



The Concept of Moderation in the Perspective of Aqidah Asy'ariyyah

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Abstract

Asya'riyah is the following of Abu Hasan Ali bin Isma'il al-Asyari, which is a theological school of thought followed by the majority of Muslims in the world. They prioritize a moderate approach to theology, utilizing rational methods and sacred texts as sources for their discourse. They regard reason as a servant to textual evidence. Initially, the Asyariyyah only dealt with theology, but their followers developed their thinking to uphold their creed and harmonize reason with revelation. Asya'riyah always seeks to find a balance between textualism and reason, striving to discover an actual and relevant equilibrium in the concepts they have formulated. This research employs a descriptive critical analysis method, which describes moderation according to Asya'riyah and then conducts analytical-critical analysis to scrutinize ideas and concepts. The research findings indicate that the application of the concept of moderation in Asya'riyah's creed encompasses: 1) The fusion of reason and text; 2) The concept of attributes between Shifatiah Mujassimah and Musyabbihah; 3) Understanding of khabariyah attributes amidst tafwid, tasybih, and tajsim; 4) Free will, between Jabariyah and Qodariyah through the theory of kasb.

Keyword: Moderation, Aqidah, Asya'riyah.

INTRODUCTION

The concept of moderation in theology can be observed through the creed brought by Asya'riyah, the followers of Abu Hasan Ali bin Isma'il al-Asy'ari. This school of thought emerged after Abu al-Hasan al-Asy'ari declared his departure from the Mu'tazilah school of thought, which he had followed for 40 years. He then formulated a new theology that gained many followers as it was seen as a form of continuity with the beliefs of the majority of Ahl al-Sunnah Waljamaah adhered to by the majority of Muslims (Al-Syahrastani, 1986; Rahman, 1979). Imam al-Asy'ari, in terms of his thinking, sought to articulate the beliefs of the majority of scholars who had previously been reluctant to express their theological views. His efforts ultimately kindled the enthusiasm of others to express their theological stances publicly.

Imam al-Asyari defended the majority of scholars by formulating a moderate theological concept to counterbalance the theological concepts of the Mu'tazilah, Shi'ites, or other theological schools. This defense by al-Asy'ari demonstrated that the majority of scholars representing the Muslim community generally possessed a moderate disposition by consistently striving to find a

balance between the textual and rational elements within diverse Muslim generations and conditions (Masrukhin, 2020).

The Asya'riyah movement began to emerge in the 4th century of the Hijra. This movement became entangled in conflicts with other Islamic schools of thought, especially the Mu'tazilah. The conflict between the Mu'tazilah reached its peak in the 5th century of the Hijra, initiated by al-Kundari (456 H/1064), who defended the Mu'tazilah and even propagated slander that lasted for ten years. As a result, Imam al-Haramain migrated to the Hijaz, and prominent figures of the Asya'riyah school of thought were imprisoned (Al-Jazari, 1987). Later, the Asya'riyah school of thought began to reemerge during the era of Nizam Mulk (484 H/1092 CE), and their opinions in the 6th century of the Hijra became the only official creed for the Sunni state. Consequently, the conflict between the Mu'tazilah and Asya'riyah led to the isolation of the Asya'riyah for 28 years (Madkour, 2004).

Al-Asy'ariyah is a term for the followers of Abu Hasan Ali bin Isma'il al-Asy'ari, and this movement eventually developed into one of the essential theological schools of thought in Islam, known as the Asya'riyah, a name attributed to Abu Hasan al-Asy'ari as the founder of this school. Al-Asy'ari was a descendant of a companion of the Prophet, Musa al-Asy'ary, and he lived between the years 260-324 H or the late 3rd century and early 4th century of the Hijra (Katsir, 1996). The Asya'riyah movement emerged when the Mu'tazilah lost their influence and the sympathy of the Muslim community. Al-Asy'ari introduced his own theological doctrine, which differed from the Mu'tazilah, by upholding moderation in creed, making it acceptable to the majority of Muslims (Al-Asy'ari, 1409).

