



**THE CONCEPT OF *TASBĪH AL-ĀLAM*  
(UNIVERSE'S GLORIFICATION):  
A Comparative Study of Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī's and Ibn  
'Arabī's Interpretations**

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**Abstract:** In the Islamic doctrine, Allah is the creator, while the universe including human beings is the creatures. The universe glorifies Allah. Glorification is the proof of the universe's obedience to Allah. The study aims to shed light on how the universe performs such a glorification. This article examines the concept of *tasbih al-ālam* proposed by Muḥammad bin al-Ḥusayn Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī (544 H/1149 AD – 606 H/1209 AD), a rationalist, in his book *Tafsīr al-Kabīr aw Mafātiḥ al-Ghayb* and compares it with that of Muhyiddin Ibn 'Arabī (560 H/1149 AD), a mystical interpreter, in his book *Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-Karīm*. This study shows that there are distinct processes and ways of how the universe commends to God. According to Ibn Arabī, the commendation by the universe is the process of getting annihilation and the unfiction of existence (*wahdah al-wujūd*); while al-Rāzī clarifies that the process itself is in metaphoric meaning (*majāzi*) contingent upon the condition of each part of the universe.

**Keyword:** Universe, Glorification, Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī, Ibn 'Arabī

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## Introduction

THE QUR'AN expounds that there are two kinds of reality, namely physical and metaphysical.<sup>1</sup> Physical reality is something that can

<sup>1</sup> Rohimin, *Metodologi Ilmu Tafsir dan Aplikasi Model Penafsiran* (Yogyakarta: Pustaka Pelajar, 2007), 86.

be apprehended through empirical experience.<sup>2</sup> This includes physics and science to measure,<sup>3</sup> analyzing data critically,<sup>4</sup> and then concluding rationally.<sup>5</sup> So, logical reasoning has a very strategic and important position. Meanwhile, metaphysics is the reality beyond human experience or perception and cannot be proven through scientific observation. It is metaphysical part that needs the approach of faith. The Qur'an uses the word "al-ghayb" for this reality.<sup>6</sup>

The creatures can be divided into two parts, namely animate and inanimate. Nevertheless there is no clear explanation concerning how those parts and realities of universe glorify God. According to Islamic doctrine, the universe glorifies God. This study attempts to examine how the glorification takes place.

To explore the problem, the author proposes a comparative study of two Muslim interpreters' understanding of the concept of universe glorification. The first interpreter is Muḥammad bin al-Ḥusayn Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī (544 H/1149 AD – 606 H/1209 AD). He is the author of *Tafsīr al-Kabīr aw Mafātiḥ al-Ghayb*,<sup>7</sup> a well-known of rational interpretation (*tafsīr bi al-ra'yī*).<sup>8</sup> The second

<sup>2</sup> The observation towards this universe is important, because of several reasons; first, Allah is the creator of this universe; second, because of interpreting Qur'an is not easy. Mohammad Nor Ichwan, *Tafsir Ilmiy: Memahami Al-Qur'an Melalui Pendekatan Sains Modern* (Yogyakarta: Menara Kudus, 2004), 239.

<sup>3</sup> Ahmad Baiquni, *Al-Qur'an, Ilmu Pengetahuan dan Teknologi* (Yogyakarta: Dana Bhakti Wakaf, 1995), 28.

<sup>4</sup> The understanding towards universe is supported by science as the association of human knowledge about universe that was came by expert's consensus in recapitulating rationally of critical analysis result towards measurement data that got from observation in universe's phenomenon. *Ibid.*, 58.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, 28.

<sup>6</sup> Rohimin, *Metodologi Ilmu*, 86.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, 82.

<sup>8</sup> This interpretation also called *Tafsir bi al-dirayah* (interpretation based on knowledge) or *Tafsir bi al-ma'qul* to all interpreters that rely on their individual interpretation (*ijtihad*) and they did not based in story (*riwayat*) of prophet's companions and followers. Their basic interpretation is language, Arabian culture that contains in every verse, science of language style and cognizance for the importance of science that will be need by them which want to interpret Koran. Thameem Ushama, *Metodologi Tafsir Al-Qur'an Kajian Kritis, Objektif, & Komprehensif* (Jakarta: Riora Cipta, 2000), 13; See also Frank Griffel, "On Fakhr Al-Dīn Al-Rāzī's Life and the Patronage He Received," *Journal of Islamic Studies* 8, no.

scholar is Muhyiddīn Ibn 'Arabī (560 H/1165 AD – 638 H/1124 AD),<sup>9</sup> the author of a famous work *Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-Karīm* or *Tafsīr Ibn 'Arabī*,<sup>10</sup> one of the best works of mystical approach in the field of Quranic exegesis (*tafsīr iṣhārī*).<sup>11</sup>

So far, there has been no specific study on this topic of inquiry that looks at these two works comparatively. Nevertheless, there are some previous studies that worth mentioning here because they are relevant to the topic this present study. The first is *Shawrun min Tasbih al-Kā'inat lillāh* by Zaghlul An-Najjar. This book illustrates *tasbih al-'alam* (universe's glorification). In this book, the author uses analytical science to prove *tasbih al-'alam* (universe's glorification) toward Allah.<sup>12</sup> The second is *al-Tahriq Ila al-Jannah al-Istighfār wa al-Tasbih* by Nishwah al-Ulwānī. One chapter of this book discusses *tasbih* (glorification), where the author explains about the method of *tasbih al-'ālam* (universe's glorification) from general Qur'anic perspective.<sup>13</sup> The other work discussing the topic of universe glorification is *Bahkan Jagat Raya Pun Bertasbih: Ilustrasi Alunan Tasbih dari Gerak Atom Hingga Rotasi Galaksi* by Ahmad Syawqi Ibrahim. This book contains forms of glorification by the creatures in this great universe. It is the truth and miracle that drive amazements for the faithful. Syawqi Ibrahim opens up our consciousness by fusing the comprehension

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<sup>13</sup> (September 2007): 313–344; Tariq Jaffer, *Razi: Master of Qur'anic Interpretation and Theological Reasoning* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2015).

<sup>9</sup> William C. Chittick, *The Sufi Path of Knowledge: Ibn al-'Arabi's Metaphysics of Imagination*, trans. Ahmad Nidjam (Yogyakarta: Qalam, 2001), 4.

<sup>10</sup> Ushama, *Metodologi Tafsir*, 83.

<sup>11</sup> Mystical interpretation is identical with *tafsīr al-iṣhārī*, it is an interpretation method of Koran that is more emphasize in studying the esoteric and allegorical meaning. The interpreters that follow this inclination usually comes from mystical class that is more emphasize the problems of spiritual moral than external and real problem. Abd. Muin Salim, *Metodologi Ilmu Tafsir* (Yogyakarta: Teras, 2005), 44; On the influence of Ibn Arabi on Arabic literature, see Alexander Knyshev, "Sufi Motives in Contemporary Arabic Literature: The Case of Ibn Arabi," *The Muslim World* 86, no. 1 (January 1996): 33–49.

<sup>12</sup> Zaghlul al-Najjar, *Shawrun min Tasbih al-Kā'inat lillāh*, trans. Faisal Saleh (Egypt: Nahdet Misr, 2003).

