WAHDAH AL-WUJUD BY A 19TH MALAY NAQSHABANDI SCHOLAR, SHAYKH ISLAM WAN SULAIMAN WAN SIDEK

Wahdah al-Wujud oleh Ulama Melayu Naqshabandi kurun ke 19, Shaiykh Islam Wan Sulaiman Wan Sidek

Muhammad Khairi Mahyuddin
Faculty of Leadership & Management
University Sains Islam Malaysia

muhmmadkhairi77@gmail.com

Abstract

In the Malay world, the doctrine of *wahdah al-wujud* has been understood in various meanings either in pantheistic connotation or real unity (*tawhid*) of Allah. Most of the Malay society misperceive it in pantheistic meaning that imply the idea of incarnation (*hulul*) and union (*ittihad*). Shaykh Islam Wan Sulaiman Wan Sidek, a 19th Malay Naqshabandi exposes a wide meaning of *wahdah al-wujud* in his Malay Jawi script epistle, *Hawd al-mawrud fi bayan wahdah al-wujud*. The aim of this study is to describe Wan Sulaiman's notion and approach in explaining *wahdah al-wujud* to his Malay contemporary society. This study employs historical and textual analytical study. The finding indicates that Wan Sulaiman's idea in describing *wahdah al-wujud* is influenced by Ahmad al-Sirhindi's teaching of his *al-Maktubat*. It can be conceived properly through purification of soul by participating in the Naqshabandi Order under the supervision of the shaykh. The true sense of *wahdah al-wujud* does not contain incarnation and union.

Keywords: *wahdah al-wujud*, Wan Sulaiman, Ahmad al-Sirhindi.

Abstrak

Di alam Melayu, doktrin *wahdah al-wujud* telah difahami dalam pelbagai maksud samaada mengandungi makna panteisme atau tawhid hakiki kepada Allah. Kebanyakkan masyarakat Melayu memahaminya dalam pengertian *hulul* dan *ittihad*. Shaykh Wan Sulaiman Wan Sidek, merupakan ulama Naqshabandi Melayu kurun ke-19 telah menghuraikan dengan lebih luas makna *wahdah al-wujud* dalam kitabnya bertulisan melayu jawi iaitu *hawd al-mawrud fi bayan wahdah al-wujud*. Objektif kajian ini ialah untuk menjelaskan pemikiran Wan Sulaiman dan pendekatannya dalam menerangkan makna *wahdah al-wujud* kepada masyarakat Melayu di zamannya. Pendekatan sejarah dan analsia teks digunakan dalam kajian ini. Hasil kajian menunjukkan bahawa pemikiran Wan Sulaiman dalam menerangkan pengertian *wahdah al-wujud* dipengaruhi oleh ajaran Ahmad al-

Sirhindi dari kitab maktubatnya. Ia juga boleh difahami dengan fahaman yang sebaiknya melalui penyucian hati dengan pengamalan dalam tariqah Naqshabandi dibawah pimpinan shaykh. Kefahaman sebenar makna *wahdah al-wujud* tidak mengandungi unsur *hulul* dan *ittihad*.

Kata kunci: *wahdah al-wujud*, Wan Sulaiman, Ahmad al-Sirhindi.

