

The Concept of *Wahdah Al-Wujud*: Comparative Study on Sheikh Siti Jenar and Mulla Shadra's Perspectives

Nurus Syarifah

State Islamic University of Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta, Indonesia

Article Info

Article history:

Received June 10, 2022

Revised June 24, 2022

Accepted June 30, 2022

Keywords:

Wahdah al-Wujud

Siti Jenar

Mulla Shadra

The form of God being of God

ABSTRACT

This article explains the comparison of the concept of wahdah al-wujud between Siti Jenar and Mulla Sadra. Siti Jenar is famous for the idea of her divine ontology, which is always interesting to discuss; Manunggaling Kawula Gusti. In contrast, Mulla Sadra is famous for the concept of his ontology called al-Hikmah al-Muta'aliyyah. This study uses a type of library research with descriptive analytical methods. The results show that the concept of wahdah al-wujud between Siti Jenar and Mulla Sadra has similarities and differences. The similarities and differences between the two focus on the form of God and His creatures. As for the similarities, both assume the form of God and His creatures are the same. However, the difference lies in the cause of being "the same" of God and His creatures.

This is an open-access article under the CC BY license.



Corresponding Author:

Nurus Syarifah,

State Islamic University of Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta, Indonesia,

Jl. Laksda Adisucipto, Papringan, Caturtunggal, Kec. Depok, Kabupaten Sleman, Daerah Istimewa

Yogyakarta 55281, Indonesia

Email: nurussyarifah29@gmail.com

1. INTRODUCTION

Essentially, everything on this earth leads to the one (God). However, over time there are differences in the philosopher's concept of one nature. It is the basis of the emergence of the *wahdah al-Manifest* concept. A philosopher named Mulla Sadra explains that *wahdah al-Manifest* is the key to understanding a deeper theological meaning between creatures and the universe in this world and God (Shadra, 2004).

Mulla Sadra brought a new stream to the world of philosophy. This flow differs from its two predecessors, namely *Masyaiyyin* and *Isyraqiyyin* or *Paripetik* and *Illuminationism*. The philosophy introduced by Mulla Sadra is *al-hikmah al-muta'aliyyah*. Overall, this philosophy is different from the two previous philosophies. Although the differences are not too striking, Mulla Sadra presents harmonization that can provide a correlation between divinity and philosophy (Al-Walid, 2012). In his work entitled "The Four Journeys", Mulla Sadra divides the journey towards the ultimate essence of God into four parts. The four journeys are a summary of the journey from going to God to being with God, in which there are elements of the natural world, time, and mystique that accompany the end of the journey.

Unlike Mulla Sadra, a Sufi named Syekh Siti Jenar provides an understanding of the problem of divinity, humans, and the universe stemming from the concept that humans are the incarnation of God's substance. In Sheikh Siti Jenar's view, she revealed a close relationship between the nature of God and the concept of *Manunggaling Kawula Gusti*. She obtains a clear picture of the concept of *Manunggaling Kawula Gusti*. This concept theologically explains the management of the relationship between humans and God. It also sociology explains the management of the relationship between humans and others, and ecologically explains the management of the relationship between humans and the environment (Derani, 2014).

Based on the explanation above, there are differences between the two figures in understanding the concept of *wahdah al-Manifest*. The author described the concept of *wahdah al-Manifest* from the perspective of Mulla Sadra and Sheikh Siti Jenar. Then the author compared the two concepts in an ontology frame.

2. RESEARCH METHOD

This study is a type of library research using a descriptive-analytical method. All data were obtained from various sources with documentation techniques to facilitate data access, both from books, journals, magazines, newspapers, and other relevant sources. The data is then collected and processed according to the aspects discussed. Furthermore, an analysis aimed to obtain objective results relevant to this study's discussion (Moehnilabib, 1997).

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1. Biography of Sheikh Siti Jenar

Sheikh Siti Jenar is a controversial and legendary figure who has lived in Java, and is still being discussed both in terms of biography and teachings (Sidqi, 2017). He is fondly called Syekh Lemah Abang. Some Javanese literatures call him Syekh Siti Brit or Syekh Jabarantas because his appearance always looks simple (Chodjim, 2007).

