



COMPARISON OF THE CONCEPTS OF ESSENCE AND EXISTENCE IN ISLAMIC METAPHYSICAL THOUGHT: PERSPECTIVES OF IBN 'ARABI AND MULLA SADRA

Kayan Manggala¹, Achmad Khudori Soleh², Muhammad Syihabuddin³, Hasan Abdul Wafi⁴

^{1,2,3}Universitas Islam Negeri Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang, Indonesia

⁴University of Innsbruck Austria

e-mail: 230204210038@student.uin-malang.ac.id¹, khudorisoleh@pps.uin-malang.ac.id², syihabzenn@gmail.com³, Hasan.A.Wafi@student.uibk.ac.at⁴

Abstract

The concept of *wahdah al-wujud* Ibn Arabi (1165-1240 AD) and the concept of *Al-Hikmah Al-Muta'aliyah* Mulla Sadra (1571-1640 AD) are the most important contributing concepts in metaphysical thought in Islam. Hence, it is also important to understand these two concepts to study both the concept of essence and existence as a basis for understanding. The purpose of this study has objectives, namely (1) to know the concept of essence and existence from the perspective of Ibn Arabi. (2) to know the concept of essence and existence of Mulla Sadra's perspective. (3) to know the meeting point and the point of difference in the concept of essence and existence of both. The method used to explore this literature study by examining the work of the two figures, namely Ibn Arabi's work entitled "*Futūhāt al-Makkiyah*" with Mulla Sadra's work entitled "*Al-Asfar al-Arba'ā*" as a primary source and several related articles relevant to the topic discussed with qualitative descriptive analysis. The results of this study are three, namely (1) according to Ibn Arabi (1165-1240 AD), existence is the form of essence, so that existence precedes essence. So, if something has existence then something has essence. But the opposite also applies. (2) According to Mulla Sadra, essence is the overall picture of reality or objects that exist in the mind; and existence is the objective reality outside the mind. (3) The concepts of essence and existence according to Ibn Arabi and Mulla Sadra have common ground in defining the concepts of essence and existence and also in comparing the concepts of essence and existence.

Keywords: Essence, Existence, Ibn Arabi (1165-1240 AD), Mulla Sadra (1571-1640 AD), Metaphysical Thought in Islam

Abstrak

Konsep *wahdah al-wujud* Ibnu Arabi (1165-1240 M) dan konsep *Al-Hikmah Al-Muta'aliyah* Mulla Sadra (1571-1640 M) adalah konsep yang paling berkontribusi penting di pemikiran metafisika dalam Islam. Maknanya, menjadi hal yang penting juga dalam memahami kedua konsep tersebut ialah mempelajari Konsep Esensi dan Eksistensi keduanya sebagai dasar pijakan pemahaman. Tujuan kajian ini memiliki tujuan yaitu (1) untuk mengetahui konsep esensi dan eksistensi perspektif Ibnu Arabi. (2) untuk mengetahui konsep esensi dan eksistensi perspektif Mulla Sadra. (3) untuk mengetahui titik temu dan titik beda konsep esensi dan eksistensi keduanya. Metode yang digunakan untuk mengali hal tersebut dengan studi kepustakaan dengan menelaah karya kedua tokoh yaitu karya Ibnu Arabi berjudul "*Futūhāt al-Makkiyah*" dengan karya Mulla Sadra dengan judul "*Al-Asfar al-Arba'ā*" sebagai sumber primer dan beberapa artikel terkait yang relevan dengan topik yang dibahas dengan analisis deskriptif kualitatif. Hasil kajian ini ada tiga yaitu (1) menurut Ibnu Arabi (1165-1240 M), eksistensi ialah wujud dari esensi, sehingga eksistensi mendahului esensi. Jadi, jika sesuatu memiliki eksistensi maka sesuatu memiliki esensi. Namun sebaliknya pun berlaku. (2) Menurut Mulla Sadra bahwa esensi adalah gambaran keseluruhan tentang realitas atau objek yang wujud dalam pikiran; dan eksistensi adalah realitas obyektif di luar pikiran. (3) Konsep esensi dan eksistensi menurut Ibnu Arabi dan Mulla Sadra memiliki titik temu dalam mendefinisikan konsep esensi dan eksistensi dan juga dalam membandingkan konsep esensi dan eksistensi.

Kata Kunci: Esensi, Eksistensi, Ibnu Arabi (1165-1240 M), Mulla Sadra (1571-1640 M), Pemikiran Metafisika dalam Islam

INTRODUCTION

The concept of Wahdah Al-wujud Ibn Arabi (1165-1240 AD) and the concept of Al-Hikmah Al-Muta'aliyah Mulla Sadra (1571-1640 AD), is actually the most basic and very important thing to understand the concept of essence and existence first from both figures. This is an important capital to understand the concept of Wahdah al-wujud and Al-Hikmah Al-Muta'aliyah. So that discussing the comparison of the concepts of essence and existence of the two figures becomes very important.

