

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background of the study

Man is the center of civilization. He is both the subject who engineers how values shall be applied and also the object to whom all of the gains are dedicated (Abidin, 2002: 26). This shall be understood not in a sense that he could absolutely determines it, but rather to consider that he is responsible for its development in an appropriate extent. Nevertheless, this perception leads us to a justification that the more we understand man and his essence, the stronger the basic of civilization we will improve. Intellectual efforts to understand man and his essence remain continuing since the beginning centuries and result in various explanations. Abidin defines these intellectual movements to appreciate and articulate man's values as humanism. Which developments are much influenced by world's religions, philosophies and ideologies in various extents along the history (p. 27-9).

Syariati, a neo-modernist Muslim thinker, concludes that, due to their vision toward the essence of man, humanism is classified into two main streams: the secular and the religious humanism (1999:119). Secular humanism rejects all forms of theism, supernaturalism, and their associated miracles, superstitions, dogmas, authoritarian beliefs, wishful and hopeful thinking. They insist on a tradition that man is much responsible to create their own values independently. Liberalism, Marxism and Existentialism are the world's ideologies, which contribute this humanism. Standing opposite with them are the traditional religions such of Islam and Christian. Which perspective on humanism encourages the self-fulfillment of man within the frame of religion. Accordingly, man is highly appreciated to be the representative of the Divine's authority in developing and preserving the world, who is naturally provided with complicated potentials within and comprehensive values to guide. However, having a different starting point in formulating values has frequently driven the secular and religious humanism to stand in opposition on making judgments toward man and his self-fulfillment. Their contradictive judgment begins from their most basic vision toward what a man's essence is.

That is understandable, historically, secular humanism of the western civilization sprouts out from a spirit to fight the domination of supernatural

existence upon man's life. At the beginning, it was born themselves as the opponent to the Greek mythology for its tyrannical Gods and Goddesses whom enslaved man under superstitious belief and castrated man's authority upon their own life. As they progressed, under the spirit of renaissance, secular humanism found its most appropriate justification to fight theism that was, at that time, stimulated by the collaboration of the middle age church and the dictatorial state. Syariati explains that this kind of humanism - from the ancient Greek up to the modern Europe - will alter itself into the more "earthly" forms whenever it confronts the "sky" and deviates its values to the more materialistic judgments (p. 40-2). Under which paradigm, man is valued no more than a systemic construction of materials related to end the primate evolution chain. Therefore, even though the secular humanism began from a good will to encourage man reaching his nobility. But in the praxis, it revealed interests in articulating man simply as *Homo Economicus* (man of economics). Secular humanism has fallen headlong into a dark perplexity of ambiguous values because of its misidentification on man's essence. Though in the concepts they claims to release humanity from theism slavery by their rationalistic paradigm. In reality, their materialistic judgment on man achieved no further than a merely new economic slavery by which moral is valued no more than a pursuit on benefit. This is what. Syariati means by his

comments that, in the praxis, modern man possesses a whole needed ability to live whatever he desires to, but unfortunately, he doesn't know "how" he suppose to, because in the principle, he couldn't find the answer for "why" it suppose to (p. 38).

Standing opposite to them, the religious humanism proposes a spiritual perspective to identify what a man's essence is. Accordingly, man is highly appreciated as a source of a whole virtuous deed in the world. It is because he conveys within him a perfect divinity that may potentially born those virtuous values. The religious doctrines act to underline this spiritual essence by appropriately making what is kept potential to become actual. Among the traditional religions claims to have this humanism are Islam and Christian.

Islam as a great religion signifies appreciation toward man. In one of the Qur'an verses, At Tiin: 4, it is stated that, "*We have inned created man in the best of moulds . . .*", (Y. Ali, 1983: 1759). What is signified by Islam is not only an appreciation toward man's material forming but more sublime than that, Islam views man's soul as his essence from where a whole-needed potential to reach nobility comes: wisdom and divine knowledge. Those potentials become actualized under guidance of religion only. That high value upon man stands for two reasons. Firstly, because it is a part of God. It is stated in Qur'an, "*When I have fashioned him (in due proportion) and*

breathed into him of My Spirit . . ." (al-Hijr: 29) (p. 643). Muslim thinkers have several different terms that point to this soul: *al-Nafs* and *al-Aql* are frequently used by philosophers whereas *al-Ruh* and *al-Qalb* are commonly used by Sufi. Secondly, because it had once seen God in the primordial time when each of soul are sworn to worship God before it is born into the world. Underlining this, Muthohhari, a modern Muslim theologian, comments these two reasons as the eternal illness suffered by a man's soul. This illness constantly alienates him from the material world and drives him to yearn God, the source of his existence (1995: 53-68). Resembling vision seems to appear in Christian's vision. The soul is regarded much greater in might and virtue than the body. It is not only because the soul remains immortal after the bodily death, but also because of the soul's ability to behold God. Early Christian thinkers are noticeable proposed the notion of emanation in explaining the existential relationship exists between human soul and God. This notion frequently appears in the trinitarian doctrines. On which, Jesus Christ commonly serves as the *logos* for the God-head's divinity whom was taking His new forming to enter the material world. This notion is noticeable proposed by Athenagoras, Origen, Arnobius, Tertullian and Valentinus (Fieser, 2002: 1-5).

