

SUFISM THOUGHTS MURTAZA MOTAHHARI

The Relations and Unity Between Intellectuality (Science), Spirituality (Faith) and Morality (Morals)

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Abstract: *This paper is a review of Sufism thoughts of a contemporary Iranian thinker, namely Murtaza Motahhari. It focuses on discussing the relation and unity of science, faith, and morals in the frame of Sufism thought. Murtaza Motahhari adopted the view of philosophical sufism or irfan. It deals with the view of Sufism based on the assumptions of rational philosophy in understanding the reality of the inner (spiritual) or irfan ilmi (theoretical) and the practices of sharpening intuitive with the path of mysticism or irfan amali (practical). The process of Suluk journey started from philosophical ma'rifat (ma'rifat ilmi) continued with the practice of Shari'a, congregations, nature, until achieving the true ma'rifat. It is the irfan concept as understood in the spiritual world of Shia. People who follow the irfan is called wise. By following Suluk (mysticism) a Arif will be increasingly forged a soul consciousness to increasingly realize the moral act in practical terms. Irfan is built on the foundation of philosophy about theology and teopani as forming the spiritual consciousness actualized through amaliyah and akhlakul karimah. Maqamat reached and passed is what is achieved by a Arif through his work. Meanwhile, hal is what alight heart of a Arif. There are six maqams passed in Irfan, namely maqam nafs, maqam qalb, maqam, spirit, maqam sirr, maqam khabiy, and maqam akhfa.*

Keywords: *Murtaza Motahhari, Irfan, Sufism Thoughts.*

I. Introduction

Human beings are the most precious and unique when compared to other God's creatures. Because of their uniqueness,

people are always interesting to be studied and discussed. The discussion dealing with the human beings and their essential as if it had never known with the word "complete", although it has been using a variety of perspectives. The uniqueness and depth of human nature affect the birth of the various branches of science dealing with human beings from various different perspectives.

In the philosophy perspective, it is concluded that humans are animals who think (*al-insan al hayawanu al-nathiq*) because humans have an intellectual reason (mind). With this intellectual reasoning, humans think, analyze, predict, compare, conclude, and various other intellectual activities. Intellectual reasoning makes humans can distinguish between the good and the bad (ethics) as well as between the right and the wrong (science). As for the sufism perspective or Islamic spirituality¹, it is concluded that humans are naturally influenced by the tendencies of their soul. When their soul is holy, it will appear holy and honorable behavior, otherwise if his soul is not pure, so it will show unholy or degrading behaviors².

Because of the idiosyncrasy and unique of the human beings than other God's creation, the human's logic and psyche are often

¹ The word Sufism is derived from the Arabic. It is Shafa or shafih which means purity. There is also an opinion coming from the word Shafwah meaning elected person. Others argue that Sufism is derived from the rows which means the line or Muslims who are in the first line of the prayer or holy war. Some experts also believe that the word is derived from the word Shuffah meaning the lower porch made of clay in the Prophet's mosque in Medina where good poor people and follow him gathered. Some think that the word Sufism is derived from the word shuf which means fleece, the cloak material that is often used by the Sufis. But there is also the opinion derived from the Greek , namely Sophia which means wisdom. See Fadhullah Haeri, *The Elements of Sufism*, Translated by Muhammad Hashim Assegaf entitled *Learning Easy Sufism*, (Cet. IV; Jakarta: Lantern Basritama, 2002), p. 1.

² Mukhtar Solihin and Rosihan Anwar, *Hakekat Manusia : Menggali Potensi Kesadaran Pendidikan Diri dalam Psikologi Islam*, (Cet. I ; Bandung : Pustaka Setia, 2005), p. 1-2.

"disturbed" by various issues concerning their lives. One of the main issues that always haunt the human thoughts and feelings are regarding the purpose of the universe creation including the purpose of their creation as an integral part of the universe.³ From the perspective of spirituality or mysticism in general (not least of Sufism in Islam), the innate nature of human beings generally has constant symptoms dealing with longing conscience (soul) to achieve oneness with God.⁴ The oneness with the God is the ultimate goal (the main objective) of the human beings, and therefore every human movement in life and their lives must be necessarily based upon achieving the eternal oneness with God as a mode of existence.

The God's position as a mode of existence is based on a view of the Sufis who declare the intrinsic potentialities of human beings in infinite and limited things to their selves dealing with the material alone. The infinite human intrinsic potentialities stretch from the unknown starting point of the creation (*azul*) to unknown immortality points (centuries).⁵ The intrinsic potentiality is the spirit of *Ilahiyah* which is the beginning and end of human life. It is realized in the practical life being the spirit as well as the orientation of life movement. It is implicitly reflected in the word of Allah "*Innalillahi wa inna ilaihi raji'un*" (Indeed, everything comes from God and will return to Him).

Sufism is a science that deals with the spirit, the heart (*qalb*),

³ Musa Kazhim, *Belajar Menjadi Sufi*, (Cet. I ; Jakarta : Lentera Basritama, 2002), p. 9.

⁴ A. J. Arbery, *Sufism and Account of the Mystics of Islam*, translated by Bambang Herawan entitled *Tasawuf Versus Syari'at*, (Cet. I ; Bandung : Hikmah, 2000), p. 1.

