



## The Concept of Love In Sufism

Abdul Wachid B.S.

Universitas Islam Negeri Prof. K.H. Saifuddin Zuhri (UIN SAIZU)

### Info Artikel

#### Article History

Disubmit 7 Januari 2022

Diterima 20 September 2022

Diterbitkan 30 November 2022

#### Kata Kunci

Tasawuf, Cinta, Sufi-Penyair

### Abstrak

*Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengungkap dan menjelaskan konsep cinta dalam tasawuf. Dalam perspektif tasawuf, cinta Tuhan mendahului cinta manusia kepada Tuhannya karena jika Tuhan telah mencintai mereka, sebagai hamba-Nya, maka mereka tidak akan pernah bisa menolak cinta-Nya karena cinta itu datang lebih dulu dari Tuhan. Cinta dalam tradisi tasawuf merupakan panggung besar (maqamat) bagi manusia untuk mengenal dan mendekati diri kepada Tuhan. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan penelitian kualitatif. Pendekatan ini berfungsi untuk menafsirkan, mengungkapkan, dan menjelaskan konsep tasawuf tentang cinta. Merupakan penelitian kepustakaan, dengan sumber data primer karya para penyair sufi seperti Jalaluddin Rumi dan Imam Al-Ghazali. Hasil penelitian ini menggunakan pengertian cinta Al-Ghazali yaitu: 1) cinta pada diri sendiri, 2) cinta karena kelebihan yang diperoleh dari objek yang dicintai, 3) cinta karena kebaikan dan keindahan, 4) cinta yang diilhami oleh kebaikan dan keindahan dalam arti akhlak, 5) cinta lahir karena munaasabah atau pertalian rahasia.*

### Abstract

This research aimed to reveal and explain the concept of love in Sufism. In the perspective of Sufism, God's love precedes humans' love for their God because if God has loved them, as His servants, then they can never reject His love because that love comes first from God. Love in the tradition of Sufism is a great stage (maqamat) for the man to know and get closer to God. This research uses qualitative research approach. This approach serves to interpret, express, and explain the concept of Sufism about love. It is library research, with the primary data source is the work of the Sufi-poets like Jalaluddin Rumi and Imam Al-Ghazali. The results of this research used Al-Ghazali's notion of love which is: 1) self-love, 2) love caused by the advantages derived from the object of the beloved, 3) love caused by goodness and beauty, 4) love inspired by kindness and beauty in moral meaning, 5) love born because of munaasabah or secret affinity.

\* E-mail: [abdulwachidbs@gmail.com](mailto:abdulwachidbs@gmail.com)

©2022 The Authors. Published by UNNES. This is an open access article under the CC BY license (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>)

DOI 10.15294/jsi.v11i3.52135

P ISSN: 2252-6315 E-ISSN: 2685-9599

## INTRODUCTION

According to F.C. Happold and Annemarie Schimmel (Hadi W.M., 2001), Sufism produces a group of poets, whose inner vision sees God as a beauty and an Absolute Love. For them, earthly or worldly love can imagine and reveal the Divine Beauty and Love. Therefore, mysticism (tasawwuf) not only produces true mystics but also great poets as well. Much literature on mystical experiences is presented in the form of literary works, especially poetry. Nevertheless, the Sufis did not intend to be poets. They just want to describe their mystical experience through poetry as a means of a spiritual ceremony.

Poetry and mystical experience do have something in common. Like mysticism, poetry deals with the deepest inner experience of the human. Like poetry, mystical experiences are personal, unique and universal. In fact, mystical experiences always contain poetic qualities. A deep poetic or aesthetic experience also has a mystical quality and Vice versa. Therefore, personality, uniqueness, and universality can be well preserved through good poetry.

By knowing the relationship between mystical experience and poetic experience, we can say that the concept of poetics in a poem will be greatly influenced by the concept of mysticism possessed by Sufi poet. It is, in particular, related to the basic concept of mysticism that is "the Divine as beauty." It is viewed as an esoteric dimension of Islam. Thus, Sufi literature (sastra sufisme) is a literary work written by Sufis based on their mystical experience and their work is not separated from Sufism as concept and experience. Meanwhile, Sufic literature (sastra sufistik) is a literary work written by a non-Sufi in its entirety, it has some similarities to the aesthetic expression and (perhaps) the ethics of literary works written by Sufis. Therefore, Abdul Hadi W.M. (2001) said, "it is impossible to speak of Sufic literature without speaking of Sufism."

The Sufis have different views on Sufism in accordance with their mystical experience. However, it does not mean that we cannot look for similarities between these diverse views. The meaning of Sufism as acts ('amal) have implications on the interpretation of the Sufi as an adherent of any of various Muslim mystical orders or teachings.

