Khatam Al-Khawjakan in Naqshabandi Mujaddidi Ahmadi Taught by Shaykh Islam Wan Sulaiman Wan Sidek (D.1354h/1935m)

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Abstract

Khatam al-khawjakan is a Sufi ritual practiced by Naqshabandi Mujaddidi Ahmadi. The ritual becomes a center to gathering Sufi disciples and to increase their spirituality level. Shaykh Islam Wan Sulaiman Wan Sidek is identified to teach this ritual to his disciples. This study aims to expose the way and manual practiced by Wan Sulaiman and his disciples. The methodology of study is historical, textual, observation and interview. The result of the study found that intercession with the pious Sufi masters is permissible in Islam in order to get spiritual aid, strong faith constancy practice of Islamic law and close to Allah

Keywords: Naqshabandi Mujaddidi Ahmadi, Khatam al-khawjakan, Wan Sulaiman.

1. Introduction

Khatam al-Khawjakan is one of the significant rituals in Naqshabandi Order. It is an official assembly physically between masters and their disciples congregationally, in particular days with specific courtesy, conditions, purposes by recitation peculiar Quranic verses and the salutation of the Prophet Muhammad SAW. The reward of those recitations granted to the spirits of Naqshabandi’s masters until to the Prophet Muhammad SAW. It is also a kind of tawassul (intercession) to the spirits of Naqshabandi’s masters in the supplication in order to obtain particular aims to Allah. The word of khatam al-khawjakan is a combination between Arabic and Persian word. The word khatam means sealing and al-khawjakan is a plural word derived from singular Persian word al-khawjah mean master. The combination word of khatam al-khawjakan, thus, it signifies the meaning the sealing of the masters or dhikr al-mashaikh (recollection of masters), where this rite makes the Naqshabandi Order is distinctive from the other Orders rite (al-Kurdi 1994; Durraniqah 1987)

The pioneer of khatam al-khawjakan is originated by shaykh Abdul Khaliq al-Ghujdawani (d.617H/1120M) and being accepted to be performed by afterward Naqshabandi masters until the time of Shaykh Baha al-Din (al-Kurdi 1994). In another source khatam al-khawjakan has been practiced earlier than the time of Shaykh Abdul Khaliq al-Ghujdawani, it has been practiced since the period of Jaafar al-Sadiq (d.148H/765M), Abu Yazid al-Bistami (d.260H/874M), and Abu Hasan al-Kharkhani (d.425H/1034M) until to the period of Shaykh Baha al-Din. They agree that khatam al-khawjakan is utilized as an effective instrument for obtaining a will, removing the horrible test, overcoming enemies and enviers, upgrading the stations, gaining the nearness to God and Divine Illumination (al-Nazili n.d).

Khatam al-khawjakan is performed by the antecedent Naqshabandi masters while in the terrible phenomenon as well as a disaster occurs by preservation properly its condition, neither decreases nor increase the number of particularly recited verses. They use their spiritual intention force to turn down both horrible situation and tragedy from being happened by God’s Will. He also tells the frequent practice khatam al-khawjakan by the late Naqshabandi masters is due to two basis; first, a lot of horrible tragedies and phenomenon occur, second less impact of jazbah (spiritual attraction) among the disciple by the way of silent dhikir. Therefore, khatam al-khawjakan is adept regularly to aid spiritual acceleration and its impact to the disciple throughout the assistance of the spirituality and flood of Naqshabandi’s masters. The repeatedly practice khatam al-khawjakan in mentioned situations seen as permissible and in some occasion is very recommendable if it becomes an effective mean to obtain the ultimate end of the Naqshabandi Order. This implementation never converts the basic principle in Naqshabandi order.
This is because every single disciple in intensifying his soul and spiritual efficacy demand distinctive approach and need (al-Qazani n.d). Naqshabandi masters ritualize *khutum al-khawjakan* not only for gaining reward from Allah, removing the dangers and obtaining goodness but to obtain by means of all masters and their pious righteous deed in order their supplication to Allah is resonant. Besides that, the right also to establish a strong union between disciple’s hearts with their master's hearts (Durraniqah 1987).