⁵ A. Reza Arasateh, *Growth to Selfhood the Sufi Contribution*, translated by Ilzamuddin Ma'mur entitled *Sufisme and Penyempurnan Diri*, (Cet. II ; Jakarta : Srigunting Press, 2002), p. 1

and the soul (*nafs*). If the heart has been getting beam (emanation), then we can feel His existence and glory, and enjoy His infinite and eternal charm.⁶ In the perspective of the Sufis, Sufism is the culmination of the realization (*tahaqquq*) and the appreciation of human servitude to God as the Mode of Existence. In reaching the peak of this servitude, some Sufis (like Al-Ghazali) emphasize fear; whereas, other Sufis (like Jalal al-Din al-Rumi) emphasize love. This emphasis was again strongly associated with the level of our understanding and experience to God. Therefore, Sufism in Islam teaches submission (*Islam*) to God. Then, in case of surrender the servant will be peaceful (*sulam*) when finding the scary side and the side that gave birth to the love of God.⁷

A person armed with a clean heart and a stable soul understands worship that is no longer an obligation impressing necessity, but as a moment to meet with a lover, as a password to unlock His mysterious treasures. This is in line with Imam Ali bin Abi Talib's statement. He said "there is servant worships Allah because she/he wants to get rewarded, that worship deals with the merchant's worship level. There is a servant worships for fear of torture, this worship deals with slaves level. There is also a slave worships because the love of Allah, that worship belongs to the believers".⁸ Worship for love without expecting reward and fear to be punished by Allah is the essence of worship performed by the Sufis.

The God conception (theosophy) and God epistemology (*manhaj kalam*) used as the mainstay of the Sufis to formulate theoretically their mystical view as well as a practical guideline for

⁶ Muhsin Labib, *Mengurai Tasawuf, Irfan, and Kebatinan*, (Cet, I ; Jakarta : Lentera Basritama, 2004), h. 25.

⁷ Musa Kazhim, *op, cit.*, h. 15.

⁸ Muhsin Labib, *loc, cit.*

the path of mysticism (*suluk*). In addition, it will carry on the practical effect perceived individually by the Sufis, in the form of *hal* (things) and *maqam* passed in their spiritual way and sociological effects, and the extent of mysticism (Sufism) to contribute to the society and the development of Islamic civilization.

In general, groups of Sufism in Islam based on the concept and methodology of his theosophical divided into two groups (*mazhab*), namely the monistic Sufism and dualistic Sufism. Sufism monistic bases their theosophy concept on the concept of *wahdab al-wujud*, *al-ittihad*, or *hulul*. The group is then known as philosophical Sufism. This group believes that the reality essence between the slave and his Lord is a inseparable manifestation unity (*wahdab al-wujud*).⁹ In epistemological views, this group combines mystical enlightenment and rational-philosophical exposure.¹⁰ In other words, this group combines two tools of human epistemology, namely; the mind and heart as well as enable both synergistically and simultaneously in the journey to God. In contrast to the group monistic Sufism, dualistic Sufism strongly rejects the view of *wahdab al-wujud* proposed by monistic groups – even they view monistic groups as a gentile group. Sufism in this group has been modified and adapted to the theology of Asy'ariyah. Later, this group is identified as a group of Sunni Sufism.¹¹ This group is more concerned with the practices of the Shari'a in the mystical and tends to ignore the rational-philosophical reasoning as the basis of Sufism. In other words, this group uses only one tool epistemology in achieving the perfection of human journey, namely intuition (*heart*) and thwarts the mind

⁹ *Bid.*, h. 52.

¹⁰ Haedar Bagir, *Buku Saku Tasawuf*, (Cet. II ; Bandung : Arasy, 2006), p. 101.

¹¹ *Muhsin Labib*, op, cit., h. 53.

work.

II. Discussion

A. The Biography of Murtaza Motahhari

Shaheed Murtaza Mutahari was a philosopher, cleric, contemporary Sufi of Shia, and one of the ideologues of the Islamic revolution in Iran. He was born on February 2, 1920 M coincided with 1338 Hijri in Fariman village, near the city of Mashhad, Iran. Mashhad is a city that is considered sacred by Shia Imami followers. His father was Muhammad Hussein Motahhari, a cleric who was a fairly prominent among Shi'ite Muslim in Iran.¹²

He was the closest disciples of two great figures of the Shia, namely Allama 'Thabaththba"i and Ayatollah Khomaeni. His first teacher was his own father. When he was 12 year old, Murtaza Motahhari began studying the religious studies in *hawzah* (Islamic Boarding School) in Mashhad. He showed his large enough interest to philosophy, treasury of rational sciences as well as *Irfan*. For first, he studied philosophy and other treasury of rational sciences at Mirza Mehdi Syahidi Razawi. After his teacher died, he left the holy city of Mashhad to migrate to the holy city of Qom to continue his religion studies in the scientific *hawzah* in the holy city.¹³

At the relatively young age, Motahhari had taught some courses such as Logic, Philosophy, Jurisprudence, and Theology

¹² Murtadha Muthahhari, *The Causes Responsible For Materialist Tendencies in the West*, translated by Akmal Kamil entitled *Kritik Islam Terhadap Materialisme*, (Cet, I ; Jakarta: al-Huda Islamic Centre, 2001), p. 9.

¹³ Muhsin Labib, *Para Filosof Sebelum and Sesudah Shadra*, (Cet, I ; Jakarta; al-Huda Islamic Centre, 2005), p. 278.