<sup>13</sup> Nishwah al-Ulwānī, *Rahasia Istighfar dan Tasbih Amalan Mulia untuk Meniti Jalan Akhirat*, trans. Faisal Hadi el-Sutha (Jakarta: Pustaka al-Mawardi, 2008).

sharpness toward the Qur'an (*naṣṣ*) with efficiency of scientific review.<sup>14</sup>

The difference between those studies and this present study is that it focuses more on the synthesis of interpretation between *Tafsīr al-Kabīr aw Mafātiḥ al-Ghayb* by Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī and *Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-Karīm* by Ibn 'Arabī and to examine the concept of *tasbih al-ālam* (universe's glorification) in these two exegesis. Do doing this comparative analysis, this study hopes to enrich our understanding comparatively and critically about the concept of universe glorification from Muslim scholar perspectives.<sup>15</sup>

### ***Tasbih* (Glorification)**

The word *tasbih* (Glorification) in the holy Qur'an is only mentioned twice. They are found in *Sūrah al-Isrā'* (17): 44 and in *Sūrah al-Nūr* (24): 41. Nevertheless, other forms of *tasbih* in verbal nouns (*maṣdar*), such as *subḥāna*, *subḥānaka*, and *subḥānahu*, are recorded forty times in the Holy Qur'an.<sup>16</sup>

Etymologically, the word *tasbih* (glorification) is an infinitive noun of *sabbaḥa - yusabbiḥu* which means "to purify". The original meaning of *tasbih* (glorification) is 'being snappy or brisk to worship Allah.<sup>17</sup> Terminologically, the meaning of *tasbih* (glorification) in general is including all of religious duties and rituals, either by oral, action, or intention.<sup>18</sup>

*Fiqh* scholars regard *tasbih* (glorification) as the highest way of worshiping Allah the almighty. No one may deserve the glorification but Him. This sacred thing is in the same way as prayer, as expressions of gratitude and compliment to Allah for innumerable mercies given to humans.<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> Ahmad Syauqi Ibrahim, *Bahkan Jagat Raya Pun Bertasbih Ilustrasi Alunan Tasbih dari Gerak Atom hingga Rotasi Galaksi* (Jakarta: Serambi, 2006).

<sup>15</sup> There is another important study on the relation between these two scholars. See Mohammed Rustom, "Ibn 'Arabi's Letter to Fakhr Al-Din Al-Razi: A Study and Translation," *Journal of Islamic Studies* 25, no. 2 (May 2014): 113–137.

<sup>16</sup> al-Najjar, *Shawrun min*, 17.

<sup>17</sup> Rāghib al-Asfahānī, *Mu'jam Mufradāt al-Fāzī al-Qurān* (Beirut: Dār al-Fikr, n.d.), 226.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid.

<sup>19</sup> M. Ishom El-Saha and Saiful Hadi, *Sketsa Al-Qur'an: Tempat, Tokoh, Nama, dan Istilah dalam Al-Qur'an* (Jakarta: Liska Fariska Putra, 2005), 726.

Muslim scholars declare that the word *tasbīh* (glorification) is *subḥānallāh*. Some others say that the statement of *tasbīh* (glorification) is not only *subḥānallāh*, but also all the words of purifying Allah.<sup>20</sup> Human beings glorify Allah orally, while other creatures manifest it in their action.<sup>21</sup> All creatures glorify Allah, not only human beings but also heaven, earth, and the whole of universe as well. They obey to Allah by expressing *tasbīh* (glorification) to Him.<sup>22</sup>

Some philosophers explain that this universe is an animate creature, like human beings. Some say that stars are animate as well. It is related with Greek legend that regards the stars as their gods or idols.<sup>23</sup>

### Ibn 'Arabī's Life and Work

Ibn 'Arabī was a figure of philosophical mysticism; he lived in the end of fifth century until the beginning of sixth century of *Hijria*. His complete name was Abu Bakar Muhammad ibn Ali ibn Muhammad ibn Ahmad ibn Abdullah al-Thā'i al-Hatimi. He was known as Ibn 'Arabī (without *ta'rif-alif-lam*).<sup>24</sup> His titles are Muhyiddīn al-Haq, al-Syekh al-Akbar,<sup>25</sup> Ibn Aflatun, etc.<sup>26</sup>

Ibn 'Arabī was an outstanding scholar who had great influences on Islamic thoughts. He was born in Murcia, Andalusia,<sup>27</sup> in 17 Ramadan 560 H / 28 July 1165 M.<sup>28</sup> His father

<sup>20</sup> Ibid.

<sup>21</sup> Ahmād Muṣṭafā al-Marāghī, *Tafsīr al-Marāghī*, vol. V (Beirut: Dār al-Fikr, n.d.), 51.

<sup>22</sup> Abdul Malik Karim Amrullah Hamka, *Tafsīr Al-Azhar*, vol. VI (Pustaka Nasional, 1999), 4063.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid., VI:4064.

<sup>24</sup> He was known by Ibn 'Arabi (without *ta'rif-alif-lam*), with the reason to distinguish between him and al-Qadi Muhammad ibn Abdullah ibn Muhammad ibn Abdullah Abu Bakar ibn al-'Arabi (468-543 H / 1076-1148 M) a scholar of interpretation, *hadīth*, *fiqh*, and *kalam*.

<sup>25</sup> Chittick, *The Sufi Path*, 4.

<sup>26</sup> Some of his other titles are; al-hākim al-Ilāhi, Khatim al-Auliya al-Warisīn, Barzakh al-Barāzikh, al-Bahr al-Zāakhir fi al-Ma'arif, al-Kibrith al-Ahmar and al-'Arif bi Allah, etc. Muḥammad ibn 'Abdullāh Abū Bakr Ibn 'Arabī, *Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-Karīm*, vol. 1 (Beirut: Dār Yaqzah al-'Arabiyyah, 1968), xi.

<sup>27</sup> Now, Murcia is entering South East Spain area

<sup>28</sup> Ibn 'Arabī, *Tafsīr al-Qur'ān*, 1:i.

was an officer under Muhammad ibn Sa'id Mardanish's government.<sup>29</sup> He came from noble family. Both his father and his uncle were two important persons in Tlemcen, Algeria.<sup>30</sup>

Ibn 'Arabī knew the world of Sufi when he was in primary school. He met two female philosophers and was amazed by them. He finally made them his spiritual gurus for two years. They were Jasmine Mursyainah and Fātimah Qurṭubiyah. In his age of 20 (580 H/1183 M) Ibn 'Arabī began to understand Sufism and *tariqah*<sup>31</sup> thoroughly;<sup>32</sup> he studied it from many teachers and Sheikhs in some places, some of them are Abū al-Abbās al-Sabti, Muḥammad al-Hashar, and 'Alī ibn 'Abdullāh ibn Jāmi'.

There was an interesting story about his meeting with Ibn Rushd (d. 595 H/1198 M). There was veil that he could see Ibn Rushd, while Ibn Rushd could not. He discussed some matters related to metaphysics.<sup>33</sup> This meeting became controversial among the supporters of logical thinking (mind) and mystical imagination (gnosis). Nevertheless he confessed that there were a mutual relationship between philosophy and mysticism. Because of this reason, he then merged the philosophy with his spiritual experience (mysticism) in his concept of "*wahdah al-wujūd*", a metaphysical concept.

Ibn 'Arabī wrote the books about Qur'anic studies, some of them are *al-Jam'u wa al-Tafsīl fi Ibdā'i Ma'āni al-Tanzil*, *I'jāz al-Bayān fi al-Tarjūmah 'an al-Qur'ān* and *Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-Karīm* in two volumes in 1387 H.

### Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī's Life and Work

Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī was title of the big scholar, he is Abū 'Abdillāh Muḥammad bin Umar bin al-Ḥusayn bin al-Ḥasan bin Ali al-Tamīmi al-Bakri al-Quraishi al-Ṭabarstani al-Rāzī al-Shāfi'ī.

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<sup>29</sup> Chittick, *The Sufi Path*, 5.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid.

<sup>31</sup> *Tariqah* in Islamic term is path for mystics to follow

<sup>32</sup> Ibn 'Arabī, *Tafsīr al-Qur'ān*, 1:v.

<sup>33</sup> Muḥammad ibn 'Abdullāh Abū Bakr Ibn 'Arabī, *Al-Futūhāt al-Makkiyah*, vol. II (Beirut: Dār al-Shadir, n.d.), 425.

Besides, he also was known as Ibn Khāṭib al-Ray,<sup>34</sup> because his father was a famous preacher in al-Ray.