Many previous studies have discussed the two figures above, studies that discuss Ibn Arabi's thoughts include: First, Ibn Arabi (1165-1240 AD) in wahdat Al Wujud in his thoughts ¹. Second, the concept of wahdatul adyan Ibn Arabi (1165-1240 AD) in resolving religious conflicts ². Third, Ibn Arabi's Sufism (1165-1240 CE) in the Reception of Aboebakar Atjeh ³. Fourth, Ibn Arabi's Philosophy of Man (1165-1240 CE) ⁴. Fifth, the concept of makrifat according to Al-Ghazali and Ibn Arabi: Anticipatory Solution to Epistemology-Based Religious Radicalism ⁵. Sixth, Religious Tolerance in the Perspective of Ibn Arabi's Wahdat Al-Wujūd ⁶. Seventh, The Concept Of Al-Wihdatul Wujud Ibnu Arabi (A Sufistic Philosophical Study) ⁷. Eighth, Ideal Man in the Perspective of Tasawwuf & Philosophy (A Comparative Study of Ibn Araby and Nietzsche's Thoughts on Man) ⁸. Ninth, The Unity of Being in the Discourse of Sufism (A Comparative Study of the Thought of Ibn 'Arabi and Ibn Sab'in) ⁹.

Previous studies on the thought of Mulla Sadra (1571-1640 AD) are: First Theoretical framework of Mulla Sadra's Thought (1571-1640 AD) and its Actualisation in Islamic Education ¹⁰. Second, The Concept of Spiritual Humanism in the Philosophy of Mulla Sadra (1571-1640 CE) ¹¹. The Third Concept of Al Hikmah in the Philosophy

¹ Abd Halim Rofi'ie, 'Wahdat Al Wujud Dalam Pemikiran Ibnu Arabi', *ULUL ALBAB Jurnal Studi Islam* 13, no. 2 (2013): 131–41, doi:10.18860/ua.v0i0.2406.

² Dzulkifli M. Mooduto, 'Konsep Wahdatul Adyan Ibnu 'Arabi Dalam Penyelesaian Konflik Agama', *Tabuah* 25, no. 1 (2022): 41–47, doi:10.37108/tabuah.v25i1.617.

³ Mochammad Maola, 'Sufisme Ibnu Arabi Dalam Resepsi Aboebakar Atjeh', *Journal of Islamic Studies and Humanities* 5, no. 1 (2020): 72–81, doi:10.21580/jish.v5i1.7137.

⁴ Happy Susanto, 'Filsafat Manusia Ibnu Arabi', *Tsaqafah* 10, no. 1 (2014): 109, doi:10.21111/tsaqafah.v10i1.66.

⁵ A. Zaini Dahlan et al., 'Konsep Makrifat Menurut Al-Ghazali Dan Ibnu 'Arabi: Solusi Antisipatif Radikalisme Keagamaan Berbasis Epistemologi', *Jurnal Kawistara* 3, no. 1 (2013): 68–78, doi:10.22146/kawistara.3962.

⁶ Sugianto, 'Toleransi Beragama Perspektif Wahdat Al-Wujūd Ibnu Arabi', *Indonesian Journal of Islamic Theology and Philosophy* 1, no. 2 (16 March 2019): 179–94, doi:10.24042/ijitp.v1i2.5076.

⁷ Nurhayati Abd Rasyid, 'THE CONCEPT OF AL-WIHDATUL WUJUD IBNU ARABI (A Sufistic Philosophical Study)', *HUNAFa: Jurnal Studia Islamika* 17, no. 1 (2020): 72–87, doi:10.24239/jsi.v17i1.582.68-83.

⁸ Ainul Fithriyah, 'MANUSIA IDEAL DALAM PRESPEKTIF TASAWWUF & FILSAFAT (STUDI KOMPERATIF PEMIKIRAN IBNU ARABY DAN NIETSCHE TENTANG MANUSIA)', *Zabru* 1, no. 1 (2020): 79–88.

⁹ Ihwan Amalih and Fadilah, 'Kesatuan Wujud Dalam Wacana Kesufian (Studi Komparatif Atas Pemikiran Ibn 'Arabi Dan Ibn Sab'IN)', *Journal of Humanities and Social Studies* 1, no. 1 (2023): h. 248-257.