As a middle path between the rationalists of the Mu'tazilah and the textualists of the hadith scholars, Asya'riyah, in its kalam methodology, utilizes not only primary sources such as the sacred texts of the Quran and Sunnah, as done by the hadith scholars, but they also employ rational methods such as Aristotelian logic. Thus, they maintain a balanced approach that uses both reason and revelation. However, they still regard the rational intellect as subservient and a supporting element for textual evidence (Hanafi, 2003). Initially, Asya'riyah only focused on theological matters, but their followers further developed the framework of al-Asy'ari's thinking to uphold their creed and harmonize reason with revelation. This intellectual endeavor allowed them to address the confusion created by philosophers and the Mu'tazilah. One of the aspects they developed is the theory of atoms or jauhar (Hye, 2004).

The moderate approach taken by Asya'riyah always aligns with the inclination towards strict textualism or excessive rationalism. In this context, Asya'riyah aims to find moderation openly and does not claim to have discovered a final and conclusive form of the concepts they have formulated. Therefore,

Asya'riyah theologians continually strive to find an actual and relevant form of moderation (Masrukhin, 2020).

RESEARCH METHODS

This research is a literature study (library research), which is a type of research that obtains data and information from library sources, both primary and secondary, such as books, encyclopedias, journals, articles, and the like. The method used in this research is the descriptive analytic-critical method. The researcher employs a descriptive method to systematically and comprehensively outline and discuss the entire conceptual thinking of the relevant figure, particularly describing the opinions of Asya'riyah regarding the concept of moderation (Bakker and Zubair, 1990). Subsequently, the researcher conducts an analysis using two methods: First, an inductive method to seek the meaning of moderation according to Asya'riyah in several of their books (Diningrat, 1989). Second, a deductive method to deduce several universal and particular issues regarding the meaning of moderation according to Asya'riyah (Surkhandi, 1990). The analytical-critical method is used in this figure's research to critique ideas, concepts, or their thoughts, and then described critically to maintain objectivity to obtain answers to the core research issues (Nurnaningsih, 2013).

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Characteristics of the Moderate Approach of the Asy'ariyah School

The characteristics of the Asy'ariyah belief system make up the majority of Muslims worldwide and serve as a middle ground between the Salafi and Maturidi belief systems. During the time when Imam al-Asy'ari lived, there were three major theological schools in Islamic history. Firstly, the Salafi school, led by Imam Ahmad bin Hanbal, was known for its strict textual interpretation, making the Quran and Hadith the sole basis and tool for understanding Islamic beliefs. Secondly, the Islamic philosophy school emphasized that belief in Islam should be grounded in both reason and revelation, with rational truths as the primary source of knowledge. Thirdly, the Mu'tazilah school sought to integrate reason and revelation, with reason serving as the determinant when textual evidence conflicted with rational truths (logical arguments) (Imarah, 1991).

Despite the existence of these three major schools, the Asy'ariyah introduced a distinctive approach that differed from all three. They aimed to reconcile reason and revelation while maintaining that reason should always be subordinate to the religious text (naql). Even though Imam al-Asy'ari initially adhered to the Mu'tazilah school until he was 40 years old (Subhi, 1969). The Asy'ari method, subsequently adopted by scholars who followed him, such as Al-Qadhi Abu Bakr al-Baqillani, Al-Imam Al-Haramaen Al-Juwaini, al-Imam al-Ghazali, Asy-Syahrastani, and others, attributed their views to Imam Asy'ari. These scholars played a significant role in developing Imam Asy'ari's ideas by employing

rational, logical arguments similar to the rationality of the Mu'tazilah (Imarah, 1991). Therefore, Imam al-Asy'ari's position, as described by his followers, was that of a sincere Muslim who defended and believed in the contents of the Quran and Hadith, establishing them as the foundation. Additionally, he used reason as a tool to strengthen these religious texts (Al-Fachuri & Al-Jarr, 1958).