A Sufi Al-Hujwiri said that "a person who has been purified by love is a holy person and, he who has been one with the Beloved and has thrown anything but Him is a Sufi" (Hadi W.M., 2001).

Another Sufi Suhrawardi in his book *Awaarif al-Ma'arif* said that there is no the word "Sufi" in the Qur'an, but there is the word "muqarrab" that is equivalent to the meaning of the

word "Sufi". Muqarrab is a man drawn by God so that he becomes very close to Him (Hadi W.M., 2001).

Through the views of these two Sufis, we can know that Sufism is the spiritual path (suluk) pursued by the Sufis to achieve the ultimate truth of Islamic teachings based on the Qur'an and sunnah. It can be realized only by establishing the oneness of God which is the essence of Sufism and also the substance of Sufi literature (sastra sufisme), as Shibli, a Sufi, said (Hadi W.M., 2001) that "The Sufi is he that sees nothing except God in the two worlds" (al-Shuufi laa yaraa fi al-daarayn ma'a Allaah ghayra Allaah).

For Sufis, Love (mahabbah) is a part of stages and states. However, Ibn 'Athallah as-Sakandari (Farhan, 2016) incorporated the concept of love into the system of stages. Therefore, a lover will be immersed in his love and offer himself to his beloved.

A person who is in this state (annihilation of the self or fana) has experienced all realities, except the Divine. He obtained the Peak of his love through dhikr and praised His greatness. Rabi'ah al-Adawiyah (Nasution, 1985) said: "My beloved is only you whom I love/forgive the sinners who come to You/You are my hope, happiness and pleasure/my heart is reluctant to love others than You."

The Rabi'ah expression of love is a subtle spiritual expression. It is the actualization of her recognition as a servant given true love by Allah SWT. Therefore, Kamus Besar Bahasa Indonesia (Departemen Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan RI, 1989) defined love as being very happy, very hopeful, or worried. So, the hopes and worries of a Sufi are only for Allah SWT alone.

After Rabi'ah, genealogically, Ibn Arabi and Ibn al-Farid continued and developed the concept of love. Through Futuhat al-Makkiyah, Ibn Arabi (Fuadi, 2013) explained that someone filled with divine love will not be held responsible before God for all his actions in the world. People who are drunk in love will lose their reason (ratio) and get divine logic. Majdub saints (wali Majdub) often experience this state.

Apart from Ibn Arabi, Ibn al-Farid is also a Sufi poet who adheres to the religion of divine love who inherited literature with the nuances of Sufism. If Ibn Arabi carried the teachings of Wahdat al-wujud, Ibn al-Farid carried the teachings of Wahdat al-syuhud because Ibn al-Farid did not follow logic and philosophy. He surrendered to his love. Therefore, he experienced annihilation of the self and headed towards Allah SWT.

According to Ibn al-Farid (Hilmi, n.d.), love is the source of life. Love doesn't depend

on anything. However, everything depends on it. The essence of love (mahabbah) is not materialistic but spiritual, and it is transcendent and eternal.

According to Imam al-Ghazali, the teachings of love emerged because of the inspiration of arguments such as “al-Maidah: 54 and Ali-Imran: 30 (Al-Ghazali, 1992; Bakry, 2018). Love for Allah SWT, according to al-Ghazali, is the highest goal of the stage passed by the Sufis. Al-Kalabazi (Bakry, 2018) argues that the love embraced by Sufis is not only a recognition but also appreciation from the heart. Therefore, the stage (maqam) love for the Sufis is an indication of the unveiling towards Allah SWT.

## RESEARCH METHODS

This research is a library research. It investigates the object through various information such as books, encyclopedias, scientific journals, newspapers, magazines, and documents. The researcher used a qualitative approach and categorized them. The explanation in this study is descriptive, a characteristic of qualitative research (Mustika Zed, 2008).

The researcher used the documentation method. He read, analyzed, observed, and described information about the object. Through these documents, researchers will get objective data and information.

Data analysis in this study is related to the process of searching for and compiling research data systematically. It takes place by organizing data into categories, breaking them down into units, synthesizing, arranging them into patterns, and making conclusions so that readers can easily understand them (Bogdan dan Biklen, 2002). Data analysis focuses on the description and placement of data in its context described in words (Faisal, 2010), and it is to generate and express new meanings and theories (Ratna, 2011). In this context, the data analysis technique that researchers use is an analysis model that includes data collection, data reduction, data presentation, and drawing conclusions or verification (Miles dan Huberman, 2009).