2. **Wan Sulaiman’s Manual of Khatam al-Khawjakan**

Wan Sulaiman, Wan Sidek (d.1354H/1935M) as Shaykh Islam and Malay Naqshabandi master wrote the manual of *khutum al-khawjakan* (seal of the masters) in his Jawi script epistle *Nihayah al-Matlab Litasfiyyah Aal-Qulub*, Completed in 30 Jamad al-Akhir 1337H/ 2 April 1919M. For Wan Sulaiman’s *khutum al-khawjakan* in Naqshabandi Mujadidi Ahmadi is a medium for a daily meeting between Shaykh and his disciples congregationally in three times subsequent of particular obligatory prayers like after midday (zuhur) or afternoon (‘asr), evening (maghrib) and dawn (subh). In fact *khutum al-khawjakan* is the instrument for physical companionship (suhbah) between shaykh and disciples and a way to get Jamiyyah (the union of the heart on total presence of Allah), and as recollection ceremony as well as an Islamic scholarly assembly for disciple to get an adequate lesson and message as required in Islam. The conditions and courtesy to attend *khutum al-khawjakan* in Wan Sulaiman’s approach are one must have proper ablution, having a proper dressing covering the body, only member of Sufi order can attend but in certain situation non-member can attend by the permission of shaykh. *Khutum al-khawjakan* not only allows for male disciples, but it is permissible as well for disciples from a female with specific separated location. It is not required to close eyes in all time unless when to begin *tawajjuh* (spiritual concentration) and recollection of *dhikr sirr* (silent remembrance) and *muraqabah* (contemplation) (Wan Sulaiman 1337H: 23-27).

Wan Sulaiman reveals the way to practice seal of the masters. It is equal to the practice of companionship (suhbah). It denotes meeting with the shaykh every day three times, namely after dawn, midday and evening prayers. The way is the shaykh recites slowly *al-fatihah* one time by distributing small stones to those who are present. Then reciting salutation of the Prophet one hundred times and five hundred times *subhana Allah* *walamdulillah wa la ilaha illa Allah wa Allahu akbar* and one hundred-time salutation of the Prophet by giving its reward to Shaykh Ahmad Sa’id (d.1288H/1871M) (Wan Sulaiman 1337H). After that reciting the salutation of the Prophet one hundred times and five hundred times: *rabbii la tazarni fardan wa anta khairu al-warithin* and one hundred time salutation of the Prophet to Shaykh Muhammad Umar (d.1298H/1881M) radiyallah anhu. Subsequently, the seals of the masters are commenced by reading *al-fatihah* seven times, the salutation of the Prophet one hundred times, *al-nashrah* seventy-nine times, *qul huwallah ahad* one thousand times, *al-fatihah* seven times and salutation of the Prophet one hundred times by rewarding it to all the spirits of the grand masters. Afterwards salutation of the Prophet one hundred times and five hundred times *la haula wala quwwata illa billah* and salutation of the Prophet one hundred times to hadrah al-Imam al-Rabbani (d.1034H/1624M) radiyallahu ‘anhu (Wan Sulaiman 1337H:).

Then five hundred times *Ya Allah ya rahman ya rahim ya arham ya rahimin wasallallahu ‘ala saidina Muhammad* to Shaykh Abd Allah al-Dihlawi (d.1239H/1824M) radiyallah anhu. After finishing the recitation, the spiritual concentration established by the shaykh to his disciple at least one hour or thirty minutes within the *muraqabah* (contemplation) period. When the shaykh recites *wa al-alhamdulillah rabb al-‘alam* the meeting is finished. This companionship (suhbah) and meeting are performed after dawn prayer (subh). If the disciple attains a spiritual experience, he must complete his inner concentration (Wan Sulaiman 1337H).

