

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 Thalīs* (third manifestation) or *A`yan Kharijiyyah* (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, `Abd 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, `A.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 *ghaib 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 (العالم حقيقة / العالم هوية), where the origin of existence assembled from Nur of Prophet Muhamad). *Martabat Wahdah* is preceded by Syekh 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* (الثاني 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* (ا) 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'aqqul* happen for the second time before *ta'aqqul* 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 Khariyyah* (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 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).

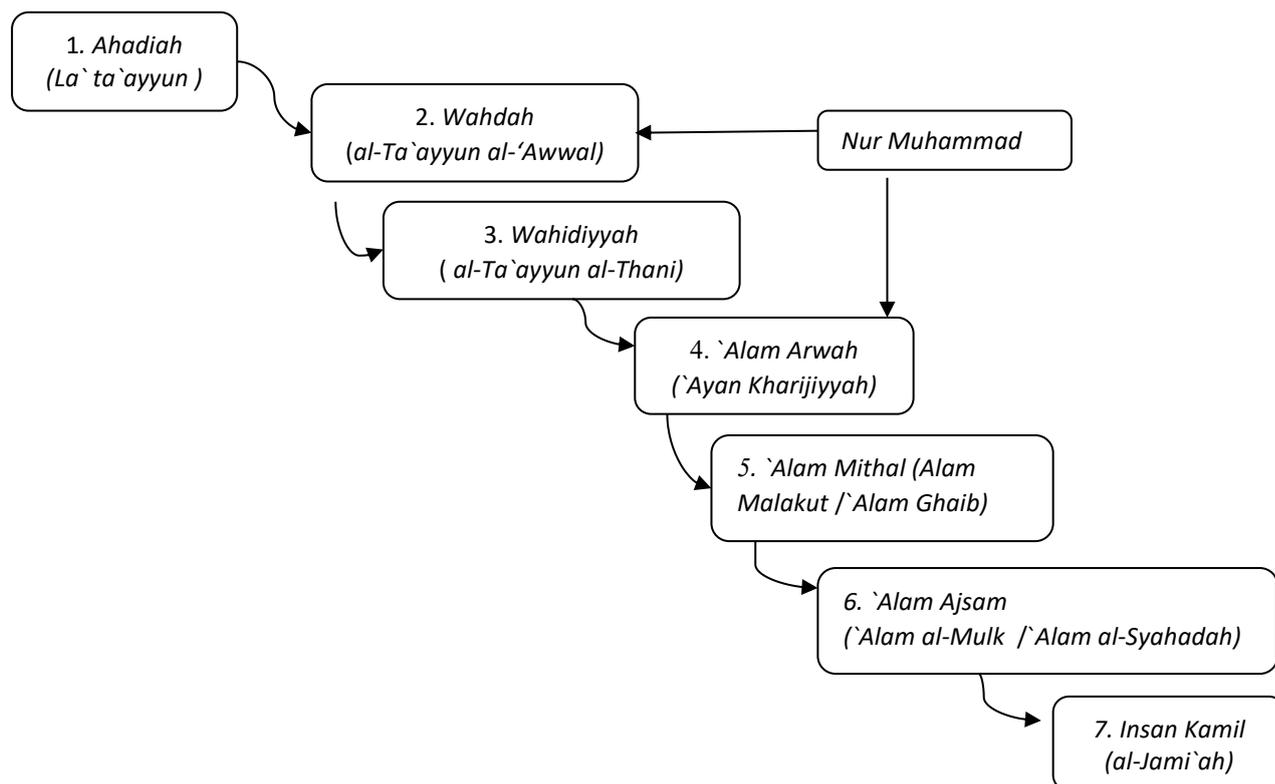


Figure 1.0 : Summary of *Nur Muhammad* in *Martabat Tujuh* via the discussions from Muhammad Fad Allah Burhanpuri, `Abd Samad al-Palembangi and Muhammad Nafis Ibn Idris al-Banjari.