¹⁰ Muhammad umar Hasi, 'Theoretical Framework Pemikiran Mulla Sadra Dan Aktualisasinya Dalam Pendidikan Islam', *JOURNAL OF ALIFBATA Journal of Basic Education (JBE)* 3, no. 1 (2023): 50–66, doi:10.51700/alifbata.v3i1.418.

¹¹ Nurul Khair and Hidayatul Qoriah, 'Konsep Humanisme Spiritual Dalam Filsafat Mulla Sadra', *Kalimah: Jurnal Studi Agama-Agama Dan Pemikiran Islam* 18, no. 1 (2020): 51–64.

of Mulla Sadra (1571-1640 CE)¹². Fourthly, the Philosophy of Wūjūdiyyah in the Relationship between the Thought of Hamzah Fansuri and Mullā Ṣadrā¹³. The fifth divine being in the perspective of Mulla Sadra's Transcendental Philosophy (1571-1640 AD)¹⁴. Sixth, Mulla Sadra's Philosophical Thought on Sufism¹⁵. Seventh, Mulla Sadra's Eschatology: Resurrection After Death¹⁶. Eighth, The Concept of the Soul According to Mulla Sadra¹⁷. Ninth, The conceptions of divine revelation: A comparative study of the view of Ibnu Sina and Mulla Sadra¹⁸.

Previous studies that bring together the thoughts of Ibn Arabi and Mulla Sadra in one study there are also several articles including; Analysing the Position of Mystical Intuition, Imagination and Reason in Mola Sadra and Ibn Arabi Theosophy.¹⁹ and 'Abdu'l-Bahá's Response to the Doctrine of the Unity of Existence'²⁰.

The purpose of this writing is to compare the concepts of essence and existence according to Ibn Arabi (1165-1240 AD) and Mulla Sadra (1571-1640 AD), while the description above shows that there have been many articles that discuss other concepts of metaphysical thought according to Ibn Arabi (1165-1240 AD) and Mulla Sadra (1571-1640 AD), such as the concept of wahdatul wujud, Sufism, wahdatul adyan, human philosophy and Ibn Arabi's Concept of Makrifat (1165-1240 AD) but has not discussed the concept of essence and existence. While the thought of Mulla Sadra (1571-1640 AD) also has not discussed the concept of essence and existence. The thought of Mulla Sadra (1571-1640 AD) is correlated with Hamzah Fansuri and Ibn Sina, there are also those who have compared it with Ibn Arabi (1165-1240 AD) but have not discussed the concept of essence and existence, there are only those who discuss the position of mystical intuition in their imagination and response. On the other hand, there are also those who discuss al-Baha's response to Ibn Arabi's concept of wahdah al-wujud. So this research has its own novelty and novelty value by comparing the concepts of essence and existence of the two figures above.

¹² Nur Khosiah, 'Konsep Al Hikmah Dalam Filsafat Mulla Sadra', *Ar-Risalah: Media Keislaman, Pendidikan Dan Hukum Islam* XVIII, no. July (2020): 1–23.

¹³ Teuku Raja Idin, 'HAMZAH FANSURI DAN MULLĀ ṢADRĀ Keberadaan Entitas Yang Tidak Membutuhkan Eksistensi Entitas Lain Di', *Kanz Philosophia : A Journal for Islamic Philosophy and Mysticism* 8, no. 1 (2022): 49–74.

¹⁴ N Warno and N Ayn, 'Insan Ilahiyah Dalam Perspektif Filsafat Transendental Mulla Sadra', *Emanasi: Jurnal Ilmu Keislaman Dan Sosial* 4, no. 1 (2021): 1–15.

¹⁵ Alkaf Rodiallah and Achmad Khudori Soleh, 'Pemikiran Filsafat Tasawuf Mulla', *AL HIKMAH Jurnal Studi Keislaman* 13, no. 1 (2023): 43–56.

¹⁶ Rizki Rizki Supriatna, 'Eskatologi Mulla Sadra: Kebangkitan Setelah Kematian', *Jaqfi: Jurnal Aqidah Dan Filsafat Islam* 5, no. 1 (2020): 101–20, doi:10.15575/jaqfi.v5i1.6329.

¹⁷ Alif Reynika Rahman, 'KONSEP JIWA MENURUT MULLA SHADRA', *Revista Brasileira de Linguística Aplicada* 5, no. 1 (2016): 1689–99.

¹⁸ Abdullah Hossein et al., 'The Conceptions of Divine Revelation: A Comparative Study of the View of Ibnu Sina and Mulla Sadra', *Teosofi* 13, no. 1 (2023): 159–79, doi:https://doi.org/10.15642/teosofi.2023.13.1.159-179.