## DISCUSSION

### The Concept of Creation and the Divine Beauty in Sufism

Views related to Sufism correspond to the basic concept of Islam “There is no god but God (Allah)” (laa ilaha illallah). Therefore, the Sufis interpret the words (Ḥadith) of Prophet Muhammad SAW, “Allah alone exists, and there is no partner with Him”; al-Junaid, a Sufi, said that “And He is now as He was.” This perception is based on the Quranic verse which asserts the Sufi

conception of the Islamic legal conception (fiqh) regarding “There is no god but God (Allah)” (Laa ilaha illallah), the verse “Wherever you are facing, there is the face of God” (Surah al-Baqarah, 2: 115).

Therefore, the concept “there is no God” (laa ilaha) is a negation, whereas “but God (Allah)” (illaallah) is an affirmation; the former is a rejection of any reality that the world and soul deify, while the second is an affirmation of the “honest truth.” The phrase “There is no God but God” (laa ilaha illallah) is positioned and perceived as “There is no the “honest truth” but God (God),” this is the threshold between creatures and God. This segregation is continued with the phrase “Muhammad is the messenger of Allah” (Muhammadarrasullallah), Muhammad SAW is a clear and well-planned manifestation of God. Muhammad SAW is the only representative of God unto His creatures. Therefore, Muhammad and the Qur'an are the guiding tools. In doing so, the revelation plays an important role in the creation of human beings. The Qur'an mentions its own verses and all the divine books as “evidence or signs” (verses of holy books/al ayaat al qouliyah), while the universe is also “evidence” (cosmic verses/al ayaat al kauniyah) of the existence of God, the universe exists because of the power of God. The implication is that everything other than God is not the “honest truth”, and all things are “signs or evidence” of God and hence all other than God to some extent are not essential. Fundamentally, the phenomenon is “signs,” but also as a “veil” (hijab). Therefore, it appears that the revelation of the “veil” (hijab) of God is built through spiritual perfection based on its two foundations, namely “Islam” (the practice of shari'a and imitating Prophet Muhammad SAW) and “imaan” (accepting The Basic Articles of Faith concerning God, prophethood, and the Last Day); then raise it on “ikhsaan” (The Basic Articles of Faith to worship Allah as if you see Him, and if you do not see Him, He sees you), and this is divine love (mahabbah), the spiritual way based upon love and devotion, in Sufism.

By viewing the reality of creation based on the concept of “Asyhadu allailaaha illallah wa ashaduanna Muhammadarrasullallah” (I testify that there is no god but Allah, and I testify that Muhammad is a messenger of Allah), it means that someone has perceived and positioned the reality of creation as creatures which have certain limits in the presence of his Creator (Allah), this is an affirmation of oneness (of God).

Allah created the universe, the jinn, and the human beings because Allah “wants to be known,” like the Quranic expression, in order to “worship Me.” According to the Sufis, the thought is based on

a sacred hadith (hadith qudsi), "I was a Treasure unknown then I desired to be known so I created a creation to which I made Myself known; then they knew Me." According to the adherent of hadith (Ahl al-Hadith) Muhammad Ibn Ibrahim (Hadi W.M., 2001) that is authentic hadith with referring to the Qur'an (65:12), "It is Allah Who has created seven heavens and of the earth the like thereof (i.e. seven). His Command descends between them (heavens and earth), that you may know that Allah has power over all things and that Allah surrounds (comprehends) all things in (His) Knowledge." In addition, there is another verse (QS 51:56) related to that verse, "And I (Allah) did not create the jinns and humans except they should worship Me (Alone)."

Abdul Hadi W.M., based on Ibn Abbas, interpreted the verse "they should worship Me (Alone)" as "so that they may reach my knowledge" (Hadi W.M., 2001). Meanwhile, Jalaluddin Rumi (1207-1273 AD) interpreted the "hidden treasure" (kanz makhfi) as "the treasury of His Eternal Wisdom" (Schimmel, 2003).

According to the Sufis, the honest truth is a "hidden treasure," no one knows His Essence or His honest truth but Himself. Even so, in order for the Universal Beauty (al-Jamaal) of His Perfection (al-Kamaal) to be "real," so He adorns the "mirrors" of fixed entities (al-a'yaan al-tsaabitah) and reveals Himself in the "mirrors." Therefore, the Qur'an states that God shows His signs in the universe and in human beings. In this case, Abdul Hadi W.M. concluded that "He saw Himself through His own creatures" (Hadi W.M., 2001)

Thus, all creatures God created are evidence or signs, (ayaat) that God loves humans more than human's love for Him. In fact, Rumi said that love (mahabbah) is an attribute of God. Therefore, God is called Love.

