MEETING POINT OF WAHDAT AL-ADYAN AND RELIGIOUS PLURALISM (A Study on the Thought of Ibn 'Arabi and John Hick)

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Abstract

The purpose of this research is to uncover the meeting point and relationship of Wahdat al-Adyan and religious pluralism. Wahdat al-Adyan promoted by a Sufi figure Ibn 'Arabi is always associated with religious pluralism developed by Christian religious figure John Hick. The recent understanding of religious pluralism has been assumed to take the legitimacy from Wahdat al-Adyan concept. So it can be understood that the understanding of religious pluralism is a legacy of the Islamic intellectual tradition and teachings. Historically, the concept of Wahdat al-Adyan developed by Ibn 'Arabi then became Wahdat al-Wujud. This concept shows that the concept of God is absolute, while the other is just relative. This is library research. It discusses the concept of Wahdat al-Adyan by Ibn 'Arabi's and religious pluralism by John Hick. The research findings show that these two concepts have very significant differences in their sources and implications of thought, it indicates that Wahdat al-Adyan and religious pluralism do not have the same rationale.

Keywords: *Concept; God; Sufism*.

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Introduction

As a part of human life, religion has a controlling position. Therefore, religious life and human life cannot be separated from each other. Religion is the most important thing in human life, it is a way of life as well as a form of belief reflecting human intellect. Human life is always sustainable with religion. Religion is attached to the feelings and atmosphere of every people. Humans have been created differently. Apart from material-empirical differences, humans also differ in non-empirical immaterial forms, such as assets, ideas, beliefs, and thoughts. God also created religions with different names and forms such as Islam, Christianity, Hinduism, Buddhism, and others are the reality that exists around us. The logical consequences of

this fact enable humans to understand and respect each other. As a religious idiom *takhalluq bi akhlaq Allah* namely competing in a positive attitude "like God" (Achmad Rosidi, 2010: 47).

In a normative perspective, religion is born with a universal human mission, in Islamic teachings is called *rahmatanlil 'alamin* while in Christianity it is called love, and other names. The text of religious teachings teaches how humanity becomes more concerned compared to other problems. Universal values such as equality and justice are the most specific terms of religion to realize its mission, namely to create peace in a pluralist society (Nur Kolis, 2017: 166). However, the development of religion is currently in abnormal situations. There is a phenomenon that religion is built on a religious community by instilling hatred against other religious communities. This condition seems that there is no other way to maintain their religious beliefs except by ridiculing and blaming other religions. Even when religion is in power, then itsuppresses other religions that do not agree with it arbitrarily. So that religious followers lose the spirit of universal humanity. Sometimes the conflict between religious believers cannot be avoided.

The conflict between religions, from a sociological point of view, begins from the public's disappointment toward the political hegemony to marginalized (poor) and minorities, which eventually leads to oppression and arbitrariness. Poverty is a condition that is very vulnerable to individual and group arrogance. The ending of this phenomenon is in the form of radical actions and rebellion. The feeling of helplessness in facing discrimination in its various forms makes a group of people come together with one goal of "rebellion and terror" (Muhammmad Ali, 2013: 11). Various countries have felt the impact of this rebellion, caused by social, religious, power, and cultural conflicts.

The meeting point of religion is a hot topic in the religious plurality today. When interreligious relationships are getting closer, people are required to show where their theological existence is compared to other religions. A rational and open perspective, as well as a comprehensive understanding and knowledge of the nature of religion, are the main requirements for humans to be able to live side by side with one another so that they are not trapped in dichotomies and distortions of truth. The disappearance of the barriers of exoteric difference and the convergence of esoteric equations are common

hopes. The goal is to be able to realize the existence of other religions with an attitude of humility, reduce superiority, and an attitude of tolerant diversity.

Studies related to religious harmonization can be traced from two concepts, namely Wahdat al-Adyan and religious pluralism. Wahdat al-Adyan is the concept of the unity of religions. Meanwhile, pluralism is the concept of religious pluralism. Both Wahdat al-Adyan and religious pluralism have different epistemologies, philosophical and socio-historical bases. This difference is only superficial because in principle it has the same goal, namely finding common ground for various religions. The hope is that there will be mutual respect among religions so that there is no need for ideological clashes. Therefore, this paper aims to reconcile the concept of Wahdat al-Adyan and the religious pluralism of the respective characters.

