HAVING MI'RAJ BY AL-QUR'AN
(Study on Ibn al-Arabi's Perspective Over al-Qur'an as Media of
Mi'raj)



A THESIS

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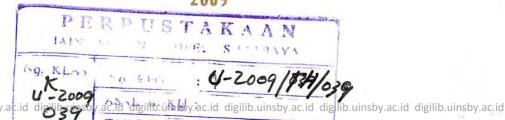
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ABSTRACT

According to Ibn al-Arabi, al-Qur'an has so many functions. One of those function is that al-Qur'an can be media of mi'raj. Mi'raj as Ibn al-Arabi's concept has no so far distinction with Moslem's common sense, namely the path of prophet Muhammad peace be upon him (PBUH) from the earth to the sky by Burraq that accompanied by Gabriel to meet Allah. Yet, Ibn al-Arabi wanted to set a wider meaning toward the term of mi'raj as "the path of everybody to reach Allah". It leads Ibn al-Arabi to the comprehension of the path of Moslems through their good deeds they do in order to meet Allah, though they don't need to penetrate the nine skies as the path of Muhammad.

To Ibn al-Arabi, the phrase "al-Qur'an as media of mi'raj" can be understood by four explanations. Firstly, al-Qur'an in a book with its writings is just like miniature of the universe (macro cosmos). All that written in the al-Qur'an can be found in universe and so as the contrary. When mi'raj understood as the path of some one by penetrating the skies across ladders of universe, so it is automatically comprehensible that some one is doing mi'raj in the al-Qur'an, al-Qur'an will be the best media which a wanderer can do mi'raj in. secondly, that articles or surah in al-Qur'an are just like steps (manzilah) or levels for this spiritual odyssey. Thirdly, Mi'raj is done only with actualizing the all define laws of Islam (syariat Islam) as reflected in jurisprudential aspects and a lot of moral ethics recommended by al-Qur'an. While the source of those define laws ips al-Qur'an. So, al-Qur'an as mentioned is the best one media for mi'raj. Fourthly, that generally, there are 28 ladders of mi'raj which have the similarity with 28 makharij al-huruf. It becomes common sense that the holy book was written and composed with 28 hijaiyah letters. So, everyone who reads al-Qur'an devoutly actually tries to climb to meet Allah through its 28 letters. So, al-Qur'an is the best one media to have mi'raj for everyone wants to get Allah.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. Background

So many aspects and views can be used for understanding al-Qur'an. One of those is that al-Qur'an may be seen by its function. M. Quraish Shihab wrote: "the great challenge being faced by Moslems, especially for intellectuals of them is how to make the holy al-Qur'an so useful for this life, namely to uncover and catch the passages contained in, then socialize to people, on how to understand and actualize all guidances without any ignoring, moreover sacrificing their positive cultures".

Reading and analyzing some books discussing about details of the holy al-Qur'an, it seems that to explore the usage and position of al-Qur'an, most of writers tend to focus their discuss to one or all of three aspects as follow.

- They concentrate their attention to al-Qur'an as miracle that al-Qur'an was revealed as miracle for this universe².
- 2) They try to get down the contents which are contained in the verses of al-Qur'an as become a common sense that al-Qur'an has its main function as the source of guidance for a belief (akidah), the source of guide for morality and the source of guidance for laws.

¹ M. Quraish Shihab, Lentera Hati: Kisah dan Hikmah Kehidupan (Bandung: Mizan, 1994), Ed. XIX: 31

² St. Amanah, Pengantar Ilmu Al-Qur'an Dan Tafsir (Semarang: CV. As Syifa', 1993), Ed. I: 149-203 and M. Quraish Shihab, Membumikan Al-Qur'an; Fungsi dan Peran Wahyu Dalam Kehidupan Masyarakat (Mizan: Bandung, 1992), Ed. II: 40

3) They use al-Qur'an's names and characteristics found in, then try to manifest Its position for human life survival such as al-Qur'an (K.A. 17:9), al-Kitab (K.A. 21:10), al-Furqan (K.A. 25:1), al-Zikr (K.A. 15:9), al-Huda and al-Syifa' (K.A. 10:57), al-Nur (K.A. 4:174) etc³. From those three points, it is comprehensible that talking about al-Qur'an functionally is a wide discuss which has so many variables.

There are so many books talk about the functions of al-Qur'an, but it is really interesting to examine a book that was written by a *sufi* interpreter, Muhammad bin Ali bin Muhammad bin al-'Arabi al-Ta'i al-Hatimi, usually known and popular with his nick name of Ibn al-Arabi (Arabi). He had so many explanations toward the functions of al-Qur'an. Of course, they all are related internately to his knowledge background as *sufi* so that those were presented based on Sufism aspects. One of main functions of al-Qur'an as quoted by him is the so called media of *mi'raj* or in a complete term, it is said "Having *mi'raj* by al-Qur'an".

According to Arabi, al-Qur'an as a holy scripture revealed by Allah to His prophet, Muhammad PBUH, has so many functions as guide as well as a media used by servant to do *mi'raj* reaching Allah. He meant *mi'raj* as a travel when prophet Muhammad had done it on *isra' mi'raj* night⁴ and so as the servant's returning straight to Allah⁵.

³ Dawud al-Atthar, *Perspektif Baru Ilmu al-Qur'an* (Bandung: Pustaka Hidayah, 1994) page 43-8 and Manna' al-Qatthan, *Mabahith Fi Ulum al-Qur'an*, (Egypt: Mansyurat al-'Ashr al-Hadits, 1990): 21-22

⁴ Arabi thought that the term *mi 'raj* just like the common sense of people that it was prophet's travel in the night (Muhammad's miraculous flight) from the mosque of al-Aqsha to Sidratul

According to him, Allah had sent down three books for mankind. Those are the holy al-Qur'an which consists of 114 articles; macro cosmos or universe; and micro cosmos which consist of human its self, namely perfect man (insan kamil). For the third, Arabi always mentions Muhammad PBUH as a good example. He considers that it's found in the al-Qur'an the verse explains both of unwritten books, namely macro and micro cosmos as follow:

"we will show them our signs in all the horizons and in themselves until it is clear to them that it is the truth...."6

He stated that the three books had a similar view or they are in identical sight, though those are not similar exactly. Yet, the similarity of the view was found by Arabi on how it described and explained the process of chronology of universe creation when Allah as the Lord of this world spoke by blowing His breath, then the breath was the so called Breath of al-Rahman (breath of The Merciful)⁷.

Muntaha. But, he tried to describe and explore it in a wider explanation as his theoretical

⁵ Here what he called as spiritual odyssey or spiritual flight in a wider comprehension. For this case, he had some other synonym words such as suluk, taraqqi, zihab, rihlah etc.

The meaning was adopted from Mobile Quran without year and publisher

⁷ For this case, Arabi referred to the prophetic reports (hadis), namely "don't ever decry the air because it was indigenous to The Breath of al-Rahman"; and "The breath of al-Rahman has come to me from the direction of Yemen". See in Ibn al-'Arabi, al-Futuhat al-Makkiyyah (Lebanon: Dar al Fikr, 1994) Volume I: 97

But, some similar Hadits found in standard books of Hadits didn't mention such term of al-Rahman.

The breath of al-Rahman caused some thing that became those three books furthermore, namely al-Qur'an, macro cosmos and micro cosmos which they are one in actual. All in al-Qur'an could be found in macro cosmos as both of al-Qur'an and macro cosmos were contained in micro cosmos and so the contrary. But, it is just perfect man (*insan kamil*) the only one micro cosmos that affords to uncover the mystery.

Here known that al-Qur'an has identical position as macro and micro cosmos in one sight. This case caused al-Qur'an a unique holy book needed by God's servants to go through the spiritual odyssey or spiritual flight, the so called *mi'raj*. al-Qur'an can be the only one holy book that lead all people to a clear guidance so as an obvious explanation and be the one media of climbing in that spiritual travel in order to meet Allah everlastingly.

There found some things caused al-Qur'an as the only one media for reaching the intimacy with Allah by the way shown that becomes a grand theme in this paper which will be discussed for further more here. In this way, Moslems especially motivated and have a deep consciousness toward the role and position of Al-Qur'an in their life, not only a text which read, analyzed and discussed exclusively.

Before all, it is not exaggeration to say that Al-Qur'an was revealed and sent to all mankind has Its own fundamental function as the mercy and guidance come from Allah, The Lord of the world -that from Him, men come and just to Him, men will make an optimal efforts in returning.⁸

There some propositions and perspectives expressed by Arabi as argumentations for supporting his explanation, either about men's afford to do mi'raj especially what ever done by prophet Muhammad PBUH in isra' mi'raj night or concerning al-Qur'an as the one media for climbing spiritual odyssey called by mi'raj, though those argumentations had scattered in so many places of his books.

One of those was the prophetic report of Muhammad PBUH (beside the verse of al-Qur'an for the 17th article: 1) as follows:

"when you stick outward a string down, it certainly falls to Allah"9.

By means of this prophetic report, Arabi expressed his views about "cosmos circle" and the returning of men and even all beings to Allah as he stated in his book:

Prophet Muhammad said: "when you stick outward a string down, it certainly falls to Allah". In other words, as the most height associated to Allah by sitting on Arsy, so it is just the same when He is down. It none other than His existence that covers all things (al-Qur'an in article 41:54)¹⁰ and always maintain those just like a plane of circle which covers the circle itself, always maintain the existence (centrum point) or that

⁸ Abdu al-Qadir Ahmad Atha' wrote: Al-Qur'an was sent in detail matters for human mankind to enable them uncovering Its goals and purposes, the verses, then endeavor maximally to do mi'raj perfectly as far as Allah's approval and permit. Ahmad Ata', Abd al-Qadir Ahmad Ata'. At-Tafsir al-Sufi Lil Quran: Dirasah Wa Tahqiq li Kitab I'jaz al-Bayan fi Ta'wili Ulumi al-Quran li Abi al-Ma'ali Sadr al-Din al-Qunawi, (Mesir: Dar al-Ta'lif bi al-Maliyyah, 1389/1969) hlm. 12

⁹ This prophetic report was adopted by Tirmidzi (an interpretation for Al-Qur'an in article of 57:

^{..... &}quot;He is the First and the Last, the Clear and the Hidden...." text of the prophetic report can be seen in appendix

10 معيط معيط محيط

from the centrum point, manifestation of enveloping correlation appears (association of covering or enveloping) for the existence of the Most Circle covering all things. The only for Him (His) the direction of upper and lower, so as the clear and the hidden.¹¹

In other word, that cosmos (universe) has its shape as a circle and the thing in is the Centrum Point (al-Haqq or Allah) and all creatures of Him. All creatures (that Arabi named it as points besides Centrum Points) all the while arose and appear from the Centrum Point and so run returning to that Centrum Point. 12

This spiritual odyssey then Arabi called as the returning of Jin and men to Allah freely with an effort and choice / free wish (ruju' ikhtiari) and the returning all creatures to Allah as forced by Him (ruju' idtirari)¹³. Starting from this point, Arabi tried to explore the odyssey of mi'raj as it is a most special and meaningful trip for men. It's because of men's potency only with their self configuration (nasy'ah) and their self composition (mizaj) so that they able to do mi'raj.