According to the manuscript entitled "State of Kretabhumi Sargha III pupuh 76" contained in "Wangsakertan Cirebon," when he was a child, he was named Abdul Jalil (Sunyoto, 2018). As for the book Bratakesawa and Dahlar Sodiq – which Munir Mulkhan further quotes, it explains that Sheikh Siti Jenar is a child whose real name is Ali Hasan alias Abdul Jalil. His father was Resi Bungsu, a royal priest at that time (Sidqi, 2017). Syekh Siti Jenar lived around 1426-1517 AD. The places where his missionary journey was from Cirebon, Semarang, to Kediri.

Throughout his life, many controversial stories surround Siti Jenar and various myths that follow him. One of these stories is when he was exposed to the words of his father who cursed him to become a worm. At that time, his father was emotional and could not contain his anger. Syekh Siti Jenar could escape from his father's words when he was found to have witnessed a secret conversation between Sunan Bonang and Sunan Kalijaga on a boat via soil that Sunan Bonang took to patch a leaky boat. Knowing that there were not only two people on the boat, Sunan Bonang also turned him back into a human as before (Lutfi, 2019).

Little Jenar was taken care of by Ki Danusela and his advisor, Ki Samadullah or Prince Wadirectsang, who at that time was a Santri in Cirebon under the guidance of Sheikh Datuk Kahfi. At the age of five, he was handed over to Sheikh Datuk Kahfi to study various spiritual sciences and Islamic teachings. At that time, Sheikh Datuk Kahfi was the caretaker of the Giri Amparan Jati Padepokan in Caruban City. It is where Jenar studied with him for approximately 15 years. Like people thirsty for

knowledge, Sheikh Siti Jenar continues to study in Pajajaran, filled with ascetics and experts in the wisdom of Hinduism and Buddhism. He also studied the Viphala Chess book, which was the legacy of King Kertawijaya. From this book, Jenar gained knowledge about human identity as a human being (Sidqi, 2017).

3.2. Mulla Shadra's Biography

Muhammad bin Ibrahim bin Yahya al-Qawami al-Shirazi or better known as Mulla Sadra is a famous Muslim philosopher. He was an only child, born in 979-980 H/ 1571-1572 AD in Shiraz, in a relatively well-known and influential Qawam family. His father named Ibrahim bin Yahya al-Qawami al-Syirazy who was a pious person. He also served as Governor of Fars Province. Socially and politically, he wielded privileged power in his native Shiraz. Mulla Sadra got his first education in the city of Shiraz. Apart from being guided by his family, he also graduated from an elementary school in his hometown (Bachtiar, 2017).

Mulla Sadra is an intelligent child and has a high interest in studying various disciplines. In 1000 AH / 1591 AD, he went to the Qazvin area and then to the Isfahan area in 1006 H / 1597 AD. In these two areas, Sadra studied philosophy, theology, prophetic traditions, and interpretation of the Qur'an. He has two primary teachers, Mir Muhammad Baqir Damad Astarabadi and Sheikh Baha 'al-Din 'Amili, better known as Sheikh Baha'i, who is an eminent legal expert in Isfahan (Faiz, 2013).

The presence of Mulla Sadra, a figure with excellent intellectual and spiritual capacity in Persia, shows the existence of his life, which also has a robust intellectual tradition. Its presence can not be separated from the traditions of life that gave birth to it. The four streams that grew before his birth were no exception. There are four classical post-Mongolian Islamic schools of thought, namely Masysya'i (Peripatetic), Isyraqi (Illuminationist), 'Irfani (Gnosis, Sufism or Tasawwuf), and kalam (Islamic theology). In addition, the four streams have a relationship with one another (Saputra, 2016). At the beginning of 11th century, a significant change in the substance of the study and systematic discussion of the concepts of divinity in Islamic philosophy occurred. However, in the same period, Mulla Sadra managed to process the four schools and then combined and unified them so that they were able to give birth to a new philosophical school and system called Hikmah Muta'aliyah (Dhiauddin, 2017). These four intellectual journeys were born from the spiritual process he underwent. The process enlightened him because he revealed that mystical truth is an intellectual truth. Mystical experience is a cognitive experience. He put his thoughts into a work "al-Hikmah al-Muta'aliyah fi al-Asfar al-Aqliyyah al-Arba'ah" (Aziz, 2015).

