

The Relevance of Philosophy and Sufism from the Perspective of Sheikh Abdul Halim Mahmud

M. Ihsan Fauzi¹.

¹ UIN Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang, Indonesia; email: ihsanfouzi@gmail.com

Received: date; Revision: date; Accepted: date; Published: date

Abstract : This article examines the views of Shaykh Abdul Halim Mahmud on the relationship between philosophy and Sufism in the context of *ma'rifatullah* (knowledge of God). The purpose of this study is to demonstrate that philosophy and Sufism are not conflicting disciplines, but rather complementary paths toward the perfection of *ma'rifatullah*. This research employs a qualitative approach using a literature review of the works of Shaykh Abdul Halim Mahmud and classical Islamic philosophical sources. The study finds that philosophy is understood as *hikmah* or rational effort to know God through the medium of reason, while Sufism pursues the path of *taṣfiyah* (purification of the soul) to attain a higher level of divine knowledge. Shaykh Abdul Halim Mahmud asserts that reason alone is insufficient to achieve perfect *ma'rifatullah* without being complemented by inner purification. This view aligns with Plotinus's concept of the stages of "finding God" through reasoning and "connecting with God" through spiritual purification, as well as the philosophical illustration found in Ibn Ṭufayl's *Hayy Ibn Yaqzan*. The study concludes that the integration of philosophy and Sufism represents a comprehensive intellectual and spiritual approach to drawing closer to God and understanding reality in depth.

Keywords : *Sufism, Philosophy, Ma'rifatullah, Hikmah, Shaykh Abdul Halim Mahmud.*

Corresponding Author:

Nama:
Afiliasi; email

1. Intrudocction

Today, there are still many people who think that Sufism is synonymous with shirk behavior, worship of graves, and violations of sharia. On the other hand, Sufism is also seen as an effort to purify the heart as well as to kill reason. Not a few thinkers state that Sufism actually eats away at the body of Islam itself. For example, philosophers and sufis such as Ibn 'Arabi, al-Hallaj, and Suhrawardi. They not only use Sufism as a means to achieve noble morals, but also as a way to know Allah. However, this model of Sufism often causes

controversy because not everyone is able to understand it. As a result, this kind of Sufism is often considered a deviation from the Shari'a.

Philosophical Sufism is a Sufism teaching that combines mystical attainment and enlightenment by providing a rational philosophical explanation. This model of Sufism has a combination of Sufism and the philosophy contained in it, so its teachings also include philosophical teachings from outside Islam, such as Greek, Persia, Indian and Christianity. Philosophical Sufism is also known as theoretical Sufism, because of its concept that emphasizes aspects of theory or metaphysical thought that combine the teachings of philosophy with Sufism. However, basically this teaching is one of the parts of Sufism, the Islamic teachings in it are not eliminated and are still maintained, especially when it comes to philosophical Sufis who adhere to Islam (Shihab, 2001).

Philosophical Sufism is indeed better known for its teachings which have a deeper concept arranged in symbolic-philosophical language. The majority of Sufis who have this understanding of Sufism are also considered to have an attitude of excesses (spiritual intoxication) and the opinions they express are considered uncommon (syathahat). One of them is like Ibn Arabi's slogan, namely "Ana al-Haqq" (Sholihin, 2005).

However, on the other hand, there are still many ambiguities in finding the characteristics of philosophical Sufism. This is due to the large number of philosophical terms that are used as terminology in philosophical Sufism. That is why there are still many experts who say that philosophical Sufism cannot be considered as original Sufism. Because there are many terms and teachings that are loaded with philosophy. The main feature of philosophical Sufism is to combine rationality with sufistic sense (Sulaiman, 2020). Therefore, not everyone can accept this model of Sufism.

One of them is Ibn Taymiyah who is known as a scholar who opposes philosophy. According to him, philosophers are part of the heretics. Ibn Taymiyah himself gave more criticism of philosophical Sufism and the institutes that are widely embraced by Muslims. But on the other hand, he also appreciated the Sufism developed by Sheikh Junaid al-Bagdadi, Sheikh Abdul Qadir al-Jailani and Harist al-Muhasibi (Kholil, 2017). In short, Ibn Taymiyah did not reject Sufism as a whole, he only rejected the adherents of philosophical Sufism and the followers of the order who he considered to be only busy doing dhikr and did not care about the condition and situation of the "backwardness" of Muslims (Zamzami, 2017).

Scholars in many of his writings make the figure of Ibn Taymiyah as a figure symbolized as a figure and pioneer of anti-Sufism until today. Ibn Taymiyah once complained about the many practices of Sufism that are not based on the Qur'an and hadith. But on the other hand, he also justifies the teachings of Sufism, but only the practice of Sufism has been carried out by his predecessors. The basis for Ibn Taymiyah's rejection of Sufism is the deeds and actions that according to him were never done during the time of the Prophet Muhammad and his companions. He revealed this from several of his works that oppose Sufism, including: *Majmu al-Fatawa*, *Minhaj al-Sunnah al-Nabawiyah Fi Naqd Kalam al-Shi'ah Wa al-Qadariyah*, *Majmu Rasa'il Wa Masa'il*, *Muwafaqat Sahih Al-Manqul Li Sarih Al-Ma'qul* (Usman, 2020).