He was born in al-Ray city<sup>35</sup> on 25 Ramadan 544 H. According Mannā Khalīl al-Qaṭṭān, he was born on 543 H.<sup>36</sup> His family name was al-Bakri, because he was one of the Abu Bakar al-Ṣiddīq's descent.<sup>37</sup> Additionally, his family name is al-Qurayshi, because he is Quraysh's descent, like Abu Bakar as his forefather. His epithet was al-Rāzī,<sup>38</sup> and al-Rāzī was name showing his birth place, it was al-Ray. His descriptive name is Al-Shāfi'ī, because his school of thought in fiqh is Shāfi'ī and he is one of the scholars that was included in *al-tabaqāt al-shāfi'iyyah*. It was indicated that al-Rāzī is one of the big scholars of Shāfi'ī thought.<sup>39</sup> There were many works of al-Rāzī, one of them is *Tafsīr al-Kabīr* also known as *Mafātiḥ al-Ghayb*.<sup>40</sup>

### **The book of *Tafsīr al-Qur'ān Al-Karīm* by Ibn 'Arabī**

*Tafsīr al-Qur'ān Al-Karīm* by Ibn 'Arabī is one of the commentary works that expresses his spirit in understanding the Qur'an. This commentary entitled "*Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-Karīm*" was published by Dār Yaqzah al-Arābiyyah, Beirut on 1387 H / 1968 M.

The book consists of two volumes and compiles all verses and *surah* based on *muṣḥaf Uthmānī*. This book is equipped by his biography, the writing background and printing office preface.<sup>41</sup> The first volume consists of 18 *sūrah* from *sūrah al-Fātiḥah* up to

<sup>34</sup> Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī, *Tafsīr Al-Kabīr Aw Mafātiḥ Al-Ghayb*, vol. I, Juz 1-2 (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyah, n.d.), 5.

<sup>35</sup> Al-Ray is the city that close by Teheran, and now it is named by Iran

<sup>36</sup> Mannā' al-Qaṭṭān, *Mabāḥith fī "Ulūm al-Qur'ān* (Beirut: Muassasah al-Risālah, 1983), 387.

<sup>37</sup> Shamsuddīn Muḥammad ibn 'Alī Aḥmad al-Dāwūdī, *Tabaqātu al-Mufassirīn* (Cairo, Egypt: Maktabah Wahbah, 1972), 214.

<sup>38</sup> al-Rāzī, *Tafsīr Al-Kabīr*, I:3.

<sup>39</sup> Mani' Abd Halim Mahmud, *Metodologi Tafsir, Kajian Komprehensif Metode Para Ahli Tafsir* (Jakarta: RajaGrafindo Persada, 2006), 320.

<sup>40</sup> *Al-Tafsīr al-Kabīr*, among the greatest commentaries of al-Qur'an in Islam, in twelve to thirty volumes depending on the edition, he spent the last fifteen years of his life working on it and did not finish it. The commentator Abu Hayyān criticized its prolixity in acerbic terms

<sup>41</sup> Ibn 'Arabī, *Tafsīr al-Qur'ān*, 1:i-xi.

*sūrah al-Kahfi*. The second one consists of 96 *sūrah* from *sūrah Maryam* up to *sūrah al-Nās*.

There are two basic purposes that encourage Ibn 'Arabī to interpret al-Qur'an. The first is the good condition of heart after he got the secret meaning of al-Qur'an. Second is the prophet's statement that there were esoteric and exoteric meaning in every characters, word and sentence of al-Qur'an.<sup>42</sup> Nevertheless Ibn 'Arabī did not claim himself finding the entire meanings implied in al-Qur'an. He admitted that God's knowledge was unlimited. Every word from God's vision has many contents that will not finish to be written even if all the sea water were to be ink. At the same time, he also confesses that his comprehension has not been stopped by whatever he knows. However, he felt that there were many meanings which penetrate his brain, so he was confused of everything being in his brain.<sup>43</sup>

Ibn 'Arabī use *tahlīlī* method in *Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-Karīm*, specifically in interpreting al-Qur'an verses about the concept of *tasbih al-ālam* (universe's glorification), although this method was not used totally and consistently, and the basic indication of that explanation is Ibn 'Arabī's attitude that analyzes verse by verse from a *sūrah* until the last verse of that *sūrah*.

With that method Ibn 'Arabī tries to fuse his philosophical mystic thoughts by seeing implied indication behind written indication and without engagement in linguistic, verses correlation (*al-munāsabah*), *asbāb al-nuzūl*, *i'rāb* and *qirā'at*. Therefore, Ibn 'Arabī and his system impresses as an interpreter that gives texts (*naṣṣ*) legitimization towards his basic thoughts.

### **The book of *Tafsīr Al-Kabīr wa Mafātiḥ al-Ghayb* by Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī**

The first edition of this book consists of 8 volumes.<sup>44</sup> It was printed and circulated in intelligent person circle. This book got big attention from the students of Qur'anic studies, because the

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<sup>42</sup> Ibid.

<sup>43</sup> Ibid., 1:5.

<sup>44</sup> al-Qaṭṭān, *Mabāhith*, 367.

content of this book discussed about various sciences in this scripture deeply.<sup>45</sup>

Some of al-Rāzī's reasons to arrange his interpretation are to explain how the wisdom of al-Qur'an is higher than that of philosophers and theologians to guides human beings. He wants to show the true way and certainty to avoid making mistakes.<sup>46</sup>

Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī's interpretation was known as the encyclopedia of sciences. His thought covered many fields of sciences; theology, natural philosophy, and philology. It also includes grammar (*nahwu*, *balaghah*) and Islamic law (*shari'a*) because he is also knowledgeable in the main subjects of Islamic studies. When he found the relation between *lafadh* of al-Qur'an and his knowledge, he will connect them. His interpretation also was influenced by *fiqh*.<sup>47</sup> The influence of *kalām* science in his *tafsīr* can be seen when he interpreted the word *al-ālamīn* with definition of *kalām* science; it is every existence besides Allah (*kullu mawjūd siwa Allāh*), and he explained the nature division into three kinds according to the division of *kalām* science. They are *al-mutahayiz*,<sup>48</sup> *al-mufāraqāt*<sup>49</sup> and *al-ṣifāt*.<sup>50</sup> But after that division, directly he explained that division doesn't mean negation that there is no other nature except those three kinds as professed by philosophers. He argues that Allah's authority can create every possible thing.<sup>51</sup>

What is more, this interpretation most likely clear of *isra'ilīyyāt* stories, and if there is *isra'ilīyyāt* story in his interpretation, it is only to show the problem of that story.

Al-Rāzī assembles all of his thoughts to support the true faith and against other thoughts that destroy the truth faith in interpreting al-Qur'an. Because they use mind in their arguments, he also uses the same method used by philosophers and

<sup>45</sup> Mahmud, *Metodologi Tafsir*, 323.

<sup>46</sup> al-Rāzī, *Tafsīr Al-Kabīr*, I:8.

<sup>47</sup> *Fiqh* in Islamic term is study of laws pertaining to ritual obligations.

<sup>48</sup> Everything that occupied space, it consists of some part (*al-jism*) or that separated / self-supporting (*al-jawhar*)

<sup>49</sup> *Al-Jauhar al-Fard* is the essence

<sup>50</sup> *Al-'aradh* is that can not exist except with other or adhere in *al-jism*

<sup>51</sup> al-Rāzī, *Tafsīr Al-Kabīr*, I:6.

*mutakallimīn* in opposing enemy's arguments, but certainly he still pays attention with *ahl sunnah* thoughts.<sup>52</sup> In addition, he also uses nature scientist's method when explaining about this universe. He explains about the stars, heaven, earth, animals, and human.<sup>53</sup>

Al-Rāzī displays some interpreters' opinions in his *tafsīr*, either from classic or contemporary scholars, like Ibn Abbas, Ibn al-Kalbi, Mujahid, Qatada, Sa'di, Said bin Zubair, Ibn Sulaymān, al-Maruzi, Abū Qutayba, Muḥammad bin Jārir al-Ṭabārī, Abū Bakar al-Baqilani, Ibn Farrak, al-Qaffal, and Ibn 'Arafah. Then, their interpretations were discussed concretively. In this case, al-Šafwandi says in his work, it is *al-Wafi bi al-Wafiyat* that al-Rāzī uses the method that was never known at previous time when he discussed an issue in his *tafsīr*. At the first time, he extended his discussion over some problems then clarified and discussed them with some argumentations.