Source: The above diagram is the summary by the author regarding the position of *Nur Muhammad* in *Martabat Tujuh* based on the work of *Tuhfah al-Mursalat Ila Ruh al-Nabi*, *al-Dur al-Nafis fi Bayan wahidah al-Af'al wa al-Asma` wa al-Sifat wa al-Dhat Dhat al-Taqdis* and *Siyar al-Salikin fi Tariq al-Sadat al-Sufiyah*.

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 Ahadiyah* 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 concentrated on 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 created *Nur Muhammad* with His *Quadrat* (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-Muhammadiyah 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 Muhammad*, also known as *al-`Ayan al-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 conviction 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 Muhammad* 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 created 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 caused 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 *iradah*], 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):

Translation: Know, O man that everything is made by Allah because of *al-Wilayah* and *al-Wilayah* is *Nur Muhammad*. Know, O man that angel was made by God from *Nur Insan*; as the word of Allah; the angels was created from *Nur Insan*, and man created by *Nur Zhahuri* [*Nur Muhammad*].

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 *Tajalli* 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*.

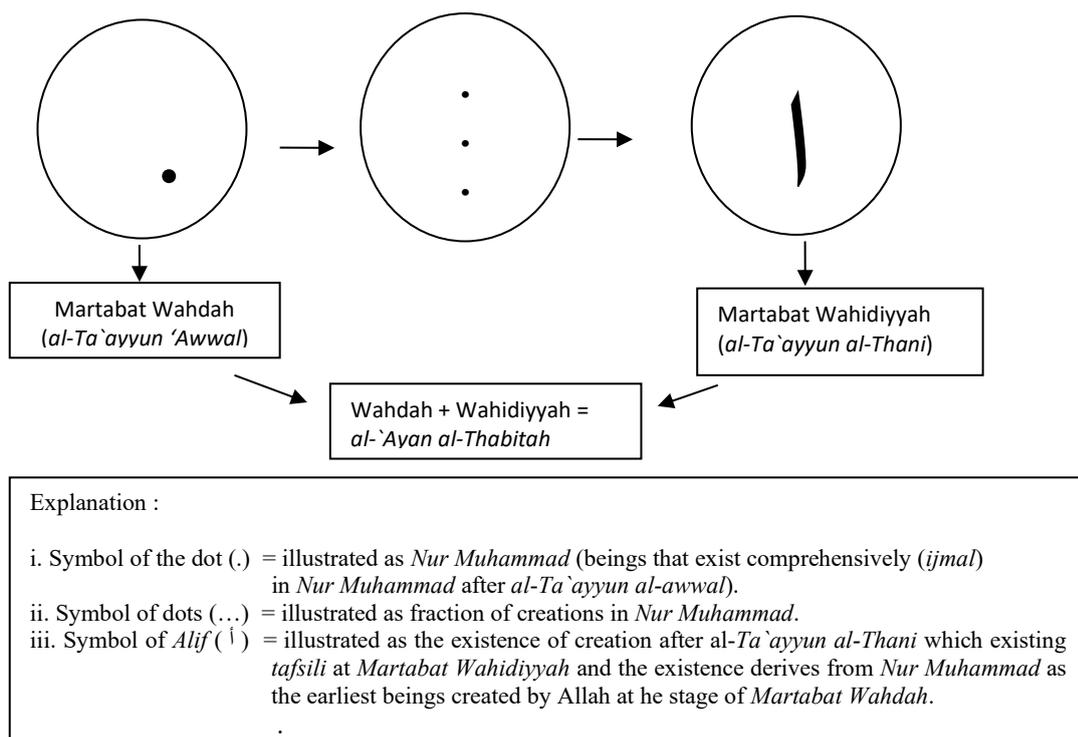


Figure 2.0: The above diagram is a synopsis of creation in '*Alam Kabir* that is derived from *Nur Muhammad*, was originally created by God.

Source : Shaykh `Abdullah `Arif, *Bahr al-Lahut*.

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-Tirmidhi, 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`iy, 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'ziz 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 *khilafiyah* (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.

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