A love affair between human and God is possible because according to Rumi human is a divine spark, based on the harmony between the tendency of the human soul and the attributes of God, evidenced by the tendency of the human heart to The All-Compassionate (al-Rahman) and The All-Merciful (al-Rahim) from God (Rumi, Matsnawi I, 3854) (Hadi W.M., 2001).

Neither Rumi nor Imam al-Ghazali distinguishes one who recognizes Allah (Arif) with a lover ('aasyiq) because love and knowledge are two things that are interconnected and need each other. Human's love or God's love has the same goal, which leads one to know his Lord as long as there is the purity of love so that the love comes to divine love (laahut). At this level, there is an encounter between the concept of love and the concept of beauty. All beauty in this world is a representation

of divine beauty, and if the representation disappears then the lover will confront his or her heart to the source of all beauty, that is God.

The concept of the creation (of the universe) relates to love ('isyq and mahabbah). Ibn 'Arabi in his book *Fushuush al-Hikam* explained:

"This is because the origin (or root) of the movement of the cosmos is from non-existence ('adam), in which it is at rest (sākin), to existence (wujūd). Therefore, it is said that [the whole matter of] the Divine order is movement out of repose. The movement which is the existence of the cosmos is the movement of love. The Prophet (SA) indicated that when he said: "I was a treasure that was not known, and I loved to be known." So if it were not for this love, the cosmos itself would not have been manifested... and there is no movement in the immanent world which is not that of love" (Hadi W.M., 2001)..

Ibn 'Arabi's view was followed by his followers Sadr al-Din al-Qunawi, Iraqi and Jami'. However, similar views have been put forward by al-Hallaj and Abu Sa'id al-Khair, although Ibn 'Arabi' extended his ideas by incorporating new aspects.

From some views concerning the relationship between the concept of divinity, beauty, and love, We can understand that love ('isyq or mahabbah) is very important in Sufism. Love, therefore, dominates various themes in the poetry of the Sufis.

### ***The Concept of Love in Sufism***

Love (mahabbah) evolved as a spiritual idea after Sufism left its form as a simple movement after the early 8th century AD (2nd century Hijri). At that time, Sufism is more as a life of asceticism (zuhud), and the highest stage (maqam) is tawakkul (full dependence and belief in God) and takwa. The Mahabbah became an important level of spirituality after being excavated on the basis of Ja'far al-Shidiq's mystical experience (699-756 AD), a mystic and the scholar of hadith and tafsir, who was regarded as a special prominence among Sufi orders. The Mahabbah was also developed by Syaqq al-Balkhi, Harith al-Muhasibi, and especially popularized by Rabi'a al-Adawiyah. When the mahabba was developed by the Sufis, the most important spiritual level or stages included repentance, patience, hope (rajaa'), fear (khauf), poverty (Faqr), Renunciation or asceticism (zuhud), oneness of God (tauhid, in harmony with God's will), Trust (tawakkul), and love (mahabbah) that contains deep longing (syawq), intimacy (uns), and satisfaction (ridlaa) that is satisfied with His will (Al-Ataftazani, 1997).

Some Sufis prefer the term 'isyq rather than mahabbah. Al-Nuri (d. 907 CE) was a Sufi who first introduced the term 'isyq to complete the term mahabbah. In the Qur'an, there is no the term 'isyq. However, in the Qur'an there is the term mahabbah, loving God maximally or absolutely: "a people He loves, and who love Him" (Q.S., 5:54).

A Sufi poet Jalaluddin Rumi did not consider isyq and mahabbah as two opposites. In his book *Matsnawi*, Jalaluddin Rumi said that "'isyq is an innumerable and enormous mahabbah," (II: 221) (Hadi W.M., 2001). Imam al-Ghazali also did not distinguish 'isyq and mahabbah, the substance of isyq and mahabbah is intimately intertwined. Therefore, al-Ghazali (Hadi W.M., 2001) used the term 'isyq as a deep love that surpass everything, a truly solid and unveiled love by anything, such as Zulaykha's love to Prophet Yusuf, Majnun's love to Layla, or al-Hallaj's love to his Lord so that he conveyed the phrase "anaa al-haaq" ("I am the Truth" or "I am He whom I love").

Therefore, the researcher uses the term 'isyq and mahabbah when identifying the temporary state of consciousness (hal or ahwal). The researcher uses the term 'isyq to explain an innumerable love; The researcher uses the term mahabbah to explain the tendency of the heart to divine love, whether it relates to the temporary state of consciousness (hal or ahwal) and spiritual level (maqamat).