When using textual evidence as a basis for their arguments, the Asy'ariyah approach is very cautious. They do not reject interpretation (ta'wil) because certain texts have ambiguous meanings that cannot be taken literally; they must be interpreted to determine the intended meaning (Al-Ghazali, 1904). Furthermore, the Asy'ariyah do not reject the use of reason as a foundation for attaining truth, as Allah encourages Islamic communities to engage in rational discourse (Madkour, 2004). In principle, the Asy'ariyah do not give complete autonomy to reason, as the Mu'tazilah did, who placed reason above the textual evidence (the Quran and Hadith). Instead, the Asy'ariyah maintain that textual evidence takes precedence over reason, with reason serving as a servant to textual evidence. In other words, they view textual evidence as the sun that shines, while reason is like a healthy eye. Through reason, they can strengthen the textual evidence and defend their religion. The Asy'ariyah introduced how to utilize a rational method, as promoted by the Mu'tazilah, to defend religious issues (Madkour, 2004). In principle, the Asy'ariyah method represents a middle ground between opposing schools of thought or between rationalist and textualist approaches. They use rational and textual evidence together in presenting their arguments. They fundamentally believe in textual evidence and seek reasons from rational thought to reinforce it. This means they don't consider reason to be the sole judge of religious texts for interpretation and to go beyond their apparent meanings. Instead, reason serves to support and clarify the Quran and Hadith, without abandoning the common methods used by philosophers and logicians to strengthen religious texts, i.e., the Quran and Hadith (naql).

Application of the Moderate Concept in Theology

The Asy'ariyah belief system is seen as a moderate theological approach that successfully combines reason and textual evidence. The Asy'ariyah blend texts from the Salafi tradition with rational arguments to develop their theological understanding. They present the Muslim community as the best among the previous nations and as moderate. This view is based on verses from the Quran, such as in Surah Al-Baqarah (2):143, Al-Imran (3:110), and Al-Nisa' (5):115, which emphasize that the nation of the Prophet Muhammad is a moderate and just community. This moderation involves balancing what is found in the texts with reason.

Asy'ariyah scholars have sought to understand religious texts through a theological lens using rational and argumentative reasoning. Ibn Khaldun describes how early Asyari scholars, before Imam al-Ghazali, aimed to find

moderation in Islamic theology. Imam al-Bagillani, in particular, attempted to develop Asy'ari theology but was less convincing because logic as the basis for constructing rational arguments was not well-established in religious traditions, and Muslims at that time considered it permissible to abandon logic in understanding the Quran, as demonstrated by his rejection of syllogism (qiyas) (Ibn Khaldun, 1377). After al-Bagillani, Imam al-Ghazali came into the picture and used Greek logic in addition to the Quran and Hadith to develop rational theology. Imam al-Ghazali combined Islamic theology with the traditions of the philosopher Aristotle to provide the philosophical basis for the rational approach to theology. His work has had a profound influence on the Asy'ariyah method and is still a reference for understanding Islam among the Asy'ariyah (Imarah, 1991).

The Asy'ariyah approach to Islamic theology focuses on reconciling reason and revelation by employing both textual evidence and rational arguments. In doing so, they aim for a moderate and balanced approach that avoids extremes and fanaticism. They strive to establish a theological framework that is firmly rooted in Islamic sources, while also engaging with reason and logic to provide a comprehensive understanding of Islamic beliefs.

Application of the Moderate Concept in Theology

The Integration of Reason and Texts

The Asy'ariyah school is considered a theological tradition that has successfully formulated a moderate (wasathiah) theology by combining reason and religious texts. The Asy'ariyah movement combines texts from the Salafi tradition with rational evidence in theological understanding. The Asy'ariyah school presents the Muslim community as the best among the communities of previous prophets and as a moderate one. This perspective is based on Quranic verses like Surah Al-Baqarah (2):143, Surah Al-Imran (3:110), and Surah Al-Nisa' (5):115. These verses highlight that the community of the Prophet Muhammad is characterized by moderation (wasathiah) and justice. In the context of thought, moderation and justice imply the ability to balance what is found in the texts and reason.

Asy'ariyah scholars have endeavored to understand religious texts theologically through rational and argumentative thinking in their time. Ibn Khaldun explains the efforts of Asy'ari scholars before Imam al-Ghazali in seeking moderation (wasathiah) in Islamic theology. Imam al-Bagillani's formulation of Asy'ari theology appears less convincing, as logic, the foundation for constructing rational arguments, was not well-known in religious tradition, and the Muslim rationality of his time did not extensively use logic (Khaldun, 2004).