Departing from these several phenomena, the author would like to try to explain how Sheikh Abdul Halim Mahmud's views on Sufism and philosophy are. It aims to enlighten people who oppose Sufism and philosophy. This article discusses the meaning of Sufism and philosophy, as well as the relationship between the two. Explain the meaning of wisdom in the ontological aspect, media or the path to Allah in the epistemological aspect and the benefits of knowing Allah in the axiological aspect. All of these things he described as a

scientific method that can provide clues to people to understand reality. He realized the knowledge of Sufism and philosophy as a form of knowing Allah SWT.

The approach used by the author in this study is a qualitative approach, namely research in the form of library research. This method is carried out by collecting and utilizing data obtained from various references through reading and studying books, theses, journals, and other literature related to this discussion. One of the main references is the work of Sheikh Abdul Halim Mahmud entitled *Al-Tafkir al-Falsafi fi al-Islam*. Thus, the author obtains data sources derived from the study of texts or references that are relevant to the subject matter.

After collecting data related to this study, the next stage in this study is to manage the data in a rational, directed, and systematic manner. The analysis method used by the author is a descriptive-analytical method (Sudarto, 1996). Through a descriptive approach, the author seeks to describe Sheikh Abdul Halim Mahmud's views and understanding of Sufism and philosophy, and to describe it objectively as it is.

2. Research Results

2.1. Biography of Sheikh Abdul Halim Mahmud

Sheikh Abdul Halim Mahmud is a descendant of the Prophet PBUH, with a descendant that continues to Sayyidina Husain bin Ali. He was born in Abu Ahmad Village, a suburb of Bilbeis, Sharqiyah Province (Eastern Province), on 2 Jumadil Awwal 1328 H which coincided with May 12, 1910 AD. The name of this village is attributed to his grandfather, Abu Ahmad, a figure who played a major role in establishing and building the village that is now known as Al-Salam (Abdurrahman, 1997).

He grew up and grew up in a respectable and dignified family, and was known for his kindness and piety to Allah SWT. From an early age, he has managed to memorize the Qur'an, so that the people in the village and surrounding areas are amazed by this achievement. His father was known as a figure who understood religion, knowledge, and had noble ethics. His father also had a high spirit and loved education, especially Al-Azhar sciences. Therefore, he directed his son to study at Al-Azhar. In 1923 AD, Sheikh Abdul Halim Mahmud began to study at Al-Azhar (Abdurrahman, 1997).

In 1923 AD, Sheikh Abdul Halim Mahmud began to study at Ma'had Al-Azhar, Cairo. Then, in 1925 AD, he moved to the newly opened Zagazig branch of Ma'had Al-Azhar to be closer to his parents. In 1928 AD, he successfully completed his Tsanawiyah education (high school level). Subsequently, he continued his education at Al-Azhar University and succeeded in obtaining a bachelor's degree in 1932 AD (Abdurrahman, 1997).

After graduating, Sheikh Abdul Halim Mahmud intends to become a teacher. However, his father told him to continue his education to a higher level. Finally, he chose to pursue further studies at the Sorbonne University, France, with concentrations in the fields of religious history, philosophy, and sociology. In September 1939, in the midst of his struggle to complete his dissertation, World War II erupted. He wrote a dissertation on a Sufi figure from Baghdad, Al-Harits bin Asad Al-Muhasibi. Many of his comrades decided to return home, but Sheikh Abdul Halim Mahmud remained firm to finish what he had started. On June 8, 1940 AD, he attended a promotion session and successfully obtained his doctorate. His work was immortalized and published in French (Dar-alifta).

After returning from France, he used to wear a suit, until after a speech by President Gamal Abdel Nasser who attacked him and the scholars of Al-Azhar, with words that hurt his heart. He immediately responded to the remarks, took off his suit, put on Al-Azhar's official

clothes, and went to the President, demanding that the honor of Al-Azhar and its scholars be restored (Al-Sayed, 2023)

After returning from France, he devoted himself as a lecturer at the Faculty of Arabic. Then, in 1951, he became a lecturer in philosophy at the Faculty of Ushuluddin. His career continued to grow; in 1964, he was elected as the Dean of the Faculty of Ushuluddin. In the same year, he also became a member of the Islamic Research Institute (*Majma' al-Buhuts al-Islamiyyah*). Subsequently, he served as Secretary General of *Majma' al-Buhuts al-Islamiyyah*, and in 1970 was appointed Vice Chancellor of Al-Azhar Ash-Syarif, then became Minister of Waqf. The peak of his career occurred in 1973, when he was inaugurated as the Grand Sheikh of Al-Azhar. (Abdurrahman, 1997).

When he served as Sheikh of Al-Azhar, he fought for Al-Azhar's position as an independent institution, because previously Al-Azhar's responsibility was under the government. He is known as a Sufi figure who preserved Sufism in the midst of the era of modernity. He also sought to advance Al-Azhar by increasing the establishment of schools in various provinces. Not only in the field of education, he also contributed to thinking in the social and political fields, including related to the Egyptian military attack on Israel and his efforts to mediate the conflict between Algeria and Morocco.

