BOOK REVIEW

Kritik Nalar Arab: Muhhamad 'Abid Al-Jabiri. Yogyakarta: LKiS. 2018
By Abdul Mukti Rouf

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CRITIQUE OF ARAB REASON; EPISTEMOLOGY OF ISLAMIC AWAKENING

Reading the book *Critique of Arab Reason of Muhammad Abid Aljabiri* from the writings of Abdul Mukti Ro'uf requires sufficient intellectual energy. This book is classified as fairly serious research. Its material objects that touch the historical and philosophical aspects that are integrated together make the reader trapped and faced with the arguments of the great figures of the Islamic world with various dynamics that take place in it. Perhaps the involvement of the great figures of the Islamic world is an inevitable choice. Even not only the great figures of internal Islamic community, but a number of large external figures who concentrate in Islamic studies are also involved to present sharp analysis with sufficient weight in breaking down Al-Jabiri's great thought.

Broadly speaking, the weight of the analysis selected by the author above is equal to the big issue raised, namely about *turats* and modernity. The author began his writing with a "provocative" argument in the form of a simple argument "*kaifa nata'ammal ma'a turats*". This sentence is chosen from the simplicity of his words, but has a spirit of continuity which breaks through especially those related to the trend of contemporary Islamic thought. Next, the weight of the analysis of the study in this book is also equal to the figure of al-Jabiri himself who has an intellectual position as a philosopher who often gets praise on one side and also often gets sharp criticism on the other.

In fact, Abdul Mukti's study can be classified into three large segments. First, regarding al-Jabiri's thought on turats issues as a contemporary Arab-Islamic discourse. Second, the position of al-Jabiri's thought in mapping up contemporary Islamic thought. Third, the contribution and implications of al-Jabiri's thought on the issues of turats toward the ideas and movements of the contemporary Arab-Islamic revival.

Discourse on Reading Turats

Reading al-Jabiri's thought cannot be separated from the reading of Arab reason in His magnum opus, *Naqd al-ʿAql al-ʿArabi*. The term *aql* becomes the starting point of a very serious conversation that is connected to the question of the identity and existence of the Arabs who are confronted with the achievements of the Modern West. Al-Jabiri suspected that the Arab system of reason was too dependent on past authority (turats) which later caused the Arabs to bow before the West, especially in the 1967 war.

Abdul Mukti in this study was very ambitious to uncover the fundamental issues of the Arab-Islamic slump as a representation of the Islamic world. On the other hand, the empowerment of the West is the trigger for the emergence of the idea of resurrection (*nahdah*) which is also a consideration that cannot be excluded. These two sides seem to signify the present and past realities of Arab-Islam. The past is a tradition (*turats*) while the present reality is Western advancement. Self Ciriticism and the spirit of Islamic Resurgence are two manifestation movements of the discourse of self-reading and the reflection of the advanced West.

Between criticism and discourse, turats has been as an important component to unravel criticisms, while modernity in this context is the starting point toward awakening. The direction of the movement and foothold led to the change and reconstruction of the world of Arab-Islam after Arab Defitism in 1967. This is where scholars have a variety of views on the issue of turats and modernity in the context of the Arab-Islamic awakening.

Mapping the views of scholars regarding turats and modernity can be divided into three major groups. First, a group that offers ideal-totalistic discourse. The main feature of this group directs consciousness to the glory of the past and is presented in total to the present. The debate of authenticity (*al-ashalah*) has become the main axis and flag by overriding all views of modernity.

Sayyid Qutb, Hasan al-Banna and al-Maududi are often categorized as central figures of this group. The thought principle developed by a number of these figures is to place Islam as a complete ideology for every Muslim both personally and in communal life. So the issues related to the paradigm of thinking and behaving in private and public spaces, individuals and society must fully refer to Islam without the possibility of other alternatives. Next, the Qur'an is placed as the basis of life in a literal sense and ignores aspects of the context both in the past and the current needs.

This glimpse of the ideal of totalistic thought is similar to that developed by traditionalists who use the model of *al-fahmu at-Turats li al-Turats* (a literal and traditional understanding of tradition). The general characteristic of this

model involves only the past issues as an established reality without making criticism at all by presenting tradition as part of historical construction. The next consequence is that this group will narrate the negative stigma of all things that are new and foreign by always being melancholic about the past.