¹⁹ Farhad Amoorezaei, 'Analyzing the Position of Mystical Intuition, Imagination and Reason in Mola Sadra and Ibn Arabi Theosophy', *International Journal of Multicultural and Multireligious Understanding* 7, no. 3 (22 April 2020): 143, doi:10.18415/ijmmu.v7i3.1411.

²⁰ Keven Brown, 'Abdu'l-Bahá's Response to the Doctrine of the Unity of Existence', *The Journal of Bahá'í Studies* 11, no. 3–4 (2001): 1–24, doi:10.31581/jbs-11.3-4.469(2001).

RESEARCH METHODS

The focus of this research is a comparison of the concepts of Essence and Existence from the perspective of Ibn Arabi (1165-1240 AD) and Mulla Sadra (1571-1640 AD). The data sources in this study come from primary data in the form of Islamic Philosophy books including Ibn Arabi's work entitled "Futûhât al-Makkiyah" with Mulla Sadra's work entitled "Al-Asfar al-Arba'". While secondary data in the form of journals and previous research accessed through Google Scholar and mendeley search. The type of research conducted by this researcher is a qualitative descriptive analysis, in which the researcher tries to analyze, summarize the various data collected. The analysis carried out by researchers is by conducting content analysis, discourse analysis, interpretative analysis. This research data analysis technique refers to literature study, which is related to theoretical studies and other references related to values, culture and norms that develop ²¹.

The relationship with each other indicates that between one variable and the other there is a match according to the title, in the sense that the discussion related to the concept of Essence and Existence in the Perspective of Ibn Arabi (1165-1240 AD) and Mulla Sadra (1571-1640 AD) has a connection in this article. The selection process is carried out by comparing one library with another, then the last is to draw conclusions until a comparison of the concepts of Essence and Existence of Ibn Arabi (1165-1240 AD) and Mulla Sadra (1571-1640 AD) is formed.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The Concept of Essence and Existence from the Perspective of Ibn Arabi (1165-1240 AD)

Ibn Arabi defines existence as the form of essence. Existence precedes essence. So that a person will not know his essence when existence does not exist. Existence appears in the form of what we call form. Meanwhile, to become a form itself must go through a level. There are four levels of existence (marâtib al-wujûd) that must be fulfilled so that it is assumed to exist or exist. These levels are (1) exist in the form of something (wujûd al-syai' fi ainih), (2) exist in thought or conception (wujûd al-syai' fi al-'ilm), (3) exist in speech (wujûd al-syai' fi al-alfâzh), (4) exist in writing (wujûd al-syai' fi ruqûm) ²².

So, the form itself can be interpreted as having existence, according to the ontological view of Ibn Arabi (1165-1240 AD) that form is divided into two, namely absolute form and relative form. Absolute form is something that exists by itself and for itself, and it is God, Allah SWT. While the relative form is something whose existence occurs by and for another form (wujûd bi al-ghair). Nisbi form is divided into two parts, namely free form and dependent form; this dependent form is in the form of attributes, phenomena, and relationships that are special and temporal. On the

²¹ Furtika Sm, *Studi Kepustakaan Menurut Sugiyono 2018 Retrieved January 10, 2019*.

²² A. Khudori Soleh, *Filsafat Islam Dari Klasik Hingga Kontemporer*, ed. Aziz Safa, 1st ed. (Yogyakarta: AR-RUZZ MEDIA, 2016); Affifi, *Filsafat Mistis Ibn Arabi Terj. Nandi Rahman* (Jakarta: Media Pratama, 1989).

other hand, free relative existence is in the form of essences, and it is further divided into two parts, namely material and spiritual²³.

However, it is necessary to underline that something that is assumed to be a relative form is not entirely a temporal entity, but can also be a permanent entity (al-`yân al-tsâbitah) as an absolute form. According to the perspective of Ibn Arabi (1165-1240 AD), all the realities that exist in this universe, in all situations, already exist and are similar to the existence in God's knowledge, while God's knowledge itself has been conceptualized in permanent entities. All affairs and things that exist in the universe never come out of the plan that has been determined by God since the beginning of His knowledge²⁴.

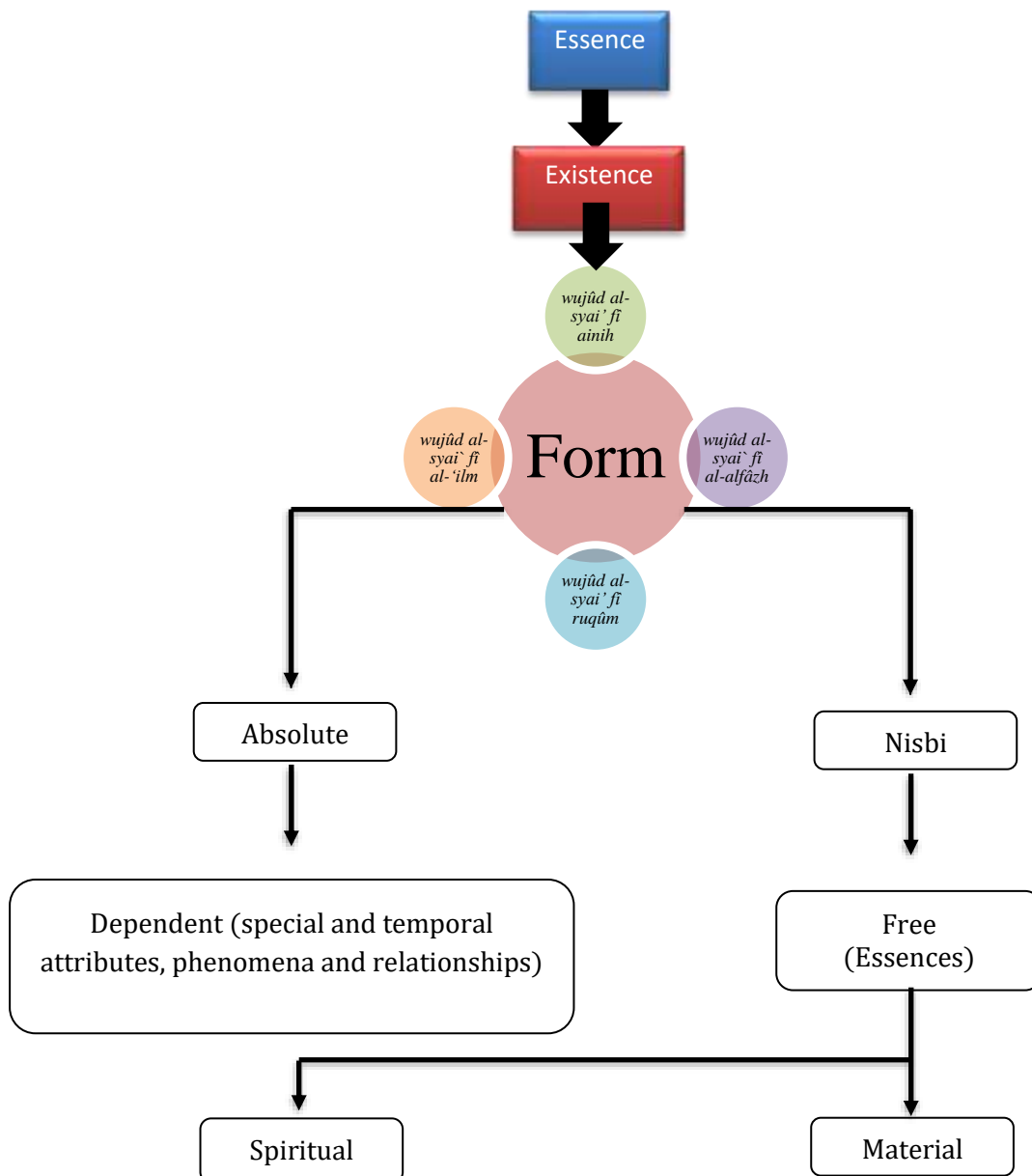


Illustration 1. Existence is the Form of Essence

²³ Soleh, *Filsafat Islam Dari Klasik Hingga Kontemporer*, Affifi, *Filsafat Mistis Ibn Arabi Terj. Nandi Rahman*.

²⁴ Ibn Arabi, *Futûhât Al-Makkîyah, IV* (Beirut: Dâr al-Fikr, 1852).

The Concept of Essence and Existence from the Perspective of Mulla Sadra (1571-1640 CE)

According to Mulla Sadra (1571-1640 CE), Essence is the overall picture of reality or objects that exist in the mind; they are merely mental forms and do not exist singularly. This overall picture cannot be seen as a reflection of the essence of existence. This is because the translation into abstract mental concepts necessarily contains errors. Whereas existence is the objective reality outside the mind ²⁵.

According to Mulla Sadra (1571-1640 CE), the essence is vague, dark, indeterminate, negative and unreal. Essence has no self and whatever exists in it is due to its 'relationship' with existence. Existence is positive, definite, certain, and real. Existence has a real nature thanks to its manifestation and relationship with absolute existence, namely God. (F. Rahman, 2000) According to Mulla Sadra (1571-1640 AD), God is an absolute being and philosophers call it a 'separate mind' (al-'aql al-mutafâriqah)²⁶.