(*kalam*) in the faculty of theology in Tehran University.¹⁴ In fact, he also had served as chairman of the philosophy department at the university. He totally put large enough interest to philosophy, treasury of rational sciences. For him, philosophy is not just to polemic or mere intellectual discipline. Philosophy is a particular pattern of religiosity and a way to understand and formulate the real Islam.¹⁵

In addition to exert themselves at science, Murtaza Motahhari also busied himself in political activities resisting the dictatorial regime of Shah Pahlavi. He even included as one of the ideologues and propagandists of the Iranian Islamic Revolution led by Imam Khomeini in 1979. He began his first political confrontation on June 6, 1963. He demonstrated seriously and openly as a follower of Imam Khomeini (Shia spiritual leader), both politically and intellectually. He appeared in the Iranian society by handing out political appeals of Imam Khomeini and urged people to support him in every sermon he said.¹⁶

In his political movement, he was active in various political organizations, including the Association of Militant Cleric, an organization brought together the scholars of Shi'ite Iran that aims to support the calls of the Islamic revolution of Imam Khomeini and to overthrow the Shah Reza Pahlavi. So many roles that he did in supporting the Islamic revolution made him finally very close to the character of Imam Khomeini. On January 12, 1979, one

¹⁴ Murtadha Muthahhari, *Introduction to Kalam*, translated by Muhammad Ilyas Hasan entitled *Mengenal Ilmu kalam*, {Cet. I ; Jakarta Pustaka Zahra, 2002), p. 7.

¹⁵ Hamid Algar, "Hidup and karya Murtadha Muthahhari", *dalam Pendahuluan buku Murtadha Muthahhari, Filsafat al-Hikmah*, translated by the Team of Mizan publisher entitled *Filsafat Hikmah : Pengantar Pemikiran Shadra*, (Cet. I ; Bandung : Mizan, 2002), p. 30.

¹⁶ Murtadha Muthahhari, *The Cause*, *op. cit.*, p. 10.

month before the Iran Islamic revolution, he was appointed as chairman of the board of the revolution along with several other Shia clerics, such as Ayatollah Javad Bahonar and Ayatollah Hussein Beheshti.¹⁷

Finally, his political activities in supporting the ideals of the Islamic revolution that drove him to the martyrdom took place on May 1, 1979 (three months after the Islamic revolution) by *Furqani* group (the Shiite militant group). He was martyred after chairing a meeting of the board of the revolution in Dr. Tadullah Shahabi's home. A bullet took in his head and penetrated his eyelids.¹⁸ Imam Khomeini as the supreme leader of the revolution could not stop crying and sadness when he was martyred. His sadness was very deep than when his own child, Sayyid Mustafa Khomeini was martyred at Shah Pahlavi's regime. Even he was martyred and sat as chairman of the revolution boards; he cannot still be separated from the world of Islamic thought. His ideas almost cover the entire field of sciences that are relevant to the needs of Muslims and for the progress of Islamic civilization in the world.

Murtaza Motahhari's works had been published whether of the lectures as well as quite a lot of his writings. They includes more than 200 titles from various disciplines, such as philosophy, *qalam*, history, sociology, anthropology, ethics, *usul fiqh* and *fiqh*, Islamic law, morals, Irfan (Sufism), politics, and economics.¹⁹

B. Murtaza Motahhari's Mysticism Thought

1. The concept of Irfan (*Philosophical Sufism*)

In Shia's view, the term Sufism is replaced by the term *Irfan* which means the introduction or knowledge. In Western literature,

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, h. 10-11.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁹ Muhsin Labib, *Para Filosof, op. cit.*, p. 280.

the term *Irfan* is often defined with the word *gnosis* or knowledge that has transcended knowledge and science.²⁰ *Irfan* in Shia is the tendency of the secrets of the inner knowledge. Based on such understanding, *Irfan* is Islamic spiritualism dimension that does not separate knowledge with spirituality, intellect with the heart, as well as synergize between achieving mystical enlightenment and rational-philosophical understanding dealing with the experiences of spirituality or the inner. In other words, *Irfan* in Shia is another name for philosophical Sufism.

According to Murtaza Motahhari, *Irfan* as a discipline is divided into two branches, namely *Ilmi Irfan* (theoretical *Irfan*) and *Amali Irfan* (practical *irfan*).²¹ Actually, the division is for mere convenience. If someone wants to cultivate the *Irfan* as a way to approach to God, he/she must combine both the types of *irfan* - because the both *irfan* are two things that cannot be separated.²²

Irfan practical aspect is the section that describes the relationship and responsibility of man against himself, world, and God. *Amali Irfan* has similarities with the concept of morality in Islam. However, in *Amali Irfan* the moral rules that must be adhered are very strictly. In other words, *Amali Irfan* is moral that is specifically religious (spiritual) and create and manage the relationship with the existence principle (*Modus Existence or Prime Causa*) on top level.²³ Thus the moral level taken by someone who wants to learn *Irfan* (*salik*) is much different from the character category for the *Anwam*. For a *salik*, moral categorization that

²⁰ Muhsin Labib, *Mengurai Tasawuf*, *opm cit.*, h. 31.

²¹ Murtadha Muthahhari, *Introduction to Irfan*, Translated by Ramli Bihar Anwar entitled *Mengenal Irfan*, (Cet, I ; Jakarta : hikmah, 2002), p. 3.

²² Agus Effendi, "Tasawuf dalam Perspektif Mazhab Ahlul Bait", in Sukardi (ed), *Kuliah-kuliah Tasawuf*, (Cet. I ; Bandung : Pustaka Hidayah, 2000), p. 83.