Sheikh Abdul Halim Mahmud died after returning from the Hajj on 16 Dzulqa'idah 1398 H / 17 October 1978 AD. The news of his death was greeted with deep sorrow by Muslims. Thousands of Muslims crowded the Al-Azhar Mosque to perform the funeral prayers and take him to his final rest. Sheikh Abdul Halim Mahmud left behind a very valuable intellectual legacy, which continues to be reprinted and become a reference in Islamic scientific treasures (Naderah, 2024).

Among his works are *Al-Tafkir al-Falsafi fi al-Islam*, *Al-Islam wa al-'Aql*, *Al-Ri'ayah li Huquqillah* by Al-Muhasibi, *Al-Tasawuf 'inda Ibn Sina*, *Qadhiyyat al-Tasawuf al-Munqidz min al-Dhalal* by Al-Ghazali, *Asrar al-'Ibadah fi al-Islam*, *Al-Rasul*, *Ahmad al-Badawi*, *Abu Madyan al-Ghawts*, and *Al-Shibli*.

2.2. Definition of Philosophy

Etymologically, the word philosophy comes from the Greek language, which is *philosophia* consisting of *philo* and *Sophia*. *Philo* means love. In a broad sense, the word means wanting and trying to achieve what it wants. Meanwhile, *Sophia* means policy which means smart. In terms of language, philosophy means a deep desire to get policy or a deep desire to be wise (Sulaiman, 2016).

As for philosophy, according to Plato (427-374 BC), it is a science that talks about the essence of something. Whereas Aristotle argued that philosophy is the science of truth that includes logic, physics, metaphysics, and practical knowledge. Meanwhile, according to Hasbullah Bakry, philosophy is a science that investigates everything deeply about the divinity, the universe, and man, so as to produce knowledge of its essence as far as the human mind can reach, as well as determine how human behavior should behave after acquiring this knowledge. (Sulaiman, 2016).

According to al-Farabi the term philosophy comes from the Greek language and entered the Arabic language through their doctrine, namely *philosophia*, which literally means "to put wisdom first" or "love of wisdom". The word is composed of two parts: *philo*, which means to prioritize or love, and *sophia*, which means wisdom or wisdom. Meanwhile, the term *philosophos* is derived from the word *philosophia*, which in their doctrine, despite various

differences of opinion, is interpreted as "a person who loves or prioritizes wisdom (Mahmud, 1955).

Al-Farabi also said that philosophy is *iitsaar al-hikmah*, but what does this wisdom mean? Then he quoted Ibn Sina's opinion on the meaning of the word wisdom which he expressed in *Risalah fi al-Tabi'iyat*, that the meaning of wisdom is the acceptance of the human soul towards various things and the affirmation of theoretical and practical truths, as far as human ability is concerned. As for wisdom related to things that we should know, and not practice, is called theoretical wisdom. Meanwhile, wisdom related to practical things that we must know and practice is called practical wisdom (Mahmud, 1955).

According to experts, wisdom can be interpreted as a science that seeks to know the essence of truth in depth. However, there is still debate about the true meaning of wisdom or truth itself. This difference of views continues to be the subject of discussion among philosophers in an effort to understand the essence of this wisdom.

2.3. Definition of Sufism

Etymologically, experts differ in their opinion by looking at the root form of the sentence of the word Sufism. First, the word suffah which means the role of the Prophet's mosque which is inhabited by some of Anshar's companions. This is because the practice of Sufism experts is almost the same as what is practiced by these companions, namely getting closer to Allah SWT., and living in simplicity (Baldick, 2002). Second, it is taken from the word shaff (صف) which means row. Shaff here is leaning on a group of companions when they pray always in the front row. Because the first row has advantages and glory in the sight of Allah (Amin, 2012). Third, it is taken from the word Shuf (صوف) which means wool, which is the clothes usually worn by Sufis. However, not all Sufis wear these clothes. Fourth, another opinion states that the root of the Sufi word is Shafa (صفا), which means purity. In this case, what the Sufis emphasize is the purity of heart and soul (Nasution, 1973).

In terminology, according to Shaykh Abū Ḥasan asy-Syādhilī, Sufism is a practice and self-practice through deep love and worship to return to the way of God (Anggraini, 2019). In the sense of Sufism as a spiritual alternative that emphasizes inner practice (*riyāḍah*) combined with love (*maḥabbah*) and worship, in order to lead a person back to the path of God.

According to Shaykh Ahmad at-Tijani Sufism, Obedience to carry out Allah's commands and stay away from His prohibitions, both physically and mentally, in accordance with His pleasure, not one's own pleasure (Tijani, 2011). Shaykh Ahmad at-Tijani emphasized that true Sufism is the perfection of practicing sharia in birth and mind, not just a zahir ritual or mental practice without a foundation in sharia. The essence of Sufism is total harmony with the will of Allah through worship and self-forging.