Essence is the opposite of existence. The more essence that is shown, the lower the level of quality of existence; conversely, the less essence that is shown, the better the level of quality of an existence. At the lowest level of the degree of existence, there is only the concept or potential of existence, namely essence. Conversely, at the highest point, there is only absolute existence. Therefore, God as the perfect and absolute One has no essence and can in no way be attributed to conceptual thought ²⁷. Thus, it is Sadra's perspective on existence itself that makes essence above ²⁸.

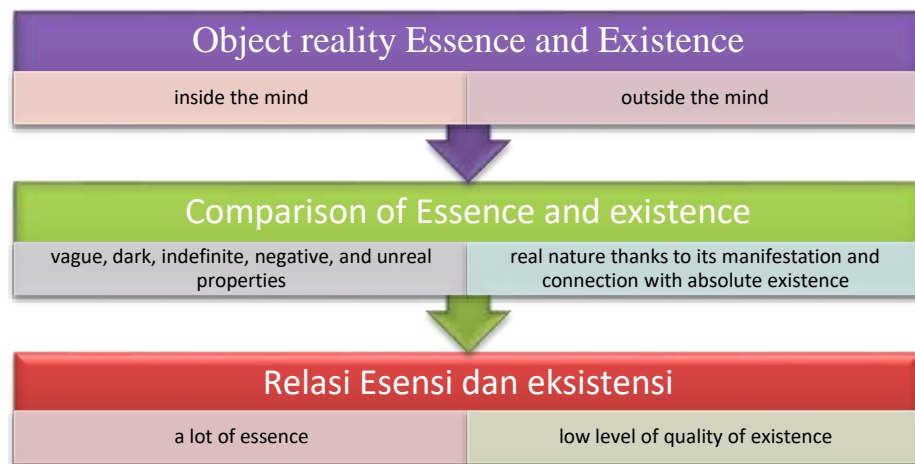


Illustration 2. The flow of the difference between Essence and Existence

²⁵ Fazlur Rahman, *Filsafat Shadra Terj. Munir Muin* (Bandung: Pustaka, 2000); Fazlur Rahman, *STUDIES IN ISLAMIC PHILOSOPHY AND SCIENCE The Philosophy of Mulla Sadra (Sadr al-Din al-Shirazi)* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1975); Soleh, *Filsafat Islam Dari Klasik Hingga Kontemporer*.

²⁶ Mulla Sadra, *Kearifan Puncak, Terj. Dimitri Mahayana* (Yogyakarta: Pustaka Pelajar, 2001); Soleh, *Filsafat Islam Dari Klasik Hingga Kontemporer*.

²⁷ Rahman, *Filsafat Shadra Terj. Munir Muin*.

²⁸ Soleh, *Filsafat Islam Dari Klasik Hingga Kontemporer*.

Comparison of the Concept of Essence and Existence According to Ibn Arabi (1165-1240 AD) and Mulla Sadra (1571-1640 AD)

There are several according to Ibn Arabi (1165-1240 AD) who revealed that existence is a form of essence²⁹. In other words, existence comes before essence. When existence has emerged into something tangible then by that form we can know the essence of the existence that has emerged. Not unlike Sadra's opinion³⁰, which says the object reality of essence itself is still in our minds. When something becomes tangible outside our minds, it changes from essence to existence. Therefore, existence is an objective reality outside the mind³¹. So, there are only differences in the use of terms in defining the essence and existence of the two figures. It's just that it has the same meaning in defining the terms essence and existence itself. Ibn Arabi uses terms to define essence and existence with non-existence and existence. While Sadra defines it with the term reality of objects in the mind and objects that are outside the mind.

Furthermore, according to Ibn Arabi (1165-1240 AD), there are two forms, namely absolute and relative form³². While Mulla Sadra (1571-1640 CE) said the comparison of the term essence with the nature of vague, dark, uncertain, negative, and unreal. However, in contrast to the term existence itself with positive, definite, certain, and real properties³³. Thus, Ibn Arabi (1165-1240 CE) shows that this relative form is more inclined towards essences. The same thing, according to Sadra that the essence is more vague. The word vague or relative terms that are found by both of them, have similar meanings of substance and even tend to be the same. While for the term existence according to both, Ibn Arabi existence with absolute form and Sadra states that existence is something that is real. Between the word absolute existence and something that is real is a word that has the same substance.

In the context of the relationship between essence and existence, the two have opposing opinions. According to Ibn Arabi (1165-1240 CE)³⁴, essence and existence are directly proportional in the relationship between the two concepts. In other words, when existence exists, its essence exists. Conversely, if the form of existence does not exist then the essence is also intangible. But according to Mulla Sadra (1571-1640 AD)³⁵ On the contrary, essence and existence contradict each other in their relationship³⁶. So, according to Sadra, when the essence is much, the existence has a low quality. But, when the essence is little then the existence has a good quality. Both have different views on the relationship between essence and existence. This will not invalidate the existing similarities nor will these different views be a treasure of knowledge for us.