INTRODUCTION

Through the Sufi history, the term of *wahdah al-wujud* (unity of being*)* is used by Sufis to ascribe to Ibn ᶜArabi, Muhammad b Ali's (d.638H/1240M) teaching even though he never explicitly utilizes the term in his writings (Zakaria 1998). The ascription of *wahdah al-wujud* to Ibn ᶜArabi is the result of his exposition on the absolute unity of the existence of Allah from a Sufi methodology and outlook. Many Sufis are influenced by Ibn ᶜArabi's *wahdah al-wujud* such as ᶜAbd al-Haq b Sabᶜin al-Mursi (d.1271H/1854M) in *Anwar al-Nabi Asrarruha wa Anwaᶜha*, Muhammad Fadl Allah al-Burhanfuri (d.1030H/1620M) in *al-Tuhfah al-Mursalah ila Ruh al-Nabi*, ᶜAbd al-Ghani al-Nabulusi (d.1143H/1731M) in *Idah al-Maqsud min Maᶜna Wahdah al-Wujud*, Ibrahim b Hasan al-Kurani (d.1101/1690M) in *Ittihaf al-Dhaki bisharh al-Tuhfah al-Mursalah ila al-Nabi*. Muhammad b Jaᶜfar Al-Kattani (d.745H/1345M) in *Jala al-Qulub min al-Asada al-Ghainyyah bibayan Ihatah b al-ᶜUlum al-Kawniyyah*, Ahmad al-Sirhindi (d 1033H/1624M)in his al-*Maktubat*, Saᶜad al-Din Masᶜud bin ᶜUmar al-Taftazani (d.792H/1390M/) and Mulla Ali al-Qari (d.1014H/1605M) in *Risalah Wahdah al-Wujud*, and Ismail bin Abdullah (d. 1259H/1844M) in *al-Muqadimat al-Kubra*.

In the Malay world, the doctrine of *wahdah al-wujud* is mostly understood from Muhammad al-Burhanpuri's epistle *Tuhfah al-Mursalah ila Ruh al-Nabi*. Al-Burhanpuri was from India. The aim of his writing is to elucidate the true understanding of *wahdah al-wujud.* It begins with the non-determination (*la al-taᶜyyun*), *the* first determination (*al-taᶜyyun al-awwal*), the second determination (*al-taᶜyyun al-thani*), and the world of spirit (ᶜ*alam al-arwah*), the world of image (ᶜ*alam al-mithal*), the world of body (ᶜ*alam al-ajsam*) and the world of man (ᶜ*alam al-insan).*

His summary of *wahdah al-wujud* contained of woven collective of Sufi ideas clarified with in aphorism and eclectic in nature and backed with relevant related al-Quran and al-Hadith to justify the key element in the unity of Allah. Al-Burhanpuri's summary of the seven degrees is an established system to provide an easy perception from a Sufi outlook to differentiate between the real existence and metaphorical being as well as divinity and the created stages (Wan Muhammad, 1973). His work was adapted by Sufi Malay scholars on their teachings such as Shamsuddin al-Sumatrani d.1039H/1630M) in *Jawhar al-Haqaiq*, Abdul Samad al-Falimbangi (d.1247H/1832M) in *Siyar al-Salikin*, Muhammad Nafis al-Banjari (d1226H/1812M) in *al-Durr al-Nafis*, Daud b Abdullah al-Fatani (d1263H/1847M) in *al-Manhal al-Safi fi Bayan Rumuz Ahl al-Sufi.*

The *wahdah al-wujud* of al-Burhanfuri has received multiple interpretations by traditional and contemporary Malay scholars. They have different conclusions based on their exoteric perception and methodology. Some consider *wahdah al-wujud* as wrong because it contains a notion of union (*ittihad*) and incarnation (*hulul*), and is influenced by Greek philosophical thought, Hinduism and Sikhism. Some conclude that the followers of *wahdah al-wujud* are heretics. The most critical traditional Malay scholar to *wahdah al-wujud* is Ahmad Khatib al-Minangkabau (d. 1334H/1916M) in the Jawi epistle, *al-Shumush al-Lami^cah fi Radd bid^c Ahl al-Sab^cah*. The *wahdah al-wujud* is understood by some Malays as consisting of union and incarnation, which negate Islamic legal obligation. They express the notion of union and incarnation directly and figuratively such as Allah exists in the form of Adam, man is Allah; man's soul is persisted in the eternal knowledge or essence of Allah, the essence of Allah and the world are likened as cotton as the reality of clothes exist in different forms and colours (Sharh Usul al-Tahqiq, 1939).

