi described it as *laysa kamithlih shay'* which also reflect the same meaning (al-Sirhindi 2004 vol. 1, pp. 302).

Therefore, the state of which the heart is in constant reminder of “*dhat Allah that does not resemble anything*” is described as *wuquf qalbi* in the Naqshabandiyyah Khalidiyyah Order. Relatively, Naqshabandiyyah Khalidiyyah figures such as Muhammad al-Baghdadi, Muhammad al-Khani, Amin al-Kurdi (d.1332/1913) and Sulayman al-Zuhdi agrees on the need of achieving *wuquf qalbi* prior to chanting the *dhikr* in the heart (al-Baghdadi 2004, pp.79, al-Khani 1989, pp. 49, al-Kurdi 2005, pp. 292, al-Zuhdi, pp. 3). This means that *wuquf qalbi* must be performed before the *dhikr* process could even begin. Hence, it is understood that the practice is a different process separated from the chanting of the *dhikr*. *Dhikr* according to the practice of the Naqshabandiyyah Khalidiyyah is the repeated chanting of certain *dhikr* words whether *Allah* or *La Ilaha Illa Allah*. While *wuquf qalbi* is the process of remembering the meaning of the words repeated and making it perpetual in memory.

The chanting of *dhikr* performed either by the tongue or the heart will not bring much benefit if the concept of *wuquf qalbi* is not practiced in concert (Abu al-Zahra' 2002, pp. 63). His stature will be the same as a person repeating something to memorize it. But at the same time his heart and his mind is busy with other unrelated matters. The result, he failed to achieve his goal. Thus it can be concluded that *dhikr* is only the mean to achieve the true meaning of *wuquf qalbi* according to Naqshabandiyyah Khalidiyyah Order. The *dhikr* must be in constant concert and harmony without any intervals with *wuquf qalbi*. However if the disciple has to talk due to matters of gravest importance, the practice of *wuquf qalbi* must be prevalent (al-Baghdadi 2004, pp.88, al-Khani 1989, pp. 89). According to Mawlana Shaykh Khalid, another practice that can help the disciple to achieve the result, is by performing the practice of *rabitah al-murshid* along with *wuquf qalbi* without performing *dhikr*. The practice is best performed daily during `Asr for an hour (al-Kurdi 2005, pp.292, Nizar 1994, pp. 30). Surely, by performing this practice the disciple are able to perform two things in concert, i.e. *rabitah al-murshid* and *wuquf qalbi* by taking into account the mannerism and procedures.

Rabitah in this context means recalling the relationship between master and disciple from the aspect that the practice is learnt from the master, the love for the master, the compatibility between disciple and master and all that relate a disciple to the master in general or specifics (Jahid 1997, pp. 255-294). Thus, the performance of both practices instantaneously can be understood through this; disciples while performing the *rabitah* will surrender themselves and believe that *wuquf qalbi* which they are performing is part of *wuquf qalbi*'s perfection graced by Allah for their master. In other word, Allah graced the disciple with a heart that thinks only of Him as He had graced it to his master. After the disciple has been identified by his master as achieving the desired goal of Naqshabandiyyah Khalidiyyah Order, he is entitled to be taught the next step of *dhikr*. The practice of *wuquf qalbi* is not only performed prior to a *dhikr* or during the *dhikr* of *Allah* or *La Ilaha Illa Allah*. The practice can in specific done separately when the disciple achieved the *muraqabah* level according to the practice of Naqshabandiyyah Khalidiyyah Order. Through the writer's observation, there are no notes from any Naqshabandiyyah figures including the Khalidiyyah including al-Sirhindi, Shaykh Khalid, Muhammad al-Khani, Muhammad al-Baghdadi, Amin al-Kurdi on *wuquf qalbi* on that form of practice.