According to Rumi, the only love that can bring a Sufi (saalik) to achieve the High Self because love is a noble way to achieve knowledge about the honest truth (Arasteh, 1974). This means that only love can bring people to believe in the ultimate and highest reality of all things.

In the aesthetic system of Sufism, love ('isyq or mahabbah) has a broad meaning. However, in Sufism, it is interpreted specifically as the temporary state of consciousness (soul) and spiritual level that bring one to the knowledge of the Divine. As Abu Nu'aym al-Isfahani explained in his book *Hilyat al-Awliyaa* (Hadi W.M., 2001) that love is a combination of various elements of the state of the soul, "The wise man's heart is the nest of love ('isyq), and the lover's heart that filled with love ('ashiq) is a nest of longing (sawq), and the heart's longer (sawqi) is the nest of intimacy (uns)."

"The last stations on the mystical path is divine love (mahabbah) and divine knowledge (ma'rifah). Sometimes love (mahabbah) and knowledge (ma'rifah) are considered complementary to each other, sometimes love (mahabbah) is regarded as superior, and sometimes knowledge (ma'rifah) is regarded as superior," said Annemarie Schimmel (Schimmel, 2003).

According to al-Ghazali divine knowledge (ma'rifah) precedes divine love (mahabbah) because "love (mahabbah) without knowledge (ma'rifah) is impossible, someone can only love something that he knows." The most touching statement of knowledge (ma'rifah) was given by al-Junayd, "Divine knowledge (ma'rifah) is the heart's doubt that God is too great to be understood, and that He is too powerful to behold. Divine knowledge (ma'rifah) is any knowledge in your heart, and God is the opposite" (Schimmel, 2003).

However, for Rabi'a al-Adawiyah, love precedes ma'rifah because a sincere love of God will be rewarded by Him with the revelation of the veil between human and God, and the Sufi sees God with his heart. Therefore, when a Sufi is asked whether he sees the God he worshiped or not, Rabi'a replied, "If I do not see Him, then I will not worship Him." Rabi'a al-Adawiyah stated that "The fruit of the spiritual discipline is turning your face away from the creatures so that you can concentrate only on God alone because the ma'rifah is to know God best" (Khamis, 1993). Thus, for Rabi'a al-Adawiyah, mahabbah precedes ma'rifah even though they are side by side and can not be separated.

In the perspective of Dzun Nun al-Mishri (H. Nasution, 1990), ma'rifah is divided into three levels, first, ordinary person's ma'rifah. It is knowing God by declaring the testimony (syahadat); secondly, scientist's ma'rifah. It is knowing God through the reason; third, the Sufi's ma'rifah. It is knowing God through the intercession of the heart.

According to al-Sarraj (H. Nasution, 1990), divine love (mahabbah) has three levels, first, The love of the ordinary person, at this level a lover always remembers God; second, The love of the shidiq, at this level a lover, because of love, can remove the veil between him and God by eliminating his will and his own attributes, then his heart is filled with feelings of love to God and longing for him; third, The love of the wise, in this level the lover, because of love, truly knows God. He no longer feels love, but he feels the Beloved Himself.

By loving God, the secret of God's creation is revealed, both the real and the unseen, the world and the Hereafter (The love of the ordinary people, I). By revealing the secret or mystery, a Sufi can see the light of power and the majesty of God (The love of the shidiq, II). Furthermore, when the love becomes deeper, the veil between man and his Lord will be opened, in this state Sufi longs for Him (the Beloved) because he has seen His beauty through the heart (sufi's ma'rifah). In his heart, the wise, the Sufi, unites his love with God's love, God's love meets his servant's love (The love of the wise, III).

In such a state of the soul, a Sufi such as Rabiah al-Adawiyah expressed her experience that mahabbah and ma'rifah mutually support their existence even though all of these always start from love for God (mahabbah).

According to Imam al-Ghazali in "Ihya' al-Ulu'um al-Diin" (Hadi W.M., 2001), love can be classified into five categories:

(1) Self-love. it is a desire for self-perfection that includes love for health, wealth, wives, children, etc; (2) Love that arises because there is advantage derived from beloved objects; (3) Love that arises because there are beauty and goodness. It includes true love; (4) Love inspired by beauty and goodness in a moral sense such as a Muslim's love for Prophet Muhammad SAW; (5) Love that arises because there is a secret affinity (munasabah), such as between the Lover and the Beloved. In this state, the lover does not consider the happiness he will gain, love arises because of a special relationship between them.

In the fourth and fifth categories, love (mahabbah) is developed by Sufis. The concept and practice of Sufism concerning divine love vary greatly depending on their (Sufis) mystical experience. How are the Sufi expressions of divine love?