For the meeting after midday prayer, recitation of salutation of the prophet one hundred times, five hundred *habshuna allahu wa ni‘ma al-wakil* and salutation of the Prophet one hundred times to Shaykh Abd al-Qadir al-Jilani (d.561H/1166M)) qaddas sirruhu. Salutation of the Prophet one hundred times, five hundred times *ya khafiyyu al-lutfi adrikni bilutfika al-khafi* and salutation of the Prophet one hundred times to Shah Naqshaband al-Shaykh Muhammad Baha al-Din Naqshabandi (d.791H/1389M) radiyallahu ‘anhu. Salutation of the Prophet one hundred times, five hundred times *la ilaha illa anta subhanaka inni kuntu min al-dhalimin* and salutation of the Prophet one hundred times to Shaykh Muhammad Ma’sum (d.1078H/1668M) radiyallahu ‘anhu. Then spiritual concentration is made similarly after dawn. (Wan Sulaiman 1337H).
makmum by Wan Sulaiman’s disciples. The situation of shaykh and his disciples, and the companionship (suhbah) of Prophet Muhammad gives the benefit to attain the purpose (Wan Sulaiman 1337H).

Their (company) to qalb (silent remembrance) in (contemplation). All shaykh and all disciples. While hundred times to one time. It seems the number is decreased to minima numbers as rukh nashrah and Quranic verse five times. Likewise the recitation of salutah above. The prayer robe for counting recollection (al huruf) is finished, all these recitations recited as well by all disciples correspondently with a low voice. After those recitations are completed, the shaykh says ‘amin’ loudly by raising his both hand and proceeded by all devotees to raise their hand as well as a supplication to grant its reward to shaykh Abd al-Qadir al-Mahd al-Qadir. The shaykh says in his supplication in Arabic expression ausili Allah thawab min hazihi al-qira’ah ila al-ruh Abd al-Qadir al-Mahd al-Qadir radyiullah ‘anhu. Then, the recitation continues with salutation and different Quranic verses premeditated for another specific shaykh and salutation according to the manual setup by Wan Sulaiman above. The prayer robe for counting recollection (tasbih) is also used by shaykh and disciple, particularly in silent recollection in all subtleties subsequent to the seal of the masters. Even though in Wan Sulaiman’s writing located salutation and Quranic verse recited in a hundred times, but in reality, the shaykh only recites salutation one time and Quranic verse five times. Likewise the recitation of al-ikhas from one thousand times time to ten times, al-nashrah from seventy nine times to one time, al-fatihah from seven time to one time a salutation from one hundred times to one time. It seems the number is decreased to minima numbers as rukhsah (accommodation) to all shaykh and all disciples. While khatam al-khawjakan begins, the eye is open until it finish. When the entire recitation of khatam al-khawjakan is finished, all disciples are required to close their eyes completely for tawajjuh (spiritual concentration) and recollection of dhikr sirr (silent remembrance) as well as muraqabah (contemplation). In this time, no rabitah (heart bond) is applied by visualizing shaykh’s image. It is sufficient for the physical existence of the shaykh body before the disciples. Every disciple will begin to recollect dhikr sirr (silent remembrance) in latifah (subtle) according to a lesson given by shaykh before and his final latifah (subtle). For instance, if a disciple is still the practice of latifah al-akhla (hidden most subtlety, he begins from latifah al-qalb (heart subtlety) until to latifah al-ahkfa (highest subtlety). Similarly for those who are in muraqabah station, if the disciple is experiencing the final muraqabah (contemplation) such as mahabbah al-thaniyah (second contemplation), he will recollect beginning from dhikir al-sirr (silent remembrance) in all lataif (subtleties), then eventually undergo from muraqabah al-ahadiyyah (contemplation of oneness), al-ma’iiyyih, (company) to aqabbiyyah (closeness), mahabbah al-ul (first love) and lastly mahabbah al-thaniyah (second love). Their eyes will be open when shaykh says walhamdulillahrabbl Alamin (praise be upon to Allah).
After that the shaykh recites the supplication asking for him and his disciple with the blessing and mercy of Naqshabandi masters to give them their spiritual flood, assistance, granting beneficence of their knowledge and secret, their breath, binding with their crowd and not removing them from their cluster, perpetual preservation in Islamic law, path of the Prophet and Naqshabandi order. However, the content of supplication can be added with any relevant expression with the purpose to seek Allah’s pleasure (Abu Yazid n.d).