Many scholars in al-Bagillani's era distanced themselves from logic because of its resemblance to Greek philosophy, which conflicted with Islamic Sharia beliefs. Then, Imam al-Haramain emerged after al-Bagillani, writing theology

using logic extensively in a book known as *al-Syamil*, later summarized in his book *al-Irsyad*. He became highly regarded, as his work was in-depth and provided an Imam-like status. Imam al-Juwaini, a subsequent figure, confronted the rapid development of philosophy, which raised concerns among many scholars. He formulated logic based on the Quran to counterbalance Greek logic and philosophy (Khaldun, 2004).

The logic developed by Asy'ariyah scholars was inspired and rooted in the Quran. The method of *jadal* (dialogue) introduced by Imam al-Haramain was the most famous at the time because it offered the best means for seeking convincing truths outside the Islamic scholarly tradition. *Jadal* (dialogue) was a method mentioned in the Quran for finding truth, as seen in Surah An-Nahl (16):125.

Imam al-Juwaini authored the book "*al-Kafiyah fi al-Jadal*" (1979) on the guidelines for dialogue based on the Quran. *Jadal* was presented as a method to find accurate and convincing truth because it employed the best mechanisms. Therefore, Imam al-Juwaini neither rejected rational arguments nor religious evidence, which are considered guidance from God (Al-Juwaini, 1979).

In other words, rational arguments serve as evidence through the independent use of reason, while textual evidence (religion) is based on God's revelation and is believed by reason. The moderation of al-Juwaini was continued by his student, Abu Hamid al-Ghazali (Al-Juwaini, 1992). Imam Al-Ghazali wrote the book "*al-Iqtishad fi al-I'tiqad*" (1994), which means moderation in belief. Al-Ghazali explained that a Muslim need not dispute theological matters. The essence of understanding theology is to strengthen one's belief in God. If a Muslim already has a strong belief in what they believe, without the need for detailed and complex theological evidence, then there's no requirement to study these details, which could weaken and confuse one's faith. In-depth theology is not obligatory for all Muslims but rather for those responsible for preserving faith in their communities (Al-Ghazali, 1994). Imam al-Ghazali even stipulated specific conditions for someone to study *kalam* (theology) (Al-Ghazali, 1994).

For Al-Ghazali, in-depth theology is not obligatory for all Muslims. It is required mainly for Muslims who are responsible for preserving faith in their communities. Focusing on faith, Al-Ghazali accepted reason to the extent needed by faith, just as he accepted the content of religious texts not to set aside reason but to find a balance between what reason directed and what religious texts suggested. Al-Ghazali was one of the Asya'riyan figures who accepted the logic formulated by Greek philosophers but also criticized philosophers, as can be seen in his book "*Tahafut al-Falasifah*." However, he recognized the importance of the logic they created (Al-Ghazali, 1994).

Additionally, Al-Ghazali wrote the book "Mi'yar al-'ilm" (1961), which contained a formulation of logic adjusted to the terms popular among scholars of jurisprudence and the Arabic language. Al-Ghazali incorporated logic as a tool beneficial to knowledge in Islamic theology. Logic serves as a neutral thinking tool, whereas philosophy results from thinking based on Greek philosophy that is not revisited for its correctness (Al-Ghazali, 1961). Al-Ghazali took a moderate approach to the prevailing thoughts of his time. Even though scholars disagreed with logic, he focused on the utility of knowledge from outside the Islamic tradition, adapting it to strengthen rational evidence for Islamic theology. Ultimately, the thinking of Al-Ghazali was followed by later Asy'ariyah scholars like Fakhruddin al-Razi, Saduddin al-Taftazani, and Sharif al-Jurjani. They were open to using logic as a way to interpret religious texts to the extent required by faith. This openness aimed to explain faith in a way understandable to the people of their time (Masrukhin, 2020).