The prayer spoken by Messenger of Allah (Muhammad) is a good base for the Sufis to perceive and position love: "O Allah, I ask You for Your Love, and the love of whoever loves You, and the love of deeds that will bring me closer to Your Love, make Your love more precious to me than cool water to the thirsty" (Schimmel, 2003). Sufis believe that love is an important base for entering religious life. They derive the basis of the teachings from the Qur'an: "But those who believe are stronger in love for Allah" (Q.S., 2: 165), "If you love God, follow me, and God will love you" (Q.S., 3:31), "Surely those who believe and do deeds of righteousness — unto them the All-merciful shall assign love" (Q.S., 19:96). However, there are still many verses that can be used as bases for the importance of love in Islamic religious life.

Once again, the mahabbah became an important level of spirituality after it had been excavated by the mystical experience of the mystic Ja'far al-Shidiq who was regarded as the originator and developed by Syaqq al-Balkhi and Harith al-Muhasibi. However, among the Sufis, there was a prominent Sufi whose concept of the Mahabbah gave great and wide influence. She is Rabi'a al-Adawiyah. She has a principle that love is the foundation of obedience and piety to God. Her views are visible from his famous prayer (Hadi W.M., 2001):

I have loved Thee with two loves:  
a selfish love and a love that is worthy of  
Thee.

As for the love which is selfish,  
Therein I occupy myself with Thee,  
to the exclusion of all others.  
But in the love which is worthy of Thee,  
Thou dost raise the veil that I may see  
Thee.

Yet is the praise not mine in this or that,  
But the praise is to Thee in both that and  
this.

According to Imam al-Ghazali, what Rabi'a meant by "a selfish love" is a love of God because of His goodness and grace, whereas "a love that is worthy of Thee" is love caused by beauty and majesty (al-jamaal and al-jalaal) that reveal his secrets. Both loves are the noblest love and deepest love and are a delicacy in witnessing the beauty of God (Al-Ataftazani, 1997).

The first model of love is longing-love (syawq), whereas the second love model is annihilation-love (fana) "... Thou dost raise the veil that I may see Thee." Rabi'ah's idea of love raises the importance of remembering (dhikr) to enhance the religious experience and to deepen the divine feeling in the heart.

Al-Junayd (Schimmel, 2003) describes the changes caused by divine love: "Love is the annihilation of the lover in His attributes and the confirmation of the Beloved in His essence." In other words, "Love is a state in which lover's attributes enter onto Beloved's attributes."

Ghazzali (Schimmel, 2003) has compared this purifying love to the "good tree whose root is firm and whose branches are in the sky," as described in the Koran (Sura 14:24); the fruits show themselves in the heart, on the tongue, and on the limbs. These fruits are obedience to the orders of God and constant recollection of the beloved, which fills the heart and runs on the tongue—the importance of recollection for the development of love has often been emphasized by the mystics. Therefore, a lover takes away all his self-will and replaces it with all the will of the Beloved (Allah) so that he lives with the faith, "There is nothing good in love without death," it means that "die before death." At the most extreme level, acceptance of the suffering was done by al-Hallaj. He said, "Suffering is himself." The more God loves someone, the more He tests him with the hard test. Therefore, the Apostles are the people who most often suffer as revealed in the Qur'an. It is also revealed by the hadith that "The most suffering people are the Apostles, then the wali, and so on." That is the reason why al-Hallaj danced merrily and fetch the

death. For him, a martyr of love deserves heaven. Such belief derives from the word of God that "Count, not those who were slain in God's way as dead, but rather living with their Lord, by Him provided" (Q.S., 3: 169).

In the perspective of Sufism, God's love precedes human's love for Him because if God has loved His servant, then the servant can never reject His love because the initiative comes first from God. Such a view derives from the statement of the Qur'an that "God will assuredly bring a people He loves, and who love Him, (Q.S., 5:54).

The perfect Divine Love has several levels in which each Sufi also differs on the order of levels as well as the number of levels that a Sufi's soul must attain in its search for God. In addition, the classification concerning the levels of love is also inseparable from the larger theme concerning the spiritual states of the Sufis (*ahwal*) and the various stages of Sufis (*maqamat*).