²⁹ Affifi, *Filsafat Mistis Ibn Arabi Terj. Nandi Rahman*.

³⁰ Rahman, *Filsafat Shadra Terj. Munir Muin*.

³¹ Soleh, *Filsafat Islam Dari Klasik Hingga Kontemporer*.

³² Rahman, *STUDIES IN ISLAMIC PHILOSOPHY AND SCIENCE The Philosophy of Mulla Sadra (Sadr al-Din al-Shirazi)*.

³³ Soleh, *Filsafat Islam Dari Klasik Hingga Kontemporer*.

³⁴ Arabi, *Futūhāt Al-Makkiyah, IV*.

³⁵ Supriatna, 'Eskatologi Mulla Sadra: Kebangkitan Setelah Kematian'.

³⁶ Rahman, *Filsafat Shadra Terj. Munir Muin*.

Concept Thinker Essence and Existence	Meeting Point		Different Point
	Concept Definition	Concept Comparison	Concept Relations
Ibnu 'Arabi	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The essence does not yet exist. Existence is the form of essence. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Essence is a relative form Existence is absolute existence 	Essence and existence are dicrectly proportional
Mulla Sadra	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Essence is reality of an object in the mind. Existence is the reality of an object outside the mind. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Essence is vague in nature. Existence is real in Nature 	Essence and Existence oppodites.

Illustration 3. A Comparison of Ibn Arabian and Mulla Sadra's Concepts of Essence and Existence

Discussion Of The Concept Of Essence And Existence Of Islamic Philosophers

Islamic philosophers before Sadra had discussed the issue of essence and existence. Ibn Sina argues that existence precedes essence. Existence is basic and is the only essence or reality that God has, while His essence and attributes are additional. One cannot imagine essence without existence, but not vice versa. However, for Ibn Sina, this existence and essence are both real realities³⁷. Ibn Arabi also agrees with Ibn Sina that existence precedes essence. Existence is the ultimate reality and that reality is only one, namely God, while the essence is nothing but forms in His knowledge called a`yân al-tsâbitah.³⁸

In contrast, according to Suhrawardi³⁹, essence is more fundamental than existence, because existence only exists in the human mind. What is the real reality is the essence which for Suhrawardi is nothing but forms of light from the Light, God. The light is only one while the various objects are only gradations of intensity or brilliance.

³⁷ Husein Nasr, *Tiga Pemikir Islam* (Bandung: Risalah, 1986).

³⁸ Rahman, *Filsafat Shadra Terj. Munir Muin.*

³⁹ Nasr, *Tiga Pemikir Islam.*

Sadra initially followed Suhrawardi's view above, but later reversed it by taking Ibn Arabi's view on the priority of existence over essence, but disagreed with Ibn Arabi on *wahdah al-wujûd*, the unity of being⁴⁰. For Sadra, the objects around us, this universe, are not just illusions but really have an existence just like the existence of God. However, the existence that is reality can never be captured by the ratio, because the ratio is only able to capture the essence or general idea. Therefore, there is a fundamental difference between essence and existence⁴¹.

However, given the fact that existence is claimed to be the only reality, on the one hand, and essence is also said to exist "for the mind," the exact relationship between existence and essence must be determined. Having done this, we can proceed to describe the nature of existence as a dynamic and systematically ambiguous process. According to Sadra, God is Absolute Being. What philosophers call Separate Intelligence is, according to him, an attribute of God and he identifies it with Platonic ideas⁴².

Platonic Ideas and what Ibn 'Arabi calls "Contingent Essences" and "Fixed Ideas (*âyan thabita*)." These have no external existence for Sadra (nor Ibn 'Arabi), but form the content of God's mind as His Ideas. Externally, at the level of God, therefore, there is nothing but pure existence. This pure existence, which is absolute, manifests itself in different forms, through the process of self-expansion, and the beings it produces, which are contingent, are modes of existence (*anha al-wujud*). These modes, although by their very nature they are just existence, are nevertheless distinguished from absolute existence because they - as modes or types of existence - exhibit certain essential characteristics to the mind⁴³. Thus, it is in the mind, not in external reality, that essences appear as a kind of secondary nature of the primordial reality, namely existence⁴⁴. Like the sun, a light source is, in a sense, identical to the rays it emits, but the rays can take on different characteristics, as, for example, in a prism⁴⁵.