Second, the transformative group. This group wants liberalization by using Western traditions as a measure to define turats. Taha Hussein (1889-1973) and Salamah Musa (1887-1958) were in this group. The most prominent theory used by this group is Historical Heretagial dialectics. Simply put, the theory is that turats itself exists in the historical arena, so dialectical relations in social issues such as economics and politics must be involved in understanding turats. The extreme fundamental features of this group are truly in the West's domination with the utmost marginalization of tradition for the sake of modernity.

Third, the Reformistic group. Hasaan Hanafi is one of the leaders of this group with a discourse proposed with a number of sufficient considerations. Hasan Hanafi views that turats and current needs are two elements that cannot exclude each other. Turats and its relation to tradition has become a force that cannot be eliminated by the presence of the character of the Arab-Islamic community. Next, the Western spirit which gave birth to the modernization of thoughts and challenges of the Muslims themselves is also a consideration to reinterpret turats. In the same spirit, this is the group where al-Jabiri is also part of, of course with different characters and discourses, such as linearity lines that compliment each other from the reformistic discourse and spirit.

Abid al-Jabiri's Epistemic Interpretation of Turats

Using the term *episteme* in the context of the study of al-Jabiri's thought is a consequence of all the discourses presented by al-Jabiri, which directly really concentrates on Arab-Islamic reasoning. Its clarity with modernity and the number of contexts of Arab-Islamic backwardness as compared to the West are not urgent to leave the turats at all. Indeed, al-Jabiri made turats the root of consciousness, culture and the most authentic identity. The deterioration in al-Jabiri's assumptions is caused by the way to understand and enforce turats. Here lies the assertion that al-Jabiri concentrated on the philosophical episteme elements.

It is not easy to elaborate a system of thought (episteme) that moves toward reform. The historical concern over the bacwardness and the direction of the goals which are the ideals are two considerations to clarify what has happened and where to move. So on that consideration, al-Jabiri began his project of

he critique of Arab reason. This is where an encounter between reflection of failure and resurrection ambition takes place. Thus, the critique made by al-Jabiri is a big agenda that seeks to reconstruct the basic principles by rereading history and relativity and progressive views to build the future.

In the process of elaborating the episteme of the turats intepretation, al-Jabiri carried out a series of criticisms not only at epsiteme which had already proceeded in the midst of Muslims, al-Jabiri took very basic criticisms starting from tahlil takwin al-aql Arabi which contained historical critique of analysis, epistemological and ideological processes, and then in the *tahlil al-Bunyawi* which contains explanations and criticisms of epitemological models that once lived in the Arab-Islamic tradition.

In examining the thought of al-Jabiri that is very complex, Abdul Mukti succeeded in explaining together the dynamics of each stage. For example, at the Bunya Aql Arabi stage there were a number of sharp criticisms on Bayani, Irfani and Burhani's reasoning, even though al-Jabiri had to take sides with the Burhani reasoning model with its influence on the ideas developed by Western Muslim thinkers, such as Ibn Hazm, as-Sahtibi, Ibn Ruayd and Ibn Khaldun. These alignments are implicit alignments with respect to ratios and sensory experiences that do not contradict with revelation. This is where objectivity serves as one of the most possible measures to bridge the divine ideological elements. Simply put, the basic construct of epsiteme is based on reality to text.

Alignment to the ratio cannot immediately place al-Jabiri part of a transformative group. Al-Jabiri prefers reformative patterns while still giving appreciation to turats as a historical achievement. On the other hand, al-Jabiri also takes input from the insights of liberal contemporary interpretation from outside (*alfahm alhhariji lil turats*) in a very selective manner through the process of harmonization and dialectics between modernity and turats. As a key method in taking the old and adopting from the outside, there are at least three methods offered by al-Jabiri, namely, hermeneutics, critique and deconstruction.

Presumably Abdul Mukti here did not only succeed in understanding in detail the epsiteme of interpreting and using al-Jabiri turats, but he could simplify it in one argument on one popular adage i.e. *al-muhafadhah 'ala qadimi al-sholeh wal akhdzu biljadidil ashlah*. One simple argument has two meanings at the same time, one being the episteme of understanding turats, while the other a bridge between the past, reality and ambitions of future awakening.