Experts say that the definition of Sufism leads to morality. Because morality is a common and popular scope among Sufis. Not only from the Sufi community itself, but it is also common for Sufism researchers and historians. Among them, as stated by Abu Bakr al-Kattani, according to him, Sufism is morality or ethics, so whoever increases morality in him, will also increase in purity in him (Mahmud, 2003).

Shaykh Abdul Halim Mahmud also quoted a narration in *Risalah al-Qusyairiyyah*, when Abu Muhammad Al-Jariri, who died in 311 AH, was asked about Sufism, then he replied that Sufism is entering into every good morality, and getting out of every bad morality (Mahmud, 2003).

There is also an earlier popular term that defines Sufism with *zuhud*. When people hear the phrase Sufism, what comes to their mind is the meaning of *zuhud*. Therefore, the Sufi

sentence is not understood but is synonymous with the person who is *zuhud* towards the world. And there are also many people who combine Sufi and 'abid, so when people hear or see someone who does a lot of worship, then they will say that he is a Sufi (Mahmud, 2003).

If we refer to the definition put forward by Shaykh al-Kattani, we will find a term that is simple and easy to understand. The definition includes two complementary aspects in explaining Sufism. The first aspect is *wasilah* (media), and the second aspect is *ghayah* (purpose). What is meant by *wasilah* is *ash-shafā* (purification or purification), while *ghayah* refers to *al-musyāhadah* (witnessing). Among the many definitions of Sufism, according to him, the essence of Sufism actually lies in what he expressed, namely *ash-shafā* and *al-musyāhadah* (Mahmud, 2003).

2.4. The Relationship between Philosophy and Sufism

In Islamic philosophy, reason is very reliable to study several objects such as Allah, nature and humans. The role of religious *nash-nash* is only a supporter of the results of the truth of reason. On the other hand, the science of *kalam* relies on revelation whose absolute truth is to test its objects – Allah, nature, man – making philosophy a suggestion to justify the *nash* of religion. Just like the existence of Allah, in Islamic philosophy the proof is preceded by rational reason, then the revelation that justifies it. Although the objects and methods of these two sciences are different, they complement each other in understanding Islam and the formation of the Muslim faith (Nasution, 2005). The relationship between Sufism and philosophy also cannot be separated from the science of *kalam*, because in the process of seeking the truth these three things are very closely related and complementary.

In the last period of Islamic history, philosophy was familiar among Sufis, and there were even many philosophers who also served as Sufis (Syarif, 1992). If explored deeper, philosophy and Sufism have a close and harmonious relationship, just like Ibn Sina who is a philosopher and a Sufi at the same time (Sukardi, 2000). And there are still many other Muslim thinkers who connect philosophy and Sufism to seek the truth, and make it a medium to know Allah. For example, other figures such as al-Kindi, al-Farabi and other Muslim philosophers. Usually Sufism and philosophy are always seen as opposites. The two are often dichotomous, both in terms of epistemology and socio-history. Sufism is claimed to be a discipline that abandons the role of reason and prioritizes inspiration and whispers of the heart, although it sometimes goes against rationality. Meanwhile, philosophy is claimed to be a discipline that upholds rationality. When al-Ghazali criticized philosophers, the relationship between the two was also fractured (Sukardi, 2000).

Efforts to restore the relationship that had been fractured have been made by many circles. One of the figures who fought for this was Suhrawardi al-Maqtul (1154-1191 AD) in several of his works, especially the wisdom of al-Isyraqi (philosophy of enlightenment). However, this work is considered an illuminationist philosophical work that erodes the dominance of peripatetic philosophy (Sukardi, 2000).

Sufism and Islamic philosophy have a number of similarities and differences on certain points. Both of them go through the process of searching for something that is secret or related to the supernatural that is believed to be the supreme truth. The truth (*al-ḥaqq*) is considered unattainable by everyone. In Sufism, truth is interpreted as the revelation (*kašf*) of the True Truth (Allah) through the eyes of the heart.

While in the term philosophy of truth is speculative about everything that exists (form), it cannot be proven based on research, empirical or experimental. Truth in philosophy is

found through the medium of reason, while the truth in Sufism is found in several ways, one of which is the medium of tashfiyah.

Sufism with its method, approaches the truth related to the spiritual journey to God. Then philosophy, by its own methods, also seeks to approach the truth both about nature and man (which can be reached by science because it is beyond or above its reach), or about God. Both seek to be the way to seek the truth about God's existence, that is, by doing good and abandoning evil. This is what is considered to be able to make humans understand the essence of divinity and achieve the perfection of the soul.

From some of these descriptions, it can be said that philosophy is a science that prioritizes theory or is theoretical, while Sufism prioritizes realization or practicality. Both have the same goal, which is to show the truth and essence of divinity. Philosophy with its theoretical methodology can lead humans to practical beliefs through the medium of reason. As for practical beliefs through the media of tashfiyah, this is the territory of Sufism. So it can be concluded that the purpose of studying Islamic philosophy is to reach the territory of Sufism, namely to know Allah.

2.5. Ontology (Meaning of Wisdom)

The meaning of wisdom as explained by Ibn Sina in *Risalah fi al-Tabi'iyat* is the readiness of the human soul to receive various knowledge and establish the truth, both in the theoretical and practical realms, in accordance with the limits of human ability (Mahmud, 1955). This can be interpreted as an intellectual exercise that allows humans to recognize the form as it is, so that it can glorify and perfect its soul (Khan, 2004). In addition, it can also be understood as the science of the nature of death which aims to investigate the true nature.

According to Ibn Sina, the purpose of philosophy is the determination of reality to something as long as it is possible for humans. It is divided into two types of philosophy, namely theoretical and practical (Sulaiman, 2016). Wisdom that is related to a thing, in which we know about it, but we do not realize it, is called *nazhariyyah* (theoretical) wisdom. The wisdom related to the matter of action that we know about and can realize is called the wisdom of *amaliyyah* (practical) (Mahmud, 1955).

The sentence of wisdom itself is often found, be it in Arabic, Shi'ir, the Qur'an and the hadith of the Prophet PBUH. It is also mentioned by Islamic scholars, especially in Arabic which has several meanings. As stated by the author of *al-bahru al-muhith* there are twenty-nine opinions in it. Among them means the purpose of a word and deed, understanding, writing or note, saving religion and improving the world (Mahmud, 1955).

فإن الرأي الذي نراه هو ما قال به عطاء : من أن الحكمة هي : المعرفة بالله

Therefore, the opinion that Sheikh Abdul Halim Mahmud sees is the opinion of Atha' who says that the meaning of wisdom is to know Allah SWT. In fact, knowing Allah will not be realized and will not be perfect except with *al-Fadhiilah* (Virtue). Therefore, the meaning of wisdom he concluded includes two parts. First, to know God, and second, to know goodness. Or if the term is narrowed down to one, then the term wisdom is to know Allah which at the same time includes knowing goodness (Mahmud, 1955).

The opinion he put forward is certainly not without basis. If we look at the earlier philosophers, we will find that their ideologies were loaded with ideas about seeking God and seeking goodness. For example, great figures such as Socrates and Plato, whose scope of thought discussed a lot about the issue of divinity and the values of goodness. The same can be seen in Islamic philosophers, for example al-Kindi who stated that wisdom is knowing Allah,

and philosophy is the medium. Thus, philosophy can be understood as the love of wisdom, that is, a continuous effort to attain makrifat to Allah. (Mahmud, 1955).

Then Sheikh Abdul Halim Mahmud also added, why is he more inclined to this opinion. According to him, all philosophers, from their earliest days, have always included research on the divinity and goodness in their teachings. Meanwhile, things outside of these two fields are optional, they may or may not exist. For example, Socrates, although his main tendency was to research virtue and goodness, also researched the divinity and limited himself to such studies (Mahmud, 1955).

As for modern philosophers: Their research focuses almost exclusively on metaphysics and ethics. The word "philosophy" in ancient times, was applied by the Greeks and by Islamic philosophers, to divinity and theology. Then, both in ancient and Muslim circles, some common descriptions were applied to every philosopher. For example, they say of Al-Kindi: "He was a doctor, engineer, astrologer, mathematician, and philosopher" (Mahmud, 1955).

Thus, Shaykh Abdul Halim Mahmud concluded that the meaning of wisdom is the knowledge of God, and philosophy is the way. Therefore, philosophy means to prioritize or love wisdom, which is a continuous effort to attain knowledge of God. Thus, based on Al-Farabi's expression, it can be said that a philosopher is someone who makes wisdom the ultimate goal of life and existence. Wisdom here means knowledge of God or knowing Allah which also includes knowledge of goodness (Mahmud, 1955).

2.6. Epistemology (*The Path to God*)

If we go back to the question of how to know God or how to attain wisdom, then the answer is philosophy. However, is philosophy the only way? According to some thinkers, reason is the only way to get to wisdom. However, in Ibn Sina's opinion, the media to achieve wisdom is divided into two, namely the media of reason and the media of riyadhoh (Mahmud, 1955). In conclusion, if we look at Greek philosophy and Islamic philosophy. So we will find that the path to wisdom is divided into two, namely the media of reason and the media of tashfiyah (Mahmud, 1955).

2.6.1 Media akal

Many people talk about the Qur'an's view of reason, and often highlight aspects of modernity or contemporaneity. Indeed, the Qur'an is a book that encourages the use of reason. Its content as a whole is a clear call to free reason from its bondage. He calls on us, with expressions that are diverse in language but united in meaning, to use reason and weigh everything against its balance. The Qur'an also gives us the freedom to believe what our intellect leads us to, as well as to follow the path that enlightens and guides our thoughts (Mahmud, 1998). Just as the Qur'an is a guide for reason, so it is with religion. This is because the Qur'an is an inseparable part, even the basis of religion itself.

The role of religion as a guide for reason is essential, especially in guiding people in matters that, if left unguided, will lead to error and failure in attaining the truth. These things include:

- Faith
- Basic rules of morality, both general and detailed
- Shari'a, both in general rules and in part in detailed rules, including general rules that contain aspects of the past and different environments (Mahmud, 1998)

On the other hand, regarding the universe—including the sky, earth, mountains, seas, stars, moon, sun, and materials and energy in it, as well as the depth of the ocean and the vastness of the sky—all of this is deliberately left so that humans can study it in depth, both in terms of how it is formed and its working mechanism (Mahmud, 1998).

Al-Imam as-Shafi'i explained that he divided the source of recognition (makrifat) into two sources, both of which have their own methods and rules as well as their own methods and styles. The first is the source of divinity, which is revelation, the second is the source of man, which is reason or feeling. For divine sources, the scope is the supernatural and moral. As for human resources, the scope is in the form of the universe and tangible matter. So when human affairs run as they should, then he (human) surrenders himself to Allah in everything related to religion, be it faith, sharia, or morals (Mahmud, 1998).

Therefore, the question arises whether the media of reason and the media of tashfiyah are the same in achieving this wisdom. If we look at history, we will find that those who use the medium of reason, they have different opinions, and none of them claim to be connected to Allah (Mahmud, 1955).

In fact, the world from the beginning of its existence, it has always sought to find a benchmark of reason to weigh truth and falsehood, in the fields of ethics and metaphysics. However, throughout the ages, and with the differences in the environment, and in spite of constant efforts, this benchmark of reason, and its logic, as well as its protection for the mind, has become a myth that is laughed at only. Because there is no benchmark of reason to distinguish between truth and falsehood regarding things behind the veil (the occult) or the supernatural, according to the expression of the Qur'an. And all that the intellect can attain is only possibilities and conjectures which do not lead to undoubted inferential belief. And this is the explanation from the side of the path of reason in understanding the occult (Mahmud, 1955).

Just like the short phrase of Plotinus is to find God and connect with Him. As for finding God here, it is through the medium of reason, namely by reasoning and proof. And this is half the path of perfection, but some people stop here because of their limitations (not achieving perfection). Their limitations may be derived from their innate nature, or they may be derived from their deviant environment, which makes them mistakenly assume that the intellect – itself – can understand the occult (Mahmud, 1955)

What is meant by connecting with God is the medium of tashfiyah, which is another part that perfects the path. This is the path of perfection described by Ibn Thufail in his treatise Hayy Ibn Yaqzan. So the term finding God and connecting with it is a perfect method that cannot be denied for philosophers or wisdom seekers (Mahmud, 1955).

2.6.2 Media Tashfiyah

If the media of reason produces conclusions that contradict each other, then the media of tashfiyah (purification of the soul) actually produces an agreed conclusion. If the users of the media of reason are of the opinion that none of them has succeeded in coming to a relationship with Allah, then it is well known among the users of the media of tashfiyah that they have reached the level of *ma'rifat* (recognition) of Allah. This view is not only embraced by Islamic Sufis, but also by philosophers who follow the *Israqiyyah school of philosophy*, as well as philosophical figures such as Pythagoras, Plato, Plotinus, Al-Farabi, Ibn Sina, and Ibn Thufail. (Mahmud, 1955).

From the experience of the righteous from ancient times, it is evident that cleansing and purifying oneself, asking for God's help, and drawing close to Him can raise the level of man

in the spirit realm to the highest level. At that level, man acquires various gifts, inspirations, and knowledge that does not plunge him into the group of materialism. Materialism is the view of those who are preoccupied with the affairs of the world, who prioritize it over religion, and make material things more important than God. (Mahmud, 2003).

According to Imam Abu Sa'id al-Kharraz, preparation to attain the degree of makrifat must be done by preparing the heart from two aspects: willingness and sincerity in giving the best. Because, makrifat is a gift from Allah that can only be achieved through effort and seriousness. The achievement of makrifat itself is true happiness. Although the path is the same as the path to Allah, the path is not easy, because the goal is very noble and will not fall into useless things (Mahmud 1988).

When Imam Abu Sa'id al-Kharraz was asked about the path to Allah, he explained that the first step to take that path is repentance. He then mentioned the conditions of repentance, and described the path to Allah as described by the Sufis, namely as the science of the soul (spiritual psychology). In detail, the path is the process of moving human beings from one phase to the next: starting from the dignity of the repentant, ascending to the dignity of lovers, to finally reaching the dignity of those who are close to Allah (Mahmud, 1988).

As mentioned by Shaykh Abdul Halim Mahmud who quoted the opinion of Imam Abu Sa'id in the book *Hilya al-Auliya*, that the beginning of the path to Allah is repentance, along with its conditions. After that, a servant will move from the maqam (dignity) of repentance to maqam *al-khauf* (fear of Allah), then to maqam *al-rajā'* (hope in His mercy), then to maqam *ash-sholihin* (pious people), then to maqam *al-muridin* (path-walkers), then to maqam *al-muthi'in* (obedient people), to maqam *al-muhibbin* (lovers of Allah), to maqam *al-muhibbin* (lovers of Allah), to maqam *al-musytaqin* (those who long), then to maqam *al-awliya* (guardians), and finally to maqam *al-muqarrabin* (those who are close to Allah) (Mahmud, 1988).

Then departing from the question whether the mind, that is, the person who reaches the degree of makrifat violates the zhahir, does the essence violate the shari'a?! Therefore, according to Imam Abu Sa'id, the statement that every mental thing is against the zhahir, then it is nonsense and unreasonable (Mahmud, 1988).

So it should be noted that people who want to complete their faith and look for behaviors that can lead to success should know the three main basics that must be implemented. Thus his faith will grow stronger with Allah's permission. The first is al-Ikhlās, the second is as-Sidq and the third is as-Sabr. So it is said that al-Ikhlās is not complete without being accompanied by as-Sidq and as-Sabr. And as-Sabr is also not perfect without being accompanied by as-Sidq and al-Ikhlās. Likewise, as-Sidq is not perfect without being accompanied by as-Sabr and al-Ikhlās (Mahmud, 1988).

1. Al-Ikhlās

The first behavior that must be carried out is al-Ikhlās, which is sincerity, one of which is as explained in the word of Allah:

فَادْعُوا اللَّهَ مُخْلِصِينَ لَهُ الدِّينَ وَلَوْ كَرِهَ الْكَافِرُونَ ١٤

"So worship Allah by sincerely obeying Him even though the disbelievers do not like (Him)." (Gafir/40:14)

Therefore, it is obligatory for a servant to hide all his deeds without wanting to be seen by humans, all the efforts he makes are only for Allah alone and hoping for His pleasure (Mahmud, 1988). To strengthen sincerity, a servant should expect nothing but Allah, fear nothing but Allah, act out of motivation other than Allah, and not care about people's reproaches for Allah's sake. He accepts all of this on the basis of love for Allah and pleasure in the attitude of those who hate him. There are many other purposes of sincerity itself, but the explanation here is intended for those who want to take the path to Allah. (Mahmud, 1988).

2. As-Sabr

Allah said:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اصْبِرُوا وَصَابِرُوا وَرَابِطُوا وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُونَ

O you who have believed, be patient, strengthen your patience, be on the lookout at the borders (of your country), and fear Allah so that you may be blessed."(Ali 'Imran/3:200)"

Patience has meaning in terms of birth (zhahir) and mind (bathin). In terms of birth, patience is divided into three: first, patience in carrying out the obligations commanded by Allah; second, be patient in shunning everything that Allah forbids; and third, be patient in carrying out the practice that is sunnah. As for the inner aspect, patience means being firm in accepting the truth that comes from anyone, as well as giving advice so that others also accept the truth. For the truth is a messenger of Allah to remind His servants, and they must not reject it. Whoever ignores or rejects the truth, it means that he has rejected what Allah commands (Mahmud, 1988).

3. As-Sidq

Allah said:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَكُونُوا مَعَ الصَّادِقِينَ

"O you who have believed, fear Allah and remain with the righteous!"(At-Taubah/9:119)

As-Sidq itself has many meanings, one of which is the sincerity of a servant to approach and repent to Allah with true repentance (Mahmud, 1988). As Allah says:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا تُوبُوا إِلَى اللَّهِ تَوْبَةً نَّصُوحًا

"O you who have believed, repent to Allah with pure repentance..." (At-Tahrim/66:8)

Repentance is regretting all omissions in carrying out Allah's commands, abandoning all that He forbids, and being determined not to repeat the deeds that Allah hates. Repentance is also manifested by always asking for forgiveness from Allah, rejecting all forms of tyranny, and believing that Allah accepts the repentance of His servants who are earnest and fulfill the conditions of repentance. One of the signs of the truth of repentance is to abandon those who neglect Allah's commands, cleanse one's heart from all evil, and return to Allah with sincerity (Mahmud, 1988).

2.7. Axiology (The Benefits of Knowing Allah)

As stated by Imam Abu Sa'id al-Kharraz, the achievement of the makrifat is happiness (Mahmud, 1988). By knowing Allah, life becomes calm, directed, light and happy. On the other

hand, if we are far from God, life will feel heavy, narrow, miserable, drowned in the mud of sin, and continuously live in a span of time and space of humiliation.

One of the most basic benefits of makrifatullah is the attainment of peace of mind (طمأنينة القلب) and peace of soul. When a person comes to know Allah by His Almighty, Wise, Merciful, and Merciful attributes, he will feel secure and at peace, even in the storms of life. The realization that everything is governed by a perfect Divine will eliminates anxiety and fear (al-Ghazali, 2005).