WAN SULAIMAN'S EXPOSITION

To solve the misunderstanding concerning *wahdah al-wujud*, Wan Sulaiman (d.1354H/1935M) , a 19th Shaykh Islam of the state of Kedah located at north of Malaysia peninsular in today context as well as a Malay Naqshbandi scholar takes to adapt the clarification of Ahmad al-Sirhindi within the blueprint of al-Burhanfuri's seven degrees. He clearly mentioned in his writing, particularly in the epistle *hawd al-mawrud fi bayan wahdah al-wujud*. He cited from *al-Maktubat* written by Imam Rabbani al-Mujaddid li alf al-thani al- Ahmad al-Faruqi and *Tuhfah al-Mursalah* written by Muhammad Fadlulllah al-Hindi (Wan Sulaiman, 1344H). Wan Sulaiman identifies the diverse understanding of the doctrine of *wahdah al-wujud* among the Malays. This *tawhid* is taught to the elite people. However, he did not give a definite description of the meaning of *wahdah al-wujud*.

He rather gives general connotation on meaning of *wahdah al-wujud*. He inserted that Allah the most exalted is the absolute being. He is beyond forms and limitation. His being is manifested throughout limitation and shape and is changeless. Nothing exists beside Him in His eternal being and future. His existence is the real reality of all beings. The relation of Allah to His creation manifest in His determination known as determination stations (*maratib al-zuhur*). This indicates the existence of the absolute being. The purpose of a station is to confirm the definite real being. Due to this purpose, many scholars contribute their interpretations to confirm it. (Wan Sulaiman, 1344H).

In light of his view, it can be said that the term *wahdah al-wujud* is used to affirm the absolute unity of Allah in respect of His Oneness and divine transcendental essence in spite of his relation in creating the world into being as His creation. He is the real essence in being, beyond limitation and comprehension neither by intellect nor imagination, the five physical senses or analogical knowledge. His essence is exempted from all conditions, including conditionality and relativity to other beings.

Wan Sulaiman perceives *wahdah al-wujud* as Sufi terminology to differentiate between the existence of Allah and the world. The distinction between both beings is demonstrated to establish explicit affirmation of the absolute transcendental unity essence of Allah that is completely distinct from the world. Furthermore, it also affirms the concept of transcendence of Allah. Many scholars attempted to verify Allah's transcendental unity in their own ways. In this regard, there are four schools: the esoteric people (*ahl al-zahir)*, the Sufi, the school of Ibn ᶜArabi, and the school of Ahmad al-Sirhindi. It is understood that although Ibn ᶜArabi and al-Sirhindi are both Sufi, their understanding of *wahdah al-wujud* have their own ways.

Wan Sulaiman describes the theories of these four schools. Their theories reflect their thought, principles, terminology and outline of the relation between Allah and the world. In summary, there is all by Him (*al-kullu bihi*) held by *ahl al-rusum* (theologian)*,* all are His manifestation *(al-kullu ᶜaynuhu)* held by the majority of Sufis; all are Him *(al-kullu huwa)* held by Ibn ᶜArabi, and all from Him (*al-kullu minhu*) held by Ahmad al-Sirhindi" (Wan Sulaiman 1344H).

Regarding to all by Him (*al-kullu bihi*), Wan Sulaiman elaborates the theologians assert that every possible object is a possible being while Allah is a necessary being. They assert that possible objects are members of the same class of being that differ from Allah. Allah is the absolute eternal being, and possible objects are created and conditional beings. Hence, Imam Rabbani views this idea is tantamount to the association of the possible object with the necessary being in the excellent qualities (*sifat al-kamalat*) and virtues (*fadail*). This is against contrary to the hadith al-qudsi that Allah says: Glory is my shirt and greatness is my trousers. If the theologian had known this fact, they would not have attributed to the possible object, neither being nor goodness and excellence, which, in reality, belong to Allah as the only existence. In fact, all these attributes existed from the aspect of consideration (*iᶜtibari*) of His determination (Wan Sulaiman, 1344H).