Furthermore, he takes a conclusion by using several norms. These matters overawe someone who reads this *tafsīr*, because he often displays the poems to solve the problem of literature (*balaghah*) with his knowledge in linguistics. He frequently adopts some opinions from Asmu'i Abi Ubaidah, Ulama Farrak, Zujaj and Mubarrad. From *Mu'tazilah* scholars he adopts the thoughts of al-Asfahani, Qādī 'Abd al-Jabbar, and Zamahsyari. Furthermore, he also discusses philosopher's arguments, scientists of *kalām* and then refuses them or weakens their argumentation.<sup>54</sup>

The conclusions of explanation above that al-Rāzī's works belong to *tafsīr tahlīlī – bi al-ra'yī* with multiple approaches, either from law, theology, or science and other Islamic sciences.

The concept of *Tasbih al-Ālam* in *Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-Karīm* and in *Tafsīr al-Kabīr aw Mafātiḥ al-Ghayb*

This section will focus on the Qur'anic verses and looks at critically both Ibn Arabī's and al-Razi's interpretation on those verses regarding animate creatures and inanimate creatures.

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<sup>52</sup> Muhammad Husein Adz-Dzahabi, *Op. Cit.*, Vol. I, p. 294

<sup>53</sup> Muhammad Abdu al-'Adzim al-Zarqani, *Op. Cit.*, p. 105

<sup>54</sup> Mahmud, *Metodologi Tafsir*, 323.

### *Animate Creature*

There are some terminologies of animate creatures in the Qur'an related to the concept of *tasbih al-'ālam* (universe's glorification) that will be discussed in this paper as the followings;

1. (من في السماوات والأرض) (Who in the heaven and earth)

In *sūrah al-Nūr* / 24: 41;

الْمُتَّرَأُ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُسَبِّحُ لَهُ مَنْ فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَالْطَّيْرُ صَافَّاتٍ كُلُّ قَدْ عِلْمَ  
صَلَاتَهُ وَتَسْبِيحةُهُ وَاللَّهُ عَلِيمٌ بِمَا يَفْعَلُونَ

Ibn 'Arabī interprets the word (من في السماوات) as the souls who purify God and manifest as beauty of God. And (من في السماوات) as the body who praise and glorify God through represent the majesty of God.<sup>55</sup>

Al-Rāzī interprets this verse that Allah gives bright heart for believers and gives dark hearth for unbelievers; those are proved with argumentations of unity of God as follows:

First, the beginning of this verse is started with sentence "do you see?" because *tasbih* (glorification) not only includes in sight of eye but also the knowledge in heart. The form of that statement is interrogative sentence, and has stipulating purpose and explanation, and then Allah decides *tasbih* (glorification) towards Him having determined that everything in the heaven and earth glorify Him.

The meaning of *tasbih* (glorification) shows everything in each condition to purify Allah from all deficits leaned to God majesty (*tanzīh*), which also means the meaning of saying glorification sentence (with tongue). Al-Rāzī agrees more with the first meaning, because second meaning is difficult. There are the inanimate creatures on Earth that cannot glorify with the second meaning of *tasbih* (glorification). Also, there is a person that does not glorify by mouth like an unbeliever.

The third meaning of *tasbih* (glorification) is that whoever in heaven, like angels, they glorify by using their tongue. While on

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<sup>55</sup> Muḥammad ibn 'Abdullāh Abū Bakr Ibn 'Arabī, *Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-Karīm*, vol. 2 (Beirut: Dār Yaqzah al-'Arabiyyah, 1968), 144.

earth, some parts of them glorify by using the tongue and some others glorify using each of their condition, so this case uses one term in *haqīqī* and *majāzi* meaning simultaneously, and according to al-Rāzī it is not permitted. He argues that the appropriate meaning is the first (glorification) meaning, because this unites body/its form (*jism*) with their character that shows purification to Allah, and to His power, divine, oneness, and with His justice, so it is general meaning of *tasbih* (glorification).

Actually *tasbih* (glorification) in the first meaning can be performed by all creatures, and if seen peculiarly, the specialty is shown with mind, because mind is created as proposition strongest on creator existence. He is Allah, and because the miracles in His creation rest more in mind, pronunciation, and comprehension.<sup>56</sup>

## 2. الطَّيْرُ (the bird)

In *sūrah al-Nūr* / 24: 41;

الْمُتَرَّأُ أَنَّ اللَّهَ يُسَبِّحُ لَهُ مَنْ فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَالطَّيْرُ صَافَّاتٍ كُلُّ قَدْ عَلِمَ  
صَلَاتَهُ وَتَسْبِيحةُ وَاللَّهُ عَلِيمٌ بِمَا يَعْلَمُونَ.

Ibn 'Arabī interprets (الطَّيْرُ) as the potency of heart and the secret which each of them never confused with others. Al-Rāzī interprets that "والطَّيْرُ صَافَّاتٍ" still has connection with previous explanation, that everything in heaven and earth glorifies Allah, and in this verse mentioned about the bird that glorifies as deputy who is appointed on the air (between heaven and earth). Because stop on the air is impossible, but bird with his wing and his balance can fly on the air, this case is showing Allah's power, and Allah also that makes birds grovel to Him. This matter strengthens the meaning of *tasbih* (glorification) was with condition that glorifies God, not by mouth.

In interpreting sentence "كُلُّ قَدْ عَلِمَ صَلَاتَهُ وَتَسْبِيحةُ", al-Rāzī provides several opinions: First, al-Rāzī quotes opinion from most of experts' *kalām* that say about the aim of *tasbih* (glorification) sentence. It shows Allah's statement;

<sup>56</sup> Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī, *Tafsīr Al-Kabīr Aw Mafātiḥ Al-Ghayb*, vol. XII, Juz 23-24 (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyah, n.d.), 175.

وَاللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ بِمَا يَفْعَلُونَ

Second opinion says about pronoun (*damir*) that returns to pray and glorify, it means that they knew what was obligated to them. They pray and glorify to Allah. Third opinion declares that pronoun (*damir*) "ha" returns to remember Allah; it means everything that glorifies and worships him knows the way of each of their praying to Allah loaded by Allah to them.<sup>58</sup>

Furthermore in *sūrah al-Anbiyā'* / 21: 79

فَقَهْمَنَاهَا سُلَيْمَانَ وَكُلَا آتَيْنَا حُكْمًا وَعِلْمًا وَسَحَّرْنَا مَعَ دَاؤَدَ الْجِبَانَ يُسَبِّحُونَ  
وَالْطَّيْرَ وَكُنَّا فَاعِلِينَ

Ibn 'Arabī explains the way of the الطَّيْر (bird) glorifying God in *sūrah al-Anbiyā'* / 21: 79. He said that the potency of spiritual (الطَّيْر) glorifying God through remembrance, thinking, and flying in the sphere of the spirituality of soul.<sup>59</sup>

Al-Rāzī explains about the method of birds' *tasbīh* (glorification) in this verse by dividing this discussion into two parts; in the first discussion, al-Rāzī writes two opinions in interpreting birds' *tasbīh* (glorification). While the first opinion says that bird glorifies with some methods; first, al-Rāzī quotes from Muqatil that says about Dawud's *tasbīh* (glorification) to Allah, then the birds follow his *tasbīh* (glorification) to Allah and they glorify together with him. Second, according to al-Kalbi, when Dawud glorified Allah, then birds answered him. Third, according Sulaiman ibn Hayyān, when Dawud forgot to glorify or in a state of being forgetful to God, the birds were becoming his trigger to glorify.

In the second discussion, al-Rāzī writes the opinion from linguistic perspective that birds' *tasbīh* (glorification) using its tongue accords with the verse of al-Qur'an:

وَإِنْ مِنْ شَيْءٍ إِلَّا يُسَبِّحُ بِحَمْدِهِ<sup>60</sup>

<sup>58</sup> al-Rāzī, *Tafsīr Al-Kabīr*, XII:175.