The concept of peace of mind (طمأنينة القلب) as the fruit of the knowledge of God can be found in various Sufism literature and interpretation of the Quran. For example, Imam Ghazali in his work *Ihya' Ulumuddin* discusses a lot about how makrifatullah leads to inner peace. The Quran itself states:

الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَتَطْمَئِنُّ قُلُوبُهُمْ بِذِكْرِ اللَّهِ أَلَا بِذِكْرِ اللَّهِ تَطْمَئِنُّ الْقُلُوبُ

"(That is) those who believe and their hearts become at peace in the remembrance of Allah. Remember, that only by remembering God will the heart always be at peace." (Ar-Ra'd/13:28)

Although it does not explicitly mention makrifatullah, the interpretation of this verse is often associated with the depth of knowledge and understanding of the oneness and attributes of Allah (Shihab, 2000)

Knowing Allah deeply will encourage a person to internalize His attributes (*takhalluq bi akhlaqillah*) (al-Ghazali, 2005). For example, knowing Allah as the Most Merciful (*Ar-Rahman*) and the Most Merciful (*Ar-Rahim*) will cultivate the nature of compassion in oneself, while knowing Allah as the Most Just (*Al-'Adl*) will cultivate the nature of justice. Thus, makrifatullah is the main foundation for the development of noble morals (*makārim al-akhlaq*) (Mahmud, 1997). As An-Nabulsi expressed, that understanding every name of Allah (*Asmaul Husna*) will affect one's behavior and morality. He argues that the recognition of the attributes of Allah is a practical way to emulate the good qualities in humans (an-Nabulsi, 2015).

The hadith of Qudsi states: "إِنَّ اللَّهَ جَمِيلٌ يُحِبُّ الْجَمَالَ" (Verily Allah is beautiful and loves beauty) (HR. Muslim). The recognition of the beauty of Allah encourages a person to do good and create beauty in all aspects of his life (Muslim, 2007)

Makrifatullah provides a clear understanding of the nature of life (حقيقة الحياة) and the purpose of human existence. A person who knows God will realize that this life is not just a chance or meaningless, but a test and journey to an encounter with the Creator. This awareness will lead his life to worship and sincere devotion. The concept of makrifatullah as an inner enlightenment that reveals divine reality and purpose in life is strongly emphasized in the Sufism tradition. Imam al-Qusyairi in his work *Ar-Risalah Al-Qusyairiyah* explains that, "Makrifat is the opening of the hijab between the servant and his Rabb, so that he sees Him with the eyes of his heart" (Chapter "Fi al-Ma'rifah"). This deep understanding leads humans to a meaningful life, where the existence of the world is seen as a preparation for the hereafter and every action is directed to devotion to the Creator (Shihab, 2000).

By knowing Allah, one will be more aware of the abundance of His favor and His justice in every destiny. This will increase gratitude (شكر) in a state of joy and patience (صبر) in the face of calamity. Makrifatullah teaches that behind every difficulty there must be wisdom and goodness from Allah. In *Ihya' Ulumuddin*, Imam al-Ghazali extensively discusses gratitude and patience as the fruit of makrifatullah. When a person understands that everything comes from Allah and that Allah will not burden the soul beyond his ability, he will be more grateful and patient (al-Ghazali, 2005)

لَا يُكَلِّفُ اللَّهُ نَفْسًا إِلَّا وُسْعَهَا

"Allah does not burden a person except according to his ability" (Al-Baqarah/2:286)

When a person knows Allah as the Almighty, the Rich, and the Giver of Sustenance, he will feel spiritually independent (الاستغناء) and no longer be too dependent on creatures or worldly things. The fear of losing possessions, position, or people will be lessened, because he knows that everything is in God's hands. It frees individuals from material and social slavery (Ibn Qayyim, 2003)

وَيَرْزُقْهُ مِنْ حَيْثُ لَا يَحْتَسِبُ وَمَنْ يَتَوَكَّلْ عَلَى اللَّهِ فَهُوَ حَسْبُهُ

"And bestowed upon him sustenance from a direction he did not expect. Whoever trusts in Allah, Allah will provide for him. (At-Talaq/65:3)

If a servant knows Allah as the only Almighty, the Rich, the Forgiving, the Most Merciful, the All-Knowing, and the Giver of Sustenance, then he will only ask, depend, be grateful, fearful, and serve Him. In Islam, faith in the unseen, intellect, revelation, and contemplation of the universe are the way to know Allah. This introduction strengthens faith, fosters piety, frees from slavery to creatures, and brings peace, blessings, and happiness in this world and the hereafter.

Makrifatullah is a very great blessing. Knowing Allah will produce noble morals. How not, by knowing Allah we will feel looked at, heard and noticed by Allah, so that our steps and movements are directed in the path that Allah wants. This is the true enjoyment of life.

3. Conclusion

According to Sheikh Abdul Halim Mahmud, philosophy and Sufism have a close and complementary relationship. In fact, philosophy in his and other Muslim philosophers views means wisdom, which is the effort to know Allah. Shaykh Abdul Halim Mahmud divided the way of knowing Allah into two media: intellect and tashfiyah (purification of the soul). In fact, philosophers who rely only on reason do not achieve the degree of makrifatullah perfectly. On the contrary, through the medium of tashfiyah, it has become famous that a person can achieve the degree of knowing Allah.

This is in line with Plotinus' phrase about "finding God and connecting with Him." Finding God here refers to the intellectual's approach to reasoning and proof, and this is half the path to perfection, but some people stop here because of their limitations. Meanwhile, connecting with God describes the path of tashfiyah as a part that completes the journey to makrifatullah. This is the path of perfection that Ibn Thufail also described in *Hayy Ibn Yaqzan*.

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