Talking about the meaning of *mi'raj* itself, it's according to Arabi a very important and fundamental acts of servants to achieve the ultimate happiness for worldly and hereafter life, clear and hidden one. There are so many definitions uttered by Arabi to describe and explain *mi'raj* which concluded in three points. *Firstly*, that hereafter all men will rise from death in a condition that suits their acts when they were still alive till he had passed away. It means that they will get

¹¹ Al-Arabi. Ibn. Al-Futuhat al-Makkiyyah, Vol. III, Lebanon: Dar al-Fikr, 1994: 136

¹² For the certain returning of all beings or creatures to the Creator, it can be referred to some verses of Al-Qur'an in article 3:109, 8:44, 19:40, 22:76, 36:83 etc.

¹³ To get a complete and wide explanation, see William C. Chittck, *Ibn al-'Arabi's Metaphysics of Imagination: The Sufi Path of Knowledge* (Albany: SUNY Press, 1989), hlm. 20

the reward for all they had done. It absolutely depends on their good or bad deeds on how far they had brought and led their selves in returning to Allah. ¹⁴ Secondly, as the main purpose of mi'raj, it is the spiritual travel to know intimately the evidences of Allah's greatness. ¹⁵ Thirdly, observing from the common and general purpose of mi'raji, it's meant that mi'raj intended to secede one's self from everything painful and saddened. ¹⁶ One's seceding from the painful shackle for whom being in mi'raj is a certain thing when he carries on again and again to come approach to Centrum Point that will shine him so that he'll afford to decrease and press the conflict on him self. On the contrary, more far from the Centrum Point, he'll fall in a darkness and will be trapped in his own conflict furthermore and so in all kinds of suffering. ¹⁷

¹⁴ Al-Arabi. Ibn. Al-Futuhat al-Makkiyyah, Vol. II: 295. in another place, Arabi stated "know! That all men since they were borne they had a burden toward divine laws of Allah. He created them from not-existing to an existence. It's sure that they are being in the journey returning and of course will end in either heaven or hell as the reward of their deeds when still alive on earth" (Ibn al-Arabi. Risalah al-Anwar dalam Rasail Ibnu al-Arabi, Hyderabad: Da'irah al-Ma'arif al-Usmaniyyah, 1361/1948 Vol.I: 3). It seems to be alike with Ali bin Abi Thalib's passage to his son, Hasan, in "Shiffin battle": "hi my son, kwow that one rides a carriage the whole day and night will everlastingly run though he stays standing on. He will get a place by covering a distance though he's just stood and stayed on his seat" (Muhammad Abduh, Syarh Nahj al-Balaghah, terj. Muhammad al-Baqir, Bandung: Mizan, 1993, cet II: 58)

¹⁵ He wrote: "the purpose of this odyssey is none other than as follows,so that we might show him some of our signs... (Al-Qur'an in article 17:1) namely the witnessing toward Allah's attributes that though His manifestation could be seen by heart, but the Owner of the attributes isn't able to be seen because of His greatness and beauty except by spiritual odyssey to the world of soul. In other word, men can witness His signs as He associated the attributes to the world 'We'-Allah, and men were arisen from those attributes" (Ibn al-Arabi, Tafsir al-Qur'an al-Karim, Beirut: Dar al-Yaqzah al-Arabiyah, 1968. vol I: 706).

¹⁶ He also wrote: "Allah is impossible to be reached by one's searching, that a thing being searched by him is none other than his own happiness not Allah. It is known intimately that one didn't search the existing. Allah is too Great than to be searched and achieved with distance, deeds and even thought. As he isn't limited by spaces, then He can't be differentiated" (Futuhat, Vol.IV: 442)

¹⁷ William C. Chittck, *Ibn al-'Arabi's Metaphysics of Imagination: The Sufi Path of Knowledge* (Albany: SUNY Press, 1989), hlm. 14

Those are some explanations toward the background on why it is needed very much to write this paper.

B. Statement of The Problem

Based on the background ahead, the problems to be discussed in this minithesis are:

- 1. What is Ibnu al-Arabi's view toward al-Qur'an
- 2. What is Ibnu al-Arabi's view toward mi'raj?
- 3. How did Ibnu al-Arabi explain al-Qur'an as media of mi'raj?

C. Objectives of Study

1. Purposes

- a. To explain Ibnu al-Arabi's views about al-Qur'an
- b. To explain Ibnu al-Arabi's views about mi'raj
- c. To find and analyze Ibnu al-Arabi's explanation over al-Qur'an as media of mi'raj

2. Usefulness

2.1 Academically:

- a. Knowing Ibnu al-Arabi's views toward al-Qur'an
- b. Knowing al-Qur'an as media of mi'raj as explained by Ibnu al-Arabi
- c. Fulfilling an academic requirement in the frame of finishing the last assignment in Ushuluddin faculty of State Institute of Islamic Studies
 Sunan Ampel Surabaya

2.2 Practically:

- a. Bringing al-Qur'an into Its significant function that al-Qur'an not only to be read and understood, but also to be an escort or to be used in actual life as media for returning to Allah
- b. Motivating moslems to have a great consciousness upon al-Qur'an's significance in their real life so that they realize that using al-Qur'an not for the sake of expecting and obtaining God's reward only, but on how they afford to practice the teachings in

D. Review of Literature

It is not exaggerated expression to say that there are so many books that talked about Ibnu al-Arabi and his views. For main references, it's certainly that some books were written by himself will get the priority scale such as: Al-Futuhat Al-Makkiyyah and a large mount of his essays compiled in his book named Rasail Ibnu Al-Arabi. This book can be a main reference for understanding Arabi's concept of al-Qur'an as media of mi'raj. Beside the book, al-Futuhat al-Makkiyyah is also very important to uncover Arabi's views toward this topic. It is comprehensible that Futuhat described it in detail explanations more than the other books of Arabi's. while Tafsir al-Qur'an al-Karim¹⁹ which presented in two volumes also helps the writer so much to access the problems being discussed here.

¹⁸ Al-Arabi, Ibn. Rasail Ibnu al-Arabi, Hyderabad: Da'irah al-Ma'arif al-Usmaniyyah, 1361/1948. this book consists of 29 essays with a specific theme for each one

¹⁹ Al-Arabi, Ibn, *Tafsir al-Quran al-Karim*, Beirut: Dar al-Yaqzah al-Arabiyyah, 1387/1968, two volumes

Plenty of intellectuals and academicians have written Arabi and his concepts. Some of them are Su'ad al-Hakim who wrote al-Mu'jam al-Sufi: al-Hikmah fi Hudud al-Kalimah, he tried to uncover and present some idiomatical words used and expressed by Arabi. He presented those in some words and idioms—which arranged as Arabic alphabetical constructions (hijaiyah)—analyzed and explored according to three perceptions, philology or linguistic, al-Qur'an and so as Arabi's concepts.

William C. Chittick has written *The Sufi Path of Knowledge* and *The Self Disclosure of God: Principle of Ibn al-Arabi's Cosmology*. It is probable to say that this is the most complete book than all books written in English for Arabi and his thought. It is the most representative one discussing the themes always uttered by Arabi, then William set forth in a discuss by West style philosophy.

Nevertheless, though those books were presented systematically and completely concerning Arabi's thoughts, but it is still hard to access easily, quickly and conclusively toward "Having mi'raj by al-Qur'an according Ibn al-'Arabi".

The other reference is Falsafah al-Ta'wil written by Nasr Hamid Abu Zaid. This book helps everyone very much whoever wish to access Arabi's thoughts easily. Nasr classified his books into three divisions, namely existence, human and al-Qur'an. Even, he tried to talk about human walking the way of Allah as explained by Arabi, but (to writer) his review isn't so complete as there have been so many things missing when reading Arabi's.

E. Research Method

E. Research Method

Research method used in this minithesis writing is as follows:

1. Approach

The approach for this paper is library research by collecting some books have relation to the subject will be discussed. Then, those books will be collaborated with the primer data resources. While the method used in this study is descriptive qualitative. The focus of this method is describing and analyzing the problem, then concluding the results.

2. Data Resources

The resource of data here divided into two categories:

- a. Primer resource, namely Futuhat al-Makkiyyah and Rasail Ibn al-Arabi
- b. Seconder resource, namely, al-Mu'jam al-Sufi: al-Hikmah fi

 Hudud al-Kalimah, Falsafah al-Ta'wil, Tafsir al-Qur'an alKarim, The Sufi Path of Knowledge and The Self Disclosure of
 God: Principle of Ibn al-Arabi's Cosmology, etc.

3. Technique of Data Collection

As the type of research by library, so it is absolutely a literary technique in collecting data, that some library books have a same orientation with the writing object should be accommodated. It is done by writing, editing, clarifying, reducing, browsing, then presenting it.

4. Technique of Data Analyzing

- a. Deduction, the method of reasoning which stands on general concept of Arabi upon al-Qur'an as the media of mi'raj, then formulated in specific and partial conclusions.
- b. Induction, the method of reasoning which stands on specific concept of him in the case, then formulated in a general conclusions.

5. Outline of Writing

This minithesis will be begun from:

Chapter I which contains preface to argumentation, scope and mechanism of research.

Chapter II will come afterward which explain the general observation relates to al-Qur'an and *mi'raj* that known as a common sense before stepping forward to Arabi's.

Chapter III will express biography, books and characteristics of Arabi's interpretation. Here, the presentation is just simple because it doesn't concern to the main theme besides it is known intimately that there were so many books and minithesis, thesis and even dissertations talked about it.

Chapter IV that is the main point for this paper that talks about Arabi's explanation toward al-Qur'an as media of mi'raj.

Chapter V as the last will be a closing that consist of conclusion and some suggestions.

In addition, it will be Glossary. It is important to write a glossary because of some idiomatical words of Arabi that must be understood as Arabi's understanding.

CHAPTER II

GENERAL STUDY ON AL-QUR'AN AND MI'RAJ

A. Definition of al-Qur'an

An observation to the derivation of "al-Qur'an" as Moslem scholars had done was formulated in some conclusions as follow:²⁰

Jalal al-Din al-Suyuti tends to be with al-Syafi'i's perspective who stated that al-Qur'an was not derived from any other word, but the word itself.

Originally the word was only used to refer to revelation of Allah sent to prophet

Muhammad PBUH.²¹

While the experts of contemporary al-Qur'an sciences (ulum al-Qur'an), Subhi Shalih tends to approve with al-Lihyani's opinion who indicated that al-Qur'an was derived from the word "qara'a" which meant "to read".²²

²⁰ Al-Suyuti explained the differences below:

a. Al-Syafii: the word al-Qur'an was not derived from any other word, but the word itself (ghairu musytaq) and without hamzah. Al-Qur'an originally used to mention the saying of Allah sent to prophet Muhammad PBUH. Regarding al-Qur'an being derived from the word "qara'a" it meant that all words and sentences could be read were al-Qur'an

b. Al-Farra': al-Qur'an was derived from the word "qara'in", plural of qarinah which meant indicator, then he based on the argumentation that all in al-Qur'an were similar one another

c. Al-Asy'ari: al-Qur'an was derived from "qarana" without hamzah which meant "to compile or to collect". The revelation of Allah was called by al-Qur'an because it was arranged in a book or mushaf

d. Al-Zujaj: al-Qur'an was derived from "al-qar'u" which meant "to collect" with wazan of "fu'lanuni" because al-Qur'an has compiled the abstracts or essences of the previous holy books

e. Al-Lihyani: al-Qur'an was derived from qara'a which meant "to read". As masdar, al-Qur'an was also understood as isim maf'ul which meant "being read"

Jalal al-Din al-Suyuti, al-Itqan fi Ulum al-Qur'an (Beirut: Dar al-Fikr, 1399) Ed. I: 53 Badr al-Din al-Zarkasyi, al-Burhan fi Ulum al-Qur'an (Beirut" Dar al-Fikr, 1400), Ed. III, Vol. I: 278

²¹ *Ibid*: 53

²² Shubhi Shalih, Mabahis fi Ulum al-Qur'an (Beirut: Dar al-Ilm al-Malayin, 1985): 19

Nevertheless, it seems that all of them in one sight that al-Qur'an is the name of the last revelation which given by Allah Himself.