There are some studies about Ibn 'Arabi and the transcendental unity of religion conducted by Media Zainul Bahri. This article examines Ibn 'Arabi' views on Wahdat al-Adyān as described in two of his books; Futuhat and Fushus, and the differences and similarities between faith and sharia. He found that in his discussion, IbnArabi explained the difference between ideal and historical or between esoteric and exoteric. Ibn 'Arabi argues that the unity of religions can be achieved through spirituality, ideals, or a transcendental (esoteric) dimension that exists outside the formal appearance of religions. In other words, the singleness will not be found in shari'ah. However, this study only focuses on Ibn 'Arabi's thoughts (Media Zainul Bahri, 2011: 461).

Another more interesting study is about Wahdat al-Adyan and its relevance to religious pluralism by Fajri Khoirullah. This research states that there is a sociological-historical relevance based on its objective in minimizing the conflicts that occurred during the birth of the two concepts. As for their epistemological relevance, these two concepts converge on Plato's and Aristotle's monistic philosophical theory. Meanwhile, socio-humanist relevance is universal ethical values to create tolerance, democracy, and peace. Besides, he also put forward a Logical Orientation (Building a Universal Theological Paradigm) and an Ethical Orientation (Creating a Future Religion) (Fajri Khoirullah, 2010: 171).

To obtain studies that are relevant to the subject matter and to facilitate the understanding and direction of research following the problem in the title, the researchers use library research, which is research that dissects the literature in the form

of books, journals, magazines related to the research theme (Winarno Surakhmad, 2011: 25). Therefore, the data source in the form of literature on the concept of Wahdat al-Adyan from Ibn 'Arabi and the concept of religious pluralism from John Hick will be discussed in-depth and critically. Then the data source was analyzed using the descriptive-analytic method. The descriptive method means explaining a symptom and facts to provide complete data about these symptoms and facts (Soerjono Soekanto, 2010: 10). Meanwhile, analytics is an attempt to systematically organize research data for in-depth study and analysis (Noeng Muhajir, 2013: 43).

Epistemology of Ibn 'Arabi's Wahdat al-Adyan

Wahdat al-Adyan in Ibn 'Arabi's thought comes from an understanding of his logic. Ibn 'Arabi based his understanding on one (*al-wahid*) and many (*al-katsir*), and then he made the concept of *wahdat al-wujud* as his philosophical basis for seeking and understanding God's relationship with the universe. Understanding the opposite of God can be used to understand God. This means that the original form of God is only one, namely God who is *haq*, however, even though God is the only manifestation, God manifests Himself in countless forms in nature (Dwi Budiman, 2020).

The ontological relationship between one and many ofIbn 'Arabi's view uses a mathematical explanation. From one there will be many meanings that are many and unlimited. In a grouping that is already known, that each unit number is a fact, for example, the number that corresponds to the grouping that is already known (calculated). In Ibn 'Arabi's view that all numbers are a reality, such as eight and nine up or down to infinity, there will not be found a unit which is a collection of the number one, but in the condition that each unit is a collection of one. So it can be understood that, although "many" comes from "one", it would be strange to hear that the number (many) is a manifestation of "one", in the sense that the object of the phenomenon is the manifestation of one. This is the term used by Ibn 'Arabi from a mathematical metamorphosis of the number "one" and the points he criticized, this concept was later put forth by Ibn' Arabi in a poem:

"Indeed, my heart has received various forms, a grazing place for deer and monasteries for priests, a house for idols, and a Kaaba for those who perform tawaf, a

slate for the Torah, and a manuscript for the Koran, I am religious. With the religion of love ... love is my religion and faith (Muhyi al-Din Ibn'Arabi, 2011: 11)."

Another concept expressed by Ibn 'Arabi is the concept of "God of belief" (*al-Illah al-mu'taqad*) or also called "God in belief" (*al-Illah fi al-I'tiqad* or "God of belief" (*al-haqq al-I'tiqad*) or "God creates belief" (*al-haqq al-makhluq fi al-I'tiqad*). In this concept, it is understood that God is a human creation, this implies that whoever praises his creation means praised himself. Ibn 'Arabi said that a trusting God is a creation for those who see it, Allah is his creation. Therefore, the creator will surely worship what he creates, and people do not accept if his creation is reproached. So, with understanding, people will not reproach each other (Ghulam Usman, 2020).