Meanwhile, nafi wa al-istibat by controlling the breath and tahil verbally are not performed in khatam al-khawjakan. Both are implemented individually in other convenient time separately. As observed after reciting the supplication as an indication in completing khatam al-khawjakan, the shaykh observes by his insight to all disciples level and their spiritual progression in order to give and upgrade them with a new lesson of dhikr, nafi wa istihbat, tahil lisan and muraqabah. Every new lesson of dhikr is taught verbally by shaykh as permission for the disciple to change his former dhikr or muraqabah to a new one. The permission and lesson taught given in the Malay language like; I permit you like as I were permitted by my teacher to upgrade the dhikr to latifah al-akhfa located in the middle of “one hundred times a day”. This procedure also applied to other rituals such as nafi wa istihbat, tahilil and muraqabah. The disciple must respond in contract form, I accept it. If someone, a new student intends to participate in Sufi order, he will be given oath by syahk after fulfilling the precondition like establishing istikhara prayer (need of guidance on an issue) in three days before.

Besides that, if any disciple is identified by shaykh suitable for the appointment to the station of khalifah and Irshad to teach and lead the Sufi order, it would be held after the khatam. After all, shaykh gives any proper lesson to all salik like reciting any Quranic verse, or Hadith of the Prophet SAW or any relevant lesson from the prominent scholars as a lesson, teaching, reminding and warning to all disciples to be maintained in pious deed and sustaining in the Islamic law and path of the prophet and by always doing constant riyahah (exercise) and mujahadah (striving). It is also become medium for all disciples to make a discussion with shaykh relating to all issues including religion and worldly matters on how to deal with both according to Islamic viewpoints. Haji Ahmad Rabat one of the heirs of Wan Sulaiman teaches Sufi book entitled siyar al-salikin and other books after khatam al-khawjakan to his disciple. The lesson is impact as knowledge is the leader to practice. In fact the way of a Naqshabandi order deals between shaykh and the disciple by al-Ijada (give a lesson) and al-istijada (take lessons) (Othman interview: 2011)

Generally, the practice of basic khatam al-khawjakan in Naqshabandi Mujadidi Ahmadi taught by Wan Sulaiman is similar to the basic practice of khatam al-khawjakan in Naqshabandi Mujadidi Khalidi or rather known as Naqshabandi Khalidi. The similarity is both share basic recitation of khatam al-khawjakan such as al-fatihah, selawat, al-nashrah, al-ikhlas, al-fatihah and selawat with very tiny different in its number. However in several aspects of implementations, there are differences between them. For instance, the disciples of Naqshabandi Khalidi of Abdul Wahab Rokan (d1344H/1926M). They begin with istighfar (forgiveness) in the beginning and ending with salawat of the Prophet Muhammad SAW or rab al-adim and recitation of the selected Quranic verses. They apply rabitah (heart bond) by visualizing shaykh image even the shaykh bodily existed in khatam. Besides that, the position between shaykh and disciple is held in a circle form and siting left tawarruk against the right tawarruk in prayer and no stranger is allowed to join the ceremony. And the hierarchy of students sitting are done according to seniority of the disciple. They close their eyes in the entire recitations Khatam and recollecting tahil al-lisan congregationally after khatam (Abdul Manam 2003).

The restriction of the stranger or outsider (non-disciple of sufi order) from entering the khatam is restricted in Naqshabandi Khalidi’s mainstream. Their folk are based on the hadith of the Prophet narrated by Tibrani, Ahmad and al-Bazzar that while gathering the companion for recollections, the Prophet closes the door from the observation of any outsiders. Ubaydullah al-Ahrar (d.895H/1490M) and Abu Yazid al-Bistami (d.874H/1469M) also restrict the outsiders from entering their gathering ritual as their being interrupt their heart from perpetual union with the presence of Allah. The disallowance for outsiders to enter the ceremony rather as prevention step from being mocked by the outsider that invites the God’s anger toward them. It is in line with Islamic legal maxim, dar’ al-mafsadah mugaddam min jaib al-maslahah (removal the destruction is given priority than gaining the goodness) (al-Khani 1996).