Terminologically, there are some different views and version over definitions of al-Qur'an. Some of those are as follow:

a) Version of principle of jurisprudence (ushul fiqh) scholars:²³

ٱلْقُرْآَانُ هُوَ اللَّفْظُ الْعَرَبِيُّ المَنزَّلُ عَلَى سَيِّدِنَا مُحَمَّدٍ صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وسَلَّمَ للتدَّبُرِ والتَّذَّكُرِ المَنقُوْلُ مُتَوَاتِرًا وَهُوَ مَا بَيْنَ الدَّفَتَيْنِ الْمُبْتَدَءُ بسُوْرَةِ الفَاتِحَةِ المَحْتُوْمُ بسُوْرَةِ النَّاسِ

"al-Qur'an is the Arabic word sent to prophet Muhammad PBUH for being thought and remembered which delivered from persons to persons in group (mutawatir)²⁴, begun from al-Fatihah article till an-Nas article as closing".

b) Version of al-Zarqani:25

اَلقُرْأَنُ هُوَ كَلاَمُ اللهِ المُعْجِزُ المُنَزَّلُ عَلَى النِّيِ الْمَكْتُوْبُ فِي الْمَصَاحِفِ المَنقُوْلُ بالتَّوَاتُرِ المُتَعَبَّدُ بتلاَوَته

"Al-Qur'an is the saying of Allah as the miracle sent to prophet

Muhammad PBUH, written in mushaf and delivered from persons to

²³ M. Khudari Beik, *Ushul Fiqh* (Egypt: Maktabah al-Tijariyyah al-Kubra, 1385): 209

²⁴ Mutawatir meant that the information delivered by number of people to others in which reliable and possible to be in mistakes becouse of the amounts.

²⁵ M. Abd al-'Azim al-Zarqani, Manahil al-Irfan fi Ulum al-Qur'an (Beirut: Isa al-Bab al Halby, no Year), Vol. I: 12

persons in group, then whoever reads it will get the reward from Allah as it is sort of worship".

B. Definition of Mi'raj

Etymologically, the word *mi'raj* as written in *Lisan al-'Arab* dictionary was derived from "'araja-ya'ruju-urujan". ²⁶ The word al-ma'arij means almasa'id (ladders), plural of *mi'raj*, such as; *ma'arij al-malaikah* (the ladders which passed through by angels to upward and do *mi'raj*). While the word almi'raj means ladder, the place to upward; such a ladder or ladder-step that passed through by spirits to upward and return to Allah when they lifted out from the bodies; and the place where deed of humans upward. The word *lailah al-mi'raj* for instance means night journey of *mi'raj* that associated to prophet Muhammad when he did *isra' mi'raj* at the night flight.²⁷

Generally, the word "al-mi'raj" (as the term of prophet Muhammad's mi'raj flight) always coupled with the word "al-isra" (which means a night flight, etymologically)²⁸. So, terminologically, "isra' and mi'raj" refers to prophet

²⁶ In al-Qur'an, there seven words at least which have a similar meaning relatively, those are:

a) Al-Qur'an, article 15:14 (ya'rujun {which means yas'adu/upwarding})

b) Al-Qur'an, article 32:5, 34:2, 57:4, (ya'ruju which means yas'udu) and in article 70:4 whith the same meaning

c) Al-Qur'an, article 43:33, (ma'arij which means darajat/ladderstep)

d) Al-Qur'an, article 70:3 (ma'arij which means sky ladders)

⁽Muhammad Fuad 'Abd al-Haq, al-Mu'jam al-Mufahras li Alfaz al-Qur'an al-Karim, {Indonesia, Maktabah Dahlan, No Year}: 579)

²⁷ Ibn al-Manzur, *Lisan al-'Arab* (Beirut: Dar al-Fikr, No Year), Vol.II: 321-2.

In some other dictionaries, the word "uruj" means irtaqa (to upward) as the antonym of nazala (to go down) and al-mi'raj means the ladder or the place of climbing, See al-Fairuz Abadi, al-Qamus al-Muhit (Beirut: Dar al-Fikr, 1415/1995), Vol.I: 199

²⁸ Al-Fairuz Abadi, al-Qamus al-Muhit (Beirut: Dar al-Fikr, 1415/1995), Vol.IV: 341. Ibn Katsir, Tafsir al-Qur'an al-'Azim (Beirut: Dar al-Andalus, 1966/166), Ed.I, Vol.IV: 238-280

Muhammad's experience when he was set to go or fly in the night from al-Haram to al-Aqsha mosque and from al-Aqsha to Sidrah al-Muntaha.²⁹

Below is the story of *isra' mi'raj* as presented by Muhammad Ridha in his book, *Muhammad Rasulullah Sallallahu 'Alaihi wa Sallam³⁰* as follows:

Isra' happened before prophet going for hijrah in the night, namely on Monday, 27^{th} of Rajab. Isra' was the prophet Muhammad's journey from Mecca to Jerusalem (Baitul Maqdis), while mi'raj was his flight to the sky ladders when five prayers were commanded at the time.

Allah said in al-Qur'an: "Allah is the most Holy Who has set his servant going for isra' in the night from al-Haram mosque to al-Aqsha mosque that We blessed around in order that We can show him our signs. Indeed Allah is the most of all who hear and see (al-Qur'an, article 17:1)".

Some people had different sight toward isra' on how prophet Muhammad PBUH had done it (the way and process). Most of them argued that he had isra' by both of his spirit and body. While the others tended to proposed the contrary. Aisyah R.A told that the messenger had isra' by his spirit only. But, her story supposed not to be strong as she wasn't prophet's wife yet.

So as the case of mi'raj that the messenger had done it by both of his spirit and body climbing up to skies sphere to witness and see the miracle of Allah's kingdom as He quoted in al-Qur'an: ..." in order that

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²⁹ Common explanation to this case can be accessed easily from some standard books of prophetic reports (*hadis*) and history of Islam. Ibnu 'Arabi himself has written the story of *isra' mi'raj* in his book, namely *Futuhat*, Vol.III: 340-2. Then, the most reference usually used for *isra'* and *mi'raj* is the verse of al-Our'an, article 17:1

³⁰ Muhammad Ridha, *Muhammad Rasulullah Sallallahu Alaihi wa Sallam* (Beirut: Dar al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyyah, No Year): 129-145

³¹ Al-Qadi Iyad quoted: most of the late scholars (salafiyyun) and moslems argued that prophet Muhammad PBUH had isra' by both of his spirit and soul while he had been unsleeping at the time. Her e is the right opinion as approved and stated by Ibnu Abbas, Jabir, Anas, Khuzaifah, Umar, Abu Hurairah, Malik Ibnu Sa'sa'ah, Abu Habbah al-Badri, Ibn Mas'ud, al-Dahhak, Sa'id ibn Jabir, Qatadah, Ibn al-Musayyab, Ibn Syihab, Ibn Zaid, Hasan, Ibrahim, Masruq, Mujahid, 'Ikrimah, and so as Ibn Juraij. See Muhammad Ridha, Muhammad Rasulullah Sallallahu Alaihi wa Sallam: 129-145

We can show him our signs.." Supposing that he had isra' and mi'raj by his spirit only, certainly Allah didn't insert time and place of the event. At the night, the prophet saw his God, then He revealed what ought to be; He commanded the five prayers a day and night; he gathered prophets for him and took prayer in group with him in Jerusalem, then they welcomed him in each skies they stayed, afterward the prophet Muhammad PBUH went back to Mecca....

Malik Ibn Sa'sa'ah told that prophet Muhammad had told him the story of his odyssey in the night of isra' as he quoted: "when I was lying around Ka'bah, Gabriel came to me suddenly. He clove my chest, then took my heart outside. The vessel on him which was full of faith (iman). Afterward, he washed my heart with the vessel and returned to the place it was in.

Gabriel took me a white reptile, smaller then a donkey, but bigger than a zebra. This one the so called Buraq. I rode it, then left with Gabriel till we got heaven. The responsible angels then opened it and asked: 'who are you?' 'I am Gabriel'. 'who is with you?' 'I'm Muhammad' 'has he sent as a messenger?' 'Yes'. They greeted: 'welcome to this place'. Just then, the door was opened. Somewhere, I met the prophet Adam upon him be peace (UHBP/Alaihissalam). Gabriel: 'here is your father, Adam. Greet him! I greeted him, then he answered directly while saying: 'welcome to you, a pious son!'

We kept up to our journey upward the second heaven. When the heaven was opened, we were asked by the responsible angles: 'who are you?' 'I'm Gabriel'. 'Who is with you?' I answered: 'I'm Muhammad'. 'Has he sent as a messenger?' 'Yes'. 'welcome to You'. Just then the heaven was opened. Some where, I met the prophet Yahya and Isa (Jesus) UHBP. Gabriel: 'here are Yahya and Isa, greet them! I greeted them and they answered: 'welcome to you, my pious brother and a pious prophet!'

After that, we went upward the next heaven (the third). When the heaven was opened, we were asked by the responsible angles: 'who are you?' 'I'm Gabriel'. 'Who is with you?' I answered: 'I'm Muhammad'. 'Has he sent as a messenger?' 'Yes'. 'welcome to You'. Just then the heaven was opened. Some where, I met the prophet Yusuf Gabriel: 'here is Yusuf, greet him! I greeted him and he answered: 'welcome to you, my pious brother and a pious prophet!'

We straight to the fourth heaven. When the heaven was opened, we were asked by the responsible angles: 'who are you?' 'I'm Gabriel'. 'Who is with you?' I answered: 'I'm Muhammad'. 'Has he sent as a messenger?' 'Yes'. 'welcome to You'. Just then the heaven was opened. Some where, I met the prophet Idris UHBP. Gabriel: 'here is Idris, greet him! I greeted him and he answered: 'welcome to you, my pious brother and a pious prophet!'