On the contrary, al-Zuhdi is the only known figures to put forward the form of practice in his notes calling it as *dhikr al-wuquf*. He described *dhikr al-wuquf* at this stage through; disciples attending his whole seven *lataif* and focusing his every muscle in his parts of body towards Dhat Allah who can't be described, without forcing himself chanting the *dhikr* Allah. In fact, the disciple is only required to memorize the meaning (al-Zuhdi, 51). With regards to realizing the meaning of *dhikr Allah* during *dhikr*, Naqshabandiyyah figures including the Khalidiyyah like al-Sirhindi, Shaykh Khalid, al-Khani, Muhammad al-Baghdadi and al-Zuhdi (al-Zuhdi, pp. 51), agreed that disciples need only to focus on the specific meaning which is Dhat Allah who resembles nothing. The realization will enable disciples to achieve the goal of Naqshabandiyyah Order's practice which is owning relevance or a special talent known as *al-hudur ma`a Allah* or constant memory with Allah.

Wuquf Qalbi a Tauhidic Realization Technique.

The realization of *wuquf qalbi* paired with *dhikr Allah* or *La Ilaha Illa Allah*, is considered as a preliminary realization that must be achieved by the disciples (al-Baghdadi 2004, pp.79, al-Khani 1989, pp. 49, al-Kurdi pp. 212). Without it, disciples will never achieve the goal of truly knowing Allah. This is because; the purpose of this realization technique is to inculcate a strong conviction in the heart of the disciples on the existence of Allah who can't be described the truth of His existence by any means. The practice if scrutinized is a form of realization to His words: "there is nothing whatever like unto Him" (al-Shura, 42:11). The writer perceives that the realization approach applied in the practice happens gradually. Meaning, disciples at beginner level is guided to inculcate the existence of Allah *wajib al-wujud* which all this while is still vague in the heart as compared to the existence of *mumkin al-wujud*, it feels as though an actual existence firmly rooted in the heart. The approach is seen as a vital process to eradicate all *wahm* (doubt) that prevents the disciple belief towards the true existence of Allah. This is because knowing and believing the existence of dhat Allah is major knot of the faith and quintessence of the faithful and all discussion in Theology with regards to various divine attributes are based on faith for the existence of dhat Allah. Without it, all Greatness and Glory attributed to Him is meaningless.

The Practical Form Of Wuquf Qalbi In Malaysia At Present

The practice of *wuquf qalbi* has also been identified among the Naqshabandiyyah Khalidiyyah in Malaysia at the moment. Most channels of the Order is found to originate from Shaykh `Abd al-Wahhab Rokan (d.1345/1926), Langkat Sumatera, which directly connected to Shaykh Sulayman al-Zuhdi who was once centered at Jabal Abi Qubays, Mecca (Syed 2010, pp.19). Therefore the practice of *wuquf qalbi* taught to practitioner nowadays must by logic have strong relation to the practice introduced by al-Zuhdi himself.

Thus, the practice of *wuquf qalbi* is compulsory in two different times that is during and outside *dhikr* periods. The order to perform *wuquf qalbi* outside *dhikr* hours was mentioned in the statement by Shaykh `Abd al-Wahhab himself found in various notes of his disciples which later became reference to the shaykh of the Order in Malaysia. Among other, his advice is reported to have said:

“ the fifth manner (in *suluk*), to maintain *wuquf qalbi* (eradicate all feelings and thoughts) in any circumstances.” (H. Ahmad, pp. 115)

Another note by his son whom later became the first to take over leadership of the Order from him in Babussalam after his demise is:

“ the way of performing *wuquf qalbi* is two steps, firstly is during our wake never forget dhat Allah wherever we go”. (Fadl Allah 1930, pp. 69)

Shaykh `Umar bin Muhammad (d.1355/1936) from Batu Pahat who is considered among the oldest caliph of Shaykh `Abd al-Wahhab Rokan also make a note on the practice:

“*Wuquf qalbi* means we remember Allah who is none like Him, in an everlasting way regardless of our condition, be it sitting, standing, walking, in the house, eating or drinking, consummating or even when seeking relief, especially during prayers and all act of worship for it is the soul of all worship”. (Umar, pp. 7)

Based on the notes above, it can be stated that the practice of *wuquf qalbi* is an obligation outside *dhikr* period among Naqshabandiyyah Khalidiyyah members in Malaysia. While during *dhikr* or *tawajjuh* occasion, the practice is known to be practiced in two stages. First, prior to starting the *dhikr* be it *dhikr Allah* or *La Ilaha Illa Allah*, and secondly during the *dhikr*. In addition, *wuquf qalbi* is also a level (*maqam*) of *dhikr* to be experienced by the disciples.