3.3. The Concept of Wahdah al-Wujud Sheikh Siti Jenar

Sheikh Siti Jenar is a Sufi who is famous for the concept of Manunggaling Kawula Gusti as his divine ontology. In the view of Sheikh Siti Jenar, God is a name that is difficult to understand beyond ordinary human reason because the name of God is in the form of supernatural. The name then becomes true through the intermediary of human presence that is tangible in worldly life. According to Munir Mulkhan, the concept of Sheikh Siti Jenar is actually not a new thing in the context of Javanese life. They see their parents as "princes of katon" or, in other words, as God can be seen and touched and whose existence is known. Furthermore, Mulkhan revealed, that if the term is the result of the teachings of Sheikh Siti Jenar, then indirectly he is talking about the concept of divinity based on the Javanese culture of life (Derani, 2014).

Sheikh Siti Jenar views God as Hyang Widi. It is based on his view, which states that God is invisible. However, Sheikh Siti Jenar distinguishes between the manifestation of God's substance in wood and stone, which is different from the substance in humans. It is because humans manifest Allah's "*tajall*" (Derani, 2014). Hyang Widi (God Almighty) is a form that is invisible, has no beginning and no end, is eternal, without any evolutionary process, and is everywhere. All of that is contained in Sheikh Siti Jenar which is manifest in one unit, so that Hyang Suksma is in him (Sholikhin, 2008).

Kawulo's Unity with Gusti in Suluk Wujil explains that God's position is still different from that of humans. God has four attributes. This concept is considered Syekh Siti Jenar's concept of wahdah al-Manifestation, which describes terms in the Kejawen Islamic school. The term is warangka manjing suspicious, suspicious manjing warangka, or in Indonesian it means that God enters into humans, humans enter in God (Derani, 2014).

There are three teachings in the concept of Sheikh Siti Jenar; one Allah, Nur Muhammad and Ingsun Sejati (Sholikhin, 2008). In this case, Syekh Siti Jenar believes that the Sufistic view combined with Javanese life will produce the idea of monotheism, which emphasizes the love of a servant who makes him one with God, so it is called Manunggaling Kawula Gusti. Syekh Siti Jenar emphasizes the mystical aspect

because it is considered similar to aspects of mysticism in Javanese culture (Utomo, 2017). He argues that the inherent element in humans creates a sense of love and can unite the existent with the unseen.

Sheikh Siti Jenar also revealed that true life on this earth could be achieved if someone has lost his life so that he can unite with God perfectly in the supernatural dimension. Furthermore, the concept of *wahdah al-Manifestation* also explains that the essence of God is not only limited to a person, animals, plants and everything that is tangible, but everything manifests depending on God (Utomo, 2017).

3.4. The concept of Wahdah al-Wujud from Mulla Sadra

Mulla Sadra is an Islamic philosopher famous for the concept of *al-Hikmah al-Muta'aliyyah*. This concept attempts to create a single thought that unites the *bayani*, *burhani*, and *irfani* methods (Kusen, 2016). Sadra's *Al-Hikmah al-Muta'aliyyah* (transcendental philosophy) is a synonym for the highest philosophical term, or wisdom philosophy (Bawa, 2017). The discussion of *al-Hikmah al-Muta'aliyyah* itself will not be separated from the teachings about existence. There is a special characteristic in *al-Hikmah al-Muta'aliyyah*. The peculiarity lies in the method and teachings. His method is said to be unique because he can summarize three methods -*bayani*, *burhani*, *irfani*, while the peculiarity of his teachings lies in the philosophy of being (Kusen, 2016).

Ontologically, *al-Hikmah al-Muta'aliyyah* Mulla Sadra is based on three things, namely *Ashalah al-Wujud*, *Tasyqiq al-Wujud*, and *al-Harakah al-Jauhariyyah* (Shadra, 2004). However, because in this paper we want to answer the concept of *wahdah al-Manifestation* from Mulla Sadra, we will focus on the first two parts, more commonly called the philosophy of existence, namely *Ashala al-Wujud* and *Tasyqiq al-Wujud*. Later, these two parts in the explanation will increase by one with *Wahdah al-Katsrah* (unity of plural existence), also often called *Wahdah fi 'Ain al-Katsrah* (unity in diversity).

3.4.1. Ashalah al-Wujud (principle of existence/the fundamental existence)

Ashalah al-Wujud is Mulla Sadra's view which states that existence does not need another form to exist or be actualized. According to him, what is called actualization is the existence of the existence itself. In other words, all existing forms come from existence (Kusen, 2016). For Sadra, God is an absolute being (Bawa, 2017). It is because he did depart from his belief in God. Because he is a Muslim philosopher, then Allah is an absolute being.