²³ Muhsin Labib, *Mengurai Tasawuf*, *op cit.*, h. 77.

must be implemented is a very special category of morality (*akhlak al-khas al-khas*).²⁴

The practice of irfan amali is so-called *Sayr Wa Suluk* (spiritual journey).²⁵ This section describes how someone follows spiritual journey (*salik*) who wants to attain the ultimate goal of humanity, namely Tawheed. He/she must start the journey by taking the travel stages (*maqamat*) sequentially, and his/her soul condition happened (*hal*) as long as he/she made the journey. For the purpose of this journey, it is very important under the guidance of a spiritual guide who really has experienced on this journey and really knows the procedures that passed at each stage. Without the guidance of an experienced spiritual mentor (*mursbid*), the *salik* could have been lost along the way.²⁶

The fundamental difference between *Safar (Suluk)* conducted by the followers of Sufism and Irfan, according to Motahhari, is that while static mysticism, Sufism is just trying to decorate our empty souls with reincarnating the God's name in their real life. Meanwhile, irfan more emphasizes on the efforts to encourage the human spirit to do a very long *safar*. Therefore, irfan teachers are also called as *al-thayr al-qudsi* (sacred bird) who invites human soul (*salik*) to wander across the spiritual realms.²⁷

Irfan ilmi focuses on the problems of being (*ontology*), discussing God, human beings, and the universe – thus, *irfan ilmi* is similar to the view of theosophy. In contrast to the philosophy that only bases its thinking on the principles of rational argumentation (Burhani proposition), while irfan bases itself on the

²⁴ *Ibid.*, h. 83.

²⁵ The word '*sayr wa suluk*' etimologically comes from two synonym words, namely *sayr* which means walking and *suluk* which also means walking.

²⁶ Murtadha Muthahhari, *Introduction to Irfan*, loc. cit.

²⁷ Agus Effendi, *op. cit.*, h. 83-84.

mystique which is then translated into a rational language to explain it. Or more specifically, the *arif* (irfan expert) would like to explain what they see with the eyes of the heart and all their existence by using rational language.²⁸ To be able to explain the intuitive experience into a rational language, of course, it totally needs understanding about logic and philosophy as a reference to explain the intuitive experience. This necessitates a *arif* that should master the logic and philosophy before pouring the spiritual experience into the rational theoretical framework.

With the separation of the heart to the spiritual reality that is obtained during a spiritual odyssey, so the esoteric knowledge and imaginative insight is revealed to the hearts of the spiritual followers as the result of improvements, education, and self-forging. It is as said by Ali bin Abi Talib "The nature of knowledge plunged in the depths of their conscience, so that their actions are based on the spirit of faith ..." ²⁹

With the fundamental differences in the epistemology between the philosophy that uses *Burhani* and *Irfan* that rely on intuitive enlightenment, then the theoretical concepts of the two are different. In some view, irfan is totally different with the philosophical view. In philosophy, both God and everything have their own form. However, God is Being Undoubtedly (*Wajib al-Wujud*) by existing Himself and the form of everything other Himself is possible, and then the form is solely for aid other than Him (God). Meanwhile, in irfan, there is no everything other than Allah, even if they are the result of its effects. The form of God surrounds and covers everything. In other words, everything is

²⁸ Murtadha Muthahhari, *Introduction to Irfan op, cit.,*, h. 7

²⁹ Murtadha Muthahhari, *Glimpses of the Nahj al-Balaghah*, Translated by Arif Mulyadi entitled *Tema-tema Pokok Nahj al-Balaghah*, (Cet. I ; Jakarta : al-Huda Islamic Centre, 2002), p. 92.

nothing more than a name, the nature and form, rather than "there is with Him".³⁰

The goal of a philosopher is also different from the purpose of Arif. The philosopher wants to understand the universe. In other words, he wants to have a full picture of the universe existing in their mind. In the eyes of a philosopher, the highest achievements of a human being lies in his ratio ability to capture a complete picture about the form of the nature, so that the universe (cosmos macro) finds himself in his mind. So, he finally becomes a "mirror universe" (microcosm). For a Arif, human being perfection does not lie in the whole mental picture about the universe. The human being perfection lies in his ability to "go back" doing spiritual journey towards the source of all things, his ability to overcome the "distance" between himself and God, and to the "His embrace" to merge until he became "immortal" (*baqa'*) in His infinity".³¹

Even both philosophy and Irfan has a fairly fundamental difference. However, in Shia, between irfan and philosophy has a very close relationship.³² Both are like two sides of a coin that complement each other. Irfan is a continuing epistemological, ontological, and axiological journeys of humans after their minds understand the theoretical conceptions of the form of God, nature, and humans. Irfan clarifies and enhances human esoteric knowledge by using heart (*intuition*) as a epistemology tool to do *riyadhah* and *tazkiyah* as its methodology.

2. *Ma'rifat, Shari'a, Tareqat, and Haqeqat*

One of the fundamental differences between irfan and

³⁰ Murtadha Muthahhari, *Introduction to Irfan, loc. cit.*

³¹ *Ibid.*, p. 8-9.

³² Muhsin Labib, *Mengurai Tasawuf, op. cit.*, p. 76.

Sufism (in the Sunni view) is in the Sunni Sufism, *ma'rifat* position (recognition) about God as a reality that is worshiped is placed on the top of the trip. While in *irfan*, *ma'rifat* precisely is positioned as the beginning of a religious journey of a person. It is as hinted by Imam Ali bin Abi Talib in a sermon, "The principal base of the religion is *ma'rifah* (know) about Him".³³ *Ma'rifat* is the rationally introduction from a servant about his Lord. In other words, even if *irfan* in praxis is more patterned intuitive than rational, however, to follow the *irfan* based on *ma'rifat Burhani* (philosophy) about God must be completed.

After completing *ma'rifatullah* as the base of religion, then the next step is to carry out an earnest worship as the logical implication of *ma'rifatullah*. The worship is the totality servitude to God Almighty and the rejection of everything else as object of worship.³⁴ The basic principle of worship is sincere and genuine in worshipping Allah.³⁵ In *irfan* view, they point out the worship of a person in three levels, namely the *Shari'ah*, *Tariqat*, and *Haqe'at*. Although the view has similarity to the Sunni Sufism, however, *irfan* has a different view dealing with these three concepts.