We went on the fifth heaven. When the heaven was opened, we were asked by the responsible angles: 'who are you?' 'I'm Gabriel'. 'Who is with you?' I answered: 'I'm Muhammad'. 'Has he sent as a messenger?' 'Yes'. 'welcome to You'. Just then the heaven was opened. Some where, I met the prophet Harun UHBP. Gabriel: 'here is Harun, greet him! I greeted him and he answered: 'welcome to you, my pious brother and a pious prophet! Afterward, we continued climbing to the sixth heaven. When the heaven was opened, we were asked by the responsible angles: 'who are you?' 'I'm Gabriel'. 'Who is with you?' I answered: 'I'm Muhammad'. 'Has he sent as a messenger?' 'Yes'. 'welcome to You'. Just then the heaven was opened. Some where, I met the prophet Musa UHPB. Gabriel: 'here is Musa, greet him! I greeted him and he answered: 'welcome to you, my pious brother and a pious prophet! When I said him good bye, he cried straightly. I asked: 'what cause you to cry?' he answered: 'I cry because the messenger's followers after me will enter the paradise more than mine.'

Then, we traveled to the seventh heaven. When the heaven was opened, we were asked by the responsible angles: 'who are you?' 'I'm Gabriel'. 'Who is with you?' I answered: 'I'm Muhammad'. 'Has he sent as a messenger?' 'Yes'. 'welcome to You'. Just then the heaven was opened. Some where, I met the prophet Ibrahim UHPB. Gabriel: 'here is Ibrahim, your father, greet him! I greeted him and he answered: 'welcome to you, my pious son and a pious prophet!

I got Sidrah al-Muntaha, then. Gabriel: 'this is Sidrah al-Muntaha'. I turned around, I saw four rivers. Two of those were seen clearly (lahiriah), while the others were hidden (bathiniah). I asked Gabriel: 'what's this Gabriel?' 'The hidden ones were rivers of heavens, while the clear others were Nile and Furat.

Then, I got Bait al-Ma'mur where 70.000 angels come in every day. I was offered a glass of liquor or gimlet (khamer), a glass of milk and a glass of honey. But I took the milk. Then, Gabriel gave his comment: 'the drink you chose is natural (fitrah) for you as you are and for your followers'. Then, Allah commanded me 50 prayers a day. When returned and got the

Then, Allah commanded me 50 prayers a day. When returned and got the place where the prophet Musa was in, he asked me: 'what was commanded to you?' 'I was ordered to do prayers 50 times a day.' Prophet Musa: 'your followers won't afford to do it. Back to your god and ask for dispensation for them.' Soon I reverted to my God so that He made it a bit lighter by decreasing 10 times of prayer a day. I went back to prophet Musa. Meeting him, I was advised to back to Allah for the second. I turned to my God and He reduced 10 times of prayer from the previous. When I came back and met Musa, he just advised me by the same statement. I did the same thing, then my God gave me a dispensation 10 times of prayer were brought down. Returning and meeting the prophet Musa, he advised me the same thing. Then, I asked my God for a dispensation and He just did the same thing as before. I went back and met the prophet Musa as he ordered me the same thing till I asked my God

and He just decreased 5 times of prayer. Finally, I answered: I have asked my God dispensations for many times and I feel so shy to do it once more. Five times a day are enough for me, then I'll do it devoutly and willingly. Then, I said good bye to prophet Musa."

Thus the summery of isra' mi'raj story as told by Muhammad Ridha.

CHAPTER III

BIOGRAPHY, BOOKS AND CHARACTERISTIC OF IBN AL-ARABI'S INTERPRETATION

Biography of Ibn al-Arabi

His complete name is Muhammad Ibn Afi bin Muhammad Ibn al-Arab al-Ta'i al-Hatimi³². He was born on Monday, 17th of Ramadhan (fast month) 560 H or 28th of July, 1165 M in Murcia, Southeast Spain. Muhammad Ibn Sa'id Ibn Mardanisy was the ruler of Murcia and Valencia at the present, while in Eastern area, Abu Bakar al-Muzaffar Yusuf al-Mustanjid Billah Ibn al-Mugtafi was the caliph there for Islamic governance³³.

There were so many nick names associated to him, but the most ones are Muhyi al-Din and al-Syaikh al-Akbar. Al-Ta'i al-Hatimi was the legendary nickname correlated to glory which has known among Arabs for one who regarded to be a great scientist and expert of prophetic reports (hadis).34 But, commonly, he was known more as a sufism figure.³⁵

Kautsar Azhari Noer, Ibn al-Arabi: Wahdat al-Wujud in Debate (Jakarta: Paramadina, 1995), Ed.I:

³² In Islamic scientific literature, there were two figures known well with the same name and they came from the same town. The first was an expert of prophetic reports and jurisprudences whose name was Abu Bakr Muhammad Bin Abdullah Ibn al-Arabi al-Ma'afiri (468-543H/1076-1148M), while the other one was the sufism figure whose name was written above. To differentiate the two persons, Islamic examiners called the second figure in Eastern "Ibn al-Arabi" without "al", while in Western, they called him "Ibn al-Arabi" with "al".

³³ Faruq Abd al-Mu'ti, Muhyi al-Din Ibn al-Arabi (Beirut: Dar al-Kutub al-Ilmiyyah, 1994), Ed.I: 23
34 C. Van Arendonk, "al-Hatim al-Ta'i", Encyclopedia of Islam, Vol.III: 274-275

³⁵ A.E. Afifi, Filsafat Mistis Ibn 'Arabi Translation of Sjahrir Mawi and Nandi Rahman (Jakarta: Gaya Media Pratama, 1995), Ed.II: 1

When Ibn Murdanisy's authority was conquered devolved upon Muwahhidin dynasty in 567/1172, Ibn 'Arabi together with his family moved to Seville, Andalusia, the place where he had pursued sciences since he was at the age of 8 years under some famous Islamic scientist's teaching. There were so many subjects he learned at the time such al-Al-Qur'an, Tafsir (interpretation), Hadis (prophetic reports), Figh (jurisprudence), Nahu-Sharf (Arabic grammar), Theology, and Scholastic Philosophy. 36

His teachers in Seville were Abu Bakr Muhammad Ibn Khalaf al-Lakhmi and Abu al-Qasim Abdurrahman Ibn Ghalib al-Qurtubi who had taught him Qira'at discipline; Abu Bakr Muhammad Ibn Ahmad Ibn Abi Hamzah in al-Qur'an field; Ibn Zarqun al-Ansari, Ibn Faszz, Ibn al-Jadd, Abu al-Walid al-Hadrami al-Khazzraj and the others in Hadis field; Abu Muhammad Abd al-Haqq al-Asybili that taught him the books of Ibn Hazm.³⁷ While his spiritual teachers were Yusuf Ibn Khalaf al-Qumi—Abu Madyan's student—and Shalih al-Adawi. 38

When Ibn al-Arabi was 30 years old, 590/1193, he expatriated Spain and went to Tunisia. Seven years later, he continued to East. Then, he was doing a pilgrimage to Mecca in 599/1202, then he traveled to plenty of Islamic centre places, stayed in Egypt, Iraq, Syria and Rome (now Turkey) though he had never gone to Iran. In 620/1233, he stayed in Damascus with his students till he had passed away there in 638/1240. He spent his life by studying, writing and

³⁶ Kautsar. Azhari Noer, Ibn al-'Arabi: Wahdat al-Wujud Dalam Perdebatan, (Jakarta: paramadina, 19995), Ed.I: 18
³⁷ Faruq Abd al-Mu'ti, *Muhyi al-Din Ibn al-Arabi* (Beirut: Dar al-Kutub al-Ilmiyyah, 1994), Ed.I:

³⁸ A.E. Afifi, "Ibn 'Arabi" in M.M. Syarif (Editor) A History of Muslim Philosophy (Weosbaden: Otto Horrassowitz, 1963), Vol.I: 399

teaching. At the same time, he was involving in social-politic life of society. He was known intimately and had a tight relationship with three domestic kings at least that one of them had studied and understood Ibn 'Arabi's books well. In 632/1234, through a document, he licensed Ayyub bin Mudaffar al-Din Musa who was controlling over Damascus in 1230-1238, to teach all of his books which amounted 290 books according to him. In the same document, he stated that he had studied to 90 Islamic intellectuals (scholars).³⁹ He passed away in Damascus on 16th of November 1240 (28th of Rabi' al-Tsani, 638) when he was 76 years old.40

B. Ibn al-Arabi's Books

Ibn al-Arabi has written so many books in a large mount of disciplines. According to Utsman Yahya, Ibn al-Arabi has witten about 846 titles of books. but those aren't kept now save 400 books more or less. 41

Here is the table for some titles of his books alphabetically which had been published according to Ibn Arabi Society and can be accessed through internet by: http//www.ibnarabisociety.org:

NO	TITLE	NO	TITLE
1	Adab al-Murid	2	Al-Abadillah
3	Anqa' al-Mughrib	4	Aqidah al-Tauhid

³⁹ William C. Chittick, Ibn al-'Arabi's Metaphysics of Imagination: The Sufi Path of Knowledge

⁽Albany. SUNNY Press, 1989): iv ⁴⁰ R.W.J. Austin, Pendahuluan dalam Ibn 'Arabi, *Sufi-Sufi Andalusia* translation of M.S. Nasrulloh (Bandung: Mizan, 1994), Ed.I: 50-1

41 Kautsar Azhari Noer, Ibn al-Arabi: Wahdat al-Wujud in Debate: 25

5	Al-Arba'un Sahifah	6	Asrar al-Khalwah
7	Aurad al-Usbu'	8	Ayyam al-Sya'n
9	Al-Azal	10	Diwan Ibn Arabi
11	Al-Dakhair wa al-Alaq	12	Al-Durrat al-Balda
13	Al-Fana' fi al-Musyahadah	14	Fihris Muallafat Muhyiddin
			Ibn al-Arabi
15	Al-Futuhan al-Makkiyyah	16	Fusus al-Hikam
17	Al-Hadiyyah al-Tsaniyyah	18	Haqiqat al-Haqa'iq
19	Hilyah al-Abdal	20	Hizb al-Wiqayah
21	Ijazah li al-Malil: al-Muzaffar	22	Al-I'lam bi Isyarat ahl al-
			Ilham
23	Insya' al-Dawahir	24	Al-Isfar an Nata'ij al-Asfar
25	Al-Isra' ila maqam al-Asra	26	Istilahat al-Sufiyyah
27	Al-Jalal wa al-Jamal	28	Al-Jalalah
29	Jawab Su'al Ibn Saudakin	30	Al-Jawahir al-Aqliyyah
31	Kitab al-Alif	32	Kitab al-Akhlaq
33	Kitab al-Ba'	34	Kitab Ma la Budda Minhu Li
			al-Murid
35	Kitab al-Mim wa al-Wawu wa al-	36	Kitab al-Ya'
	Nun		
37	Kitab al-Yaqin	38	Kalimah Allah
39	Al-Khalwah al-Muthlaqah	40	Majmu'at Sa'ah al-Khabar