In Ibn 'Arabi's view, the person who criticizes and blames the others' beliefs is in an accident. It means that God, in his belief, means God who is in a position he has criticized (Kautsar Azhari Noer, 2013: 36-39). The reason is that the god in his own beliefs, as in the beliefs he condemns, is not a god as he prejudices. This is the same as "knowing an unknown God" (not knowing the unknown). Such people only understanding God in the form of their own group belief and deny it. God is in other forms of belief, while God that appears as God in the form of belief, means that God who appears alone in all forms of belief is the same.

The correct understanding about divinity in Ibn 'Arabi's view is the understanding that cannot be seen particularly form of belief. IbnArabi said, "whoeverfrees God from limitations, will not deny him and confess him in any form in which God changes him". The knowledge capacity of a servant is the determinant and which inherits a servant's trust in his Lord. Each individual has a certain readiness (*al-isti'dad al-juz'i*) as a form of appearance in realizing universal loneliness. God showed himself to a servant with a servant's loneliness to attain an understanding of divinity. Finally, the individual will be bound or limited based on the knowledge he has acquired to form a belief (Ruhullah Syams, 2020).

The context of the verse which contains commands from God is used as the basis for Ibn 'Arabi's view on the issue of religious truthsuch as about creation (God's will) and obligations (God's commandments). The following is Ibn 'Arabi's explanation:

"The order of creation caused all beings to exist. Everyone knows this commandment. The commandments of obligation were conveyed by Allah to the prophets in the form of revelations that they must convey to their people. This commandment imposes an obligation on humans to serve God. The first commandment is addressed to all beings. The second commandment is specifically addressed to humans. The first commandment must be fulfilled. The second commandment can be fulfilled and cannot be fulfilled. In terms of the order of creation or divine will, according to Ibn 'Arabi, all religions, whether those of Allah's worshipers or those of idolaters are true, that is, all religions are following the order of creation or divine will, mandatory orders, all religions are not the same and not true. The true religion is a religion that is following the commandments and obligations, that is, a religion that is following Allah's revelation, like what has conveyed by the prophets. Religion is what guarantees security and happiness. False religion is a religion that violates the obligatory commandments, that is, a religion that is not following Allah's revelation. This religion does not guarantee safety and happiness. Those who obey Allah's revelations will find salvation and happiness, while those who deny it will be miserable and wretched."

Ibn 'Arabi's explanation can be concluded that he talk about the certainty of God, in terms of normative or historical about the unity of religion. In his explanation of the eight relationships between God and man, all of them move systematically, these are:

1. The diversity of sharia (*al-syar'iikhtilaf*). Caused by the diversity of divine relations and by the variety of circumstances.
2. The diversity of divine relationships due to *al-ahwal'sikhtilaf*or the variety of circumstances.
3. The variety of circumstances due to *al-azmanikhtilaf* or the diversity of time.
4. The diversity of time is due to the *al-harokahikhtilaf* or the variety of movements.
5. The diversity of movements due to *ikhtilaf al-tawujjuhad al-ilahiyah* or the diversity of the direction of God's attention.
6. The diversity of directions of divine attention due to *ikhtilaf al-maqashidi* or diversity of goals.

7. The diversity of goals is due to *ikhtilaf al-tajalliyat* or the diversity of God's appearance.

8. The diversity of God's appearance is due to *ikhtilaf al-syar'i* or diversity of syari'ah (Hendar Riyadi, 2007: 61-63).

First, *ikhtilaf al-syar'i* or the diversity of sharia due to the *ikhtilaf al-nisab al-ilahiyah* or the diversity of divine relationships. God communicates with his prophets as a manifestation of his will to convey his revelations or shari'a without time limit. God's relationship with a prophet is different from God's relationship with other prophets. This causes differences in the shari'ah of each prophet. In explaining this phenomenon, Ibn 'Arabi said, according to the Koran (QS. 5: 48), that every religious community has its own rules (*shari'ah*) and ways. Another statement in the Koran is that in every community the way of worship is determined, so do not argue about it, but say that God knows best and God will be the judge on the day of the resurrection (QS. 22: 67-69) (Tim Penerjemah Kemenag, 2011: 56).