<sup>59</sup> Ibn 'Arabī, *Tafsīr al-Qur'ān*, 2:86.

<sup>60</sup> *Sūrah al-Isrā'* /17: 44

Those are being superiority of Dawud because he knows that *tasbih* (glorification) is importance thing, so he adds his faith and his *tasbih* (glorification) to Allah. Based on those explanations, al-Rāzī is more inclined to the first opinion, because it doesn't concern the composition of external word.<sup>61</sup>

In *sūrah Sād* /38: 18-19,

إِنَّا سَجَّنَّا الْجِبَالَ مَعَهُ يُسَبِّحُنَّ بِالْعَشَيِّ وَالْإِشْرَاقِ (18) وَالْطَّيْرَ مَحْشُورَةً كُلُّهُ لَهُ أَوَّابٌ (19)

Ibn 'Arabī interprets *الطيير* (bird) in this verse as all the collective powers which have a balance condition.<sup>62</sup>

In interpreting this verse, al-Rāzī quotes al-Qaffal that he said about Dawud imports the beautiful voice, and then birds come along to whistle after hearing that voice. So, their *tasbih* (glorifications) are voice reflection from birds whistling with beautiful voice of Dawud simultaneously.

Then, al-Rāzī explains about bird's *tasbih* (glorification) that it has connection with bird's fate submitted to be gathered. Al-Rāzī quotes Ibn Abbas who said "When Dawud glorifies Allah, a mountain answers him and birds gathers to him, and then they are glorifying together, and Allah makes them gather and glorify with Dawud. And how do birds glorify Allah, while they do not have mind? Then al-Rāzī answers that all are the miracles given by Allah to Dawud.<sup>63</sup>

### 3. الْمَلَائِكَةُ (angels)

In *sūrah al-Ra'd* / 13: 13,

وَيُسَبِّحُ الرَّعْدُ بِحَمْدِهِ وَالْمَلَائِكَةُ مِنْ خِيفَتِهِ وَيُرْسِلُ الصَّوَاعِقَ فَيُصِيبُ بِهَا مَنْ يَشَاءُ وَهُمْ يُجَادِلُونَ فِي اللَّهِ وَهُوَ شَدِيدُ الْمُحَالِ (13)

In this verse, Ibn 'Arabī explains *الْمَلَائِكَةُ* (Angels) as the spiritual power derived from the majesty and almighty of God to reach

<sup>61</sup> Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī, *Tafsīr Al-Kabīr Aw Mafātiḥ Al-Ghayb*, vol. XI, Juz 21-22 (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyah, n.d.), 173.

<sup>62</sup> Ibn 'Arabī, *al-Futūḥat al-Makkiyah*, II:349.

<sup>63</sup> Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī, *Tafsīr Al-Kabīr Aw Mafātiḥ Al-Ghayb*, vol. XIII, Juz 25-26 (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyah, n.d.), 162.

annihilation (فِناءٌ).<sup>64</sup> It is stated in the *hadīth* that actually Allah has the seventy thousand veils from light and darkness. If the veils were removed, everything would be burned by His majesty.<sup>65</sup>

Al-Rāzī interprets (وَالْمَلَائِكَةُ مِنْ خَيْفَتِهِ) that angel glorifies with his fear and submission. Al-Rāzī quotes from Ibn 'Abbas that actually angel's fear to Allah is not like human beings' fear that there is no one of them knows who is on the right and who on the left. And the angel only acts to devote without drinking or eating.<sup>66</sup>

In sūrah al-Isrā'/17: 44;

تُسَبِّحُ لَهُ السَّمَاوَاتُ السَّبْعُ وَالْأَرْضُ وَمَنْ فِيهِنَّ وَإِنْ مِنْ شَيْءٍ إِلَّا يُسَبِّحُ بِحَمْدِهِ وَلَكِنْ  
لَا يَنْفَهُونَ تَسْبِيحُهُمْ إِنَّهُ كَانَ حَلِيمًا غَفُورًا

Ibn 'Arabī explains about the way how this power glorifies God in this verse. He says that the angelic power glorifies God through knowledge and ability (العلم والقدرة), and his own pure existence from the others (النَّوَاتُ الْمَجْرَدَةُ مِنْهُمْ بِالْتَّجَرْدِ عَنِ الْمَلَادَةِ)

Al-Rāzī explains that the living and *mukallaf* creatures glorify Allah with two methods. First, by saying "Subhānallāh" using the tongue; second, with each condition that shows Allah's oneness and majesty.<sup>67</sup>

### *Inanimate Creature*

In this chapter, some terminologies of inanimate creatures in Qur'anic verses will be explored, they are;

1. (مَنْ فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ) everything in heaven and earth)

In sūrah al-Hadīd/57: 1

سَبَّحَ لِلَّهِ مَا فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَهُوَ الْعَزِيزُ الْحَكِيمُ

<sup>64</sup> The passing away of the Sufi from his phenomenal existence, involves *baqa*, the continuance of his real existence.

<sup>65</sup> Ibn 'Arabī, *Tafsīr al-Qur'ān*, 1:236.

<sup>66</sup> Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī, *Tafsīr Al-Kabīr Aw Mafātiḥ Al-Ghayb*, vol. X, Juz 19-20 (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyah, n.d.), 22.

<sup>67</sup> *Ibid.*, X:174.

Ibn 'Arabī explains that all existence both in this heaven and earth expresses its purification in its own condition, accepts the annihilation (فَنَاءٌ) of its unreal existence, because of the domination of power of God.<sup>68</sup>

In discussing this verse, al-Rāzī divides it in some discussions. First, it's about the definition of *tasbih* (glorification) that estrange Allah from the badness. Then he explains that *tasbih* (glorification) from the badness estranges Allah's essence, character, action, names, and laws from the badness.

While in Allah's Essence: the method of *tasbih* (glorification) does not make impossible thing (*muhāl*) to be possible, so its badness is the lacking and the possibility. While in His character: the method of *tasbih* (glorification) is purifying Allah from inanity, because Allah knows everything, and makes Allah's most powerful over all, and purifies Allah's characters. While in His deed: the method of *tasbih* (glorification) is making all possibility as his deed. While in His name: like Allah's saying;

وَلِلّٰهِ الْأَسْمَاءُ الْحُسْنَىٰ فَادْعُوهُ بِهَا<sup>69</sup>

"And Allah's are the best names; therefore call on Him thereby,"<sup>70</sup>

In His laws: the method of *tasbih* (glorification) is that all what was declared a certain deed to be Islam laws and it contains benefit and kindness.

Al-Rāzī also explains from linguistic perspective, the sentence *sabbaḥa* in the form of *fi'il mādī* shows past tense. If it uses *fi'il mudārī*, it shows in the future, and if formed *fi'il amr*, that are to know about *tasbih* (glorification) to Allah, which is performed continuously without desisting.

Furthermore, al-Rāzī adopts al-Zujaj's opinion regarding the meaning of *tasbih* (glorification) which is the *tasbih* (glorification) using the tongue. However, it is answered by al-Rāzī using 2 reasons:

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<sup>68</sup> Ibn 'Arabī, *Tafsīr al-Qur'ān*, 2:597.

<sup>69</sup> *Sūrah Al-'Araf/ 7: 180*

<sup>70</sup> Software qur'an in word by Muhsin khan

First, because that opinion means Allah creates the life for mountain, until it can say *tasbih* (glorification), as in fact that inanimate creatures are impossible to deliver any *tasbih* (glorification). *Tasbih* (glorification) using the tongue can only be done by people who have mind and know Allah, and say glorification with intention to purify Allah, in which cannot be performed by the inanimate creatures. So, there are two options for *tasbih* (glorification) that are possible to be done by animate and inanimate creatures, that are glorification showing Allah Majesty and purifying to Allah, and with the possibilities of His beautiful creation.