41	Al-Manzil al-Qutub wa Maqalahu	42	Magam al-Qurbah
	-		
	wa Haluhu		
43	Ma'arif Rijal al-Ghaib	44	Al-Masa'il
45	Mawaqi' al-Nujum	46	Al-Mauizdah al-Husna
40	wawaqi ai-ivujuii	40	Ai-iviauizuaii ai-riusiia
47	Mir'ah al-Ma'ani	48	Misykat al-Anwar
49	Muhadarat al-Abrar wa	50	Munajat al-Rahman bi Ayat
			, and the second
	Musamarat al-Akhyar		al-Qur'an
51	Naqs al-Fusus	52	Al-Nasa'ih
53	Al-Qasam al-Ilahi bi al-Ism al-	54	Al-Qaul al-Nafis fi Taflis Iblis
			711 Qual at Hattis II Tattis Ions
	Rabbani		
55	Qur'an al-Tuyur	56	Al-Qutb wa al-Imamain
57	Dodd al Mutanishihat ila al	58	Risalah al-Anwar
37	Radd al-Mutasyabbihat ila al-	38	Risalan al-Anwar
	Muhkamat		
59	Risalah fi al-Ahadiah	60	Risalah fi Usul al-Fiqh
			-
61	Risalah al-Qausiyyah	62	Risalah al-Hikam al-Ilahiyyah
63	Risalah al-Intisar	64	Risalah al-Kutub
65	Risalah Sirr al-Huruf	66	Risalah al-Syaikh ila al-Imam
03	Nisaian Sin ai-muu	00	Risalah al-Syaikh ha al-ililah
			al-Razi
67	Risalah al-Wasiyyah	68	Ruh al-Quds
60		70	Contamb at V
69	Al-Syajarah al-Nu'maniyyah	70	Syajarah al-Kaun
71	Al-Syahid wa al-Musyahad	72	Syaqq al-Jaib
73	Al-Tadbirah al-Ilahiyyah	74	Tafsir Ibn Arabi

7 5	Taj al-Rasail wa Minhaj al- Wasa'il	76	Taj al-Tarajim
77	Tajalliyat	78	Tahzdib al-Akhlaq
79	Takhmis Qasidati Abi Madyan	80	Al-Tanazzulat al-Lailiyyah
81	Al-Tamazzulat al-Mausiliyyah	82	Tarjuman al-Asywaq
83	Tuhfah al-Safarah	84	Al-Tur al-A'la
85	Al-Ujala'	86	'Uqlah al-Mustaufiz
87	Al-Wasaya	88	Al-Wird

C. Characteristic of Ibn al-Arabi's Interpretation

There so many things can be moslem's lessons that come from Ibn al-Arabi's interpretation. Here, it's presented three of those only. *Firstly*, Ibn al-Arabi's opinion on interpretation of al-Qur'an. *Secondly*, some opinions over himself interpretation. *Thirdly*, style of his writing on his book, namely *al-Futuhat al-Makkiyyah*.

The next, will be presented some of his views toward interpretation of al-Qur'an.

1. When an interpretation based on the text literally, the interpretation is valid. For this case, he wrote:

Each meaning contained in the words of Allah, whether al-Qur'an, Taurat, Zabur, Injil, or Shahifaf for whomever knew them all in their languages, then the meaning was that what Allah wanted related to the interpreter himself. It's because His knowledge covered all meanings. No

one could say that the interpretation was wrong when it really based on the text. Whoever supposed the contrary, he was absolutely lack of his knowledge. Nevertheless, to apply and actualize an interpretation in this life wasn't a must, except for the interpreter himself and everyone followed him. ⁴².

Whoever tried to interpret al-Qur'an by the text or literally as contained in, he had a right interpretation. On the contrary, he who interpreted as he thought, actually he became an infidel or unbeliever as explained in hadis told by al-Tirmidi. Yet, it's not proper to consider him as who has interpreted al-Qur'an by his own perspective except the philologists didn't understand the meaning of his words.⁴³

2. Validity of an interpretation is multilevel. It's absolutely based on spiritual interpreter as Ibn al-Arabi told:

One interpreted al-Qur'an on his own desire, he had really become apostate. While the interpretation was multiple diverse and wasn't absolute. It utterly depended on interpreter's spiritual condition as he understood the words, namely moments in levels (maratib) of spiritual climbing as well as his attainment in degrees (derajah). When he reached the higher level, he would discover the new and comfort meanings in. 44

3. All verses in al-Qur'an had clear (*lahir*) and hidden (*bathin*) meanings, limits (*hudud*), and *muttala*' as the interpreter climbed from and reached it. He explained:

the messenger Muhammad said: "none of verse of al-Qur'an was revealed or sent down except it absolutely had clear and hidden meanings. Each

⁴² Ibn al-Arabi. Al-Futuhat al-Makkiyyah: 119

⁴³ Ibid: 567

⁴⁴ Ibn al-Arabi. Tafsir al-Qur'an al-Karim, (Beirut: Dar al-Yaqzah al-Arabiyyah, 1968), Vol. II: 5

letter had limit, while every limit had muttala'". 45 Then finally I knew that the clear meaning was an interpretation, while the hidden one was metaphor (ta'wil), the limit was final point of an understanding in a sentence, while almuttala' was that an interpreter climbed from and to it...⁴⁶

4. The clear or literal meaning must be prioritized. So, if an interpretation had a controversial meaning with the literal one, it ought to be false. There were some statements of Ibn al-Arabi toward the case in a various context he tried to explained.

None of moslem interpreter had the same care as Ibn al-Arabi's in keeping the literal meanings of the Book. He had never refused the clear or literal interpretation. His interpretation based on a "futuh" which passed over than cognitive boundaries of the common. He often quoted that it's very possible that Allah would like to uncover the senses contained in a text for pious ('arif) while the others couldn't reach them, and the disclosures (mukasyafah) would be right as long as hand in hand with the literal. The disclosure was an additional metaphor which enable us to know the reality of God in His manifestation. At the time being, it's not needed to talk about how far the righteousness of that disclosure because it will never give an effect on a command or prohibition in syariat.⁴⁷

⁴⁵ Chittick stated that the hadis was often adopted by sufi and Ibn al-Arabi himself likely knew well that the hadis wasn't found in some standard books as he wrote: our companionships, association of kasyf, all of them approved on the validity of the hadis (Ibn al-Arabi. Al-Futuhat al-Makkiyyah, Vol. I, Lebanon: Dar al-Fikr, 1994: 187), William C. Chittick, Ibn al-'Arabi's Metaphysics of Imagination: 423

46 Ibn al-Arabi. Al-Futuhat al-Makkiyyah: 4

⁴⁷ William C. Chittick, Ibn al-'Arabi's Metaphysics of Imagination: xvi

The main principle of him in metaphorical interpretation of al-Qur'an was very simple when an interpreter willingly and logically acknowledge and witness that there is no God save Allah and Muhammad is His messenger, that Allah wishes all meanings literally in al-Qur'an that can be understood by the language users. Allah who has created philologists and given an existence to the language al well as revealed al-Qur'an. The purpose of revelation is clarification, not causing everyone confused. "we had never sent a messenger save by his people's language so he can give them explanation" (al-Qur'an, article 14:4). Therefore, Ibn al-Arabi always analyzed the meaning of the words as understood by the Arabic language users as al-Qur'an was sent to them, though not in the context of so many specialists in some fields when tried to bear a meaning for the words.⁴⁸

Ibn al-Arabi treated every word in al-Qur'an and *hadis* with a maximal standard. No one is accidental. Allah and His messenger never spoke except by what they really wanted as they told. It's not allowed to substitute a word on other one, then suppose the word as what really meant and wished as well as interpret the word metaphorically as its prototype in realities of divinity, if the treatment even refuse or minimize the literal meanings. So, it's very necessary to know the meaning of the words literally and realize that each one expresses a certain dimension in a concrete method of divinity reality which will never shown by the other words. ⁴⁹

⁴⁸ Ibid: xvi

⁴⁹ Ihid xvi

Ibn al-Arabi's opinion on his own books:

- a) That all of his writings in his books were about al-Qur'an⁵⁰
- b) That there was the correlation in explanation among those books, while one could understand he who's able to know the correlation (munasabah) of al-Our'an verses.⁵¹
- c) That everything he wrote in his books was the command of Allah, not an individual wish exclusively.⁵²
- d) Whatever he wrote was only a bit than the condition that Allah opened for him (through disclosure) as he wrote: "whatever I wrote in each chapter is just like a drop in ocean when it's compared with the thing I have. So, when it's imagined how much it is what I have when compared with the other one in my books. It's a sea without any beach." 53

From his writing character, especially in his famous book, al-Futuhat al-Makkiyyah, it's found:

1) In interpreting, he usually begins with a theme, then expresses the meanings etymologically that contained in key terms, afterward he tries to

⁵⁰ Ibn al-Arabi, Al-Futuhat al-Makkiyyah, Vol. III: 56 and 334

⁵¹ Ibid, Vol. II: Dar al-Fikr, 1994: 548

⁵² He wrote: "I don't refer to philosopher's statement at all nor anyone else. Everything I tell here and in other books is what I get through my disclosure and dictated by al-Haqq" (Ibn al-Arabi. Al-Futuhat al-Makkiyyah, Vol. II: 432). In other space, he also wrote: "surely that this book and the other books of me stand on their own method without any imitation over the others generally or the authors' style… when something occurs on my heart from behind of curtain, then my heart immediately obey it and write it as the boundaries ordered." (Ibn al-Arabi. Al-Futuhat al-Makkiyyah, Vol. I, Lebanon: Dar al-Fikr, 1994: 59)

His statement indirectly was the response on Corbin's suspicion that his interpretation was the imitation over Syi'ah as Corbin explained in his book (Henri Corbin, , Creative Imagination in The Susism of Ibn 'Arabi (L'imagination creatrice dans le Sousisme d'Ibn 'Arabi), Translation of. Ralph Manheim, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1969: 50)

⁵³ Ibn al-Arabi. Al-Futuhat al-Makkiyyah, Vol. II: 578

- utter some related propositions from al-Qur'an or *Hadis*⁵⁴. He starts from the general, then explains the hidden meanings.
- 2) He often repeats the themes he wrote which in Chittick's version the repetition has it's own context that's different with the others in some pages of his books.⁵⁵
- 3) On his interpretation, he used so many idiomatical words that can be understood just by means of the context on how he understood and explained the words.⁵⁶

⁵⁴ As he used hadis for argumentation, he had his own criteria in the validity and the contrary. Beside the common way as the fix methodology used and applied by hadis scholars, he had also a disclosure method (Ibn al-Arabi. *Al-Futuhat al-Makkiyyah*, Vol. III, Lebanon: Dar al-Fikr, 1994: 70)

⁵⁵ William C. Chittick, Ibn al-'Arabi's Metaphysics of Imagination: xxi

⁵⁶ Ibid: xxi. Therefore, it's needed special dictionaries explain them like Istilahat al-Sufiyyah in Rasail Ibn al-Arabi, al-Mu'jam al-Sufi: al-Hikmah fi Hudud al-Kalimah etc.

CHAPTER IV

AL-QUR'AN AS MEDIA OF MI'RAJ IN IBN AL-ARBI'S PERSPECTIVE

A. Definition of al-Qur'an According to Ibn al-Arabi

As some quotations read from Ibn al-Arabi's writings, especially in al-Futuhat al-Makkiyyah, it seems that Ibn al-Arabi interprets al-Qur'an as "compilation" (al-jam'u), though it's important to confirm that he always accepted any interpretations which had no controversial sight to the exist theorem. Below are some quotations explain the case.