On their vision on man's essence and existence, they are commonly divided as to be the exotericist (those who follow the external or literal religion, the "letter of law") and the esotericist (those who follow the inner, mystical, spiritual religion or path, the "spirit of law"). The esotericist provides a broader and deeper understanding on man than that of the exotericist. According to the esotericist, man derives his existence from God. This cause man conveys within him or herself a divine soul, a divine spark, that has emanated directly from God. Esotericist's vision on man is regarded more universal. Esotericists from different traditional religion may shares in similar vision about this. According to K. A. Noer in his article "Sufisme Dan Dialog Agama-Agama I", this is reasonable for historically there were amounts of recorded contacts and dialogues made by esotericist's from different religions since the 7 th century (2002: 7).

This study will discuss the representatives of both Islam and Christian humanism in literary works. Based on the assumption that somehow a literary work can be considered as a documentation on the history of philosophy and ideas. It is because the history of literature had revealed it self as to be in equal with and reflecting the history of ideas (Wellek and Warren, 1977: 23). The analysis focuses on an important aspect of humanism, which concerns

man's essence and his existential relationship to God that both of the above humanism share in.

A literary discipline that concerns to the discussion on literary works from two or more of different countries is classified to the comparative study (Wellek and Warren, 1977: 51). Under which perspective, there are three important objects to discuss that are Affinity, tradition and influence (Hutomo, 1993:73). This study limits the discussion only on the affinity. The affinity is commonly described as interrelatedness existing between intrinsic elements of a literary art such as its structure, theme, style or background. Among various important intrinsic elements, the study focuses its analysis on poetic thought. It based on the classification made by Boas and Smith in their book “ An Introduction to The Study of Literature” that one of important intrinsic elements found in poem is the thought of the poem (1985: 87).

The comparative study approach is applied to reveal the religious humanism thoughts, which are possibly expressed into beautiful verses by two great poets, Maulana Jalaluddin Rumi (13 C) and John Donne (1572-1631 C). These poets are admirable not only for of their complexity of toughest that suffices the study, but also for their poetic expressions that exalt other poets at their age. Rumi is a famous Persian *Sufi* whose influences are traced along Persia, Turkey, Egypt and certain groups in India. His spiritual thoughts are

paralleled to Ibnu Arabi's for its completeness. His thoughts include all subjects in *Tasawuf* (Arberry, 1986:32). His expressions are so revolutionaries that Nicholson metaphorically illustrates him as the top of a highest mountain whereas the other poets, previous or after him, are only the hills on its leg (1995: xix).

Meanwhile, John Donne, also evoked his own greatness among the seventeenth century poets. His influence is traceable along some other great metaphysical poets whom are commonly recognized as the "school of Donne" such as Izaak Walton, Andrew Marvell or George Hebert. Grierson, an english critics, concludes that Donne possess the whole peculiar qualities of all metaphysical poets which are their greatest achievement: the more intellectual and less verbal character of their wit in comparison to that of the Elizabethan's, the finer psychology of which their conceits are often the expression, their learned imagery, the argumentative and subtle evolution of their lyrics. Grierson comments Donne, " All these qualities are in poetry of Donne, and Donne is the great master of English poetry in the seventeenth century " (1959: xvi).

Both of the poets also revealed their selves as the admirer of humanism during their life. It is noticeable not only through their thoughtful verses but also through their career sterility from political entanglement with

the authorizer of their age. During their life, both Rumi and Donne committed to stand beside the common people and release them from oppressions from either the state, the religion authorizer or their own mistake in thinking life. Through his thoughtful verses, Rumi had significantly reformed the ruined humanity of his society. For this, An-Nadwi, a Professor at Cairo University praises Rumi as to deserve for an eulogy "The Pride of Humanism" (1997:48). While Dr. McDaniel, an English modern critics, praises Donne in an almost similar tone, "Dr. Donne's religious hymns show a breadth of knowledge which we associate with the cliché Renaissance man, which indeed he was. . . ." (2002: 2).

However, it is interesting to look upon a fact that, despite of their different ages or personal backgrounds, both Donne and Rumi have noticeably applied almost similar expressions in several poems on religious themes. This fact induces an assumption that both of Rumi and Donne may have stood for similar thoughts on man's essence. Therefore this study aims to digest the extent of that possibility and to reveal differences and similarities that varies their thoughts. Accordingly, three different poems will be examined for that purpose: Rumi's "Though Philosophers Call Man the Microcosmos, Divines Calls Him the Macrocosm" (Whinfield, 2002: 35) and Donne's "Holly sonnet II & XIV" (Partridges, 1991: 435, 443).

I.2 Statement of the problems

Concerning the above background, the problems that are discussed in this study are:

1. In what manner do Rumi and Donne relate man's existence to God?
2. How do Rumi and Donne figure out man's essence in the studied poems?
3. What are the similarities and differences of their thoughts expressed in the studied poems?