According to Murtaza Motahhari, *Shari'ah* is a body of Islamic law containing a good purpose and truth. The Arif believes that all roads eventually lead to God as the final destination and the plenary of the human journey. All the truth and the good purposes are only means, causes, or intermediaries which leads man to God. The *fiqh* scholars generally view that *shari'ah*

³³ Muhammad Abduh, *Syarh Nahj al-Balaghah*, Translated by Muhammad Bagir entitled *Mutiara Nahj al-Balaghah : Wacana and Surat-surat Imam Ali*, (Cet, III ; Bandung : Mizan, 2003), p. 22.

³⁴ Murtadha Muthahhari, *Glimpses, op, cit.*, h. 81.

³⁵ Murtadha Muthahhari, *Man and Universe*, Translated by Muhammad Ilyas Hasan entitled *Manusia and Alam Semesta*, (Cet. II ; Jakarta : Lentera Basritama, 2002), p. 74.

contains a good purpose, and the good objectives being the spirit (the cause) of the existing of shari'ah. They also argue that the only way to achieve the good goals is to act in accordance with the shari'ah itself. However, the arif have a view beyond that. They say that good various causes are the stages of the journey to God and the processes to achieve the truth.³⁶ Shari'ah is everything that should be done by the Muslims in which we reach proofing in accordance with the quality of our obedience and worship.³⁷

The Arif believes that the Shari'ah has an inner side called as the *tariqat*. It is a way to true righteousness (*haqiqah*) or the achievement of a real unity of God (Tauhid).³⁸ In the language of Fritjof Schoun (Muhammad Isa Nur al-Din), *tareqat* as mentioned in a hadith is *ihsan*. It is the action of virtue that gives confidence and implements the completing values. In other words, *ihsan* (charity) is to intensify and deepen the faith and charity. *Ihsan* or *tareqat* briefly is the sincerity of the will and intelligence. It is our total attachment to God's law.³⁹

Following *tareqat* is inseparable from adherence to the shari'ah. In the view of arif, there is no other way on following *tareqat*, except through conducting *shar'i* worships intensively. In other words, a person's level in *irfan* is largely determined by the level of worship intensity conducted.⁴⁰ The Awwam considers the worship of God solely specific rules required, while the *Arif* considers worship to Allah as adhesive (love) that connects

³⁶ Murtadha Muthahhari, *Introduction to Irfan*, *op. cit.*, p. 12-13.

³⁷ Fritjof Schoun, *Sufisme : Veil and Quintessence*, Translated by Tri Wibowo Budhj Santoso entitled *Proses Ritual Menyingkap Tabir Mencari Yang Inti*, (Cet. I ; Jakarta : Srigunting Press, 2000), p. 151.

³⁸ Murtadha Muthahhari, *Introduction to Irfan*, *op. cit.*, p. 13.

³⁹ Fritjof Schoun, *loc. cit.*

⁴⁰ Haedar Bagir, *op. cit.*, p. 139-140.

between lovers (*ishq*) and beloved (*ma'syiq*).⁴¹ Worship understood as a reflection of love will usher in an Arif to spiritual awakening⁴² to travel for the sake of an encounter with the Beloved Allah.

In addition to following tareqat done by intensifying worship to Allah, it also must be done by fully sincere which could only be done by "blowing" the ego of an Arif.⁴³ An Arif depicts the essence of tareqat through threaded following sentence. "The first phase of the dhikr is to forget ourselves and at the last stage is the disappearance of the servant into motion worship to Him".⁴⁴ With the disappearance of the ego in motion worship, then the ultimate goal in following *Suluk* is when the achievement of unity or oneness with God (*manunggaling kawula lan gusti*). The oneness with the creator of universe is *haqiqat* of worship in view of the Arif.

The Arif believes three things, namely *Shari'ah*, *Tareqat*, and *Haqiqat*. They are three things that are sequential and linked. *Shari'ah* is a means to achieve *tareqat*, and *tareqat* is a means to achieve *haqiqat*. *Shari'ah* is the skin of *tareqat*, and *tareqat* is the skin of *haqiqat*.⁴⁵ The three branches are analogous to human consisting of three parts, namely, body, soul, and spirit that cannot be separated from each other. It form a unified whole between outer and inner aspects. *Shari'ah* is the outer shell, *tareqat* is in the seed, while *haqiqat* is the seed of seed. Nevertheless, the Arif also believes that human existence can have more than three phases. In this case, they believe that the presence of one stage that is beyond

⁴¹ Ibrahim Ghazur Ilahi, *The Scret of ana al-Haqq*, Translated by Bandaharo and Joebaar Ajoeb entitled *Menyingkap Misteri Sufi Besar "Mansur al-Hallaj"*, (Cet, IV ; Jakarta : Srigunting Press, 2002), p. 89.

⁴² Muhktar Solihin and Rosihan Anwar, *op. cit.*, p. 48.

⁴³ Murtadha Muthahhari, *Introduction to Irfan, loc. cit.*

⁴⁴ Reynold A. Nicholson, *The Mystics of Islam*, Translated by Nashir Budiman entitled *Aspek Ruhaniah Peribadatan Islam di dalam Mencari Keridhaan Allah*, (Cet, II ; Jakarta : Srigunting Press, 1997), p. 45.