It can be said that the theologians believe that the world has existence (*wujud*). They assert the existence of Allah and the possible object as members of the same class of being. They believe in the distinction between Allah as necessary existence (*wajib al-wujud*) and eternal (*qidam*) and the possible object as possible existence (*mumkin al-wujud* or *wujud al-jaiz*) and created (*hadith*) due to Allah is prior being to the world. However, he concludes the said idea has a polytheistic notion of associating the goodness and virtues with Allah. If they are really conscious of Allah's sovereignty, they will not ascribe the goodness and virtue to the possible object.

Regarding to all are His manifestation (*al-kullu ᶜaynuhu*), held by the majority of Sufis. Wan Sulaiman elucidates that he majority of Sufis believe that the possible objects, and its qualities are one with the Necessary being. Imam Rabbani views that although they have avoided associating the possible objects with God, they still have regarded the non-being as being and the defect as perfections. For them, there is nothing that is bad or evil in itself: if there is evil at all, it is so in relation to something else. For instance, poison is

bad in relation to whom it kills, but relates to the animal wherein it is vital energy and effective cure. They get this matter by their unveiling visions based on the degree of their discovery (Wan Sulaiman, 1344H).

It is clear from Wan Sulaiman's idea that the majority of Sufis refers to the late Sufis that believe the world is the possible object where its qualities and actions are the manifestation (*ᶜayn*) of Allah's qualities and His actions as one being based on their degree of insight, vision, and unveiling. Although they are absconded either from polytheistic or dualism in being, they still look upon the non-being as being and defects as perfection. Consequently, neither bad nor good exist by itself in both beings. However, if both exist, their natures are relative to something. For instance, poison, its nature of bad or evil is relative. For humans, it is bad because it kills him but for animal, it is good as it can turn into a cure. It must be alerted that the word *ᶜayn* here does not mean the identical but manifestation according to ᶜAbd al-Karim al-Jili's (d.827H/1424M) interpretation. For instance, the sentence *al-khalq ᶜayn al-khaliq* has a syntactical missing word in-between that connotes actor's impact signifies his qualities or locus of manifestation (*athar al-khaliq dalil ᶜala al-sifat al-lati taliq bihi or mazhar tajalli fihi*) (al-Jili, 1999).

Regarding to all are Him (*al-kullu huwa)* of Ibn ᶜArabi, Wan Sulaiman expresses his idea that Ibn ᶜArabi and his followers believe that the entities in the knowledge in the outer world are nothing but the essence of Allah. Where all of His qualities and names are indistinguishable to one another as well as identical to His transcendental Essence. They consider the subsisting entities in the eternal God's knowledge reflecting in the exterior world are not shadow existence. Thus, they assert that the forms of subsisting entities in the outer world are identical to that existence. Hence, they consider this matter as a union that all is Him. This is adhered to by Ibn ᶜArabi's school in discussing *wahdah al-wujud* (Wan Sulaiman, 1344H).

Thus it can be conceived from Wan Sulaiman's simple elaboration that Ibn ᶜArabi and his followers believe that the world is perceived as permanent archetypes (*al-aᶜyan al-thabitah)*, eternal subsisting entities persisted in the eternal knowledge of Allah. Allah's qualities and His names are identical between one another as well as identical to His essence. Consequently, Allah's essence, his qualities and names are one, no plurality and multiplicity of name and predicts the multiplicity that appears in the outer world is a reflection of the subsisting entities formed in the mirror of the manifest being through five determinations such as the first determination, second determination, spiritual, image and corporal. As a result, the multiplicities of images of the subsisting entities reflected in the manifested beings are in their view neither shadow nor semblances, but it is identical with those entities, so they assert the identity by pronouncing union in the sense that All is He. However, it must be in mind that the word incarnation in Ibn ᶜArabi's notion is not the really material union between two things but metaphorical. It is equated as number one where it is the origin generating the multiples' numbers (Suᶜad al-Hakim, 1971).