Ja'far al-Shidiq, the sixth Imam of the Shiites (w.148 AH / 765 AD) said that God is infinite. Therefore, gnosis (*ma'rifah*) is also unlimited. Ja'far al-Shidiq as the pioneer of the idea of Divine love marks twelve signs of hearts containing Divine love, and they are at the same level representing the spiritual journey to the vision of God: (1) the sign of faith; (2) signs of gnosis (*ma'rifah*); (3) the sign of intellect (*'aql*); (4) a sign of confidence (*yaqin*); (5) the sign of resignation (*Islam*); (6) a sign of excellence (*Ihsan*); (7) a sign of full dependence and belief in God (*tawakkul*); (8) a sign of fear to God (*khawf*); (9) sign of hope (*raja'*); (10) signs of love (*mahabbah*); (11) signs of longing (*syawq*); and, (12) the sign of amorous rapture (*walah*) (Nasr, 2002).

Abu al-Qasim al-Qusyayri (w.465 H / 1072 H) (Nasr, 2002) through his famous book on Sufism placed love (*mahabbah*) and longing (*syawq*) as the 49th and 50th levels of the fifty stages (*maqamat*) he revealed. In the perspective of al-Qusyayri, longing (*syawq*) is complex because it is not simply the separation or the presence of the Beloved. It is a very strong longing that only continues at a meeting with God. Al-Qusyayri also placed love (*mahabbah*) as a holistic principle relating to spiritual progress. He divided love into three degrees, honesty (*rasti*), drunkenness (*masti*), and emptiness or nothingness (*nisti*).

However, Ruzbihan Baqli (w.606H / 1209 AD), who is classified as the early Persian Sufi who wrote a treatise on the level of love (*mahabbah*) in the Persian language *Abhar al-Asyqin* (Melati Para Pencinta) complexly and fascinatingly. In his book, Ruzbihan described the mystical ascent to perfect love as a spiritual path consisting of twelve stages (*maqamat*): (1) 'ubudiyah or servanthood; (2)

*wilayah* or sainthood; (3) *muraqabah* or meditation; (4) *khawfi* or fear; (5) *raja'* or hope; (6) *wajd* or finding; (7) *yaqin* or belief/unshakeable faith/certainty; (8) *qurbah* or nearness; (9) *mukasyafah* or unveiling; (10) *musyahadah* or witnessing; (11) *mahabbah* or love; and, (12) *syawq* or longing. The twelve *maqams* are followed by the highest degree of universal love (*'isyq-i kulli*) which is the purpose of the spirit (Nasr, 2002).

Carl W. Ernst (Nasr, 2002) explains the level of love according to Ruzbihan Baqli in a concise and interesting way.

Servanthood consists of spiritual discipline practices such as *dhikr*, prayer, silence, and fasting, in order to purify one's character. Sainthood includes such qualities as repentance (*tawba*), piety (*wara'*), and asceticism (*zuhud*). Meditation is based on control of random thoughts and seeing one's true nature. Fear is a kind of purifying fire that instills the manners of the prophets, although it is a deception if it alienates one from the Beloved. Then hope is the cure, leading to the springtime of the soul. Finding is encountering the nearness of the beloved (Ruzbihan notes that he has explained its varieties in a work for novices, the *risalat al quds* or 'Treatise on the Holy'). The certainty of the elite is something beyond the unshakeable faith that is the certainty of the ordinary person; it is a direct perception of divine attributes in the hearth. Nearness is an ascent to the divine presence in an increasingly intensive transcendence, which Ruzbihan describes, in a characteristic image as the burning of the wings of a bird. Unveiling operates on the levels of intellect, heart, and spirit to reveal the different form of love; it joins love and beauty in the soul and reveals divine lordship as the wine of love. Witnessing is a category that Ruzbihan divides into two parts corresponding to sobriety and intoxication (a division that can be made in every station); the sober part of witnessing is clothing with divinity (*iltibas*), a trait of Abraham, while the intoxicated part is effacement (*mahw*), a characteristic of Moses-yet Muhammad united both experiences in his witnessing.

According to Ruzbihan (Nasr, 2002), love, in essence, can be divided into two, the love of the ordinary person, and love of the elite. The love of the ordinary person is based on the manifestation of beauty in creation, it is faith and not a direct witness. The love of the elite is based on three things, first, when the soul has not made a covenant with his God and recognized Allah as his God (Q.S., 7: 172); secondly, when the soul is no longer veiled by attributes of a person (as a servant). There is no veil between the person and his God; thirdly, the person (servant) becomes a mirror of the divine

attributes so that whoever stares at the Beloved (God) will be a God's lover.

Ruzbihan (Nasr, 2002) described the longing (*syawq*) as a fire that burns all thoughts, desires, and veils in the heart. Therefore, if love and longing achieve unity, then the human self will "vanish" (*fana*). The end concerning the boundary of love, according to Ruzbihan, consist of two levels of gnosis (*ma'rifah*) and oneness of God (*tawhid*), there is no more spiritual levels. At this level, it is not surprising that the Sufis express ecstatic expressions (*syathiyyah*) as Abu Yazid's statement "Glory be to me"; or the expression of al-Hallaj, "I am the Truth." The experience of the lover in the ecstatic state is union with God that transcends all other forms of expression.