Second, the diversity of divine relationships is due to the *ikhtilaf al-ahwal* or the variety of circumstances. Ibn 'Arabi emphasized that there are differences in the relationship between Allah and his prophets, such as differences in the relationship between Allah and someone who wants to eat and those who sleep or sunbathe. A person who is sick, he will pray, "o most giving medicine" or "o most giving heal"; anyone who is hungry, he will pray, "o provider of food"; when a person is drowning, he will cry out, "o most help (Savior)". Therefore God's relationship will vary according to the varied conditions of his being. Likewise, Allah's relationship with the prophets was due to the variety of conditions of the people in each prophetic period. This context is in line with the explanation of the Koran "He is Allah at every moment (time) of his busy life. We will settle (the affair) with you, O humans and *jinn*." (QS. 55:29-30).

Third, the diversity of times (*ikhtilaf al-azmani*) implies a variety of circumstances. It means that each season is different from other seasons and conditions, such as winter is different from summer. Thus, the existence of seasons influences the state of the body, and in the end, the diversity of times causes different circumstances and conditions. Fourth, the diversity of time is due to the *al-harokah*

overview or the variety of movements. A motion requires a certain time which differs from one motion to another. So that one motion has a certain time.

Fifth, the diversity of divine attentions (*ikhtilaf al-tawajjuhat al-illahiyah*) has implications for the diversity of movements. In Ibn 'Arabi's perspective, the diversity of Allah's attention to the direction of celestial bodies is evidenced by the varied movements of them. Therefore, it has been become the direction of Allah's attention to the motion of the sun and the motion of the planets, in contrast to the direction of Allah's attention to the motion of the moon circulating on its axis. In the view of the Koran, it is stated that "each one circulates on its axis." (QS. 21:33).

Sixth, *ikhtilaf al-maqashidi* or the diversity of goals is influenced by the diversity of divine attention. That is, if Allah's purpose for the motion of the moon is the same as Allah's direction for the motion of the sun, then there will be no difference between one effect and another. Whereas, there is no doubt that the effect varies in the perspective of Ibn 'Arabi equated that the direction of Allah's attention in accepting Zaed voluntarily, will be far different from the direction of Allah's attention in accepting Amr with anger. The difference in this view is that it is God's purpose to give happiness to Zaed and it is Allah's purpose to give punishment (misery) to Amr which causes "attention pluralism".

Seventh, the diversity of God's appearance (*ikhtilaf al-tajalliyat*) implies a variety of goals. In Ibn 'Arabi's perspective the supremacy of God does not require any repetition, and therefore the appearance of God is varied (not repeated). If the appearance of God takes the same form (repeated) in a form, there is similarity. However, the diversity of objectives is unquestionable and indeterminate. Thus, every particular goal must have a certain appearance of itself, which is different from each appearance.

Eighth, the diversity of shari'ah (*ikhtilaf al-syar'i*) which causes religious diversity has implications for the diversity of God's manifestations. That is, each shari'ah is a path to God as well as a different path (varies). So God's appearance must be as diverse as God's gifts. Apart from this, people's views about shari'ahalso vary. So every mujtahid has a certain view of the law as a way to God which is different from the views of other *mujtahid*s. These different views lead to diversity in understanding, meaning that God's appearance has diversity due to the diversity of sharia, as it is stated

that with the diversity of God's relationships, diversity can continue (Muzakkir, 2012: 135).

From various aspects and concepts of Wahdat al-Adyan conveyed by Ibn 'Arabi, it is the same God that becomes one source of a religion, only their appearance that has differences.

Epistemology of John Hick's Religious Pluralism

Religious pluralism is a condition of living together (coexistence) between followers of different and varied religions in one community while maintaining a characteristic of teaching taught by their respective religions. However, in a social context, "religious pluralism" is often used in the discourse and scientific sociology studies of the modern era. Many experts have different definitions, one of them was expressed by John Hick.

"Religious pluralism is an idea that the world's major religions are different perceptions and conceptions, and coincidentally, a real or supreme response from within human varied cultural institutions; and that the transformation of the human form from self-centeredness to ultimate concentration takes place in each of these human cultural institutions and occurs, as far as can be observed, to the same extent (Christian Sulistio, 2020)."