However, Wan Sulaiman has different approach than master from Naqshabandi Khalidi’s tradition. The approach of Wan Sulaiman to do khatam al-khawjakan can be seen by people has his own justification. He seems to teach the people that Naqshabandi ritual is good and give benefit to all people regardless of age, sex, living or even death people.
Naqshabandi masters like Abdullah al-Dahlawi make his ceremonial ritual without closing the door in his cloister. Similar way practiced by masters from Ahmad Sirhindi’s descendants and other masters that they perform the Naqshabandi’s ceremony in the hall of Masjid al-Haram openly and their own cloisters (al-Khani 1996).

This is looked not against their rule and courtesy in Naqshabandi’s practice. Thus Wan Sulaiman’s approach is not against with the practice of his prominent masters. It is rather a matter of different ways of performance by each master who has their own justification in educating their disciples and society as well. This is strengthened by the fact that Wan Sulaiman has been influenced by his masters’ approach as well. Wan Sulaiman’s masters mostly came from the bloody descendent of Ahmad al-Sirhindi like Abu Said, Ahmad Said and Muhammad Umar. All of them are outstanding scholars and Naqshabandi masters identified truly their descendent up to Ahmad Sirhindi and carry out his valuable Sufis heritage and knowledge. Not only Wan Sulaiman openly practice khatam al-khwajakan, the similar practice of khatam al-khwajakan recited openly by the disciples of Qadiriyah wa al-Naqshabandiyyah of Ahmad Khatib al-Sambas (d. 1292H/1875M) in a centre of al-Inabah, one of the non-Governmental Drug rehabilitation centre in Kuala Nerang, Kedah. Thus, the restriction for outsiders and to close the door in Naqshabandi’s gathering ritual is not the absolute instruction. It can be perceived in vast connotation. It depends on to Naqshabandi grandmasters understanding to look the beneficence of Naqshabandi’s ritual toward their current society

In Wan Sulaiman’s manual of a seal of the masters, many grand masters such as Shaykh Abd al-Qadir al-Jilani, Baha al-Din al-Naqshabandi, Ahmad al-Sirhindi Muhammad Macsum, Abd Allah al-Dilhawi, Abu Hanifah, Aishah, and Muhammad Andakhawi al-Bukhari are included. However, Naqshabandi Khalidi rituals in Malaysia today, do not include those grand masters in their khatam al-khwajakan (Abdul Manam 2003). The seal of the masters in Naqshabandi Mujadidi Ahmadi’s manual continues after the death of Wan Sulaiman. It is determined for him a specific Quranic verse to be recited and granted its reward to him in khatam al-khwajakan. Abdul Mannan al-Tahir is the second generation of Wan Sulaiman. He is the student and successor of Ahmad Ribat, the direct heir of Wan Sulaiman. Wan Sulaiman’s seals of the masters are recited with a salutation to Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) one hundred times and Quranic verse five hundred times, rabbana amana bima anzalta wa taba’na al-rasula faktubna ma al-shahidin. Wan Sulaiman’s seal is exercised after evening prayer (Abdul Mannan 1976).

Besides that, his later successor also has a specific Quranic verse to be recited after their death as agreed unanimously while living between the master and his disciple. The master’s seal is exercised after the death of the master not while he is living. For example, the seal for Ahmad Ribat is ritualized by reciting salutation of the Prophet (PBUH) one hundred times and five hundred five hundred recitation of rabbi habli hukman wa al-hiqni bi al-salihin. For Abdul Mannan al-Tahir, a successor of Ahmad Ribat, salutation of the Prophet (PBUH) is recited in one hundred times and Quranic verses five hundred times, rabbana afaq *alaina sabran watawaffana muslimin. Both seals are recited after midday prayer (Abdul Mannan 1976). The tradition in determining specific Quranic verse for the masters and granting it rewards to them in seals of the masters is not practiced in the Naqshabandi Khalidi tradition in Malaysia.