If the word "existence" is replaced with the word "there", then the "existent" is "there." Everything that "is" comes from that which "is." There is no way that "there" comes from the "non-existent." If it is related to the universe's existence and its existing contents, then it must also come from that which exists (Kusen, 2016). Thus, it concluded that the existence of the universe and everything in it comes from "exists." This "exist" is the absolute and the actual existence, namely God.

3.4.2. Tasyqiq al-Wujud (gradation of form/intangibility of form)

According to Mulla Sadra, existence is a single reality that appears in different stages. Likewise, with the existence of God, humans, animals, plants, and inanimate objects, as well as everything in the universe. All of them constitute a single being and reality, but with different levels of states and manifestations. This level of gradation is not in essence but existence. The highest stage in the hierarchy of gradations of existence is God the Highest, and the lowest stage is the initial material that is the material of all materials (Bawa, 2017).

The highest level of existence is self-sufficient and perfect. While the levels that are below it and sequentially getting down, then the nature that is owned is increasingly not independent and imperfect. The existence that has the highest level is called absolute existence. This form is independent and does not depend on other than itself, meaning it does not depend on other forms. He also has a different degree from other forms. He does not say and is not reprehensible (Kusen, 2016).

The absolute existence is also called *Mustaqil* Forms. As for the form whose level or degree is below the *Mustaqil* Form, it is called the *Rabith* Form. *Mustaqil*'s form is Allah, while *Rabith*'s form is from other than Allah. *Mustaqil*'s form is where *Rabith*'s form depends. He is the source and cause of the existence of the *Rabith*, so the existence of the various *Rabith* Forms depends on the *Mustaqil* Being. If the *Mustaqil* Form does not exist, then the *Rabith* Form will never exist.

3.4.2. Wahdah al-katsrah (unity in plural form)/wahdah fi 'Ain al-katsrah (unity in diversity)

The previous point discussed the existence of God, humans, animals, plants, and inanimate objects, all of which are one being. In other words, God's form, human form, animal form, plant form, and

inanimate form are the same. The point of difference lies in the gradation (degree/level) of appearance and perfection called *Tasyiq al-Wujud* (Kusen, 2016).

Wahdah al-Katsrah is unity in diversity. The point is that the form is essentially one or singular, but in that singularity, there is a diversity of other forms (plural unity of existence). In other words, all forms are single but contain diversity (Kusen, 2016). The presence is essentially one or singular as the form of Allah. In contrast, the various forms in the one of God are the forms of humans, animals, plants, and other inanimate objects. The existence is diverse (plural) in the universe. In essence, there is only one, and there is valid, namely the *Mustaqil Being*.

3.5. Comparison of Wahdah al-Wujud Siti Jenar and Mulla Sadra

In comparing the concepts of Sheikh Siti Jenar's and Mulla Sadra's, it is necessary to mention the similarities and differences so that the comparison between the two can be seen clearly. The similarity of the two concepts is that they both have philosophical thoughts about the existence of God and His creatures. According to both, the form of God and the form of His creatures are the same. The essence of all these forms is one or singular. The following table describes the similarities and differences of both concepts.

Tabel 1. The Comparison of Wahdah al-Wujud by Siti Jenar and Mulla Shadra

The Similarity of <i>wahdah al-wujud</i> Concept by Syekh Siti Jenar and Mulla Shadra	
1. Philosophical thoughts about the form of God with His creatures	
2. The form of God with the form of His creatures is similar	
3. The essence of all these forms is one or singular	
The Differences of <i>wahdah al-wujud</i> concepts by Syekh Siti Jenar and Mulla Shadra	
Syekh Siti Jenar	Mulla Shadra
<i>Manunggaling Kawula Gusti</i>	<i>Al-Hikmah Al-Muta'aliyyah</i>
Kemanunggalan Allah	<i>Ashalah al-Wujud</i>
Nur Muhammad	<i>Tasyiq al-Wujud</i>
Ingsun Sejati	<i>Wahdah al-Katsrah</i>
Human is the reflection of God	God, human, and his creators have different gradation

Source:

The differences in the concept of *wahdah al-Manifestation* from Sheikh Siti Jenar and Mulla Sadra from the table above are; first, the teaching of the two concepts of *wahdah al-Manifest* are different. Sheikh Siti Jenar with the teachings of *Manunggaling Kawula Gusti*, while Mulla Sadra with the teachings of *al-Hikmah al-Muta'aliyyah*. Second, the essence of Sheikh Siti Jenar's teaching is the Oneness of Allah, Nur Muhammad, and True Ingsun. While the core teachings of Mulla Sadra are *Ashalah al-Wujud*, *Tasyiq al-Wujud*, and *Wahdah al-Katsrah*. Third, according to them, the form of God and the form of His creatures have different teachings, consider the "same" one. According to Sheikh Siti Jenar, the human is the reflection of God; thus, the creatures and God are absolutely equals. Meanwhile, according to Mulla Sadra, even though the form of God and His creatures are the same - a single form but contains diversity - but have different gradations or levels, the highest level is the *Mustaqil Being*, namely Allah.