Hick's in Anis's view in Tracing Religious Pluralism, the truth is that religion is a manifestation of social reality. Thus, all religions are the same thing and none is better than the other. It is different from the Indonesian Ulama Council which defines religious pluralism as an understanding that teaches that all religions are the same. While the truth in every religion is relative, therefore, every believer cannot claim that only the religion he believes is the truest and any other religion is wrong. Religious pluralism also teaches that all followers of religion will enter and live together in heaven.

The idea of religious pluralism emerged during a period called the European Enlightenment, precisely in the 18th century AD, when this period is often referred to as the starting point for the rise of the modern thought movement. This period was marked by a new discourse regarding the turmoil of thinking in modern society which wanted to free reason from religious boundaries and give more priority to the superiority of reason (the paradigm of rationalism). The logical consequence of the conflict between the

church and the real-life outside the church, amidst the turmoil of thought in Europe, gave rise to an understanding known as the paradigm of liberalism, where the manifestations of this understanding are freedom, tolerance, equality, and pluralism or diversity.

At the beginning of its existence, the idea of religious pluralism was an attempt to lay a theoretical foundation in the realm of Christian theology to foster a tolerant attitude towards religions other than Christianity. It is a form of religious liberalization effort or a religious thought reform movement initiated by the Christian Church in the 19th century. The leader of this religious pluralism movement is Riedrich Schleiermacher. This movement, later on, became known as the "Liberal Protestant".

In this modern era, theology of religious pluralism has experienced very rapid development, although, in the views of pluralists in the realm of methodology and philosophical approaches, there are differences. Some pluralists argue that every religion has the same core or essence. In a tradition of world religions, historically, this common essence can be identified. Several other pluralists take a relatively historical approach. They think that every religion is a relative nature which cannot claim its superiority, in terms of achieving salvation over other religions, they are both only relatives.

As a pluralist, John Hick combines two-approach elements outlined above. Hick stated that there are historical and substantial differences in each religion. All religions have the same essence and purpose in Hick's view. When there is no common essence, there will likely be a compromise of the integrity of the tradition, namely emphasizing only one aspect of the tradition. A doctrine or even a mystical experience cannot find true religious unity. However, it can be found in the same deliverance or an experience of salvation (Anis Malik Thoha, 2015: 16-17).

As the greatest figure in the discourse of religious pluralism, Hick exerts all his efforts by thinking, developing, explaining, and interpreting the ideas and theories of religious pluralism on a large scale. With this kind of effort, religious pluralism can be introduced to the general public. All of this can be found in Hick's various works discussing religious pluralism. The theory of religious pluralism developed by Hick begins with his view of globalization. In Hick's view, the flow of globalization will lead to "convergence" or the process of unifying religious methods, so that in time,

religions will not only be exclusively radical entities but turn into sects, and there will be a unification of religions or what Hick calls "global theology".

To develop this religious pluralism, Hick initiated the concept of "orientation transformation", namely the transformation from old egoism to new egoism, a shift from the convergence of religion to the convergence of God. In Hick's view, religion is just a form of historical tradition that varies throughout the world and differs in the context of worship. Absolute reality according to Hick is a manifestation of true God which he calls "absolute reality". Then in Hick's view, every God in every religion and belief is referred to as a relative God, because God is only a picture of the understanding of each religion and belief. Meanwhile, the authenticity and the original manifestation of each God is the same. It's just that the capture of the experience of every human being is different from various images and concepts according to different traditional contexts, resulting in a different picture and understanding (Burhanudin Mukhamad Faturahman, 2018: 30).

Hick's origin theory implies a change in the world's major religions. A certain religion, Islam (for example), has undergone a major change to become only one of the many ways of salvation from previously being the only religion that has an absolute path of salvation mission. This theory attempts to create the right problems (*haq*) and the wrong problems with religion that are no longer relevant and appropriate. Hick's emphasize that the path of salvation is not single and monolithic, but is many and varies according to the number of traditions or teachings of existing religions and beliefs.

In Hick's perspective, religious pluralism implies recognition of the foundation for the convergence of the world's major religions and all kinds of religious truth-seeking. Meanwhile, for other views, religious pluralism implies mutual respect between various religious views and subsequently respects these differences. Whereas the former emphasizes individual religious freedom, the second emphasizes the recognition of the demonization of the typical answerer (Nur Said, 2015: 379).