At this point, love is perceived and positioned as the final form of relationship between human and God. The principal factor which prefers love rather than worldly fulfillment and which is beyond self-will has been recognized since 95 and 98 Hijri (the era of the rabbi al adawiyah). The Sufis has revealed the understanding of love through the characteristics of the inner experience through the temporary states of consciousness (*hal* or *ahwal*) and the spiritual levels or stages (*maqamat*), and the wealth of their soul that distinguishes each understanding of love. The number of different spiritual levels or stages only indicate the priority of each Sufi to give a certain emphasis to achieve divine love. The stages have the same purpose, that is only to signify the level of progress concerning the Sufi as a lover to be at one with the Beloved (God).

## CONCLUSION

The concept of love in Sufism informed us about essential forms of love. Love derives from mystical and aesthetic experiences that elicit strong sufic and prophetic expressions. In this research, the concept of love in Sufism love can be classified into five categories, as follows: (1) self-love, (2) Love that arises because there is advantage derived from beloved objects; (3) Love that arises because there are beauty and goodness. It includes true love; (4) Love inspired by beauty and goodness in a moral sense such as a Muslim's love for Prophet Muhammad SAW; (5) Love that arises because there is a secret affinity (*munasabah*).

## REFERENCES

- Al-Ataftazani, A. al-W. al-G. (1997). *Sufi dari Zaman ke Zaman*. Bandung: Penerbit Pustaka.
- Al-Ghazali, A. H. M. bin M. (1992). *Ihya Ulum al-Din*. Beirut: Dar al-Kutub al-Ilmiyah.
- Arasteh, R. (1974). *Rumi, The Persian, The Sufi*. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.
- Bakry, M. M. (2018). *Maqamat, Ahwal dan Konsep Mahabbah Ilahiyah Rabi'ah Al-'Adawiyah* (Suatu Kajian Tasawuf). Al-Azar, 1(2).
- Departemen Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan RI. (1989). *Kamus Besar Bahasa Indonesia*. Jakarta: Departemen Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan RI.
- Faisal, S. (2010). *Format-format Penelitian Sosial*. Jakarta: Raja Grafindo Persada.
- Farhan, I. (2016). *Konsep Maqamat dan Ahwal dalam Perspektif Para Sufi*. *Yaqzhan*, 2(2).
- Fuadi, M. R. (2013). *Memahami Tasawuf Ibnu Arabi dan Ibnu al-Farid: Konsep al-Hubb Illahi, Wahdat al-Wujud, Wahdah al-Syuhud dan Wahdat al-Adyan*. *Ulul Albab*, 14(2).
- Hadi W.M., A. (2001). *Tasawuf yang Tertindas*. Jakarta: Paramadina.
- Hilmi, M. M. (n.d.). *Ibnu al Farid wa al Din Ibnu Arabi*. Kairo: Dar al Maarif.
- Khamis, M. A. (1993). *Rabi'ah al-Adawiyah*. Jakarta: Pustaka Firdaus.
- Matthew B. Miles dan A. Michael Huberman. (2009). *Analisis Data Kualitatif*. (Tjetep Rohendi Rohidi, Ed.). Jakarta: UI Press.
- Mustika Zed. (2008). *Metode Penelitian Kepustakaan*. Jakarta: Yayasan Obor Indonesia.
- Nasr, S. H. (2002). *Warisan Sufi - Buku Pertama (Sufime Persia Klasik dari Permulaan hingga Rumi (700-1300))*. Yogyakarta: Pustaka Pelajar.
- Nasution, H. (1985). *Islam: Ditinjau dari Berbagai Aspeknya (II)*. Jakarta: UI Press.
- Nasution, H. (1990). *Filsafat dan Mistisisme dalam Islam*. Jakarta: Bulan Bintang.
- Ratna, N. K. (2011). *Teori, Metode, dan Teknik Penelitian Sastra: dari Strukturalisme hingga Poststrukturalisme Perspektif Wacana Naratif*. Yogyakarta: Pustaka Pelajar.
- Robert C. Bogdan dan Sari Knoop Biklen. (2002). *Qualitative Research for Education: an Introduction to Theory and Methods*. Boston: Pearson Press.
- Schimmel, A. (2003). *Dimensi Mistik dalam Islam*. Jakarta: Pustaka Firdaus.