⁴⁵ Murtadha Muthahhari, *Introduction to Irfan, loc. cit.*

the reach of intellect (mind) of human.⁴⁶

3. *Maqam and Hal*

In the Suluk journey, a *salik* (*Arif*) would have had *maqam* and *hal* (thing).⁴⁷ *Maqam* and thing are understood differently by the Sufis. Nonetheless, the Sufis (*Arif*) agreed that *maqamat* (plural of *maqam*) is the position of a spiritual pedestrian (*salik*) in front of God obtained through the hard work of worship, earnestly against lust (*mujahadah*), doing spirituality exercises (*riyadhab*). So, it reaches his character (*adab*) which enables him to have the requirements and undertakes efforts to carry out various obligations (as well as possible) to achieve the perfection. While the things (*plural ahwal*) is the atmosphere or circumstance that surrounds the heart created by God in the human heart, without the Sufis are able to resist if he came, and without being able to defend if he goes.⁴⁸

The concept of *maqamat* and *ahwal* is introduced as part of the sufism understanding as a spiritual journey (*suluk*). *Maqamat* is terminals (stations) that must be passed by a *salik* before he reaches the end of the spiritual journey. While *hal* is a momentary spiritual state that is experienced by the spiritual walkers in the middle of the trip.⁴⁹ According to Murtaza Motahhari, *maqamat* is what is achieved by an *Arif* through his work, whereas *hal* is what an *Arif*'s heart without his willing. It is temporary, while *maqamat* is permanent. It is said that, in *Arif*'s view, *hal* is like a flash of light fleeting. The *Arif* calls the flashes of light with the term *lawaih*, *lawamih*, and *tawalih*. These terms are used to indicate the differences of intensity levels in the length of various light flashes

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 15

⁴⁷ *Maqamat and ahwal in plural form.*

⁴⁸ Haedar Bagir, *op. cit.*, p. 131-132.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 132.

perceived.⁵⁰

If it is explored more in depth where *maqamat* and *abwal* the Sufism tradition, it is none other in order to further reinforce the commitment of a Muslim in the *shahadah* (testimony) Tauhid with the testimony that there is no god but God (*la ilaha illallah*). In other words, *maqamat* is a translation of *syahadah taubid*. Meanwhile, it is no more a part of the manifestation in achieving *maqam* according to the truly results of spiritual efforts with good deeds and fully submission to God.⁵¹ In other words, between *maqam* and *hal* are two inseparable things in a series of *suluk* trips. Achieving a level of *maqam* obtained by a *salik* necessitates *hal* as a consequence that he obtains from a series of spiritual journey.

The fundamental difference between the concept of *maqam* and *hal* according to dualistic mysticism (Sunni Sufism) and monistic mysticism (philosophical Sufism or Irfan) lies in the structure of *maqam* traversed and *hal* acquired based on the *maqam* level. In Sunni Sufism, *maqam* traversed is static because the soul does not do spiritual odyssey penetrating trajectories nature. *Maqamat* understood in Sunni Sufism is just the soul condition which has been decorated by *taballi* and *tajalli* of God's names. In other words, *maqamat* is actually just efforts to improve the quality of life in worship to God. *Maqamat* levels in Sunni Sufism is, for example, *taubah*, *wara*, *zuhud*, *faqir*, *Shabr*, and *ridha*.⁵²

Maqamat level in *Irfan* is based on a philosophical view of the human soul which is the micro and macrocosm simultaneously, thus the human soul can move dynamically penetrate the macro

⁵⁰ Murtadha Muthahhari, *Introduction to Irfan*, op. cit., p. 100-101.

⁵¹ Hasyim Muhammad, *Dialog Antara Tasawuf and Psikologi*, (Cet, I ; Yogyakarta : Pustaka Pelajar, 2002), p. 27.

⁵² Untuk lebih jelasnya mengenai *maqamat* dalam tasawuf Sunni, lihat *ibid.*, p. 26-47.

realms levels. According to Motahhari, the human soul is like a dynamic organism. Humans on their trek for the sake of God must necessarily pass spiritual *Safar per Safar* (trip after trip). Human must travel pass or safar far enough, in which he must run from one terminal to another terminal. Therefore, in Irfan's view of a *salik* will go through *maqams* form nature levels from the lower to the higher natures.⁵³

The human soul is a dynamic organism. Therefore, according to Motahhari, if humans want to achieve a higher purpose, then they must follow and pass systematics specified in the spiritual realm.⁵⁴ This is done with the ritual, *mujadabah*, and *riyadhah* which aims to raise awareness by doing intuitive perception of the two sentences creed (*syahadat*) that someone claims to be a Muslim.⁵⁵ With the rise of consciousness and the intuitive perception, an *arif* would be able to travel to the level of *maqam* in the levels of the universe.

In Motahhari's view, there are six levels of the *maqam* that must be passed by a *salik* to reach *al-Haqq*. The six *maqam* levels are generally divided into two major classifications of *safar*. The first is *maqam nafs* - early step that must be taken by a *salik* to liberate his soul from material tendencies. After that the next trip is reaching *maqam qalb*. It is the first spiritual nature that should be passed by humans, on the one hand *qalb* is *maqam*, but on the other side the *qalb* is *hijab* for a *salik*. In this case, *nafs* provides *hijab* in form of material blessings, and *qalb* provides light that could be a boon but it could also well be the *hijab* if a *salik* fascinates him.

⁵³ Agus Effendi, *op. cit.*, p. 83.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 90.

⁵⁵ Laleh Bahtiar, *Sufi : Exspression of the Mystic Quest*, Translated by Purwanto entitled *Perjalanan Menuju Tuhan*, (Cet, I ; Bandung : Nuansa, 2001), p. 63.