"Know! That Allah has sent down al-Qur'an in characters composed and structured from two up to five letters in each word, then Allah made It in words, verses, articles, so as the light, guidance, potion, mercy, remembrance, explainer, righteousness, muhkam, mutasyabih, and mufasshal (detailed). Each of those names have the specific meaning which's different from others, though all are the decrees of Allah. When the Book compiled those names, so It called as al-Qur'an (compilation). Then a servant tries to sanctify Allah by those praises, namely specific praise in each level he is being, so the praise will lead him to know some knowledge he had never owned before, namely "the knowledge of permit of Allah" that by the knowledge, Allah had caused a bird of clay to be alive through Jesus and by the knowledge, Jesus blew a breath in the bird so that it could fly. By the knowledge, he had cured a blind man and a leprosy sufferer, even awakened a died one.

Here is a great knowledge that Abu Yazid and Dzun Nun al-Mishry gained it. Once upon a time an ant was dead because of Abu Yazin al-Bustami unintentionally, but it was alive again after he had blown a breath in.

⁵⁷ Ibn al-Arabi, al-Futuhat al-Makkiyyah, Vol. III: 96

While Dzun Nun al-Mishry when a mother came to him and complained about his son who was pounced on by a crocodile. Soon Dzun Nun came to Nile and called the crocodile, surprisingly the crocodile vomited the child in alive condition just like prophet Yunus who has been vomited by a fish. When their disclosure was opened by Allah through the knowledge. they praised Allah by the specific praises taught in the each levels. In this way, they strengthened their soul from all people challenged them as they have known that the level was the compilation of all levels (al-jami'). Therefore, the level is called by level of al-Our'an". 58

Al-Qur'an is one of holy books, but just al-Qur'an that has the aspect of compilation (jam'iyyah).59

Prophet Muhammad PBUH expressed his praise to Allah by means of al-Qur'an that compiled all praises. That's why al-Qur'an is known as compiler or qur'an.60

In his comprehension, al-Qur'an has very close synonym terms which the most often he mentioned are as follow⁶¹: Wujud, the names of Allah, Akhlak (Moral) of Allah, 62 Moral of the messenger Muhammad and Cosmos (macro and micro cosmos). Here are some quotations there in his statements:

"The messenger's morality is al-Qur'an and al-takhalluq bi asma' Allah (having morality of Allah's) is his character "63

"Cosmos is a book of opened sheets"64

⁵⁸ *Ibid*: 92 ⁵⁹ *Ibid*: 160

63 *Ibid*, Vol. III: 61

⁶⁰ *Ibid*, Vol. II: 88

The other terms are for instance: Wajh Allah (the face of Allah), Barzakh, Unlimited Imagination, The Cloud, The Breath of al-Rahman, al-Haqq, Universal Reality, Perfect Human Reality, Knowledge, Ray, and Tajalli (manifestation). Certainly that all of those are used in specific context that will be no overlap in use

62 He stated that the way straight to Allah based on "al-takhallaq bi asma' Allah" (have morality of

Allah). See al-Futuhat al-Makkiyyah, Vol.II: 42

"If you want to meet the messenger Muhammad, but absolutely you can't meet him directly, yet you can meet al-Qur'an instead. There is no difference between both of meeting him and al-Qur'an. It is as if that al-Qur'an is the configuration of Muhammad Ibn Abdillah Ibn Abd al-Mutthalib." 65

"Al-Qur'an is a great totality that compiles all things"66

"All existences are letters, words, articles, and verses. Therefore, all are the great al-Qur'an" 67

"The perfect human is the compiler of all cosmos realities" 68

"Allah quoted: 'We'll show them all signs of us, either what contained in horizon or in their selves' (al-Qur'an 14:15) in order that they know that they are cosmos consist of signs in. First of all opened for who has solitude is the signs of cosmos—before anything in his self—as cosmos was created before his existence as quoted above. Afterward, Allah will show him His signs were opened to the servant, everything in his self."

In accordance with his explanation, Abd al-Karim Ibn Ibrahim al-Jilli, a Sufism figure, talked about the correlation of the three books. In his perspective that the holy Book consists of articles, verses, words, and letters. The articles have the same meaning as inner forms (dzati), namely the manifestation of al-Kamal (the most perfection). It's certain that each article in has a specific meaning that different from the other one. So, the manifestation of Allah in shape is just different one another. While the verses in are similar with realities of

⁶⁴ The interpretation of Ibn al-Arabi over al-Qur'an (Article 52:2-3) in al-Futuhat al-Makkiyyah, Vol. III: 455

⁶⁵ Ibd, Vol. IV: 60

⁶⁶ Ibd, Vol. II: 134 and Vol. I: 56

⁶⁷ Ibd. Vol. IV: 167

⁶⁸ *Ibd*, Vol. III: 410

⁶⁹ Ibd, Vol. II: 150

compilation.⁷⁰ The most perfect man is Muhammad the messenger because he is a good servant of *al-Haq* (God) and good friend of creatures.⁷¹

Al-Qur'an is the only one among three revealed books ahead that's easier to understand being compared with both of cosmic revealed by Allah because of availability of key in al-Qur'an which enable the servant to get disclosure (*futuh*), namely the disclosure for him to understand and uncover the signs in both of macro (universe) and micro cosmos (him self).⁷²

The written books are actual, right and authentic manifestation of Allah's sayings. Every letter is full of meanings as it is the reflection of God's realities, either from the aspect of form and the substance, so as the cosmos, but the written book has it's own excellence because of the linguistic, namely the letters that suit to the truth of absoluteness or Allah Him self. The linguistic aspect indicates straightly a specific characteristic of humans, namely their ability to speak or talk rationally. It caused them to be thinking animal (hayawaman natiq). Besides, the written book with its letters has a specific character which wasn't owned by the cosmos, that's how to compile and combine (al-jam'u wa al-damn).⁷³

Thus some explanations toward al-Qur'an in Ibn al-Arabi's version, especially in the point of the written book which was revealed to prophet Muhammad PBUH.

Abd al-Karim Ibn Ibrahim al-Jilli, al-Insan al-Kamil (Beirut: Dar al-Fikr, No Year), Vol. I: 109
 Ibid. Vol. II: 71

⁷² Ibn al-Arabi wrote: "the knowledge of letters preceded the knowledge of names just like a letter that preceded a word which consist of the letters". See Ibn al-Arabi, Kitab al-Mim wa al-Nun in Rasail Ibn al-Arabi, Hyderabad: Da'irah al-Ma'arif al-Usmaniyah, 1361/1948, Vol. I: 3

B. Definition of Mi'raj According to Ibn al-Arabi

There are so many remarks and usages of the word "mi'raj" in ibn al-Arabi's terms. But, it's comprehensible that the word mi'raj is articulated by him to describe human's journey returning to Allah generally. For instance, he used the word the most in ranks to explain mi'raj journey of messenger Muhammad PBUH in penetrating cosmos levels as discussed ahead. In the night of isra' mi'raj, one of his explanations toward the case which has a tight correlation to the context is when he talked about the intention and meaning of al-Qur'an 35:10, that believer without any discrimination actually has been doing mi'raj by his good deeds as he quoted:

"...and everything ascends (ya'ruju) straight to heavens" (al-Qur'an 57:4), namely the good words on Buraq of good deeds that berings the owner (believer) straight to Allah. Then, Allah says: "only to Him, the good words ascend (yas'udu), everything appears from the earth, and good deeds taken up by Him (al-Qur'an 35:10)"74

"As soon as possible he will know that Allah prepared a riding animal for him as the reward of his good deeds. The animal is so domesticated and easy to order which names Burq and that's a barzakhi animal"75

It's obvious that Ibn al-Arabi tends to treat isra' the same as mi'raj term when analyzed from some quotations ahead⁷⁶. In his version, that isra' and mi'raj

⁷⁴ *Ibid*, Vol. III: 348 ⁷⁵ *Ibid*, Vol. III: 348: 560

Barzakhi means the place and time between death and the Last Judgment

is Qur'anic experience that not only prophet Muhammad PBUH has done it, but also can be experienced by other people of his inheritants. However both of those experiences, namely prophet Muhammad's and his followers' has some differences practically. On this point, ibn al-Arabi differentiated both of prophetic isra' mi'raj such what experienced by prophet Muhammad and the other one of Sufi's tradition as clarified and explored by him.

"Don't you know that when prophet Muhammad PBUH was in mi'raj flight, Allah had made 50 times of prayers compulsory upon him and his followers. Then, it's the so called mi'raj tasyri' that's specialized over him and none of the others included the holy persons save the prophet had it...."⁷⁷.

Muhammad, the messenger had experienced mi'raj for 34 times. Once only he did mi'raj by his body, while the other one he's just done it by his soul... While the holy persons (wali) experience the spiritual barzakhi mi'raj where they can witness and see the meanings of sensory shapes for imaginations. In this way, they're opened with disclosure. They also have isra' either on the earth or air but not in the heavens by their body. In this line, prophet Muhammad surpassed other people of all servants that he has experienced isra' mi'raj, penetrating heavens and orbits by his body and soul, while his followers just afford to have it by their

Muhamamd can be found in three books, namely Risalah al-Anwar, al-Futuhat al-Makkiyyah, and Kitab al-Isra'. Michal wrote: "Risalah al-Anwar which talked more about the mi'raj of holy persons in detail exploration isn't the one of ibn al-Arabi's books talking about the theme. He also wrote it in some other places of his books at random, namely allegorically in al-Futuhat al-Makkiyyah of chapter 167 and autobiographically in the chapter 367, as well in Kitab al-Isra'' (Michal Chodkiewiez, Seal of the Saint, Cambridge, England: The Islamic Text Society, 1993: 148). In this book, everyone can get a clear description and detail exploration because he combined and compiled all of Ibn al-Arabi's writings toward the mi'raj.

77 Ibn al-Arabi, al-Futuhat al-Makkiyyah, Vol.III: 55

soul as spiritual flight not of their bodies. *Isra' mi'raj* of his followers, His servants lie variously. It absolutely depends on various manifested meanings that tends paradoxal to sensory *isra' mi'raj*. So, their *mi'raj* is spiritual flight with their souls and heartsight over the forms of *barzakhi*.⁷⁸

To describe Ibn al-Arabi's spiritual experience in doing *mi'raj*, it's presented here what he wrote in his monumental book, al-Futuhat al-Makkiyyah in chapter 367, namely the *mi'raj* of penetrating levels of cosmos as comparative study on the topic being discussed.