According to al-Rāzī, if the meaning of *tasbih* (glorification) is *tasbih* (glorification) using the tongue, the meaning of “*Mā fī al-Samāwāt*” is all heaven’s occupants (throne of god).<sup>71</sup>

فَإِنْ اسْتَكْبَرُوا فَالَّذِينَ عِنْدَ رَبِّكَ يُسَبِّحُونَ لَهُ بِاللَّيْلِ وَالنَّهَارِ وَهُمْ لَا يَسْأَمُونَ<sup>72</sup>

“But if they are proud, yet those with your Lord glorify Him during the night and the day, and they are not tired”<sup>73</sup>

And from them that has affinity with Allah;

قَالُوا سُبْحَانَكَ أَنْتَ وَلِيُّنَا مِنْ دُونِنَا كَانُوا يَعْبُدُونَ الْجِنَّ أَكْثَرُهُمْ يَرْبُّونَ مُؤْمِنُونَ<sup>74</sup>

They shall say: Glory be to Thee! Thou art our Guardian, not they; nay! They worshipped the jinn; most of them were believers in them.<sup>75</sup>

While that glorify in the earth is from prophets, like what said Dzun al-Nun;

وَذَا الْتُّونِ إِذْ ذَهَبَ مُغَاضِبًا فَظَنَّ أَنْ لَنْ تَقْدِيرَ عَلَيْهِ فَنَادَى فِي الظُّلُمَاتِ أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا أَنْتَ سُبْحَانَكَ إِنِّي كُنْتُ مِنَ الظَّالِمِينَ<sup>76</sup>

<sup>71</sup> Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī, *Tafsīr Al-Kabīr Aw Mafātiḥ Al-Ghayb*, vol. XV, Juz 29-30 (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-‘Ilmiyah, n.d.), 179.

<sup>72</sup> *Sūrah Fuṣṣilat*/41: 38

<sup>73</sup> Software qur'an in word by Muhsin khan

<sup>74</sup> *Sūrah Sabā*/34: 41

<sup>75</sup> Software qur'an in word by Muhsin khan

<sup>76</sup> *Sūrah Al-Anbiyā*/21: 87

"And Yunus, when he went away in wrath, so he thought that We would not straiten him, so he called out among afflictions: There is no god but Thou, glory be to Thee; surely I am of those who make themselves to suffer loss" <sup>77</sup>

And what said by Musa;

وَلَمَّا جَاءَ مُوسَىٰ لِمِيقَاتِنَا وَكَلَمَهُ رَبُّهُ قَالَ رَبِّيْ أَنْظُرْ إِلَيْكَ قَالَ لَنْ تَرَانِي وَلَكِنْ اُنْظُرْ إِلَى الْجَبَلِ فَإِنِ اسْتَقَرَ مَكَانَهُ فَسَوْفَ تَرَانِي فَلَمَّا تَجَلَّ رَبُّهُ لِلْجَبَلِ جَعَلَهُ دَكَّا وَخَرَّ مُوسَىٰ صَعِقًا فَلَمَّا أَفَاقَ قَالَ سُبْحَانَكَ تُبْتُ إِلَيْكَ وَأَنَا أَوَّلُ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ <sup>78</sup>

And when Musa came at Our appointed time and his Lord spoke to him, he said: My Lord! Show me (Thyself), so that I may look upon Thee. He said: You cannot (bear to) see Me but look at the mountain, if it remains firm in its place, then will you see Me; but when his Lord manifested His glory to the mountain He made it crumble and Musa fell down in a swoon; then when he recovered, he said: Glory be to Thee, I turn to Thee, and I am the first of the believers. <sup>79</sup>

And from the Prophet' companies;

الَّذِينَ يَذْكُرُونَ اللَّهَ قِيَامًا وَقُعُودًا وَعَلَى جُنُوبِهِمْ وَيَنْفَكِرُونَ فِي خَلْقِ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ رَبَّنَا مَا خَلَقْتَ هَذَا بَاطِلًا سُبْحَانَكَ فَقِنَا عَذَابَ النَّارِ

Those who remember Allah standing and sitting and lying on their sides and reflect on the creation of the heavens and the earth: Our Lord! Thou hast not created this in vain! Glory be to Thee; save us then from the chastisement of the fire: <sup>81</sup>

But if that *tasbih* (glorification) in spiritual meaning (*ma'na wi*), so all heaven parts, and earth, mountain, tree, thunder, animal, pen, light, dark, character, body, organ, and others, all are glorifying to Allah and this *tasbih* (glorification) is the meaning of worship to Allah. <sup>82</sup>

<sup>77</sup> Software qur'an in word by Muhsin khan

<sup>78</sup> *Sūrah Al-A'raf/ 7: 143*

<sup>79</sup> Software qur'an in word by Muhsin khan

<sup>80</sup> *Sūrah Ali Imran/ 3: 191*

<sup>81</sup> Software qur'an in word by Muhsin khan

<sup>82</sup> al-Rāzī, *Tafsīr Al-Kabīr*, XV:180.

In *sūrah al-Isrā'*/17: 44, Ibn 'Arabī explains the method of *tasbīh* (glorification) used by heaven and earth. He says that everything has each own specialty and its perfection which does not belong to others (أن لكل شيء خاصية ليست لغيره), through this specialty both the heaven and earth purify God from the polytheism. Furthermore, he explains that heavens glorify Allah with the perfection (الكمال), height (العلو), former (التأخير), shaper (الإيجاد) and with other divine characters (الريوبينة); therefore, they perform an action in every moment (وبأنه كل يوم هو في شأن).

Earth glorifies Allah with persistence and consistency (الدوام), blessing and creation (الخلقية و الرزقية), education (التربية), affection (الإشفاق), love (الرحمة), and gives the reward for everything obedient and grateful to him (قبول الطاعة و الشكر عليها بالثواب) and something like that.<sup>83</sup>

But not all humans can understand that specialty, because of their limited knowledge and thought about metaphysical things (ملكت الأشياء), and also because they don't pay attention to that specialty. Only the people who have heart and pay attention to it can understand. Actually, their specialty can strengthen their *tasbīh* (glorification) and the unity of God.<sup>84</sup>

With reference to the heaven and earth in *sūrah al-Isrā'*/17, al-Rāzī explains that witless creatures, like animal and inanimate creatures only can glorify Allah by their condition as new creatures, showing Allah's Oneness and Majesty clearly. They cannot glorify using the tongue, because it cannot be done without comprehension, science, ability, and pronunciation, while inanimate creatures do not have the aforementioned components.

Al-Rāzī comprehends heaven's and earth's *tasbīh* (glorification) in this verse in *Majāzi* meaning; that is in the obedience meaning to follow operative Allah laws on them. Suitability and accuracy of Allah creation shows that Allah creation is perfect and congenial, not only in their form or work

<sup>83</sup> Ibn 'Arabī, *Tafsīr al-Qur'ān*, 1:717.

<sup>84</sup> Ibid., 1:718.

system as one unitary, but also in each part and details unit. That suitability is their *tasbih* (glorification).

The form of their *tasbih* (glorification) was their condition or suitability that shows Allah Oneness and Majesty, in their form as a unitary. This universe as a unitary can prove Allah's Oneness through its form and work system, but detail parts from this universe cannot be understood by many people and cannot prove Allah's Oneness and Majesty. Al-Rāzī metaphorically illustrates it using an apple. An apple consists of many parts that cannot separate from its form as an apple. But, there was found, in every part of the apple, the characteristics and features, for example the taste, color, aroma, and certain form that all of it by self-supporting in perfect union and can be proof to show Allah Oneness. Certainly every apple can take other forms and characteristics. And its form in real form is impossible to exist without the creator, in this case is Allah. Those details cannot be understood exhaustively by human.<sup>85</sup>

## 2. الرعد (thunder)

In *sūrah al-Ra'd* / 13: 13. According to Ibn 'Arabī the meaning of الرعد (thunder) is the majesty of God which causes humans reach the state of annihilation (فباء). In this state, humans lose their consciousness because of Allah's majesty effect. The thunder (الرعد) glorifies God through the real fixed manifestation.<sup>86</sup>

With regard to the thunder in *sūrah al-Ra'd* / 13: 13, al-Rāzī explains in his interpretation some opinions: the first opinion considers that *al-ra'd* is an angel's name, and voice heard from thunder angel voice with his *tasbih* (glorification), and *tahlil*.<sup>87</sup>

Second opinion said that, *al-ra'd* was the name for special voice that produced, so actually thunder glorified Allah, because *tasbih* (glorification) and purification, with of a kind of it not merely from real *tasbih* (glorification) as the form of *lafdh* that shows purification to Allah, but the existence of this voice proposition on

<sup>85</sup> al-Rāzī, *Tafsīr Al-Kabīr*, X:175.