With regard to the first stage of *wuquf qalbi*, it is defined as “collecting all identity in the heart, focusing all thought towards Allah Ta`ala who has no Equal” (Fadl Allah 1930, pp. 62). Collecting all identity means all conscience and thoughts of the disciples towards his physical body must be unified in his heart, till he felt himself as only a dot in his heart (Amaluddin, interview). Other definition is also used to describe the meaning of *wuquf qalbi* as “centralizing all definitions to the heart” (Fadl Allah 1930, pp.81), “to focus only on Allah”, “to focus on Allah *laysa kamithlih shay*” (Ishak, pp. 1). All descriptions on the meaning of *wuquf qalbi* describe only one meaning, that is disciple focusing only on Allah. This clearly showed that the practice of *wuquf qalbi* in the Naqshabandiyyah Khalidiyyah Order in Malaysia at present does meet the requirement of the practice according to Naqshabandiyyah and Khalidiyyah figures of the past as described earlier. In reference to the second stage, the practice of *wuquf qalbi* does co-exist with the practice of *dhikr Allah* till the stage a disciple is deemed worthy of *dhikr La Ilaha Illa Allah*, also known as *dhikr Nafy wa al-Ithbat*. The concept of *wuquf qalbi* during *dhikr* is the same as before. The difference between the two stages is only from the aspect of practice where chanting the *dhikr* in the heart does not happen at stage one while at stage two the disciple chant the *dhikr* in concert with the practice of *wuquf qalbi*.

Regarding the *maqam* of *dhikr wuquf qalbi* mentioned, it is a stage of *dhikr* taught to disciples who have undergone *dhikr Nafy wa al-Ithbat* in the Naqshabandiyyah Khalidiyyah Order in Malaysia. Based on the writer's observation, the method is known to be passed down from Shaykh Sulayman al-Zuhdi who spread the practice in Mecca around the thirteen hijri century. The fact was based upon his statement in an article on his notes presented by the author in past discussion. However, there is a little difference in the aspect of execution found in the Naqshabandiyyah Khalidiyyah Order in Malaysia at present. The difference in execution according to the writer might originate from the difference in definition given to the practice. The practice of *wuquf qalbi* at this stage is defined as “gathering all identity towards the seven physical and spiritual parts and focusing all thoughts towards Allah *laysa kamithlih shay*” (Amaluddin, interview) or facing all seven subtle spiritual centers (*al-lataif al-sab`ah*) along with all parts of body towards dhat Allah (Fadl Allah, pp. 67).

Another definition is focusing the seven subtle spiritual centers towards Allah *bila mithal* (Ishak 1986, pp. 4). In scrutinizing the few definitions above, it seems that the first and second definition consist of the same meaning. However there is a little difference in the third definition compared to the two previous definitions. The difference that can be identified is the first and second definition both aspects physical and spiritual which is the body parts and the seven subtle spiritual centers are focused towards Allah. However, referring to the third definition, it seems only the focus towards dhat Allah is emphasized upon only the seven subtle spiritual centers. Based on the understanding, there are two forms of *wuquf qalbi* known to be practiced in Malaysia. First, the execution of *wuquf qalbi* practice upon the first and second definition. Practically, a disciple has to perform *wuquf qalbi* by only focusing his thoughts upon the seven subtle spiritual centers without chanting the *dhikr* in the heart.