This nature that gives rise to essences in the mind is a clear sign for Sadra of the weakening of existence. The more complete existence is, the less essence it exhibits; therefore God has no essence. Essence, therefore, is negation and dysfunctional to existence. Existence is positive, definite, determinate, and real; essence is vague, dark, uncertain, negative, and unreal⁴⁶.

This is why it is more appropriate to say that, for example, "this is man," than to say, "man exists." (Sadra, n.d.) Since essence does not exist in itself, whatever existence it has is due to its "union" with existence, while existence is servile, thanks to their manifestation and relation to absolute existence: They [i.e., essences], as long as they remain unilluminated by the light of existence, are not something that the mind

⁴⁰ Soleh, *Filsafat Islam Dari Klasik Hingga Kontemporer*.

⁴¹ Rahman, *Filsafat Shadra Terj. Munir Muin*.

⁴² Rahman, *STUDIES IN ISLAMIC PHILOSOPHY AND SCIENCE The Philosophy of Mulla Sadra (Sadra al-Din al-Shirazi)*.

⁴³ Ibid.

⁴⁴ Mulla Sadra, *Al-Asfar al-Arbaà, I* (Tehran, n.d.).

⁴⁵ Rahman, *Filsafat Shadra Terj. Munir Muin*.

⁴⁶ Rahman, *STUDIES IN ISLAMIC PHILOSOPHY AND SCIENCE The Philosophy of Mulla Sadra (Sadra al-Din al-Shirazi)*.

can point to by saying whether they exist or not.... They forever remain in their original concealment as non-being] and their original state as nothingness They cannot be said to exist or not exist - nor do they create, nor are they objects of creation [objects of creation are contingent existences, not essences]... [contingent] existences, on the other hand, are pure relations [to absolute existence]; the mind cannot point to them when they are considered out of relation to the Creator who sustains them, because they have no existence independently [of God]. However, in themselves [unlike essences], these [contingent] existences are concrete realities, unaffected by the uncertainty of essences, pure existences without [mixing] essences and simple lights without darkness⁴⁷.

When we say that essence and existence are "unified" or "united", this talk can be very misleading if we imagine that two things or realities are united and united, because we have seen that essence has no reality of its own. We should rather think of this "unification" in the sense that when absolute existence ceases to be absolute and becomes "modes" of existence, these modes themselves give rise to essences, where existence is the real, the essence, the subjective element. Indeed, God Himself gives rise to essence when He "descends" from His absoluteness and produces attributes as the contents of His thought⁴⁸.

His attributes, thus viewed as pure ideas or pseudo-essences in His mind (e.g., power, will, knowledge, etc.), have no real existence at all but are purely subjective to Him, but when viewed as His names (e.g., Almighty, All-Wise, All-Knowing), become modes of existence identified by Sadra with the Ideas of Plato and the separate Intelligences of the Muslim Peripatetics. Thus, in the downward movement, as existence becomes increasingly diversified into modes, these capital existences produce diverse essences⁴⁹.

CONCLUSION

Based on the description above, the following conclusions are presented, 1) Ibn Arabi (1165-1240 AD) argued that the concept of essence and existence is: existence is a form of essence, so that existence precedes essence. So, if something has existence then something has essence. However, the opposite also applies, if something does not have existence then the essence of that something cannot be known. 2) Mulla Sadra (1571-1640 AD) stated that the concepts of essence and existence are: Essence is the overall picture of reality or objects that exist in the mind; and Existence is an objective reality outside the mind. 3) The concepts of essence and existence according to Ibn Arabi and Mulla Sadra are related because they both discuss the concepts of essence and existence with definitions and comparisons of essence and existence which have the same substance but are different in terms such as Ibn Arabi (1165-1240 AD) uses the term not yet exist and form, while Mulla Sadra (1571-1640 AD) uses the terms

⁴⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁸ Sadra, *Al-Asfar al-Arba'ah*, I.

⁴⁹ Rahman, *STUDIES IN ISLAMIC PHILOSOPHY AND SCIENCE The Philosophy of Mulla Sadra (Sadr al-Din al-Shirazi)*.

reality of objects in the mind and outside the mind in defining essence and existence, and in addition to the use of the terms relative and absolute existence according to Ibn Arabi and Mulla Sadra (1571-1640 AD) prefer vague and real terms for essence and existence, and they do not agree on the relationship between essence and existence, Ibn Arabi (1165-1240 AD) said that the relationship between essence and existence is directly proportional, but Mulla Sadra (1571-1640 AD) has a different opinion that the relationship between essence and existence is contradictory. This research only focuses on the concept of essence and existence according to them as figures from Islam, but has not focused on books and thoughts alone, there is still a lot that can be discussed in terms of the Qur'an and hadith, and there are many more thoughts that discuss essence. and other existences from Islamic and Western figures.

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