It can be looked further that incarnation (*ittihad)* has two kinds: real (*haqiqi)* and metaphorical (*majazi)*. The former class has two subdivisions; first, to two

things become one, e.g. Amr become Zayd or vice versa. Second, one thing becomes another thing that did not previously exist, e.g. Zayd becomes some individual who did not previously exist. The incarnation (*ittihad*) in this real sense is necessarily impossible. The metaphorical classes have three subdivisions. First, one thing changes into another by instantaneous or gradual transformation, e.g. water becomes air in which case the real nature of water is destroyed by the removal of its specific forms from its substance. Second, one thing becoming another thing by composition so that a third thing result, e.g. earth become clay by the addition of water. Third, the appearance of one person in the form of another, e.g. of an angel takes the form of a human being (H.A.R Gibb & J.H.Kremers, 1973).

All these three species of metaphorical incarnation actually take place. In the technical language of the Sufi, the name incarnation is given to the mystical union by which the creature is made one with the creator or to that theory that such a union is possible. Whereas *hulul* is derived from *halla*, to loosen, unfold, alight, settle in a place *mahalla*. It implies the relation between body and its place, an accident and its substance. It can be applied in the substantial union of body and soul (H.A.R Gibb & J. H. Kremers, 1973).

In Sufis viewpoint the metaphorical incarnation from the aspect of linguistic approach is different from the belief in Christianity and Hinduism In the viewpoint of Christianity and Hinduism, they believe in the real incarnation. Christianity believe that incarnation is the divine descent has taken in man once especially in Jesus Christ. He became the son of god to be sent as expression of grace, salvation and become revelatory medium of God intention and purpose. Where in Hinduism believe that incarnation is the divine descent has occurred many times materially. The meeting point between Christianity and Hinduism in real incarnation that is God taking a human form physically and become living in this material world (Daniel, 1993)

For the fourth, all are from Him (*al-kullu minhu*) as believed by Ahmad al-Sirhindi, Wan Sulaiman precisely explained that Ahmad al-Sirhindi and his followers believe that all subsisting entities are non-existent and its reflection in the outer world by the creative will of Allah with a shadowy existence. The good and evil lies in every essence, nature and existence in the world, whereas all good and excellence comes from Allah as He says: Whatever good that comes to you is from Allah and whatever evil that befalls you is from yourself. This verse connotes gnosis. It is verified that the world exists out there with a shadow being and God existed out there with His Essence as a real being. The world is a shadow of the real existence, namely God. Thus, the world cannot be identified as identical with God and there can be no mutual predication between them. The shadow cannot be identified with the real. It is similar to a shadow of a person is not identified as a person himself as both in the outer world is two different entities (Wan Sulaiman, 1344H).

Hence, it can be noticed from Wan Sulaiman's idea that Ahmad al-Sirhindi and his followers perceive the world as possible realities (*haqaiq al-mumkinah*). Its nature is non-being, impotency, darkness and a source of evil. Allah's qualities and His names are distinctive between one another as well as to His essence. They have an objective existence in the outer world in a unique

and undefinable way. He vies that reflections of possible realities in the mirror of the manifest being are shadows. It has an objective existence in the outer world and is totally distinctive from Allah. The world reacts to all the perfection by His act of creating (*al-Ijad*) which reflects from His qualities and names. In this way, they consider all the world are from Him (*al-kullu minhu).*

In the discourse of *wahdah al-wujud,* many scholars have different standpoints toward Ibn ᶜArabi. Either they support or disagree with him. Al-Sirhindi does not completely oppose him. Al-Sirhindi believes that *wahdah al-wujud* is in the level of knowledge for the saints. It is a distinctive degree between servant and Allah as adhered to by the companions and their followers (al-Qazani, n.d). He is seen to re-evaluate and rectify *wahdah al-wujud* from Ibn ᶜArabi's expression along theological principles. It is found in some parts of *al-Maktubat* that al-Sirhindi acknowledges Ibn ᶜArabi's intellectual, spirituality and true verification in *wahdah al-wujud*. However, due to his ingenious writing on the *wahdah al-wujud* within the framework of science of morphology and syntax, many people have misunderstood his real intention as it demands missing syntactical part connotation (*taqdir*) and interpretation (*ta'wil)* from the exoteric word (al-Sirhindi, n.d).