<sup>86</sup> Ibn 'Arabī, *Tafsīr al-Qur'ān*, 2:236.

<sup>87</sup> *Tahlil* in Islam term is repeated recitation of the confession of faith: there is no God but God: (*lā ilāha illāllāh*)

the existence of former, and that voice purified the Former from deficit and possibility.<sup>88</sup> Third opinion declared that the meaning of thunder was thunder that glory. People who heard that glorification, actually thunder is glorifying to Allah, and so this meaning is leaned to *tasbih* (glorification). Fourth opinion is of Sufi and expresses that thunder was angel's voice, lightning was the benefit which was produced, and rain was their crying.<sup>89</sup>

### 3. الجبال (mountain)

In *sūrah al-anbiyā'* /21: 79, Ibn 'Arabī interpreted (الجبال) mountain as heart which became the mountain of the body, the (الجبال) glorifying God through its own characteristic as God command him.<sup>90</sup>

With reference to the mountain, in this verse al-Rāzī quoted from *Mu'tazilah* that mountain's *tasbih* (glorification) could do by itself action or Allah action. But that opinion was opposed by al-Rāzī by saying that "it was impossible for mountains to do glorification itself, because it is not the animate creature that has knowledge and ability", while the second opinion is also impossible, because if that *tasbih* (glorification) was Allah's action, while the speaker that commands to glorify Allah not the mountain.

Then al-Rāzī interprets the verse;

وَسَخَّرْنَا مَعَ دَاؤَدَ الْجِبَالَ يُسَبِّحُنَّ وَالْطَّيْرَ وَكُنَّا فَاعِلِينَ

Similar to the verse;

يَا جِبَالُ أَوْيِي مَعَهُ وَالْطَّيْرَ

Means: "O mountains! Sing praises with him, and the birds;"<sup>92</sup>

From this verse we knew that Allah made the mountain glorifying together with Dawud and obey with Dawud's command.<sup>93</sup>

<sup>88</sup> al-Rāzī, *Tafsīr Al-Kabīr*, X:21.

<sup>89</sup> Ibid., X:22.

<sup>90</sup> Ibn 'Arabī, *Tafsīr al-Qur'ān*, 2:86.

<sup>91</sup> *Sūrah Sabā'* / 34: 10

<sup>92</sup> Software qur'an in word by Muhsin khan

In *sūrah Sād*/38: 18-19, Ibn ‘Arabī explained that the way how the mountain glorifies God. He says that the mountain glorifies God through his obedience and his journey for the time of worship, either there was veil of light of spirituality or illumination of manifestation which dominates the soul.<sup>94</sup>

In interpreting mountain’s *tasbih* (glorification) in this verse, in the first step al-Rāzī elaborates several discussions about its *tasbih* (glorification). In this case, there are some opinions. First, the opinion that Allah created body (*jism*) of mountain as living creatures, sensible body, has ability, can speak, so that the mountain can glorify to Allah. This is evidenced in the following verse:

فَلَمَّا تَجَلَّ رُتُبَةُ الْجَبَلِ<sup>95</sup>

Means: “But when his Lord manifested His glory to the mountain”<sup>96</sup>

The meaning of that verse was that Allah created mountain as a creature that has a mind and understanding. Then, Allah made that mountain be able to see Allah. Second opinion was about interpreting whereof that told by al-Qaffal. He said that Dāwūd imports the beautiful voice. Then a mountain reflects that beautiful voice, and birds also came along to whistle after hearing that voice. So, their *tasbih* (glorifications) were voice reflection from mountain and birds whistling with beautiful voice of Dāwūd simultaneously. Third opinion mentions that Allah submitted the mountain, so that a mountain obeys all being commanded by Dāwūd and makes mountain’s submission as *tasbih* (glorification) done by the mountain, because it shows Allah’s superiority with the knowledge.

Then, al-Rāzī continued to the second discussion. According to *ṣāḥib al-kashshaf*, word “*yusabbihna*” means “*musabbihāt*”, and there were differences between them; they was about the form of verb (*fi’l*) showing to matter that is happening and renewal, and in the form of noun (*isim*) show to permanence, al-Rāzī mentions that

<sup>93</sup> al-Rāzī, *Tafsīr Al-Kabīr*, XI:173.

<sup>94</sup> Ibn ‘Arabī, *Tafsīr al-Qur’ān*, 2:349.

<sup>95</sup> *Sūrah Al-A’raf* /7: 143

<sup>96</sup> Software qur’ān in word by Muhsin khan

liked what explained by Abd Qohir in his book *Dalā'il al-I'jāz*, so that word "yusabbihna" show an incident / *tasbih* (glorification) newness done by mountains at one particular condition, and the listeners who visited mountain and listened the *tasbih* (glorification).<sup>97</sup>

### **Analytical concept of *tasbih al-'ālam***

This part discusses the method of *tasbih al-'ālam* (universe's glorification) by comparing between the interpretation of Ibn 'Arabī and Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī regarding animate and inanimate creatures.

Ibn 'Arabī based his interpretation of al-Qur'an on his concept of unity of existence (*waḥdah al-wujūd*),<sup>98</sup> including the interpretation of *tasbih al-'ālam* (universe's glorification). It is appeared on his interpretation about the definition of some parts of 'ālam (universe). For example, he interprets thunder (الرعد) in *sūrah al-Ra'd* / 13: 13 as the manifestation of God's majesty which causes humans reach the state of annihilation (فَناء). In this state, humans lose his consciousness because of Allah's majesty effects, and the thunder (الرعد) glorifies God through the real fixed manifestation.<sup>99</sup>

*Tajalli* (manifestation) is the concept closely related to the concept of *waḥdah al-wujūd* (unity of existence). God's manifestation occurs continually without beginning and end. *Tajalli* (manifestation) is the process of manifestation of God's self that cannot be recognized absolutely, because *Tajalli* (manifestation) is the manifestation *al-Haqq* in the shape that was decided. God's manifestation is unlimited.

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<sup>97</sup> al-Rāzī, *Tafsīr Al-Kabīr*, XIII:163.

<sup>98</sup> Wahdah al-Wujūd is the concept that actually only Allah which has a form. And this nature is shadow (syabah), the manifestation or appearance (tajalli), the parable (matsal) and the sign (ayat) from amount of overall God characters and name (asma). In other word, Wahdah al-Wujūd is essential identification of manifested order with ontological principle. Cyril Glasse, *Ensiklopedi Islam (Ringkas)*, trans. Ghufron A. Mas'adi, 1st ed. (Jakarta: RajaGrafindo Persada, 2002), 279.

<sup>99</sup> Ibn 'Arabī, *Tafsīr al-Qur'ān*, 1:236.

God's manifestation in everything in line with "readiness" (*isti'dad*) of everything, the ability of everything to receive God's manifestation is different; it depends on its readiness. God is One and manifests in His Oneness, the readiness of 'ālam (universe) to receive manifestation is different. So, everything has its specialty and has the different ability to receive that manifestation.<sup>100</sup> From those explanations, it is that Ibn 'Arabī's interpretation is based on the concept of *wahdah al-wujūd* (unity of existence).