- 1. In the beginning of his flight, a flight to the first heaven, he met four elements of realm or nature. They are soil, water, air, and fire. Then, he make a dialogue with them till he get the first heaven. 79
- 2. At his arrival in the first heaven, he met prophet Adam that stood on his right side in front of him with his smile on Ibn al-Arabi while telling him: "just like this what I experienced when the day of oath in front of Allah and on His right hand, all of my generations. I and all of my generations were on His right hand so that all would be happy....."
- 3. Arriving at the second heaven, Ibn al-Arabi met prophet Jesus and Yahya, then he got some knowledge from them which covered the secrets of spirit, the death and life and all related to lauh al-mahfudz, universal soul and the highest quill. Here, Allah showed him that all ways rotated in circles and none of ways was straight.⁸¹

79 Ihid: 34

⁷⁸ *Ibid*: 342-3

⁸⁰ Ibid: 345-6

⁸¹ Ihid: 346-7

- 4. Arriving at the third heaven, he met prophet Yusuf and got confirmation about some knowledge from him such as the knowledge of forms, jewelries, beauty, the harmony of four elements ahead and characteristics which arranged the universe, cosmos hierarchy, the secrets of imagination world, knowledge of symbols, interpretations of dreams, and about the wisdoms of Allah.⁸²
- 5. Getting the fourth heaven, he met prophet Idris then they had a long dialogue. He found so much knowledge in this heaven through his conversation with the prophet such as knowledge about eternality alteration of God's realities (taqlib al-umur al-ilahiah), namely that His manifestation happened in so many kinds and had never limited as well always new, knowledge of relativity. In this heaven, he was greeted by prophet Idris because he's the inheritant of prophet Muhammad and the last holy persons for his followers.⁸³
- 6. Reaching the fifth heaven, he met prophet Harun, then they mad a long dialogue. As prophet Idris did, prophet Harun congratulated Ibn al-Arabi because he had become prophet Muhammad's follower and inheritant. Some of their dialogue matters were about Pharaoh's fate and the value of sacrifice⁸⁴ as well as about imperfection of knowledge owned by some *makrifat* people⁸⁵
- 7. When he got the sixth heaven, he met prophet Musa. They had so many themes in talking about, but the largest one is about witnessing or seeing Allah. 86 According to Ibn al-Arabi, that some body who reached the sixth

83 *Ibid:* 348-9

⁸² Ibid: 347-8

^{84 16:2} Val. 11.

⁸⁵ Ibid Vol III: 340

ibia, Vol. III: 349

heaven in the way he did (spiritual flight), so he'll obtain 12.000 kinds of

knowledge by referring to al-Qur'an 2:60 as part of musawwiyah guardian.87

8. in the seventh heaven, he met prophet Ibrahim leaning on Bait al-ma'mur.

They chatted for along time, especially around some al-Qur'anic verses

related to Ibrahim himself. Here, Ibn al-Arabi witnessed a great deal of

spiritual aspects concerning with Bait al-ma'mur.88

9. Passing over the last heaven, he continued his flight to Sidrah al-muntaha. In

this place, he had his great chatting with Allah, The Almighty about so many

things.89

Then, Ibn al-Arabi doesn't tell any body about the next level he passed

and experienced, but he just talked about a large mount of knowledge he got from

his flight. However he still kept up his flight straight to a lot of places that after

calling at Sidrah al-Muntaha, he flied directly to the fixed orbited stars as well as

unfixed orbited ones, then to Kursi (chair), afterward to Arsy, universal substance,

nature, universal spirit, the first intellect/pen/Muhammadian reality, cloud, and

the last he reached where he was in front of Allah (the presence of Allah).⁹⁰

⁸⁷ *Ibid*, Vol. II: 277

88 *Ibid*, Vol. III: 350

89 Ibid

⁹⁰ *Ibid*, Vol. II: 275-85

C. Al-Qur'an as Media Of Mi'raj in Ibn Al-Arabi's Perspective

To know al-Qur'an as media of mi'raj, it's comprehensible by four explanations as expressed by Ibn al-Arabi.

Firstly, that al-Qur'an is identical to that of a cosmos, 91 while the flight of mi'rai is done by passing over the ladders of mi'raj in the cosmos.

Secondly, that all articles contained in al-Qur'an are stopping places (manzilah-manzilah)⁹² which found in the holy book.

Thirdly, that some one can't do mi'raj except by religious worship based His law, while the kind of worship can be found only in al-Qur'an.

Fourth, that there are 28 ladders of mi'raj that comprehensively identical to that of 28 Arabic alphabets in al-Qur'an. Below are some quotations adopted from Ibn al-Arabi's explanations (for the second till the fourth part, while the first was discussed ahead).

The articles in al-Qur'an are spiritual stages as he wrote: 1)

I had explained to you that the verses summery of Allah's words which manifested in the breath of Al-Rahman are just like the verses in holy al-Qur'an and other holy books. That the articles compiled the verses and so explained in details as the verses in al-Qur'an which become manzilah of the holy book...93

⁹¹ This part was discussed ahead

⁹² Etymologically, manzilah means the place where some one stops in the frame of flying straight to Allah. Ibn al-Arabi tends to interpret it as a place where Allah goes down to meet His servant (being in flight) and he comes to Him. See Futuhat al-Makkiyyah, Vol. II: 577 or in Glossary. 93 Ibid: 429

Chodkiewiez in his research on al-Futuhat al-Makkiyyah, found the thesis that after observing ibn al-Arabi's book, it's concluded that all chapters in his book had a close correspondence with each articles in al-Qur'an as he wrote the chapters in a certain section of his book which talked about manzilah exclusively. Thing that's very unique that the chapters mentioned in a certain section has a tight correlation with the hidden meanings contained in al-Qur'an where each manzilah in relates closely to one or more of spiritual realities of messenger Muhammad PBUH explicitly, prophet Isa and prophet Musa. Each one of the chapters contained a lot of catalogs of karamah and basirah⁹⁴ and Ibn al-Arabi often correlated the matter with certain details in the specific articles of al-Our'an.⁹⁵

2. Mi'raj is done based on laws of Allah (syari'ah), while laws found in al-Our'an as the main source of Moslems.

In Ibn al-Arabi's perspective, the term of *syari'ah* has so many definitions. Some times he meant *syariah* as codified jurisprudential laws, but in other chance he meant it as "wide road" of Islam that consist from all levels of Islamic teachings, even some other time he meant it as comprehensive clear dimensions of Islam when it's confronted to spiritual mystical path (*tariqah*) and reality (essence) that formed hidden dimensions of Islam. ⁹⁶ Yet, he stated that all meanings expressed came from al-Qur'an as he quoted below:

⁹⁴ Both of the words explained in Glossary

⁹⁵ James Morris and Friends, *The Introduction to The Meccan Revelation* (New York: Pir Publication Inc. 2002): 97

⁹⁶ William C. Chittick, Ibn al-Arabi's Metaphysics of Imagination: 170

Know that there are three sources of Islamic laws in syariah as approved: The holy book (al-Kitab), prophetic traditions (as-Sunnah) and consensus of Moslem scholars. While analogy (Qiyas) is still in debate.... And because of all His Islamic law which burdened to all who have attained the age of puberty (mukallaf) come from al-Qur'an certainly, so it's impossible that syariah can be reached except by the Speaker of al-Qur'an itself, namely Allah.....⁹⁷

He argued that *syariah* is the only one way as a key to open the door of *mi'raj*. It's obviously described by him in his quotations for instance what he wrote in describing about *mi'raj* flight in his *Risalah al-Anwar*:

...the most important thing and the most compulsory for you firstly is that you must learn and know how to do and perfect your ablution, your prayer, your fasting, your piety, as well as all burdened over your specifically because all of these kinds would be your first step and phase in doing mysticism (suluk). After those, a servant should keep his odyssey up to the so called observant (wara'), then asceticism (zuhd) and resignation (tawakkul) as well. When you get hal among ahwal of tawakkul, you'll obtain four sacred glories (karamat). Those glories become a sign that you've gotten the first level of tawakkul, namely: the folding up of earth in front of you, walking over water, flying in the air, then all creatures offering meal for you. Afterward, you'll enter some maqam continuously, ahwal, karamat and tanazzulat⁹⁸ forever till you'll be died...⁹⁹

⁹⁷ Ibn al-Arabi, al-Futuhat al-Makkiyyah, Vol. II: 162

⁹⁸ The explanations of these terms can be accessed in Glossary

⁹⁹ Ibn al-Arabi, Risalah al-Anwar in Rasa'il Ibn al-Arabi (Hyderabad: Da'irah al-Ma'arif al-Usmaniyyah, 1948), Vol. I: 1-13

In accordance with his explanation, Nasr Hamid in his book, Falasafah al-Ta'wil, wrote a similar description as follow:

Imagination odyssey indeed is a process from human's clear side to the hidden one. Here is the so called mi'raj flight of Sufism people. In the frame of uniting and compiling these two aspects, it's needed a mediator power and the power known by syariah. Actually syariah is a mediator which's able to protect humans from destruction everlastingly, namely arrogance and claiming being a god and protect them from throwing headlong being animals. Therefore, it's known intimately that Sufism world in mi'raj journey started from the implementation of syariah perfectly and all kinds of clear obligations comprehensively till some one gets the level of tawakkul. This phase is signed by his attaining over some sacred glories, then it continues to verification over a great deal of magam and hal up to reaching the real makrifat...

Indeed, mi'raj odyssey for them is a process passing over all levels of clear and hidden corners which show them on how far they have implemented syariah.....¹⁰⁰

3. Twenty eight Arabic characters articulation (makharij al-huruf) in al-Our'an are the ladders of mi'raj

According to Ibn al-Arabi, twenty eight Arabic characters composition and their articulations (makharij al-huruf) as known—namely the characters of deep one (hamzah) in articulation till the shallowest (wawu)—are similar with twenty eight levels of cosmos as breathed by Ar-Rahman. He explained:

¹⁰⁰ Nasr Hamid Abu Zaid, Falsafah al-Ta'wil: Dirasah fi ta'wil al-Qur'an 'inda Muhy al-Din Ibn 'Arabi (Beirut: al-Markaz as-Saqafi al-Arabi, 1996): 205-6

So, cosmos amount in accordance with 28 characters without any differences.

The first is intellect or pen as prophet Muhammad PBUH said that the first thing created by Allah was intellect, but in other statement, he said that the first was pen, then soul (lauh), then nature (tabiat), then grit (alhabba'), then body, then shape (syakl), then Arsy, then Kursi, then atlas (orbit without stars), then orbit with fixed stars, then the first heaven, then the second heaven, then the third heaven, then the fourth heaven, then the fifth heaven, then the sixth heaven, then the seven heaven, then the orb of fire, then the orb of air, then the orb of water, then soil, then mineral, then tree, then animal, then angel, then gin, then human, and then level (martabah)¹⁰¹

In other hand, he stated obviously that *makharij al-huruf* symbolizes spots or ladders of *mi'raj* which passed over by *mi'raj* explorer in his odyssey to meet Allah. He wrote:

That harakah, characters or huruf and makharij al-huruf are admonitions from Allah. That the essences consist of attributes and maqamat. He has mad the harakat just like attributes, characters as what being explained, while makharij al-huruf just the same as all maqamat and levels of mi'raj. 102

¹⁰² Ibid, Vol. I: 105

¹⁰¹ Ibn al-Arabi, al-Futuhat al-Makkiyyah, Vol. II: 395

Below is his quotation about this case that he wrote in the chapter 451 of al-Futuhat al-Makkiyyah entitled "discussing about manzilah in makhraj to know the levels of mi'raj":

Supposing that there is no existence in the ladders of mi'raj, it's absolutely there is no entity of characters come from makharij.

The matter in that existence manifested the words of Allah—cosmos—that's the breath of Al-Rahman, so that the matter called by words.

Therefore, prophet Isa known as the word of Allah (kalamullah) {al-Qur'an 4:171}

Know that when Allah manifested His words, He determines for those words the levels as He planned! Then, some of them are associated to shining spirits, some are associated to fire, while the others are associated to soil. They all are in different levels and Allah place them integrally with their selves, then Allah show them their selves and in them selves, they are disguised or separated from Him.