Next is to reach *maqam* of soul nature. After a salik is able to beat fascination towards the *qalb* lights (*hal* obtained in *maqam qalb*), then the human soul will drift toward *maqam* to soul *maqam*. This soul *maqam* is end of the the first safar of human, in Sadra, the journey of beings to God.⁵⁶

After passing three *maqams* in the first Safar, a *salik* will enter the second safar in *labut* nature. *Safar* in the universe is divided into three *maqam* levels. First, *maqam sirr* is *maqam fana fi al-al-Dzat*. In this *maqam*, the Arif often experiences ecstatic or *syatabat* (*drunkenness*) together with the Beloved Allah. Second, *maqam kbafy* is *maqam fana'* annihilated in God's character. Third, *maqam akhfya* is *maqam fana'* in God's substance and character as well⁵⁷. These two Safars as the second safar in *al-asfar al-arba'ah*, Mulla Sadra, is traveling in the Lord with the Lord.

Preoccupation in *hal* obtained at every level of *maqam* will result in spiritual stagnation experienced by the arif until he was unable to continue the journey to the next *maqam* level. Most Sufis or the Sufis experience the preoccupation on light flashes of *qalb* and soul, as well as experience *syatabat* (*ecstasy*) on *maqam fana fi al-Dzat* (*maqam sirr*) as experienced by Mansur al-Hallaj.

4. Sufism and the Concept of *Imamah*

In the journey of *Suluk*, the Sufis generally agree on the need for a spiritual guide who really have experienced the trip and is very aware at any stage of the procedure. Motahhari considers the existence of a spiritual guide (*Murshid*) as a necessity in the journey of mysticism. Without the experienced guidance of a *murshid* (*syeykhi*) a *salik* will most likely get lost and fail in his journey.⁵⁸

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 88-89.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 89.

⁵⁸ Murtadha Muthahhari, *Introduction to Irfan*, op. cit., p. 3.

In Imami Shi'a, the belief in the imam as a substitute for the Prophet Muhammad saw,⁵⁹ that not only serves as the guardian of the minutes of the prophet, but also became the spiritual leader of mankind. In Shia's view, imams are the guardians and keepers of Apostles science. Imam is the most perfect individual and exemplary human being in terms of religion. Imam is a leader of men, and has passed the perfection and happiness and give guidance and instructions to others to tread the straight path.⁶⁰ Thus, by judging the integrity and quality of the individual's imam, an imam is the highest mursyid the spiritual journey of the believers.

In the Shia's perspective, the imam has the notch area on the Muslims. *Walayah* literally means rescue, leader, and person in charge. Then, in practical terms, the role of the Walayah has several important parts, namely *wala' al-mahabbah* (love), *wala' imamah* (leadership), *wala' z'i'amah* (in charge), and *wala' al-tasarraf* (mastery), and *wala' batiniyah*.⁶¹ The five positions and roles of the imam necessitate the imam's position as the owner of the highest authority over all people, particularly in the area of human spirituality. With regard to the Irfan area, a imam has a role of *walayah batiniyah* that necessitates his position and authority as the

⁵⁹ In the belief Shia Imami, there are twelve Imams as successor to the Prophet Muhammad. They are Imam Ali bin Abi Thalib, Imam Hasan bin Ali, Imam Husein bin Ali, Imam Ali Zainal Abidin al-Sajjad, Imam Muhammad al-Baqir, Imam Ja'far al-Shadiq, Imam Musa al-Kazhim, Imam Ali al-Ridha, Imam Muhammad al-Jawad, Imam Ali al-Hadi, Imam Hasan al-Askari, and Imam Muhammad al-Mahdi al-Muntazhar.

⁶⁰ Ibrahim Amini, *Hamed Bayad Bedonand*, Translated by Faruq Dhiya entitled *Semua Perlu tahu : Buku Pintar Ushuluddin*, (Cet, i ; Jakarta : al-Huda Islamic Centre, 2006), p. 34.

⁶¹ Murtadha Muthahhari, *Syesy Makoleh*, Translated by Muhammad jawad Bafaqih entitled *Kumpulan Artikel pilihan*, (Cet. I ; Jakarta : Lentera Basritama, 2003), p. 120-121.

spiritual leader of human or *mursyid* for all mankind.⁶² Personality of imam described by Motahhari is as a person who has an strong appeal of spirituality and morality to those who follow his journey and has a strong repulsive force also to those who deny the truth.⁶³

The highest stages of *wilayah* according to Motahhari are *Walayah* that covers the inner dimensions of the human. *Wilayah batiniyah* here is on one hand dealing with human hidden power in order to achieve perfection and the other related to the existing bond between a man and God. *Wilayah batiniyah* believed by Shi'a is the authority of imam from among *ahlul bait* of the People based on integrity and quality of their intellectual, moral, social, and spiritual that they have. So God sets a magical *Walayah* provisions given by Allah swt. It means his position is so high, that he became the caravan leader of human spirituality, the leader of the human conscience, a witness to their deeds, and the supreme ruler of his day. The world will never be empty of such spiritual leader. In other words, the world is never without a perfect man.⁶⁴

The necessity will always be the perfect human figure that appears to be the human spiritual caravan leader based on the assumption that the fundamental human need for spiritual attainment. Therefore in conducting spiritual journey, a man can walk on his own without a spiritual guide who has reached the level of true perfection. Thus the presence of a perfect human being as a spiritual leader is a necessity and justice of God to the human embodiment.

⁶² Lihat Murtadha Muthahhari, *Master and Mastership*, Translated by Yudhi Nur Rahman entitled *Kepemimpinan Islam*, (Cet, I ; Banda Aceh : Gua Hira, 1991), p. 30.