However, the degree of moderation (wasathiah) among Asy'ari theologians varied because the principle of moderation was not always the same and depended on the state of knowledge and theological challenges of their respective eras. The challenges of moderation differed from one era to another and from one community to another. Therefore, to understand the form of moderation, it is not sufficient to look at its appearance alone. Context is essential in every circumstance, and Asy'ari theologians sought a balanced synthesis of reason and texts, between intellect and faith. Consequently, moderation (wasathiah) has diverse patterns that depend on theological challenges and human knowledge development. One of these patterns is constructing a logical way of thinking based on religious texts, allowing for a harmonious integration of religion and reason. The Asy'ariyah tradition sought to build a relevant and contextual theology of moderation.

Attributes

In this matter, the Asy'ariyyah face two extreme views, namely the Shifatiah Mujassimah and Musyabbihah factions. They believe that God has attributes as stated in the Quran, and these attributes must be understood literally (Hye, 2004). On the other hand, the Mu'tazilah group argues that God does not have attributes outside of His essence. This is because if God has attributes, then those attributes are eternal, just as God is eternal. This would mean that the eternal beings are not one (ta'addudul Qudama) (Jones, 2009). To avoid the understanding that if God has attributes, those attributes are eternal, and there are many eternals, Al-Ghazali stated that God's attributes are not the same as God Himself; they are different from His essence but exist within His essence, often referred to as "la hiya huwa wa la hiya qoiruhu" (Al-Ghazali, 1994). Consequently, as these attributes are nothing but God, they do not imply multiplicity in eternity.

Regarding the attributes of God, Asy'ariyyah holds that God has attributes and rejects the Shifatiah Mujassimah and Musyabbihah groups. Asy'ari scholars assert that God has attributes as mentioned in the Quran and Hadith, and these attributes are in harmony with His essence but entirely dissimilar to the attributes of created beings. God hears, but not in the way that creatures hear. His attributes are unique and cannot be equated with those of creatures, nor can the attributes of creatures be compared to the attributes of God. However, it's important to note that when referring to attributes similar to those of humans, Asy'ariyyah insists on understanding them in a manner called "bila kaifa" (without asking how), avoiding any form of anthropomorphism (Al-Asy'ari, 1955). In this way, the Asy'ariyah tradition applies a moderate concept of thought to establish and sanctify the attributes of Allah. They strike a balance between those who deny God's attributes, such as the Mu'tazilah, and those who equate God's attributes with those of humans, known as Mujasimah. This balanced approach led to the formulation of the concepts of sifat salbiah and ma'ani. Sifat salbiah denotes the negation of attributes that are unworthy of God, a result of the ijtihad (independent reasoning) of the Asy'ariyah tradition. In contrast, the Mu'tazilah school refuses to attribute any qualities to God (Al-Taftazani, 2007).

The purpose of formulating sifat salbiah is to sanctify God's essence by denying anything unworthy of Him and to instill awareness in Muslims about the attributes that should not be ascribed to God. Determining sifat salbiah represents the Asy'ariyah school's way of understanding the purity of God, as formulated in the concept of sifat wajib. The human mind cannot fully comprehend the essence of God, but it can understand that God is eternal, unlike created beings, and one (Al-Ghazali, 1994; Al-Juwaini, 1992; Al-Taftazani, 2007).

Sifat ma'ani, on the other hand, is formulated to convey a specific meaning attributed to the understanding of God. Sifat ma'na, whether eternal (qadim) or non-created (baharu), is based on the belief that these attributes are attributed to the eternal essence of God (Al-Taftazani, 2007). The formulation of sifat ma'ni aims to bridge two opposing lines of thought: the extreme rational approach represented by the Mu'tazilah and the textual approach that cannot adequately explain the concept of divine attributes while maintaining the sanctity of God. The Asy'ariyah tradition attempts to provide an understanding of the aspects of divinity related to creation. Sifat ma'ni serves as a means to sanctify God by denying any unworthy attributes, which ultimately requires an explanation of what can be ascribed to God, known as sifat ma'ni (Al-Juwaini, 1950).

Sifat ma'na includes qudrah (power), iradah (will), 'ilm (knowledge), sam' (hearing), bashar (sight), kalam (speech), and hayat (life). The formulation of sifat ma'ni by the Asy'ariyah school encompasses aspects of divinity to explain the purity and perfection of God, as well as His relationship with creation. The

eternal nature of sifat ma'ni always depends on and follows the eternity of God's essence to differentiate between the essence of God, God's power (qudrah), and other attributes. All attributes attributed to God are thus eternal, just like God's essence (Al-Juwaini, 1992; Al-Taftazani, 2007).

Tafwid, Takil, Tasybih, and Tajsim in Understanding Khabariyah Attributes

The Asy'ariyah school, in understanding the Khabariyah attributes, employs a moderate approach between tafwid, tasybih, and tajsim. The formulation of divine attributes is an effort to purify the attributes of God. The proof of existence, qidam (pre-eternity), baqa (everlastingness), mukhalafah lil-hawadis (being different from created things), and other attributes is done rationally to demonstrate that God exists and possesses specific attributes. This endeavor is undertaken to affirm that the existence of God can be accepted by those who doubt or even deny His existence. The debate over tasybih, tajsim, and the sanctification of attributes lies in the Khabariyah attributes mentioned in the Quran, which resemble attributes of creatures. The debate is not about the authenticity of the Quran but rather what is meant by the reports it conveys. For example, the word "yad," which literally means "hand," "wajh," which means "face," "nuzul," which literally means "descent," and "istawa," which means "ascendancy."

Tasybih means an approach that likens God to His creatures, while tajsim is the view that God has a physical form and bodily parts. These stances are contrary to the principle of mukhalafah lil-hawadis and, as mentioned in God's word in Surah Al-Shura (42:11), that there is nothing like Him. Tasybih and tajsim represent unified attitudes towards divine attributes that are opposed by the Asy'ariyah school because they are seen as inconsistent with the majesty and purity of God (Masrukhin, 2020). Broadly speaking, there are several approaches to understanding Khabariyah attributes:

1. Believing without entering into rational understanding and leaving the interpretation to God.
2. Interpreting through takwil by seeking an alternative meaning (not the literal one) that aligns with the purity of God and can be accepted by reason.
3. Understanding the attributes as they are, with meanings frequently ascribed to created beings.

The first approach is the stance of the early three generations of Muslims since the time of the Prophet, known as the Salaf. The second approach is the stance of Asy'ari scholars. The third approach is adopted by the mujasimah and musyabihah schools. The Asy'ariyah school combines the first and second approaches while rejecting the third one. They understand Khabariyah attributes using the concept of takwil, turning the original meaning into another that avoids equating God with creatures, ultimately for the sanctification of God's attributes.

The Asy'ariyah school seems to dispute the first approach because it conflicts with the concept of sifat salbiah (attributes of negation). For instance, if the word "yad" attributed to God in Surah Al-Fath (48:10) is interpreted literally as "hand," it might lead to the conclusion that God has a bodily form resembling His creatures and possesses a hand like a human. In the view of Asy'ari theologians, this interpretation contradicts the majesty and holiness of God. Therefore, they reinterpret "yad" to mean "power" (Al-Taftazani, 2007). Other verses in the Quran also contain meanings that do not align with divine attributes. For example, the word "istawa," in Surah Taha (20:5), which literally means "to ascend" or "to be established," is interpreted as "having dominion" in a non-physical sense. The word "ain," found in Surah Taha (20:39), which means "eye" literally, is interpreted as "sight" in a manner that befits divine attributes. Another word in the Quran is "saq," which means "foot" literally but is interpreted as "taking a step" or "making a movement" in the context of the Day of Judgment (Al-Taftazani, 2007).

In principle, the Asy'ariyah school is in line with the understanding of the early generations of Muslims, which means they affirm divine attributes as stated in religious texts. They reject at-Ta'til, which is the view that empties God of His attributes or denies that God has attributes. As such, the Asy'ariyah tradition argues that God indeed has attributes but that these attributes are fundamentally different from the attributes of created beings. They should not be the subject of debate, and their understanding should be in a manner of "bila kaifa wa bila tasybih" – without asking how and without likening God to creatures. This does not imply that God's attributes are multiple eternals but rather that they differ from God's essence itself, as explained by Al-Ghazali (Al-Jasim, 2007).