Al-Rāzī's method of rational interpretation suggests that there are two methods of *tasbih* (glorification). They are glorifications by using the tongue (*lisān al-maqāl*) and by utilizing any possible means contingent upon condition (*lisān al-hāl*). According to al-Rāzī, creatures can glorify Allah through these two methods. First, by saying the sentence "*Subhānallāh*" with the tongue and by making use of condition that shows Allah oneness and majesty.

Animal and inanimate creature only can glorify Allah by the second method or with their condition as new creatures. This sign as position of glorifying Allah or submission to Allah's commands totally submit toward Allah's law (*sunnatullāh*).<sup>101</sup>

Inanimate creatures cannot glorify Allah using the tongue or *lisān al-maqāl*, because that method cannot be done without comprehension, science, ability, and pronunciation, while inanimate creatures do not possess such living functioning features.

Al-Rāzī comprehends the concept of *tasbih al-ālam* (universe's glorification) in metaphoric meaning (*majāzi*). It is in the meaning of obedience to follow Allah's laws on it. Suitability and neatness of Allah creation show that Allah creation is very perfect and congenial, not only in the form or work system as one unitary, but also in each part and details unit. That suitability is its *tasbih* (glorification).<sup>102</sup>

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<sup>100</sup> Sri Puji Purwati, *Konsep Insan Kamil Ibn 'Arabi* (Semarang: IAIN Walisongo, 2000), 34.

<sup>101</sup> al-Rāzī, *Tafsīr Al-Kabīr*, X:174–175.

<sup>102</sup> Ibid.

## The differences and similarities of *tasbīh al-ālam*

The interpretation is very important, because it functions to study word by word, verses and sentence composition of al-Qur'an to understand Allah's purpose in saying His verses. The consequence of comprehension towards purpose is in the application of al-Qur'an verses. If the realization of the purpose from a verse is wrong, it will cause the wrong application from that verse and it is a big mistake.

This section will explain the differences as well as similarities between Ibn Arabi and al-Razi regarding the concept of the universe glorification between Ibn 'Arabī and al-Rāzī. The difference mainly lays on their perception of universe's glorification. While ibn 'Arabī uses the esoteric meaning, al-Rāzī uses the extrinsic meaning. Furthermore, ibn 'Arabī uses mystical approach, while al-Rāzī uses rational approach. The other difference concerns the ways and the process in which glorification is realized.

According to Ibn 'Arabī, *tasbīh* (glorification) is performed by everything in this universe as the process of achieving annihilation and reaching the state of *wahdah al-wujūd*. This process just cannot be understood by humans and in a state of condition that cannot be comprehended by common people.<sup>103</sup>

Meanwhile, al-Rāzī interprets the method of universe glorification in metaphoric meaning (*majāzi*).<sup>104</sup> Every creature glorifies God in accordance to its respective conditions (*bi al-hāl*).

Allah is the Creator of the heaven, earth and all its contents, whatever was found on them, either angel, gin, human being, and every animate creature and all things, and also every phenomenon and law of universe.

Therefore, everything submits to God willing and is obedient to His desire. Creatures glorify, praise and purify God. Sometimes that *tasbīh* (glorification) comes from sensible body and *mukallaf*: like from gin and pious people: they are the people who know Allah and worship him, and people who obey to his command. That's glorification known as *tasbīh takhlifi* or *tasbīh Ikhtiyāri*.

<sup>103</sup> Ibn 'Arabī, *Tafsīr al-Qur'ān*, 1:718.

<sup>104</sup> al-Rāzī, *Tafsīr Al-Kabīr*, X:175.

Sometimes, that glorification also comes from angels and every mortal who does not *mukallaf*, inanimate creatures, and all phenomena and laws of universe. That glorification is known as *tasbih fitrah* or *tasbih taskhir*.<sup>105</sup>

The other difference between Ibn 'Arabī and al-Rāzī in interpreting the concept of universe glorification concerns the classification of universe. Ibn 'Arabī divides universe into material (*zahir*) and spiritual (*baṭin*), and he also divides it into physical and metaphysical. According to him, the reality of this universe is not seen as something else from the Form Essence as former all existing, because the reality of universe is the manifestation (*tajalli*) of God's names (*asmā' ilāhi*).

Al-Rāzī divides universe into groups. First is the group of animate creatures and *mukallaf*. Second is the animate creatures and not *mukallaf*. Third is inanimate creatures. Then, he considers that inanimate creatures are the real inanimate creatures, which do not have lives and felling. Neither do they have comprehension, science, ability, and pronunciation. Hence, their glorification to God is accorded to their respective condition.<sup>106</sup> According to al-Rāzī, humans are not able to discern universe's glorification conducted by inanimate creatures, but are able to know Allah mercy and the philosophy of that *tasbih* (glorification). So, the form of inanimate glorification is by their condition or suitability that shows Allah Oneness and Majesty.

Despite having different interpretation of the concept of universe glorification, both Ibn Arabi and al-Razi hold a particular similar view on it. The similarities are that both of them have the same opinion that *tasbih* is a process of purifying God. In other words, they have the same concept about glorification that refers to the meaning of purification of God from any other things that may reduce God's Oneness and majesty. Such similarity can be conceived from their interpretation in *sūrah al-hadīd*/57: 1, where both the Qur'anic commentators concede "purification" as the high objective and manifestation of universe glorification.

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<sup>105</sup> al-Najjar, *Shawrūn min*, 8.

<sup>106</sup> al-Rāzī, *Tafsīr Al-Kabīr*, X:175.

## Conclusion

Ibn 'Arabī's concept of *waḥdah al-wujūd* shapes his understanding of the concept of *tasbīh al-ālam* (universe's glorification). He sees the reality of this *ālam* (universe) as being invisible as something else from the Form Essence as former all existing because the reality of universe is the manifestation (*tajallī*) of God's names (*asmā' ilāh*).

Al-Rāzī explains two methods of *tasbīh* (glorification); embodied glorification by the tongue (*lisān al-maqāl*) and conditional glorification (*lisān al-hāl*). According to him, something that is alive and *mukallaf* is able to glorify Allah with two methods. First, saying the sentence "*Subḥānallāh*" using the tongue. Second, with each condition that shows Allah oneness and majesty. Animal and inanimate creatures glorify Allah only by the second method. Al-Rāzī comprehends the concept of universe glorification in a metaphoric meaning (*majāzi*). It is in the obedience meaning to follow Allah laws (*sunatullāh*). Suitability and neatness of Allah creation show that it is very perfect and congenial, not only in the form or work system as one unitary, but also in each part and details unit. That suitability is its *tasbīh* (glorification).<sup>107</sup>

Such different interpretation is possible because Ibn 'Arabī uses mystical approach and esoteric meaning, while al-Rāzī uses his rationality. According to Ibn 'Arabī, *tasbīh* (glorification) done by everything in this universe is with each specialty or readiness to receive God's manifestation. Here glorification is the process that facilitates annihilation and *waḥdah al-wujūd*.<sup>108</sup> Meanwhile, al-Rāzī argue that there are two methods of glorification; by the tongue (*lisān al-maqāl*) and by condition (*lisān al-hāl*). Al-Rāzī interprets the process of *tasbīh* (glorification) metaphorically (*majāzi*).<sup>109</sup>

Ibn 'Arabī divides *ālam* (universe) into material and spiritual. In other words, he divided *ālam* (universe) into physical and metaphysical, while al-Rāzī divides *ālam* (universe) into groups

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<sup>107</sup> Ibid.

<sup>108</sup> Ibn 'Arabī, *Tafsīr al-Qur'ān*, 2:597.

<sup>109</sup> al-Rāzī, *Tafsīr Al-Kabīr*, X:175.

i.e. first, animate creatures and *mukallaf*; and second, animate creatures and not *mukallaf*; and third, the dead things.<sup>110</sup>

The similarity between Ibn 'Arabī and Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī in interpreting the concept of *tasbih al-ālam* (universe's glorification) is that both of them have the same opinion that *tasbih* (glorification) is the process of purifying to God.

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<sup>110</sup> Ibid.

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