Furthermore, Hick provides separation from what was initiated by Kant. Kant gives a signal to the face of God who is greeted in various religious judgments. Hick further differentiates between God in the known and unknown states. God is a comparison with humans who take the manifestation of truth in various understandings

and thoughts as different manifestations of each religion. Hick said that these religions are manifestations of the facial forms, images, and *tajalli* of one God. Even though in appearing from Him to man, God gave a different way. Both Jehovah who becomes the God of the Jews, Allah as the God of the Muslims, where each of these Gods is a personal God in history which is the same result of the universal manifestation of God and the intervention of human power, both as a concept of divinity and in historical aspects (John Hick, 2010: 223).

Then, Hick said that all the manifestations of God in various images were formed because of the presence of God's reality. The presence of God is based on the various meanings of all religions, both the definition, conception and meaning of God's structure, influenced by the internal religions in a variety of traditions and influenced by the knowledge and consciousness of religious followers. The basis for the different affirmations and meanings of God from each religion is to distinguish between something as His essence (the state of God) and something manifested by the predecessors of religion, where the predecessors of religion played a role in forming the epistemological basis of religion which gave birth to the theory of separation of religious knowledge from the essence of religion. Finally, this all is a form of relativity in religious knowledge without denying and opposing the substance of the existence of other religions.

This understanding of the different appearances of God also applies to Prophets (messengers of all religions). Where the Prophets in explaining their dreams and their *mukasyafah* are certainly influenced by certain factors, which may be different from all Prophets (every religious messenger). As a result, this difference in the appearance of God is a way for the emergence of religious equality. John Hick revealed that this concept has provided a philosophical framework in providing an understanding of religious pluralism.

Meeting Point of Wahdat al-Adyan and Religious Pluralism

According to Bahri, the understanding of pluralism in the Sufism tradition initiated by the Sufis is usually called Wahdat al-Adyan. However, the earlier great Sufis, such as Ibn 'Arabi, al-Hallaj, and IbnFarid, never explicitly stated that their ideas were pluralism (Media Zainul Bahri, 2011: 39). Mustafa Hilmi then introduced the term

Wahdat al-Adyan after studying Ibn 'Arabi's work from Nicholson to Afifi. He stated firmly that the ideology instigated by the Sufis related to religion is called Wahdat al-Adyan which concludes based on its identification from subjective conclusions (Muhammad Mustafa Hilmi, 2000: 382).

Pluralists see that the concept of Wahdat al-Adyanin the Sufism tradition is a theory proposed by the Sufis that must be developed towards religious pluralism. According to Ibn 'Arabi, Wahdat al-Adyan is a consequence of the monotheism concept elaboration in understanding tawhid that the only one is Allah, while the other is multiplied. This understanding is then used to support the understanding of pluralism as a facility to build a religious pluralism project. The philosophers have manipulated the expression of the Sufis, namely the concept of Wahdat al-Adyan which is understood as the basic concept of religious pluralism. The manipulation steps of these philosophers were by cutting the text and context, for example, John Hick manipulating Jalaluddin Rumi's words, "the lights are different, but only one light". Hick thinks that Rumi's expression contains ideas of religious pluralism.

There is often a misunderstanding of the Sufis expressions. This is because the spiritual experience of each Sufi is expressed in their way. Often they use symbolic media to express these spiritual experiences. This symbolic expression is based on the difficulty of verbally expressing intuitive personal experiences. A person who lacks spiritual knowledge and experience intuitively will not be able to understand the nature of phenomena as Sufis do, so misinterpretation of the Sufis' verses is commonplace.

Afifi understood that Ibn 'Arabi positioned love as the basis for all forms of worship. Worshiping means loving the object being worshiped. Love is the principle that penetrates all beings and binds them together. Love is a universal thing that includes all religions (A.E. Afifi, 2010: 207). Khalif Muammar also made an interpretation that said that Ibn 'Arabi's concept of love is the essence of religion and an important principle for pluralism and inclusivism (Khalif Muammar, 2012: 31). Fatimah Usman considers Ibn 'Arabi to be a follower of religious pluralism. This opinion was seen by Al-Taftazani's criticism of Ibn 'Arabi by saying that Ibn' Arabi had made a mistake which was not based on seeing all religions. According to him, belief and religion have clear differences and cannot be considered the same. Contradictory beliefs are impossible to be united in one belief. It can be understood that Ibn 'Arabi is a

follower of Wahdat al-Adyan who states that all religions have the same essence, differences are just a misunderstanding (Fathimah Usman, 2012: 18).