Some scholars believe that al-Sirhindi's notion is superior to Ibn ᶜArabi such as Mirza Mazhar Jan Janan (d.1295H/1880M) and ᶜAli Yahya (d.1189H/1776M). Others believe that al-Sirhindi's and Ibn ᶜArabi's notion are different in terminology but share the same idea such as Ahmad b ᶜAbd al-Rahim (Shah Wali Allah al-Dihlawi) (d.1175H/1762M), Shah Rafiᶜ al-Din (d.1248H/1833M) and Muhammad Ismaᶜil Shahid (d.1245H/1830M) (al-Ansari 1990:116-117). The others perceive al-Sirhindi's critical standpoint toward *wahdah al-wujud* as his strict precaution to avoid misinterpreting Ibn ᶜArabi (al-Kattani, 2005:411). Ibn Hajar al-Haytami acknowledges Ibn ᶜArabi as a righteous saint and considers his books useful but in need of revision. This is because Ibn ᶜArabi's writings contain many valuable insights not mentioned by earlier Sufis (Ibn Hajar, n.d).

Wan Sulaiman has a moderate standpoint toward this doctrine. He does not accuse Ibn ᶜArabi and other schools are falsehoods, rather, he sees all schools are true due to their distinction between Allah and the world. He looks at all the schools are in the truth in according to their degree of intellect, spirituality and methodology in confirming the distinctive nature being between God and world.

This in line with ᶜAbd al-Wahhab b. ᶜAli al-Subki's (d.771H/1370M) idea in the different methodology applied in the theology by *Ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Jamaᶜah*. He expresses that *Ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Jamaᶜah* are unanimously agreed on one similar basic creed such as necessary, possible and impossible to Allah. They employed the different methodology and principal to perceive the theological subjects. *Ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Jamaᶜah* are divided into three main group: The first is *ahl al-hadith;* their fundamental concept is based on literal interpretation of al-Quran, Hadith and consensus agreement. The second is *ahl al-nazar wa al-naqal* from the al-Ashaᶜirah and al-Maturidiyyah group; their basis is complementary between reason and revelation. The third is *ahl*

al-wujd wa al-kashf namely Sufi group. Their starting point begins with the method of *ahl al-nazar* and *ahl al-hadith,* and ends up with the unveiling and divine inspiration (al-Zubaydi, n.d)

He suggests the notion of *wahdah al-wujud* can be realized by participating in the Naqshabandi Mujaddidi Ahmadi Order not by multiple verbal expressions. However, he perceives the true and wrong interpretation of *wahdah al-wujud* is based on one's degree of perception and spiritual accomplishment. He concludes by saying that people in *wahdah al-wujud* are divided into four levels: The first, the civilian people (ʿ*awwam*) they confirm the *tawhid* by confessing verbally *la ilaha illa Allah*. The second, elite (*khawwas*), they confirm the *tawhid* by knowledge and argumentation. The third is the elite of the elite (*khawwas of khawwas*). They confirm the *tawhid* by spiritual taste and experience. The fourth, atheists (*mulhid*) they confirm the *tawhid* by union and incarnation. They are in true guidance and path in accordance with their level of mind and spirituality as Allah says, "Say (O Muhammad SAW to mankind): Each one dose according to his way and your Lord knows best of him whose path is right" (al-Quran, al-Isra'. 17:84).

He analogised the understanding of *wahdah al-wujud* is the doctrine like as an Arab who does not know about the existence and reality of a durian from the stage of verbal, watch and taste directly the durian. This explains the multiple degrees of understanding of *tawhid* to Allah. People have figured out many ways to verify the real *tawhid* to Allah. He looks that it is compulsory for one to find ways in obtaining *tawhid* of the elite. By this issue, it is ascertained that there is no closest and easiest was to the real *tawhid* of elite of the elite unless by participating in the Naqshabandi Mujaddidi Ahmadi Order as it is identical to the shari'ah as well as the prophetic path (Wan Sulaiman, 1344H).