I.3. Objective of the study

The objectives of the study are:

1. To dig Rumi's and Donne's thoughts on man existential relationship with God expressed in the studied poems.
2. To dig Rumi's and Donne's thoughts on man's essence expressed in the studied poems.
3. To identify similarities and differences of their thoughts expressed in the studied poems.

1.4. Limitation of the study

This study discuss humanism in the below scope of limitation: (1) The thoughts of both Rumi and Donne on man's existential relationship with God, which are expressed in the studied poems, (2) The thoughts of both Rumi and Donne on man's essence, which are expressed in the studied poems, and (3) The similarities and differences that vary the both poet's ideas on man's existential relationship with God and his essence in the studied poems.

1.5. Theoretical background

The writer decided to apply semiotics as the main theory on the analysis. Semiotics concerns with sign system. This concern appears to her as being appropriate to explain the poem's nature as a mode of significations complicated expressed (Culler, 1981: 48,49). Since this theory has been vastly developed into various fields and concerns, the writer choose to apply Michael Riffaterre's Semiotics of Poetry in her analysis. Riffaterre appropriately combines the structural theory and the semiotics concerns in interpreting a text. His semiotics based on assumption that significance is produced through the unity and continuity of the text, formally and

semantically. Since both of the studied poems reveal religious atmosphere, she also applies religious approach to support her analysis. This is based on Wellek and Warren's opinion in "Theory of Literature", that the production of a literary work is influenced by various extrinsic factors including the religion (1977:80). Since the writer aims to reveal any similarities and differences possibly existing in two different poems, she also applied a comparative study approach to support her analysis.

1.6. Method of the study

Objects of this study are two poems: Rumi's "Though Philosophers Call Man The Microcosm, Divines Call Him The Macrocosm", and Donne's "Holly Sonnet II & XIV." Since poem significance is powerfully determined by comparison and correlation between elements in the text, the whole lines of poems are taken as sample population. In this study, data collecting was undergone by library research and hermeneutics reading. The library research was used to collect and analyze the related library resources such as books, paper, Internet resources or newspaper articles. The library research was focused to find out two kinds of data resources: first, the primary data that are the studied poems, Second, the secondary data that are any library resources,

which explain the related analysis devices such as the theory of semiotics, religious and comparative study approaches and other related resources. These two kinds of data are regarded as the qualitative data. Hermeneutic reading is the second stage of reading or semiotic reading by which the writer interprets the text as referring to other ideas despite of its representational meanings. The data will be analyzed in an explorative-interpretative technique. The explorative technique is used to explore the most proper significance of the poem considering its unity in a whole. The interpretative technique is used to reduce the significant thought of both poets expressed in certain lines. The use of both techniques is in the frame of a literary theory namely semiotics conceptualized by Riffaterre, in which, positive hermeneutics is applied as an important instrument in interpreting the text.

1.7. Significance of the study

This study is made in an expectation that the result of this study will contribute the reader's personal knowledge on their own essence of humanity since the secret knowledge of God may begin from the knowledge on our own nature as the perfect manifestation of His divine attributes. Specifically, this study is expected to enlarge the knowledge of the student of English

Department of Airlangga University upon two things. First, it hopefully provides practical examples for certain literary theory, approaches and method's application that sufficient to the student's study. And second, by embracing them to Donne, a great metaphysical poet of the 17th century, it hopefully gives supplementary knowledge to understand more the English medieval literature it self.

1.8. The definition of key terms

Al Aql : Literally, it means the intellect. But in Sufism's perspective it refers to the supra-rational intuition that has its center or concentration in the heart (Burckhardt, 1984: 133, 158).

Al Insan al Kamil : Literally, it means the Perfect Man. Ibnu arabi firstly proposes this term to identify the highest spiritual station that shall be achieved by man. In this spiritual station, man is regarded as the miniature that includes the entire realities of Allah in His manifested aspect (*Wujud al Muta'uyyan*) (Ali, 1997: 55).

Al Nafs : Literally it means the self or the soul. It refers to the physical soul, the gentle form of an individual or the " I". In an

opposition with the spirit or the intellect, *al Nafs* appears in negative aspect. This because *al Nafs* is constructed from individualistic and egocentric inclinations (Burckhardt, 1984: 166).

Al Qalb : Literally it means the heart. But in a more specific definition it refers to the organ for the supra rational intuition that is related to the heart as that of relates the thought to the intellect. It also means feeling that exists in the center of individuality (p. 167).

Al Ruh : In *sufism*, it includes these below meanings (p. 168):

1. God. the uncreated spirit (*ar Ruh al Ilahi*), also the holy spirit (*ar Ruh al Qudus*).
2. The Universal spirit, the created spirit (*ar Ruh al Kulli*).
3. Individual spirit, or better mentioned as the polarized Spirit in its relation with the individual existence.
4. The vital spirit. In Hinduism it is called *prana*. It is a gentle nature that relates the eternal spirit (*al Ruh*) with the body.

BAB II

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK