An Analysis on Doctrine of Nur Muhammad in Bahr Al-Lahut: A Corelation to Martabat Tujuh (Seven Echelon)

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Abstract
The doctrine of Nur Muhammad is one of the discussions that explain the first beings created by Allah is Nur Muhammad. It is being debated by various scholars of Sufism who are trigger to either accept or reject the doctrine. Accordingly, the doctrine also being a discourse in Malay world and amongst of the earliest works is Bahr al-Lahut. The question remarks, firstly on the writings regarding the doctrine of Nur Muhammad in the work of Bahr al-Lahut. Then, it interrogates the means and descriptions on the doctrine of Nur Muhammad by Shaykh `Abdullah `Arif. Therefore, the objective of this paper is to identify and analyze the doctrine of Nur Muhammad in Martabat Tujuh through writing in Bahr al-Lahut. This study applies content analysis method while studying Bahr al-Lahut manuscript that has been edited from the original copy obtained from the University of Leiden. The findings indicate that Shaykh `Abdullah `Arif also discusses doctrine of Nur Muhammad in the scope of Martabat Wahdah (first echelon); an echelon midst the doctrine of Martabat Tujuh. The doctrine of Nur Muhammad hence, explains the existence of the universe begins from Nur Muhammad, and acts as the first being created by Allah. In addition, Nur Muhammad is also identified by application of other terms such as Ruh Idafi (pneuma of ancillary), Ruh Makhluk (pneuma of beings), Nur Zahuri, Hakikat Muhammad (the quintessence of Muhammad), al-Qalam (The Pen), and al-Wilayah (sovereignty). Besides, the nature of Nur Muhammad is from nonexistence to existence i.e. muhdath (neoteric).

Keywords: Nur Muhammad, Bahr al-Lahut, Martabat Tujuh, Tasawwuf, Ma’rifatullah.

1.0 INTRODUCTION
Martabat Tujuh deals with the echelon of existence (Abdillah, A. M, 2001: 101) and the origin of creation in the perspective of Tasawuf Falsafi (philosophical Sufism) (Ibrahim, AFH 1998: 1). According to Ibrahim AFH (2003: 17), Martabat Tujuh also refers to an explanation that facilitates the understanding of Oneness of Allah via seven martabat; Ahadiyyah (monism), Wahdah (oneness), Wahidiyyah (The One), Alam Arwah (cosmos), Alam Mithal (quintessence), Alam Ajsam (anthropomorphize), and `Alam Insan (beings). Abdillah, A. M (2001: 101) explains...
the founder of Martabat Tujuh doctrine is al-Burhanpuri (1020 H / 1620 M) who successfully expanded Ibn `Arabi’s and al-Jili’s Sufism. In this study, the author will discuss the doctrine of Nur Muhammad in Martabat Tujuh, predominantly at the second martabat (Wahdah) at Ta`ayyun ‘Awwal (first manifestation), and the fourth martabat (`Alam Arwah) at Ta`ayyun Thalis (third manifestation) or A yan Khariyyah (manifestation of existence).

2.0 MARTABAT TUJUH IN SUFISM
This study will deliberate fundamental understanding of Martabat Tujuh according to al-Burhanpuri, Muhammad Fad Allah (1965: 130), al-Banjari, Muhammad Nafis (n.d: 21) and al-Palembani, ʿAbd Samad (n.d: 104-105).

The first martabat is known as Ahadiyyah (al-Burhanpuri, M.F, 1965: 130). It divides to Martabat La ta`ayyun (intangible), Martabat al-Itlaq (generalization) and Martabat al-Dhat al-Buht (divination). In fact, Ahadiyyah is the first martabat of all martabat tanazzul (manifestation echelon). al-Burhanpuri, M.F (1965:130) further explains the significant of this martabat are absence from all attributes; exists solely anonymous, and stand solitary. Moreover, al-Palembani, ʿA.S (n.d: 104-105) clarifies the first martabat also called as martabat Zhuhuri (emersion) that exists the quintessence of God, and apparently no existence except this. The existence of God’s quintessence on this martabat also named ghaiib al-mutlaq i.e. utter concealment from intelligence and senses of beings. The analogy of Martabat Ahadiyyah like a blank and bare paper without qaiyyid (tractable). The parables executes by scholars to illustrate the blank is letter ‘O’ which is also called al-Itlaq (Abdullah, W.M.S, 1992: 24-25).

Martabat Itlaq is approximately free, and is manifest (Ta`ayyun) because there is no other manifestation unto. This martabat corresponds to independent and secluded dhihin (intellectual freedom) from reasoning i.e. refers to La`tayyun Martabat Ahadiyyah is the supreme and there is no beyond, as all other martabat is under this martabat (al-Burhanpuri, M.F, 1965:130 ; Abdullah, W.M.S 2004: 12).

The second martabat is identified as Wahdah or Martabat al-Ta`ayyun al-`Awwal (first manifestation echelon). This martabat concerns from the knowledge of Allah to His Substance, His Nature, and all the creatures (maujudat) comprehensively (ijmal), without being estranged each other. It is also in other names, recognized as Hakikat Muhammad (al-Burhanpuri, M.F, 1965:130). al-Banjari, M.N (n.d: 21-22) also explains in this martabat that all names (asma’) and attributes collectively (ijmal) gathered in quintessence of Prophet Muhammad (p.b.u.h.). Hakikat Muhammad is the core of all creatures and is the essence of nature (حقيقة / العالم هوية), where the origin of existence assembled from Nur of Prophet Muhamad). Martabat Wahdah is preceded by Syeikh Dawud al-Fathani as dot and particle in an area and pictured to the following . According to him, the dot is the origin of a letter and, encompasses all the letters to be written or written afterwards. The original contents of the letter assemble in the dots collectively however, intangible. He also mentions, whenever discretion upon something is happen, then it is called Ta`ayyun ‘Awwal (Abdullah, W.M.S, 1992: 25).
The third martabat is acknowledged as Wahidiyyah, or al-Ta’ayyun al-Thani (التاني التعيين). This martabat is also known as Hakikat Insan (innate of beings). Martabat Wahidiyyah resembling the knowledge of Allah to His substance, His attributes, and all creatures are being detailed indeed specified (al-Burhanpuri, M.F, 1965: 131). Al-Banjari, M.N (n.d: 22) explains that there has been a khitab (message) of Allah in His own words: "Verily, I am your God", and all the abovementioned martabat is Qadim (obsolete) (al-Burhanpuri, M.F. 1965: 131, al-Banjari, M.F, n.d: 22, Abdullah, W.M.S, 2004: 12). It is because the third martabat is none other existence except the substance and attributes of Allah. All creatures at that time being were only in the knowledge of Allah that had not been revealed in the tangible world. As illustrated by Sheikh Dawud, Martabat Wahidiyyah as a letter of alif or others, came from the perfection of collective dots, at the level of Martabat Wahdah thus, circumstantially exist in Martabat Wahidiyyah. Due to the perfection of the details, also ta’aqquq happen for the second time before ta’aqquq of Martabat Wahdah, thus Wahidiyyah also named Ta’ayyun Thani (Abdullah, W.M.S 1992: 24-25). These two martabat are renowned the knowledge of Allah i.e. Infinitely Preexistent, and accordingly is called A`yan Thabitah (constant manifestation) (al-Palembangi, `A.S, n.d: 105).

The fourth martabat is understood as Alam Arwah, also being named as Ashya` al-Kawniyyah al-Mujarrad (cosmic universality) refers to everything that create by Allah, have not yet settled but, differ to one another (al-Burhanpuri, M.F, 1965: 131). This martabat is also entitled as Nur Muhammad; a very delicate and unorganized state where the origin of souls of beings, neither human nor other creatures, that vary to one another. This martabat is considered as the first martabat pertaining to existences that are kharij (visible) or zahir (apparent) or tanjizi (completed), and also named A`yan Kharijiyyah (manifestation of existences). It includes four martabat namely ‘Alam Arwah, ‘Alam Mithal, ‘Alam Ajsam, and ‘Alam Insan (al-Palembangi, `Abd Samad, n.d: 104-105). Abdullah W.M.S (2004: 12), explains that there was misunderstanding in this martabat where some believes that Muhammad is originated from Nur Allah, nonetheless the interpretation deviates from actual understanding. The first being creates by Allah is Nur Nabi Muhammad which is from His Nur. According to his interpretation, the form of Nur Muhammad is created by his Lord, and not from or a fragment of Nur Allah because one of His identifiable names is Nur. The Prophet Muhammad is the perfect manifestation of Asma ‘Allah and His attributes, then He is the ruler of ‘Alam Kabir (macro-cosmos) and `Alam Saghir (micro-cosmos).

The fifth martabat then named as martabat of ‘Alam Mithal. This martabat is described as a result of a delicate, irregular, indissoluble, undivided, unshrouded, and unamend (al-Burhanpuri, M.F, 1965: 131 ; Al-Palembangi, A.S, n.d: 104). This nature is exemplified to all cosmic creation as a result of kun (be!). Sheikh `Abd Samad clarifies Alam `Mithal as alienated spirits in the various forms whereas the origin of the soul is one. According to him, the Sufis constitute Alam Ruh parable to the sea, and Alam Mithal is that sea waves. The form of surf are differ in fact various, notwithstanding the origin and essence is one and not diverse. The same goes to the origin and nature of the spirit which is one and not multiples, except in the different
forms. ‘Alam ‘arwah cannot be reached, touched, seen, heard, felt, and osculated by five senses. ‘Alam Arwah dan’ Alam Mithal only reachable through Nur Iman (faith gleam) from heart because both alam originated from Nur. This is, in contrast with ‘Alam Ajsam where it able to respond by senses. Sheikh `Abd Samad explains this alam is also known as ’ Alam Malakut and’ Alam Ghaib which enables one to attain ma’rifah (wisdom) of the earliest three obsolete martabat, hence manages to reach Ma’rifah Allah (Al-Palembangi, A.S, n.d: 106).

The sixth martabat is known by the name of martabat of ‘Alam Ajsam. This martabat can be demonstrated as something that can be separated and divorced from one another (al-Burhanpuri, M.F, 1965: 131). ‘Alam Ajsam consists of four elements: fire, wind, earth, and water. Stone, plants, animal, human, and genie occur from these four elements. ‘Alam Ajsam is also named as’ Alam al-Mulk and’ Alam al-Shahadah because it is able be to achieve by five senses. Alam Ajsam resembles that cosmic is the result of the word kun (Al-Palembangi, A.S, n.d: 104-106).

The seventh martabat is acknowledged as Martabat al-Jami’ah, which is the martabat that brings together all six echelons which comprises Ahadiyyah, Wahdah, Wahidiyyah, ‘Alam Arwah,’ Alam Mithal and ‘Alam Ajsam. The set of all martabat is named as the final tajalli (emergence) as well as Martabat Insan Kamil (perfect being) (al-Burhanpuri, M.F, 1965: 131). Whenever Ma’rifah has perfected a human being through all the previous martabat, then he has reached the martabat of Insan Kamil. This maqam (prestige) is the position of the anbiya` (prophets) and awliya` (the chosen). But the most perfect ma’rifah is the Prophet Muhammad and then followed by other Prophets, while the status of wali (saints) is different to the rank of Prophets (Al-Palembangi, A.S, n.d: 104-106).

The summary of the above discussion shows that Nur Muhammad was at the martabat of Wahdah and Alam Al-Arwah. Nur Muhammad in Martabat Wahdah as the essence of all attributes and names, collectively gathered in the core of the Prophet Muhammad. It is the essence of all creatures and nature because every incident emanates from Nur Muhammad. Nur Muhammad is also found in martabat of ‘Alam Al-Arwah. This martabat also named with Nur Muhammad because it is a very fine, unorganized yet varies from one to the other. Nur Muhammad in the position as it is the first martabat of all alam manifestation or ‘Ayan Kharijiyyah which consists of four last martabat in the Martabat Tujuh (Ahmat, A. C., Aziz, N. H., Anas, N., & Habidin, N. F. 2016: 159-165).

Figure 1.0 : Summary of Nur Muhammad in Martabat Tujuh via the discussions from Muhammad Fad Allah Burhanpuri, `Abd Samad al-Palembangi and Muhammad Nafis Ibn Idris al-Banjari.
3.0  **DOCTRINE OF NUR MUHAMMAD IN MARTABAT TUJUH BASED ON BAHR AL-LAHUT**

The author finds Shaykh `Abdullah` Arif discussed the doctrine of Nur Muhammad through teachings of Martabat Tujuh. Based on an in-depth analysis of the text, his thoughts produce relevance and similarity to Martabat Ahadiyyah and Wahdah, however those terms are not quoted directly in Bahr al-Lahut. To analyze Nur Muhammad's doctrine in this work, the author has concentrates to Shaykh `Abdullah `Arif's thoughts on Nur Muhammad in Martabat Wahdah.

3.1  **Analysis of Nur Muhammad's doctrine in Bahr al-Lahut of Martabat Wahdah (al-Ta`ayyun al-`Awwal)**

First: Shaykh `Abdullah` Arif began his writing by praising Allah as Dhat who create Nur Muhammad with His Qudrat (omnipotence). The author finds that he believes Nur Muhammad is the creature of Allah accordingly. In fact, in Bahr al-Lahut he describes the creation of Nur Muhammad as below (Al-`Arif, `Abdullah in Ahmat, A.C, 2012: 95):
Translation: Praise be to Allah, Dhat Who Governs the whole universe that has create Nur Muhammad with the attributes of His Qudrat, peace and blessings be upon him; Muhammad the Messenger of Allah as the beloved of Allah, and above All the members of his family, his friends, and his people.

Second: In Martabat al-Ta`ayyun al-`Awwal, Shaykh `Abdullah` Arif describes all creatures such as `Arash (throne), Kursi (sovereignty), seven layers of heaven and earth, and others are made from Nur Muhammad. This view also coincides with the interpretation of Sheikh al-Banjari, M.N (n.d. 21 & 22) where all the creature originated and inaugurated by Nur Muhammad. Similarly, Sheikh al-Habsyi, A.M.H (2010: 15) mentions that the first creature that appears in the universe is Nur al-Habib (Nur Muhammad) and from it all the creation and other formation of either new or beforehand. Su`ad al-Hakim (1981: 357) in Mu`jam al-Sufi defines Nur Muhammad is the beginning of the process of alam and Nur is made precedent of other creatures. On the contrary, Shaykh `Abdullah` Arif believes Nur Muhammad was the essence of all existence and alam because of Nur was made in `Alam Kabir. The teaching has similarities with the thinking of Sheikh Muhammad Nafis which explains the fact of hakikat Muhammad is hakikat alam. The statement of Shayk`Abdullah` Arif who explained Nur Muhammad was the derivation of all the following creatures are (Al-`Arif, `Abdullah in Ahmat, A.C, 2012: 96):

Translation: Because of Arash and Kursi and the seven layers of heaven and earth, and everything contained in both were created by Allah Ta`ala from Nur Muhammad because Nur Muhammad occurred for 50,000 years of journey for Allah’s supremacy and emersion, and thus That [creation of all beings] is due to the greatness and majesty of the Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings be upon him) that he [Nur Muhammad] is also in the grace and greatness of Allah. Know, indeed everything [existence at the stage of `Ayan Kharijiyyah] has been made by Allah from Nur Muhammad.

Third: Shaykh `Abdullah` Arif attempts to explain the existence of Nur is in the knowledge and taqdir (predestines) of Allah in Martabat Ta`ayyun `Awwal. Nur Muhammad has existed and is included in the knowledge of Allah comprehensively; in a form of taqdiri (destiny). Being taqdiri is a mere existence of the fixed taqdir in His knowledge and every such thing has not been revealed and is not in the form of khariji (visible). He also explains that Nur Muhammad has occurred for 50,000 years in order to state the Greatness of Allah’s Dhat, which Nur Muhammad is also on His greatness and thus cause the creation of all beings. He explains in Bahr al-Lahut as follows (Al-`Arif, `Abdullah in Ahmat, A.C, 2012: 96):

Translation: Nur Muhammad occurred for 50,000 years, for said searching Greatness of Allah’s Dhat, and thus it [the creation of the beings] is due to the greatness and majesty of the Prophet Muhammad, and it [Nur Muhammad] was in the Majesty and greatness of God.
The author also finds that the views by Shaykh `Abdullah `Arif similar to the view of Shaykh al-Nabhani, Yusuf Ismail (1997: 8) in his Al-Anwar al-Muhammadiyyah Min al-Mawahib al-Laduniyyah who quoted a Hadith that explains God has set taqdir of beings 50,000 years before creating heaven and earth. Shaykh Yusuf points out a hadith to support his work, as below:

Translation: Sahih Muslim, the Prophet (p.b.u.h.) said: "Surely he (p.b.u.h.) justly said, God has completed Qadr of every creature and worldly details 50,000 years before the creation of the heavens and the earth, and his` Arash is on the liquid".

Because Nur Muhammad is in the power and greatness of God, then all creatures are used to exist in order to indicate the love of God upon Nur. Shaykh `Abdullah `Arif emphasized the belief that all life exists through wujud majazi and `Ayan Kharijiyyah is made of Nur Muhammadd, also known as al-`Ayán Thabitah. The occurrence of Nur Muhammad as the earliest creature also causes God to be acknowledged and identified. The author believes that, acknowledged and identified refers to convincement of Dhat Allah which is wujud mutlak (absolute existence), the properties of the Most Perfect, of His `Af`al.

Fourth: In Bahr al-Lahut, Shaykh `Abdullah `Arif emphasizes that there are two qualities of the Prophet Muhammad namely inward and outward. At the inward is known as Ism al-Wilayah (substantive domain), while outward is known as Ism al-Nubuwwah (substantive prophecy). He further explains that Ahl Suluk (man of conduct) mentioned the beginning of Tajalli which is the visible Dhat (Jalal) and attributes (Jamal) was Nur Muhammad, who had gathered all the souls of beings and angels (Al-`Arif, `Abdullah in Ahmat, A.C, 2012 : 97). His statement coincides with the view of Sheikh Muhammad Nafis in his definition of Martabat Wahdah which manifests all names and attributes collectively and gathered i.e. in Hakikat Muhammad. The statement by Shaykh `Abdullah `Arif who is also a Suluk member, quotes the words of other Suluk experts, who explained the Tajalli Allah, collectively gathered in the Hakikat Muhammad; as follows (Al-`Arif, `Abdullah in Ahmat, A.C, 2012: 97).

Translation: It has been said by Ahl Suluk that the beginning of Tajalli is Nur Muhammad and that is where the spirit of the beings and the angels and all creations are congregated.

Fifth: The continuation of abovementioned Tajalli, Shaykh `Abdullah `Arif also teaches that Hakikat Muhammadd is the essence of alam, also the essence of all existence. It is truly approachable when he explains the creation of creatures at Tanazzul stage. In his view, the earliest jawhar (quidity) made by God is` Alam Kabir i.e. Ruh Idafi which is manifestation from Tajalli of Dhat Allah. Ruh Idafi conveys the whole existence as a sign of the greatness of God. `Alam Kabir that contained in Ruh Idafi, also known by the name of Hakikat Muhammad as the Hakikat Alam. `Alam Kabir refers to the cosmos universality created from Ruh Idafi. The author finds that Shaykh `Abdullah `Arif intends to explain the reason of Ruh Idafi is the origin of `Alam
Kabir, as to express the greatness of Allah. Shaykh `Abdullah` Arif explains that the existence of the earliest jawhar is `Alam Kabir. While `Alam Kabir originated from Ruh Idafi such as below (Al-`Arif, `Abdullah in Ahmat, A.C, 2012: 97):

Translation: Shall you know that the earliest Jawhar [something included in the word of kun] is `Alam Kabir which is also Ruh Idafi [related to] from manifestation of the Dhat Allah. Everything from `Arash and Kursi and Luh Mahfuz and qalam and the heavens and the earth and paradise and hell and everything contained in them, all and every kind of light from the concealment like the sun and the moon and the stars and the sky and its occupants consist of angels, and as well as the earth and its inhabitants from humans and animals and genies and evils. All these things were creates by Allah from Ruh Idafi and Ruh Idafi is none and other than to mention greatness of Allah.

However, the author aims to explain a formed jawhar refers to a matter of fact and is included under Divine kalam, namely Kun. The Kalam of Allah is kalam nafsi; kalam to control a creation which belongs to the attributes of Allah (Ibrahim, M. R: 6). Kalam is not something spoken by verbal and voice, because the kalam is a creature.

Then, Shaykh `Abdullah` Arif insists Ruh Idafi belongs to the greatness and majesty of Allah. There is an argument cited by al-Fathani, Z.M (n.d : 6) and al-Raniri, N.A (2004 :3) where their works equate with the arguments used by Shaykh `Abdullah `Arif when explaining each incident that was cause by the Prophet Muhammad. The latter is guided by the argument in Bahr al-Lahut as follows (Al-`Arif, `Abdullah in Ahmat, A.C, 2012: 97):

Translation: Allah has said: "I made something because of you, O Muhammad [to know you], creates you by Me [Allah] because of Me [Allah].

Sixth: The author finds Shaykh `Abdullah `Arif described the doctrine of Nur Muhammad through concept of Tajalli Dhat Allah based on the theory of existence of creatures which from nonexistence to existence. Ruh Idafi is new and it exists from none to exist with God’s qudrat (omnipotent) and iradah (willpower). In his view, Ruh Idafi is new because the existence of "none" to "exist" has similarity equated by `Abd al-Rahman, A. (n.d : 3) in al-Jawhar al-Mawhub wa Munabbihat al-Qulub, which everything made from Nur Muhammad like `Arash till the earth will totally be destroyed.

To get a clearer understanding, Shaykh `Abdullah` Arif carries a parable of something (`Ayan) who is in the knowledge of Allah and apparently in the mirror named Ism Makhluk (substantive creatures). While the knowledge of Allah which is mirrored in the mirror is known as Ism Ma`suq i.e. Hakikat Idafi. He likened the real shadows like the Ruh Idafi that is new. The mirror is Qadim, because it is Dhat Allah which expressed as shadow or Ruh Idafi. Dhat Allah is the Infinitely Preexistence and there is nothing like Him. In the opinion of author, he wants to
emphasize Allah's Dhat as Infinitely Preexistence as to ensure the students who read his work do not misunderstand the Dhat of Allah of the Almighty because there is nothing that resembles His Dhat and vice versa. The views of Shaykh ‘Abdullah’ Arif in Bahr al-Lahut which explains Ruh Idafi are new and Dhat Allah the Almighty are as below (Al-`Arif, `Abdullah in Ahmat, A.C, 2012: 102-103):

Translation: It has been said that Ahl Allah, the love [sensual longing or the Iراده], is like a clean mirror, then something that exists [Ayan] in the knowledge of Allah which is apparent in the mirror is the name of the creature [Ism makhluk] known as Ruh Idafi. This is because Ruh Idafi exists from none [‘Adam] to exist [existence]. The mirror [analogy to Dhat Allah] is Qadim and all the apparent shadows [Ruh Idafi] in the mirror are new. There is nothing that resembles the Dhat of Allah the Infinitely Preexistence because indeed Allah is eternal with His attributes. It is well known that what exists in the knowledge of Allah which apparent in the mirror, is the name that is Ism ma`syuq and it is hakikat Idafi.

Seventh: The word Ruh Muhammad is also another term used by Shaykh ‘Abdullah’ Arif to refer to the words of Nur Muhammad. He explained that Ruh Idafi is the origin of the existence of the whole being because Ruh makhluk was revealed from Ruh Idafi. Meanwhile Ruh Idafi is Ruh Muhammad. In addition, there is an explanation the nature of knowledge of Allah is Qadim and Azali (sempiternal). The text in explaining those description can be reachable as below (Al-`Arif, `Abdullah in Ahmat, A.C, 2012: 103-104):

Translation: Know, indeed Dhat Allah is like a mirror that pure, serene and apparently in the mirror i.e. Ruh Idafi and it is the origin of all beings as indeed the soul of the rising beings is from Ruh Idafi. Ruh Idafi is the Ruh Muhammad. It is the Knowledge of Allah which is Qadim and Azali.

Eighth: Bahr al-Lahut also explains, everything that exists by God because of wilayah and something that existed in wilayah was found in Nur Muhammad. It has been explained earlier, wilayah is in the sense of inward while Nubuwwah at the angle of outward, and both are the attributes of Prophet Muhammad. Therefore, it is understandable that existence of wilayah is because of Nur Muhammad existence.

In addition, the word Nur Zahuri is also used in Bahr al-Lahut, a synonym for Nur Muhammad. He explained that angel was made from Nur Insan, while a human beings made from Nur Zahuri. The existence that exists in Nur Insan is due to something that exists in Nur Zahuri. The views of Shaykh ‘Abdullah’ Arif in Bahr al-Lahut that explains al-wilayah, Nur Insan and Nur Zahuri as follows (Al-`Arif, `Abdullah in Ahmat, A.C, 2012: 97-98):
Ninth: Shaykh ‘Abdullah’ Arif continued the discussion by debating the first Tajalli of Dhat Allah is Tanazzul (descending or manifest) to Qalam i.e. Hakikat Muhammad. Qalam states something in the narrative of Luh Mahfuz that all the mumkinat (possibilities) are from Nur Muhammad. Nur Muhammad states that the whole of the mumkinat is in the knowledge of Allah. Thus, it can be understood based on the above discussion, Qalam also refers to the meaning of Hakikat Muhammad and Nur Muhammad. The difference between Nur Muhammad and the Hakikat Muhammad explained by Shaykh ‘Abdullah’ Arif; occurs after the occurrence of Tanazzul of Dhat Allah to Qalam. His view coincides with the definition forward by Armstrong (1995: 179) who explains the difference between the two things is in the position of the (Tanazzul) creature because the power of God is manifested through the manifestation of the universe. Shaykh ‘Abdullah’ Arif’s understanding concerning Tanazzul of Dhat Allah to Qalam (Hakikat Muhammad) which caused the existence of dots (‘Ayan Thabitah) till visibly appear Nur Muhammad can be analyzed based on the text below (Al-`Arif, `Abdullah in Ahmat, A.C, 2012: 98):

Translation: It has been said by ‘Abdullah’ Arif, who among the Ahl Suluk; the beginning of the Tajali of Dhat Allah [Tanazzul] descends [reveals Himself to Hakikat Muhammad] to Qalam [Hakikat Muhammad] and from Qalam to the existence of the dots [‘Ayan Thabitah] and from the dots to visible of [Zahir] Nur Muhammad.

Based on the above passage, his thoughts have similarities with Sheikh Dawud when describing Martabat Wahdah by such an illustration of dots (Abdullah, W.M.S, 1992: 24-25). The dots is the origin of the perfect letter of alif at Martabat Wahidiyyah. The entire existence of the perfect alif had previously gathered at the preceding dot of existence which explains the rank of Wahdah. Alif is perfect because of the existence of the dots, and if without the dot, the letter of alif does not exist. The existing dots is likened apparent of Nur Muhammad which contains and converges on it the entire existence of the creatures collectively i.e. al-Ta’ayyun al-`Awwal on the martabat of Wahdah so to declare the knowledge of Allah. The perfect existence of alif comparable to existence of creatures by tafsili i.e. al-Ta’ayyun al-`Thani in Martabat Wahidiyyah.
Figure 2.0: The above diagram is a synopsis of creation in ‘Alam Kabir that is derived from Nur Muhammad, was originally created by God.


Tenth: The discussion of Dhat Allah being asserted for the second time in Bahr al-Lahut by Shaykh ‘Abdullah ‘Arif. To him, Dhat Allah is like a clear and clean mirror. The mirror image was the essence of the soul (hakikat ruh) and all beings in Martabat Wahdah. Then, it manifest visibly in the mirror like ‘Arash, kursi, sky, earth, devil, genie, and etc. where those are made by Allah from Nur Muhammad. The author finds that Shaykh ‘Abdullah ‘Arif attempts to explain the occurrence of Ta’alluq Iradah Allah (the prudence of God) on the provisions of Qada’. His statement which illustrates Dhat Allah as a clear mirror can be understood as follows (Al-‘Arif, ‘Abdullah in Ahmat, A.C, 2012: 98):

Translation: Know, O man that Dhat Allah is like a clean mirror. Thus it is determined that the essence of all the spirits and all beings and all things, manifests in forms of ‘Arash and kursi and the heavens and the earth and the genie and the devils and animals, which are all made by Allah from Nur Muhammad.

Eleventh: Shaykh ‘Abdullah ‘Arif confirms the views on Nur Muhammad as the earliest creature by quoting a hadith into Bahr al-Lahut. The existence of Nur Muhammad who has been destined for 50,000 years earlier, is in a view of compassion and love. In that situation, Nur
Muhammad became scared because of the Majesty of Allah. The argument argues by Shaykh ‘Abdullah’ Arif in Bahr al-Lahut, the first beings created and to be submissive to God because of His Presence as follows (Al-`Arif, `Abdullah in Ahmat, A.C, 2012: 98-99):

Translation: The Prophet Muhammad (p.b.u.h.) said: "The first created by Allah is my Nur [Nur Muhammad], and then my Nur was prevailing for 50,000 thousand years ahead [before Dhat Allah or no detachment with Allah] then saw by Allah upon him [Nur] with the grace of affection [Tajalli Jamal Allah], once looked my Nur trembled due to His presence.

Twelve: In addition, Shaykh ‘Abdullah’ Arif also explains Nur Muhammad admits, thus prostrates to Allah as a witness that He is the One and Only God; The Almighty. To declare His Oneness (Wahdaniyyah Allah), Nur Muhammad then worship Allah for 50,000 years, five times prostration. He also explains Nur Muhammad’s prostration was from Nur Allah. Based on this statement, the author finds Shaykh ‘Abdullah’ Arif does not mean to say Nur Muhammad is part of God. The message to be conveyed is Nur Muhammad made from God as the earliest creature. This view coincides with the argument proposed by Wan Mohd Saghir explaining the meaning of "Nur Muhammad from Nur Allah" when describing the teaching of Martabat Tujuh. According to him, "Nur Allah" is His Asma`, while Nur Muhammad is the perfect statement to Asma` and the attributes of Allah (Abdullah, W.M.S 2004: 12). Shaykh `Abdullah` Arif’s statement on this subject can be examined as follows (Al-`Arif, `Abdullah in Ahmat, A.C, 2012: 99):

Translation: So, Allah has said to my Nur, Am I your God (Allah)? So my Nur answered with saying; Yes You are my Lord. Then he prostrated Him with the Dhat and the attributes of Allah at fifty thousand years, which five times prostrating intentionally to Oneness of God. I am Nur from Nur Allah.

This thought also coincides with the view of Sheikh Zayn al-`Abidin Ibn Muhammad al-Fathani who explained Nur Muhammad had bowed to Allah five times cause of indignity and fear of Him (al-Fatani, Z.M, n.d: 3). According to Syeikh Zayn, from the occurrence has incumbent by Allah to His Prophet Muhammad and his people of five-time daily prayers. The author also finds that the argument contained in the work of Bahr al-Lahut is the words of Suhayl Ibn Soleh al-Hamdani when he asked Abi Ja`far about the Prophet Muhammad as the earliest Prophet but he is the last was sent. The answer from Abi Ja`afar can be seen based on the following argument, as quoted by al-Nabhani, Y. (1997: 8) in his work:

Translation: From Suhayl Ibn Soleh al-Hamdani, he asked Abi Ja`far Muhammad Ibn Ali: How did Muhammad be the Prophet who led the other Prophets while he was last sent out? Abi Ja`afar said: indeed, when Allah undertaking the covenant from Alam Arwah to the Children of Adam and their zuriat (descendant) and when they testified to themselves when asked, ((Am I your
God?)). Prophet Muhammad was the first person to answer, Yes! Therefore, he began as the earliest Prophet but the last to be sent.

There is even a Hadith that explains the prophethood of Muhammad was appointed as Prophet while the creation of Prophet Adam was between ruh (spiritual) and jasad (physical). The Hadith can also be seen in Sunan al-Tirmizy (Al-Tirmidhī, 2000: 821) and al-Mustadrak `Ala al-Sahihayn (Al-Hakim, 1997: 715), as below:

First Hadith:

Translation: Abu Hammam al-Walid Ibn Suja` Ibn al-Walid al-Baghdadi said: Narrated to us by al-Walid Ibn Muslim, from al-Awza’i, from Yahya Ibn Abi Kathir, from Abi Salamah, from Abi Hurayrah, said: They said: Messenger of Allah, when is it obligatory for you to be a prophet? He (peace be upon him) replied: ((When the Prophet Adam (in the making process) between ruh and jasad).

Second Hadith:

Translation: Narrated to us by Abu al-Nadhar al-Faqih and Ahmad Ibn Muhammad Ibn Salamah al-An'iziz said, narrated from `Uthman Ibn Sa`id al-Darimiy and Muhammad Ibn Sunan al-‘Uqiy narrated from Ibrahim Ibn Tohman From Budayl Ibn Maysarah of Abd Allah Ibn Syaqiq from Maysarah al-Fajar said: I asked the Messenger: When are you a prophet? He (peace be upon him) replied: ((When the Prophet Adam (in the making process) between ruh and jasad).

Third Hadith:

Translation: Abu Bakr Ibn Ishaq, narrated from Sulayman Ibn Muhammad Ibn al-Fudhayl, narrated from Muhammad Ibn Hisyam al-Ba'labakiy, narrated from Abu al-Walid Ibn Muslim from al-Awza`i from Yahya Ibn Abi Kathir from Abi Slamah from Abi Hurayrah said: Someone has said to the Prophet: When is obligatory for you being a prophet? His answer: ((Among the time Adam was made and breathed his soul into his body)).

Accordingly, based on the discussion that has been analyzed above, the author finds Shaykh ‘Abdullah’ Arif highlights his views clearly in Bahr al-Lahut. The writings of Bahr al-Lahut by Shaykh ‘Abdullah’ Arif is a thin works thus, the view of Zahir are very concise. However, in the opinion of author, in order to understand the contents, a reader needs a basic knowledge of doctrine of Nur Muhammad and Martabat Tujuh. If a reader reads without having a foundation on the doctrine of Nur Muhammad and Martabat Tujuh, there may be difficulties in understanding the writing of the text. This is because Shaykh ‘Abdullah ‘Arif does not explain
the description of Nur Muhammad in detail and only contains the main points. The authors find that this text is a very important and valuable to Sufism, who are on the basis of this knowledge. On the other hand, having a view of this work is not a work to be evaluated. Only those who have the ability can afford to reach God’s Omniscience. Therefore, it is desirable to explain the research made above only a rough study made by the author, while in-depth understanding preferably to the author of the work namely Shaykh ‘Abdullah ‘Arif and those who are more acquainted with, because the author unable to understand abundantly.

4.0 CONCLUSION

Based on the above discussion, the author concludes some important points regarding Shaykh ‘Abdullah ‘Arif’s view of Nur Muhammad in his work. He discuss the doctrine of Nur Muhammad through the framework of Martabat Tujuh by focusing on the two earliest echelons namely Martabat Ahadiyyah and Wahdah. In this paper, the author finds that Nur Muhammad's discussion in Bahr al-Lahut was discussed by Shaykh ‘Abdullah ‘Arif on Martabat Wahdah. He mentions the existence of this universe begins from Nur Muhammad as the first creature made by God. He named Nur Muhammad in his work with some other terms such as Ruh Idafi, Ruh makhluk, Nur Zahuri, Hakikat Muhammad, al-Qalam, and al-Wilayah. The existence of Nur Muhammad occurs from "nonexistence" to "existing", and the existence of Nur Muhammad is characterized as muhdath. In addition, on the viewpoint of author, Nur Muhammad is related to khilafiyyah (divergences) that needs to respond with an open mind and tolerance as there is no element of polytheism to Allah. The author celebrates both the views of the scholars from either the group who accepted or rejected. This is because, the views expressed by them are based on the understanding of the sources of the argument and the understanding of the knowledge and, that is held fairly celebrated.

References


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