⁶³ Lihat Murtadha Muthahhari, *Polarization Around the Character of Ali bin Abi Thalib*, Translated by Muhammad hashem entitled *Karakter Agung Ali bin Abi Thalib*, (Cet, I ; Jakarta : Pustaka Zahra, 2002), p. 31-34.

⁶⁴ Murtadha Muthahhari, *Master and, op, cit.*, p. 26.

The Imam is someone chosen by God to be the leader of the *Wilayah* (region). He was in control in his hand esoteric territory. He is the center of "ray area" that monitors the human heart.⁶⁵ With the recognition to the imam's authority as a leader and mentor of the highest human spirituality, it does not necessitate the loss of the role of a certain Arif as individual mursyid specifically guided his students. It is just an arif's authority who became mursyid fall within the authority of imam's region as the highest mursyid.

5. Sufism and Morals

In Motahhari's view, between Sufism (*Irfan*) with morals (ethics) are the two things that have the closeness and similarities. Both of them discuss the particulars of "what to do".⁶⁶ Nonetheless, morals, in Sufism review, have fundamental differences with morals (ethics) in a general definition. According to Motahhari, both have some fundamental differences. Namely, *Irfan* discuss morality in the human relationship with himself, with the world and with God, and his main concern is the relationship with God as the foundation of morality. Meanwhile morals do not generally discuss the human relationship with God. The second, morals in *irfan* is dynamic, while the character is static. Namely, *irfan* discuss early and end stage of the trip as well as the sequence of stages that must be taken of morals do. Third, the spiritual elements in ethics are confined to the concepts and ideas that most people understand. Meanwhile, the spiritual elements in *irfan* are much deeper and broader. Namely, in the spiritual journey *irfan* for example, most of them talk about the heart and the circumstances that will happen along the way without the

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 134.

⁶⁶ Murtadha muthahhari, *Introduction to Irfan, op. cit.*, p. 5.

knowledge of those around.⁶⁷

In carrying out *Irfan Amali*, a *salik* must follow the rules of very strict morals, than the implementation of morals for mankind in general. Moral to an Arif is an obligation that must be carried out in the journey of his suluk for the sake of achieving the highest levels of maqam. While morals in certain matters to most people is sometimes not as an obligation that must be carried out, but only option implemented to achieve *fadhilah*.

According to Murtaza Motahhari, the basis of moral action is based on the rational-philosophical assumption about human nature, though the value and the benefits from the morals actions sometimes cannot be grasped by the human mind.⁶⁸ According to Motahhari, the human has tendency to commit acts of morals nature,⁶⁹ as human nature such as godless and religious nature. Morals deeds are an extraordinary act committed by a human being, because to carry out such actions to make sure truly efforts and sincere to defeat selfishness and lust handcuff. Motahhari said deed as an act of moral knight who has a higher value than the usual action.⁷⁰

Moral act apart from works based on the assumption of rationality, also based on intuitive awareness (spiritual). Quoting Immanuel Kant, Motahhari said moral deed is an act to get the light of divine light. And it is not possible to be realized without

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 6

⁶⁸ Murtadha Muthahhari, *Falsafa-ye Akhlake*, Translated by Muhammad Babul Ulum and Eddy Hendri entitled *Filsafat Moral Islam*, (Cet, I ; Jakarta : al-Huda Islamic Centre, 2004), p. 21.

⁶⁹ *Lihat* Murtadha Muthahhari, *al-Fitrah*, Translated by Afif muhammad entitled *Fitrah*, (Cet, II ; Jakarta : Lentera Basritama, 1999), p. 55.

⁷⁰ Murtadha Muthahhari, *iFalsafaye Akhlake*, op, cit., p. 23.

based on the plenary belief to Allah.⁷¹

From the statement previously, it can be concluded that between *irfan* and morals are the inseparable two things. With the journey of *Suluk*, an *arif* will be increasingly forged soul consciousness to increasingly realize the moral act in practical terms. Because of the moral act is a requirement to achieve perfection of the *suluk* journey. By reaching intellectual understanding maturity of the nature of man and world philosophically, it is followed by sharpening intuitive to perform soul pilgrimage in the *suluk* journey (*spirituality*). Then the outcome produced practically in an *arif*'s life attitude is the moral act that has positive effect not only for himself but also for all humans in their surroundings.

III. Conclusion

Murtaza Motahhari adopts the view of philosophical Sufism or *Irfan*. It is sufism view is based on the rational philosophical assumptions in understanding the reality of the inner (spiritual) or *irfan ilmi* (theoretical) and the practices of sharpening intuitive with the journey of Sufism or *Irfan Amali* (practical).

Philosophical *Ma'rifat* to the reality of *Ilahiyah* (God) is the root of religion and mysticism trip, then *praxis* in practice of *Shari'ah* to achieve *tareqat* as the journey to the real truth (*haqqeqat*), and the third is inseparable unity.

Maqamat is what is achieved by an *Arif* through his work, while *hal* is what alights the *arif*'s *qalb*. In *irfan*, there are six *maqams* that should be passed, namely *maqam nafs*, *maqam qalb*, *maqam, rub*, *maqam sirr*, *maqam khabfy*, and *maqam akhfa*.

⁷¹ Murtadha Muthahhari, *Tarbiyatul Islam*, Translated by Muhammad Baharuddin entitled *Konsep Pendidikan Islam*, (Cet, I ; Depok : Iqra Kurnia Gumilang, 2005), p. 117.

Irfan necessitates the presence of a Imam who has a role of *walayah batiniyah* which necessitates his position and authority as the spiritual leader of human or mursyid for all mankind. Between Irfan and morals are the inseparable two things. With the sufism journey, an arif will be increasingly forged soul consciousness to increasingly realize the moral act in the practical terms.

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