At a glance, Ibn 'Arabi's poetry explains as if Ibn'Arabi supports the notion of religious pluralism by accepting the truth of all religions which are considered to have the same essence with different patterns. Furthermore, Ibn 'Arabi seemed to only hold on to the spirit to love all religions without wanting to deny any differences. This is the understanding followed by pluralists and some Muslim figures in understanding Ibn 'Arabi's poetry.

In terms of understanding Ibn 'Arabi's poetry, the real point of error lies in understanding the meaning of the term *al-hubb*. The real meaning of *din al-hubb* in the expression Ibnu 'Arabi is the Prophet Muhammad's religion, Islam. As Mahmud Ghurab expressed in Fatimah Usman as follows (Ghulam Usman, 2020: 35):

"The mention of *din al-hubb* refers to the word of Allah SWT: So, follow me (Rasulullah Saw.), Allah will love you. Because of this then Ibn 'Arabi called it *din al-hubb*. The purpose of having a religion with *al-hubb* is to be able to accept the *taklifat* of his beloved (Allah) with good acceptance and full of willingness."

Ghurab's statement explains that *din al-hubb* refers to the Prophet Muhammad religion which aims to eliminate difficulties and burdens in carrying out *taklif* and to accept all kinds of *taklifs* with all their willingness. Due to carrying out orders because of pressure it feels heavier than carrying out orders from the essence he loves. This idea arose from Ibn 'Arabi's contemplation on the verse "fattabi'uniyuhbibkumullah" which gave an understanding of the importance of following the Prophet Muhammad when someone claims to love Allah.

Furthermore, the term *al-din* is only referred to as the word Islam. *Al-din* means submission (*istislam*) only to Allah, and the only religion accepted by Allah is Islam. The rejection of the pluralism view did not only come from Ibn 'Arabi but also another Sufi, Jalaluddin Rumi. Rumi experiences a distortion of the meaning of his expression so that he seems to be a pluralist. The phrase "The lights are different, but the lights are the same. It comes from above" after being examined does not at all express support for pluralism.

Hick uses this Rumi's expression as justification for religious equality. Hick thinks that the lanterns which he defines as religions reinforce his concept of relativity.

He added that religious pluralism in Islam was promised by the Sufi tradition for a long time. Anis Malik denied Hick's statement. He said that just to build his pluralism idea, Hick had cheated. Hick reduced the meaning of *al-din* to be limited to the experience of personal faith which originally covered all aspects of personal and collective life (Anis Malik Thoha, 2015: 241-242).

Ibn 'Arabi's spiritual experience is his spiritual experience, while Hick has reduced the meaning of *al-din* as an experience of his faith. However, Islam is a religion and social institution and the name of a set of rules and morals adhered to by all Muslims from the collective aspect to personal life. Hick's real goal is to renounce the religion of all humans and to replace the social function of religion with a secular and global religion.

The parameters on which Hick is based on measuring the relative reality of religions that are believed by Muslims and non-Muslims need to be questioned, especially in terms of divinity. Hick has arbitrarily concluded, whereas the aim of Rumi's expression of all religions is divine light referring to religions revealed by Allah Most High. Sequentially, Muslims are required to follow the light that has been determined by the Prophet Muhammad as a guide for life to death. Anis also continues to criticize Hick's methods, suggesting that Hick has decided that the text also has consequences for breaking the context, even though it doesn't seem to interfere with its meaning. From the above explanation, it has led to an understanding that religious pluralism and Wahdat al-Adyan have different understandings and implications.

Conclusion

Wahdat al-Adyan and religious pluralism do not have a scientific relationship and essence. Wahdat al-Adyan is the thought of the Sufis (Ibn 'Arabi) who was motivated by his experiences and spiritual journey. Meanwhile, the thought of religious pluralism comes from western philosophy and conflicts between religions which are later ascribed and justified as the development of the concept of Wahdat al-Adyan. These two concepts, of course, have very significant differences in their sources and implications of thought, although, later new concepts regarding religious pluralism emerged as an effort to reconcile and strengthen relations between religions. This paper only provides an explanation that Wahdat al-Adyan and religious pluralism have no

meeting point for each other. The implication of this study is to provide an understanding to the community of the importance of understanding religion in totality by respecting one another.

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