Thus, Wan Sulaiman's illustration in the degree of *tawhid* from knowledge and tasted is similar to Abu Hamid Muhammad b Muhammad al-Ghazzali's notion such as certitude knowledge (ʿ*ilm al-yaqin),* witnessed knowledge *(ʿayn al-yaqin)* and truth knowledge *(haq al-yaqin)*. The capability to perceive the Only One being in the creation requires spiritual insight and perception capability. It is a gift from Allah that one can see the multiplicity in unity, and unity is a plurality within creation. For example, one sees man as one person in form based on his strength and intellectual cognition (*iʿtibari*) but from another angle, one sees a man is a plurality because of his substance contains many elements (al-Ghazzali, 1995). Based on the degree of perception of the relationship of Allah and the world, there are many terms describing the oneness of Allah. A similar principle applies to these four schools. Each school has its own approach and terminologies based on their degree of spiritual insight.

This is backed up with fact that scholars writing their ideas according to the influential knowledge surrounding their times. Thus, the different methods and explanations of *wahdah al-wujud* between the Sufis and theologians are complementary. For instance, the terminologies used such as reality (*haqiqah*), cause (ʿ*illah*) and flood (*fayd*) by Sufi scholars do not signify they are influenced by the Greek philosophy. They borrowed this vocabulary to clarify

and establish the concrete principles of *tawhid* based on their understanding within the framework of Islam. The divergent vocabularies and methods in clarification cannot be a basis to accuse the others as being wrong (al-Kurdi 1990).

The doctrine of *wahdah al-wujud* is being recognized as the highest stage of *tawhid* by the adherers of Naqshabandi Mujaddidi Ahmadi taught by Wan Sulaiman. It is rather be perceived with the connotation of *shuhud* (witness by insight) (Mustafa n.d). This is in line with teaching of several scholars such as Ahmad al-Sirhindi and Muhammad Jaᶜfar al-Kattani. For instance, Kattani views that whoever believes *wahdah al-wujud* is not unity in witness (*wahdah al-shuhud)*, he cannot smell the connotation of real unity of Allah. Furthermore, Ahmad al-Sirhindi did not reject totally *wahdah al-wujud* but he rather interprets it as unity in witness as a preventive way. This is because the expression of *wahdah al-wujud* idea in exoteric word contains many problems in mind and may drive one to the astray (al-Kattani, 2005).

It can be said that Wan Sulaiman provides a general guideline to understand *wahdah al-wujud* properly from the viewpoint of Sufis and theologian. He acknowledges the four school such as the theologian, the majority of Sufi, Ibn ᶜArabi and Ahmad al-Sirhindi are in true guidance in according to their level in understanding and spirituality. He does not make the discussion of *wahdah al-wujud* exclusive. It can be shared by all people in perceiving the unity of Allah and His differences from the creation. *Wahdah al-wujud* is wrong if it is perceived with the connotation of incarnation, union and atheism.

CONCLUSION

In sum, Wan Sulaiman's standpoint is clear that he does not accuse any school of being wrong. His exposition signifies his broad understanding that *tawhid* reflects one's intellect and spirituality. The true sense of *wahdah al-wujud* cannot be grasped by revising many books through words and verbal expression. However, it can be realised by participating in the Naqshabandi order through purification of soul under the supervision of the shaykh. Even, Wan Sulaiman has cited some ideas from Burhanfuri but most of his exposition is dominated by Ahmad al-Sirhindi's thought from *al-Maktubat* with a slight different explanation.

REFERENCES

Al-Ghazzali, Muhammad Muhammad. (1995). *Ihya' ᶜulum al-din*. Beirut: Dar al-Fikr.

Al-Jili, Abdul Karim Ibrahim. (1999). *Maratib al-wujud wa haqiqah kulli mawjud*. Kaherah: Matbaᶜah al-Qahirah.