Another unique among the seal of the masters in Wan Sulaiman is, he does not only list Naqshabandi master but also al-Qadiris masters such as Abd al-Qadir al-Jilani and Abd al-Rahman Mahd al-Qadiri. This practice not rare and against the spiritual rule as al-Qadiri’s chain also associates to Naqshabandi spirituality via Ali bin Abi Talib. Shaykh Abd al-Qadir al-Jilani has several ways and spiritual floods to the companions and the Prophet. One is throughout his famous chain from his master Shaykh Abu Sacid al-Mubarak al-Baghdadi al-Makhrimi (d.513H/1119M) until to Ali bin Abi Talib (d.40H/661M) and the Prophet Muhammad SAW (d.11H/632M). He also has chain meeting with to several companions such as Abd Allah b. Umar (d.73H/693M) and Abd Allah b. Abbas (d.67H/687M) until to the Prophet, Muhammad SAW throughout his chain from Abi al-Khitab Mahfuz al-Kadani.

Besides that, he also has spiritual connectivity to Abu Bakar al-Siddiq throughout his masters, Abi al-Wafa al-Kurdi (d.500H/1107M), Abu Muhammad al-Shanbaki and Abu Bakar b Hawari al-Sarju who meets Abu Bakar al-Siddiq (d.13H/634M) by spiritual way or known in Sufi’s terminology Uwaysiyyah. It is also strengthened his chain to Abu Bakr al-Siddiq in direct meetings throughout his another chain from Jafar al-Sadiq (d.165H/768M), Abu al-Qasim bin Muhammad ibn Abu Bakar (107H/725M), Salman al-Farisi (d.33H/654M) who directly meeting Abu Bakar al-Siddiq (al-Sanusi 1954).
However, another distinctive feature of Wan Sulaiman’s seal of the masters is his inclusion of Aishah R.A, the wife of the Prophet (PBUH) among the masters in Naqshabandi spirituality. It is identified that Aishah narrated the hadith of the Prophet on the advantage of silent recollection that becomes the trademark in Naqshabandi practices. Aishah narrated the Prophetic saying that he said: “Silent recollection is superior because it cannot be heard by the angels. It is granted to seventy times reward. In the Day of Judgment, Allah asks the angels, whether they have recorded all people deed. They reply that nothing is missing in their record which they knew. Allah replies that for one is a hidden deed that the angels do not know. It is a deed that only. He knows and gives a reward. Indeed, it is silent recollection” (Abu Ya’la. Kitab Musnad Abi Ya’la, bab musnad Aishah radiyallah ‘anha)

Abu Hanifah is also included as many great masters in Naqshabandi order are the adherers of Hanafi School such as Muhammad Parsa (d.822H/1419M), Muhammad al-Baqi (d.1011H/1603M), Ahmad al-Sirhindi (d.1034H/1624M) and others (Abu Zahrah 1947; al-Sirhindi, n.d.). It is believed by Naqshabandi masters that all four jurists, namely Abu Hanifah (d.150H/767M), Malik bin Anas (d.179H/795M), Muhammad b Idris al-Shafi’i (d.204H/820M) and Ahmad b. Hanbal (d.240H/855M) participated in Sufism. Abu Hanifah and Malik took an oath from Ja’far al-Sadiq (d.165H/768M) whereas Shafi’i and Ahmad got the oath from Shaykh Ma’ruf al-Kharkhi (d.199H/815M) (Yahya 1990).

3. Conclusion

In sum, Wan Sulaiman’s seals of the masters had a pivotal function as a medium for educating disciples and society. His application, however, differs to Naqshabandi Khalidi. It seems that the seals of the masters taught by Wan Sulaiman is more comprehensive covering not only; it’s basic but also masters, indicating what nothing is missing in their record which they knew. Allah

Reference