Ibn al-Arabi also explained in al-Futuhat al-Makkiyyah, Volume II from page 421 till 469 about those characters. He began from the name of Allah, then levels of the related cosmic and the suited characters, afterward the relevance of all. Here are some of his quotations:

¹⁰³ Ibid, Vol. IV: 65-6

- 1. Al-Badi' (The Almighty Creator), the first intellect (known by the highest pen as well), Hamzah as he understood and interpreted from al-Qur'an 2:117. the first intellect was created by Allah without any mediator. It's the only one creature and the first created by Him without any mediator, and absolutely different from the others which created through one or more mediators.
- 2. Al-Ba'is (The Almighty Raiser), universal soul (al-nafs al-kulliyyah or al-lauh al-mahfuz), Ha' as understood and interpreted from al-Qur'an 82:8. Al-Bais means take up or raise everything over there. It's correlated with some people appointed to be prophets or with humans raised at the day of judgment. In this case, universal soul is the first existence raised from the other one, namely the first intellect. In intellectuality or spirituality, intellect and soul or pen and luh are some prototypes of all cosmic activities and receptivities, masculinity and feminism. Soul reflects cosmic popularity internally in two principle powers, the knowing gotten from intellect and deed.
- 3. Al-Batin (The Most Hidden), nature (tabi'at), Ain as he understood and interpreted from al-Qur'an 57:3. Nature represents the name Al-Batin in cosmos it hides forever, though it manifests through four qualities and tendencies of main cosmic known by four nature: warm, cold, dried, and wet. Both of these four nature are active (warm and cold) while the others are receptive which multiply spiritual power. Nature is a mother that realize all its orders over all in cosmos save intellect and soul.
- 4. Al-Akhir (The last), substance of grit or dust (al-jauhar al-habba'i), Ha' as he understood and interpreted from al-Qur'an 57: 3. Substance of grit is just like nature which can't be known except by it's trace. It becomes matter of empty room and underlies all existences in this universe, unless intellect and soul. The relevance between both of Al-Akhir and substance of grit is that factually al-akhir constitutes the principle of hereafter life, while all existences were born from the

- Most Earliest and returning to the Last. Thus, that all existences emanated from The substance of grit and would return to it time by time, then it returns through new creating finally. Of course, it'll return to the substance of grit one upon time, then Allah will gave a new existence in the next phase.
- 5. Al-Zahir (The Most Clear), The Whole Body (al-jism al-kull), Ghain as he understood and interpreted from al-Qur'an 57:3. The whole body is substance of whole physical that becomes source of appearance and shape for body and imaginary in this universe. It can be drawn as an orb fills out empty realm. Imaginary bodies have sensory characteristics which are similar with those physical bodies but not solid so that they gain appearances as well. The relevance of both is that what's clear and manifested for us is physical, namely what defined as sensory, though it doesn't depend on external sensory organs utterly for instance what we see through our dreams.
- 6. Al-Hakim (The Best Wisest), Shape (syakl), Kha' as he understood and interpreted from al-Qur'an 17:84. Shape is the following logical step after manifestation in physical, The Whole Body. By Shape, all existences in this realm have differences among them. Al-Hakim dominates every shape composition and has correlation with "place some thing properly" that in this case, He determined the proper shape for each physical existences.
- 7. Al-Muhit (The Almighty Pervader), Arsy, Qaf as he understood and interpreted from al-Qur'an 20:5. Here is what mentioned in al-Qur'an that Al-Rahman sit down on. He's the first physical existence that has specific shape. He covers all manifested universes and of course including imaginary realm.
- 8. Al-Syakur (The Almighty Thanker). Kursi, Kaf. Here is the first imaginary existence in Arsy port. Kursi is as large as sky and earth. It is a locus where Allah hanged His leg on, that's leg of mercy confronting anger. There is nothing on Kursi unless His mercy, but

- It's as large as skies and earth (al-Qur'an 2:225) which compile either mercy or anger.
- 9. Al-Ghani (The Best Richest), Orbit without stars (al-falak al-atlas), Jim as he understood and interpreted from al-Qur'an 3:97. It manifested The Almighty's riches as It's free of planet's specification, though It can be divided into twelve sectors known by zodiac. Heaven is located between this Orbit and the lower one.
- 10. Al-Muqaddir (The Almighty Disposer), The Orbit with Stars (al-Falak al-Manazil), Syin. Twenty eight manzilah of moons contained in this Orbit and each has correspondence to characters of Breath. Interaction between 12 orders of zodiac and 28 manzilah mentioned creates imbalance (because of difference in rate). This condition causes a constant movement and change for the lower areas. Explicitly, al-Qur'an associate those moons manzilah to the decision of Allah (al-Qur'an 36:39)
- 11. All-Rabb (God). The First Heaven, Ya' as he understood and interpreted from al-Qur'an 20:114. This heaven correlated to Saturn, Saturday, place of prophet Ibrahim.
- 12. Al-Amin (The Almighty Knowing), The Second Heaven, Dhad as he understood and interpreted from al-Qur'an 20:114. This Heaven correlated to Jupiter, Thursday, place of prophet Musa.
- 13. Al-Qadir (The Almighty), The Third Heaven, Lam as he understood and interpreted from al-Qur'an 20:114. This Heaven correlated to Mars, Tuesday, place of prophet Harun.
- 14. Al-Nur (The Almighty Ray), The Fourth Heaven, Nun as he understood and interpreted from al-Qur'an 20:114. This Heaven correlated to Sun, Sunday, the place of prophet Idris. This heaven what Allah called by "the high place" (al-Qur'an 19: 57) as it's the heart of all places.
- 15. Al-Musawwir (The Almighty Shaping), The Fifth Heaven, Ra' as he understood and interpreted from al-Qur'an 20:114. This Heaven correlated to Venus, Friday, place of prophet Yusuf.

- 16. Al-Muhsi (The Almighty Sumer), The Sixth Heaven, Tha' as he understood and interpreted from al-Qur'an 72:8. This Heaven correlated Mercurius, Wednesday, the place of prophet Isa (Jesus).
- 17. Al-Mubin (The Best Clearest). Worldly Heaven, Dal as he understood and interpreted from al-Qur'an 4:1. This heaven correlated to Moon, Monday, the place of prophet Adam.
- 18. Al-Qabid (The Almighty Controller), Fire, Ta' as he understood and interpreted from al-Qur'an 6:96
- 19. Al-Hayy (The Most Alive), Mail, Za' as he understood and interpreted from al-Qur'an 38:36
- 20. Al-Muhyi (The Almighty Awakener), Water, Sin as he understood and interpreted from al-Qur'an 21:30
- 21. Al-Mumit (The Almighty Deadener), Soil, Shad as he understood and interpreted from al-Qur'an 41:10
- 22. Al-Mu'izz (The Most Glorifier), Mineral, Za'.
- 23. Al-Razzaq (The Almighty Bestowing), Plants, Tsa' as he understood and interpreted from al-Qur'an 51:58 and 56:72
- 24. Al-Mudzill (The Most Scornful), Animal, Dzal as he understood and interpreted from al-Qur'an 36:72
- 25. Al-Qawy (The Almighty Strongest), Fa', as he understood and interpreted from al-Qur'an 6:66, 16:50 and 2:286
- 26. Al-Latif (The Most Gentle), Jin, Ba' as he understood and interpreted from al-Qur'an 7:26
- 27. Al-Jami' (The Almighty Compiler), Human, Mim as he understood and interpreted from al-Qur'an 38:75
- 28. Rafi' Al-Darajat (The Almighty Heightener of Dignity), Level, Maqamat and Manzilah, Wawu as he understood and interpreted from al-Qur'an 57:3. This level is the last which refers to diversities of humans in types and unlimited individuals of dignities where everyone has different level when compared with others as a macro cosmos with its degree in each extended landscape, so does micro cosmos. Every

existence of individual is a manzilah or level in returning to Allah so that each one is in a way of maqamat.

Thus, Ibn al-Arabi's explanation toward al-Qur'an as media of *mi'raj*. From ahead, it seems that those four explanations have a tight relevance and correlation one another which indicates that the only al-Qur'an is media of *mi'raj* in returning to Allah for humans.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION AND CLOSING

A. Conclusion

From the explanations ahead, it's concluded some conclusions that represent the points of study:

- In Ibn al-Arabi's perspective, that al-Qur'an is a written holy Book of Allah which has sent down to prophet Muhammad PBUH. Etymologically, the word al-Qur'an has many meanings, but the most important one is "to compile". It is because in al-Qur'an as a compiler that compile all realities of cosmos. It is comprehensible easily when some one considers the relevance of the holy Book with both of macro cosmos and micro cosmos. Everything in macro or micro cosmos is contained in al-Qur'an certainly, and so the contrary. Compared with both unwritten books, al-Qur'an is the most necessary and eminent because of keys presence in, namely written characters. By these characters, a servant is able to uncover the secrets in himself (micro cosmos) and what out of himself (macro cosmos).
- 2) Mi'raj in Ibn al-Arabi's views, is not different so far as the common paradigm as known intimately in some Islamic books that Moslems mean mi'raj by associating it to prophet Muhammad's experience. However, Ibn al-Arabi has his own definition that the term of mi'raj basically indicates prophet Muhammad's experience PBUH when he was when he was set to go or fly in the night from al-Haram to al-Aqsha mosque and

from al-Aqsha (from earth) to Sidrah al-Muntaha. But in other hand, as Ibn al-Arabi's perspective the term of mi'raj can also associated to human's experience in returning to Allah. In this case, all believers, the servants of Allah have been doing mi'raj returning to Allah by their good deeds they do every day. Prophet Muhammad's flight in the night of isra' and mi'raj is actually common experience for Moslem, not only prophet Muhammad himself who had done it practically, but also all his followers, all servants of Allah as He will. The difference of both lies on how to do it. Prophet Muhammad's isra' and mi'raj was implemented to accept God's commands to do as known by tasyri' isra' mi'raj and he did it by both of body and soul, while for his followers the so called isra' is done by their souls only. But, both of those isra' and mi'raj are intended to meet Allah.

- There are four definitions at least understood from al-Qur'an as media of mi'raj in Ibn al-Arabi's perspective, namely:
 - That al-Qur'an is identical to that of cosmos, while *mi'raj* flight is done by passing over or covering the ladders of *mi'raj* there in the cosmos.
 - That all articles contained in al-Qur'an are *manzilah* of what in that holy Book
 - That *mi'raj* can be done only by performing all in *syariah*. *Syariah* itself comes from al-Qur'an as the principle of Moslems.

That commonly, there are twenty eight ladders of mi'raj that are identical to that of twenty eight makharij al-huruf (articulations) in al-Our'an.

B. Closing

Praise be to Allah, The Lord of the world who maintain all His creatures by His mercy everlastingly. Shalawat and salam may always belong to His messenger, Muhammad PBUH who has brought his followers from the darkness to the lightness by means of Islam and for all his families, his companionships and for his followers of course as well.

I thank so much to all friends, lecturers, supervisors and all who has helped writer in the frame of fulfilling and finishing this simple minithesis. I hope so much that this simple writing will be useful to all readers and whomever need to take benefit. Nevertheless, some advices and constructive critics will be very necessary for me to understand more about Ibn al-Arabi's concept toward this study. Only Allah who knows the best because no one is perfect.

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