Al-Kattani, Muhammad Jaᶜfar. (2005). *Jalā' al-Qulub min al-Asda' al-Ghainiyyah bibayan Ihatatihi Salla Allah ᶜalaihi wa Sallam bi al-ᶜulum al-Kawniyyah*. Bayrūt. Dār al-Kutub al-ᶜIlmiyyah.

Al-Kurdi, Muhammad Diya'al-din. (1990). *Nash'ah al-tasawwuf al-Islami*. n.p.: n.p.

Al-Qazani, Muhammad Murad Abdullah. (n.d). *Dhayl al-Rashaḥāt*. A Margin in *Kitab Tarjamah Rashahat ᶜayn al-Hayat al-Asli li al-Shaykh al-ᶜArif billah Ali b Husain al-Waᶜiz al-Kashifi al-Harawi*, p. 3-43. n.p.: n.p.

Al-Quran al-Karim. (1996). *Interpretation of the Meaning of the Noble Qur'an In The English Language.* Dr Muhammad Taqiuddin Al-Hilali And Dr Muhammad Muhsin Khan (Trans). Kingdom Of Saudi Arabia: Darussalam Publisher and Distributors.

Al-Sirhindi, Ahmad Abdul Ahad. (n.d). *Al-Maktubat li al-Imam al-ᶜAlim al-Rabbani al-Mujaddid li alfi al-Thani Ahmad al-Faruqi Al-Sirhindi. Muaᶜrrab al-maktubat al-shariᶜah al-marsum bi al-durr al-maknunat al-nafisah* Trans. Muhammad Murad al-Qazani. Istanbul: Siraj Kitabevi.

Al-Zubaydi, Muhammad Muhammad. (n.d). *Ittihaf al-Sadat al-Muttaqin bi Sharh Ihya' ᶜUlum al-Din*. Bayrut: Dar al-Fikr.

Daniel E. Bassak. (1993). Incarnation in Hindusim and Christianity the myth of the Godman. London: The McMillian Press LTD.

H.A.R Gibb & J.H.Kremers. (1973). Shorter Encyclopedia of Islam. Netherland Leiden: R.J. Brill.

Ibn Hajar al-Haiytami, Ahmad Shihabuddin. (n.d). *Al-Fatawa al-hadithiyyah*. Beirut: Dar al-Fikr.

Mohd Nasir Mohd Tap. (2009). *Mencarik Ilusi Mengapai Realiti; Wacana Tasawwuf, Tarekat & Pemikiran Kalam Imam Ahmad al-Sirhindi.* Kajang: Kolej Dar al-Hikmah.

Muhammad Hassan To' Kerani Mohd Arshad. (1968). *Al-Tarikh Salasilah Negeri Kedah*. Kuala Lumpur: Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka.

Mustafa Hj Hussain. (n.d). *Buku Catatan Peribadi*. n.p.: n.p.

Sharh Usul al-Tahqiq. (1939). Pulau Pinang: Percetakan al-Maᶜarif Sdn Bhd.

Suᶜad al-Hakim. (1981). *Al-Muᶜjam al-Sufi al-Hikmah fi Hudud al-Kalimah*. Beirut: al-Muaʾasasah al-Jamaᶜiyyah lidirasat wa al-Nashr wa al-Tawziᶜ.

Wan Muhammad Wan Ali. (1973). *Suntingan dan Anotasi Sebuah Kitab Tasawwuf Melayu kurun ke 13/18 Masihi: al-Durr al-Nafis.*Master thesis. Intsitiut Bahasa kesusateraan dan kebudyaan. UKM.

Wan Sulaiman b Wan Wan Sidik. (1344H). *Hawd al-mawrud fi bayan wahdah al-wujud.* Pulau Pinang: Persama Press.

Zakaria Stapa. (1998). *Tokoh sufi dan penyelewenagan akidah*. Kuala Lumpur: Berita Publishing Snd Bhd.