Will and Free Will

When discussing the concept of free will, there are two opposing schools of thought: Jabariyah and Qodariyah. In between these two conflicting views, there is a moderate approach that seeks to reconcile them according to the demands of Islam, and that's the Asya'riyah school. The topic of human free will is a frequently debated subject among Islamic theologians, and debates regarding human free will are quite intellectually taxing.

The debate about human free will has been dominated by two opposing views: the Muktaizilah and the followers of the radical Imam Ahmad bin Hanbal. The Muktaizilah argue that humans possess free will without any divine intervention because free will is the basis for reward and punishment for Muslims' actions. On the other hand, the followers of Imam Ahmad bin Hanbal hold the opposite view. According to them, humans do not have free will, as they are merely subjects of God's will (Al-Taftazani, 2007).

The Muktaزيلah invested much effort into critiquing the views of the hardline Hanbalian camp. In their efforts, the Muktaزيلah made human will arbitrary, which resulted in a limitation of God's power. The concept of humans being free without God's intervention implied that God's power was restricted outside of human will and freedom (Al-Subki, 1995). In this context, the scholars of the Asy'ariah school sought to find a middle path that could demonstrate human freedom without diminishing God's authority over humans. The efforts of Asy'ariah scholars aimed to reconcile the two conflicting tendencies using the terms "kasb" and "iktisab." The term "kasb" is used to refer to the will and actions created by God, while "iktisab" points to these two when attributed to humans (Al-Asy'ari, 1955).

The first-generation Asy'ariah scholars viewed that humans are free to will at the level of attributes, as essentially God creates human will (Al-Asy'ari, 1955; al-Bagillani, 2000). This can be illustrated by explaining the will and the act of reading a book. When someone reads, they are considered to have the will to read and are currently reading. In their knowledge, they are doing two things: willing and acting. This is referred to as "iktisab." Nevertheless, it is God who creates these two things, known as "kasb." The second-generation Asy'ariah scholars believed that both God and humans have will. Will, whether attributed to God or humans, means choosing one option from two or more. For example, a person may choose to eat rather than not eat or choose another will from the two, or look for another option (Al-Taftazani, 2007).

The difference between the will of God and humans lies in the ability to realize their will; God's will is certain to become reality, while the realization of human will is not guaranteed. Many human wills go unfulfilled and remain unrealized due to various obstacles. In the view of the second-generation Asy'ariah scholars, the formulation of human will does not derive from how God created it but from how human will exists within their knowledge. In their knowledge, humans recognize that they have a will concerning something. They endeavor to make that will a reality, though human wills are not always realized. However, humans possess the power to choose their will (Al-Taftazani, 2007). Therefore, formulating free will as the awareness of willing freely represents an effort to unify two perspectives: one view stating that God has free will, and humans have none on one side, and another perspective suggesting that humans have free will without divine intervention on the other side. This understanding of free will means more than just knowing; it encompasses one's complete self-awareness of their existence in the context of daily life (Masrukhin, 2020).

CONCLUSION

The concept of moderation in theology can be observed in the theological doctrine of the Asya'riyah, as they represent a middle path between the rationalist Muktaزيلah and the textualist Salifah or the followers of Hadith. The

Asya'riyah do not solely rely on primary sources like the holy texts of the Quran and the Sunnah, but they also incorporate rational methods. The application of the concept of moderation in theology includes:

1. The synthesis of reason and scripture: Asya'riyah have successfully formulated a theology characterized by moderation (wasathiah) by combining both reason and scripture.
2. Divine Attributes: Asy'ariyah encountered two extreme views, namely the Shifatiah Mujassimah and Musyabbihah, regarding divine attributes. Asy'ariyah formulated a moderate concept bridging these extremes.
3. Tafwid, Takil, Tasybih, and Tajsim in Understanding Khabariyah Attributes: Asy'ariyah, in understanding the Khabariyah attributes, employ a moderate approach, balancing tafwid, tasybih, and tajsim.
4. Will and Free Will: Asya'riyah attempts to reconcile two opposing views, Jabariyah and Qodariyah, through the theory of kasb.

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