4. CONCLUSION

The concept of *wahdah al-Manifestation* between Sheikh Siti Jenar and Mulla Sadra has similarities and differences. Both believe that the form of God and His creatures are the same. However, from these similarities, there are also very striking differences. Sheikh Siti Jenar considers that the form of God and humans are the same, because the human form is the reflection of God. As for Mulla Sadra's opinion, although the form of God and His creatures are similar -because the form of God is single but contains a variety of other forms-they still have different levels or gradations, and the form of God is the highest gradation.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The author would like to thank those who helped the author complete this article, including Allah SWT, both parents, alma mater, and lecturers. The author completed this article with prayers, support, and roles from all of them. However, it is still possible to receive suggestions and criticism from various parties for improving the quality of this article.

REFERENCES

- Al-Walid, K. (2012). *Perjalanan Jiwa Menuju Akhirat: Filsafat Eskatologi Mulla Sadra*. Sadra Press.
- Aziz, M. (2015). Mulla Shadra [1571 M-1636 M] (Study Tentang Pemikiran Al-Hikmah Al-Muta'aliyah Dan Al-Asfar Al-Arba'ah). *Al Hikmah: Jurnal Studi Keislaman*, 5(1), 121-130.
- Bachtiar, A. S. (2017). Pemikiran Etika Mulla Shadra. *KURIOSITAS: Media Komunikasi Sosial Dan Keagamaan*, 10(1), 61-72.
- Bawa, D. L. (2017). Pemikiran Pendidikan Mulla Shadra. *TARBAWI: Jurnal Pendidikan Agama Islam*, 1(2), 123-128.
- Chodjim, A. (2007). *Syekh Siti Jenar: Makrifat dan Makna Kehidupan*. Cet. ke-2. Jakarta: PT Serambi Ilmu Semesta.
- Derani, S. (2014). Syekh Siti Jenar: Pemikiran dan Ajarannya. *Buletin Al-Turas*, 20(2), 325-348.
- Dhiauddin, D. (2017). Aliran Filsafat Islam (Al-Hikmah Al-Muta'aliyah) Mulla Shadra. *Nizham Journal of Islamic Studies*, 1(1), 45-47.
- Faiz, F. (2013). Eksistensialisme Mulla Sadra. *TEOSOFI: Jurnal Tasawuf Dan Pemikiran Islam*, 3(2), 436-461.
- Kusen, K. (2016). Menurunkan Konsep Ontologi Mullâ Shadrâ ke Dalam Filsafat Ketuhanan. *Refleksi*, 15(2), 187-196.
- Moehnilabib. (1997). *Dasar-dasar Metodologi Penelitian*. Lembaga Penelitian IKIP Malang.
- Saputra, H. (2016). Konsep Epistemologi Mulla Shadra. *Substantia: Jurnal Ilmu-Ilmu Ushuluddin*, 18(2), 183-196.
- Shadra, M. (2004). *Kearifan Puncak, Terj.* (D. Mahayana & D. Djuniardi, Eds.). Pustaka Pelajar.
- Sholikhin, M. (2008). *Manunggaling kawula-gusti: filsafat kemanunggalan Syekh Siti Jenar*. Narasi.
- Sidqi, A. (2017). Mendaras *Manunggaling Kawula Gusti* Syekh Siti Jenar. *Jurnal Dinamika Penelitian*, 17(1), 1-26.
- Sunyoto, A. (2018). *Atlas Wali Songo*. Tangerang Selatan: Pustaka Imam.
- Lutfi, A. (2019). Pergulatan Syariah dan Tasawuf di Nusantara: Analisis Kuasa Pengetahuan Syariah atas Sufi Siti Jenar dalam Praktek Islam Politik. *Dialogia: Jurnal Studi Islam dan Sosial*, 17(2), 161-180.
- Utomo, A. H. (2017). Tauhid Al-Wujud Syekh Siti Jenar dan Unio Mystica Bima. *Jurnal Filsafat*, 16(2), 116-127.