The performance thus starts with *latifah al-qalb*, followed by *latifah al-ruh*, *latifah al-sirr*, *latifah al-khafi*, *latifah al-akhfa*, *latifah al-nafs al-natiqah* and *latifah kull al-jasad*. After that *wuquf qalbi* is performed to all physical parts starting from eyes, ears, mouth, hands and so on. The duration of realization is around half an hour for each *lata'if* and physical parts. Thus, each disciple will take about three hours to complete a realization session of *wuquf qalbi* (Amaluddin, interview). There is another technique in realizing *wuquf qalbi* based on the third definition. The practical form is a disciple realizing it through focusing the thought of the seven *lata'if* towards only Allah. However, the practice must be performed in concert with *dhikr Allah* in the heart (Jahid, interview). After observing the different form and technique of the practice, the writer now understand that both technique do agree with the *dhikr al-wuquf* concept presented by Shaykh Sulayman al-Zuhdi previously. The difference is referring to the general and specific aspect contained in each definition. The first and second definition covers the specific aspect mentioned. Under close scrutiny, the definition specifically demands the seven *lata'if* along with all physical part to play their role in focusing the thought towards Allah.

The third definition is considered a general definition because one of the seven *lata'if*, that is *latifah kull al-jasad* contain the physical aspect that covers all the physical parts mentioned in first and second definition. *Latifah kull al-jasad* is the *dhikr* delivery point that covers the whole body starting from head to toe of a disciple (Ishak 1986, pp. 4). Therefore, all physical parts mentioned in the first two definitions are included in the realization of *latifah kull al-jasad*. With regards to the difference in realization technique for *wuquf qalbi* either by chanting Allah along with focusing the thought towards Allah or only focusing the thought towards Allah without *dhikr*, the matter according to the writer is referring to the understanding attained through statements made by Shaykh Sulayman al-Zuhdi on the matter along with referring to the practiced passed down by the teacher leading the Order from one generation to the other. The statement made by Shaykh Sulayman al-Zuhdi on *wuquf qalbi* realization technique is “without forcing self (*takalluf*) in chanting *dhikr Allah*” (al-Zuhdi, pp.51). It is understood that *wuquf qalbi* is not practiced along with *dhikr* chanting the word Allah in the heart.

The statement can also be interpreted as the practice needs to be performed along with *dhikr Allah* in the heart until the state of *wuquf qalbi* emerges in the disciple inner self, then at that moment he no longer has to force himself chanting the word of *dhikr* in his heart. This also means that the disciple must constantly chant the word Allah in his heart in concert with the practice of *wuquf qalbi* until he reach the stage where *dhikr* is no longer forced upon him. Therefore the two techniques are still within the interpretation scope of al-Zuhdi's statement. Regarding the practice of *wuquf qalbi* passed down through Sheikh `Abd al-Wahhab Rokan, the writer finds that the two techniques are practiced by the caliphs after him in Malaysia at present. A branch of the Order originates from Shaykh Yahya Shaykh `Abd al-Wahhab in Babussalam, Sumatera (Amaluddin, interview) while the other is traced to Shaykh `Umar Muhammad from Batu Pahat, Malaysia (Jahid, interview) and both figures are caliphs acknowledged by Shaykh `Abd al-Wahhab Rokan (Fadl Allah 1930, pp. 76).

Conclusion

The practice of *wuquf qalbi* is one of the main fundamentals in Naqshabandiyyah Khalidiyyah because it is instrumental in enabling a person to build the attribute *dawam al-hudur ma'a Allah*, which is the pinnacle of the spiritual journey of the Order. The practice is also performed by members of the Naqshabandiyyah Khalidiyyah in Malaysia and it is in tandem with the concept presented by Naqshabandiyyah Khalidiyyah figures of the past. The difference or innovations in execution technique practiced in Malaysia does not show that it has swayed from the guideline of *wuquf qalbi* practiced shown by its predecessors. Even more the technical difference in the practice which happens in Malaysia is not more than an interpretation or innovation to better suit the needs of its followers.

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- , *Bab Kayfiyyah Dhikr Wuquf Qalbi*, n.p., n.d.

Interview

Amaluddin Noorshah, interviewed on 13th. August 2009, at Padang Rengas, Perak, West Malaysia. He is one of Naqshabandiyyah Khalidiyyah Order's successors in Malaysia.

Jahid bin Haji Sidek, interviewed on 9th. March 2009 at *tawajjuh* ceremony centre situated at Tok Jembal village in Kuala Terengganu, West Malaysia. He is a one of the foremost *shaykh* whose leads the Naqshabandiyyah Khalidiyyah Order in Malaysia nowadays.