

# The Epistemology of Ibn Arabi and Al-Ghazali's Sufism: A Comparative Study of the Source and Validity of Spiritual Knowledge

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**Abstract** : *The epistemology of Sufism, as a bridge between rational knowledge and spiritual experience in Islam, has long fascinated Muslim thinkers. This research reveals the complex layers of thought of Ibn Arabi and Al-Ghazali, two Sufi figures whose thoughts have resonated throughout the centuries. Through in-depth analysis of their monumental works, this study reveals how these two figures navigated the sea of ma'rifah (intuitive knowledge) on different ships but headed to the same port. Al-Ghazali, with his kashf compass, sailed carefully between the currents of the Shari'a and reality, while Ibn Arabi, with his Wahdat al-Wujud sails, sailed a wider horizon, embracing the winds of Greek and Bathiniyah philosophy. This research not only maps their spiritual routes, but also explores how the knowledge maps they drew are still relevant in the navigation of contemporary spirituality, offering a new compass for seekers of meaning in the modern era.*

**Keywords:** : *Epistemology of Sufism; Ibnu Arabi; Al-Ghazali; ma'rifah; Wahdat al-Wujud; Islamic spirituality.*

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## 1. Introduction

Sufism is a discipline in Islam with a broad epistemological reach, covering human life's outer and inner aspects. The uniqueness of Sufism lies in its model of knowledge obtained through spiritual experience, which, at a certain level, can bring a person to a state of fauna in Absolute reality (Cibro, 2021). The epistemology of Sufism, or what is known as 'irfani, has unique characteristics that distinguish it from other Islamic scientific disciplines such as philosophy, kalam, and fiqh (Hasan, 2012a).

In the context of the philosophy of science, the epistemology of Sufism offers a unique perspective on the sources and validity of spiritual knowledge. Al-Ghazali, an important figure

in the tradition of Sufism, concluded that Sufism involves a process of purifying the soul (tazkiyat an-nafs) consisting of three stages: takhalliy (emptying the soul of despicable traits), tahalliy (filling the soul with praiseworthy traits), and tajalliy (openness to the soul of reality) (Wekke et al., 2018). This process shows that the epistemology of Sufism not only focuses on the cognitive aspect and involves spiritual and ethical dimensions.

Ibn 'Arabi's view is that divine knowledge cannot be achieved except through divine revelation and disclosure, not through rational reasoning, whose peak of knowledge is only knowing that God exists. Intuitive knowledge is not knowledge obtained from the results of rational reasoning as achieved by philosophers (Ali, 2022). Affirming the privilege of the method of disclosure and the weakness of thought in producing this knowledge does not mean that the Sufis ignore reason altogether. In Ibn 'Arabi's view, the reason is important, especially in maintaining the Shari'a, and the Shari'a leads to the essence (Bakir, 2019). Reason has a light with which certain things can be captured (known). With the light of reason, humans can come to knowledge about divinity (uluhiyyah), what is obligatory, what is impossible and what is jaiz for Him. Just as reason has a light to know, so faith has a light with which everything is known as long as nothing hinders it.

Through the light of faith, reason can grasp knowledge about the essence and what attributes Allah attributes to Himself. Thus, the limitations of reason are only limitations in achieving perfect divine knowledge, which can only be achieved with knowledge that comes from Allah Himself, namely through Divine revelation (Murtaza et al., n.d.). What distinguishes Ibn 'Arabi from most other Sufis is his high appreciation for the thoughts and language of philosophers, as seen in his various books that discuss philosophical issues and the terms they use. This appreciation does not make him affiliated with philosophy or philosophers. His wisdom drives his appreciation of the thoughts of philosophers. According to him, the thoughts of philosophers are not necessarily wrong and contradictory to what the Prophet SAW said (Arifin & Amiruddin, 2018). The epistemology of Sufism presents a complex roadmap to a deeper understanding of reality. This map has three main dimensions: esoteric, exoteric, and neo-esoteric (Bakir, 2019). Each dimension offers a different but complementary perspective. The flexibility of Sufism's epistemology lies in its ability to integrate various sources of knowledge, including revelation, inner experience, and rational understanding (Komarudin, 2012). Thus, Sufism is not trapped in one point of view but offers a broad and deep scope.

This study aims to explore the epistemological dimensions of Sufism more deeply, especially in terms of the sources and validity of spiritual knowledge in Islam. By understanding the fundamental structure of 'Irfan epistemology in Sufism, it is hoped that it can provide new insights into how spiritual knowledge is obtained, validated, and integrated into the broader context of Islamic science. The significance of this study lies in its contribution to the discourse of contemporary Islamic philosophy of science and its potential to bridge the gap between rational-empirical and spiritual-intuitive approaches to understanding reality. Thus, this study is relevant to the study of Sufism and Islamic philosophy and to efforts to develop a more comprehensive and integrative Islamic epistemology.

This research uses a qualitative approach with content analysis and hermeneutics methods to examine the epistemology of Sufism in the Sunni Islamic tradition, especially the works of Ibn Arabi and Al-Ghazali. This approach was chosen because of its suitability for analyzing complex philosophical and mystical texts. The primary data sources used are the central works of these two figures, "Futūḥāt al-Makkiyyah" by Ibn Arabi, as well as "Iḥyā'

'Ulūm al-Dīn" and "Mishkāt al-Anwār" by Al-Ghazali. Secondary sources include tafsir, sharia, scientific journals, and relevant previous research.

Data was collected through literature study and documentation, focusing on identifying and recording information related to Sufism epistemology. Data analysis involved three main stages: content analysis to identify epistemological themes, hermeneutic analysis to interpret the text by considering the historical and cultural context, and comparative analysis to compare the epistemological concepts between Ibn Arabi and Al-Ghazali (Faricha, 2021).

The research process begins with collecting and classifying sources, followed by reading primary texts. Next, the identification and codification of epistemological themes, contextual analysis, interpretation of key concepts, systematic comparison, and synthesis of findings are carried out. Research ethics are upheld by adhering to academic honesty, objectivity, and respect for copyright. This method is designed to allow for an in-depth exploration of the epistemology of Sufism of Ibn Arabi and Al-Ghazali, as well as providing a strong foundation for comparative analysis between the two figures in the context of the Sunni Sufism tradition (Dewi, n.d.). With this approach, it is hoped that the research can comprehensively understand the sources and validity of spiritual knowledge in Islam, primarily through the perspectives of two significant figures in the Sunni Sufism tradition.

## 2. Results

Epistemology, derived from the Greek words "episteme" (knowledge) and "logos" (science), is a branch of philosophy that focuses on the origin, nature, character, and types of knowledge. This topic is one of the most frequently debated in philosophy, covering questions about what knowledge is, what its characteristics are, and the relationship between knowledge and truth and belief. In general, epistemology can be interpreted as a theory of knowledge related to the nature of science, assumptions, its foundations, and accountability for the knowledge possessed by individuals. (Parida et al., 2021 (Hafizh et al., 2024) According to Abdul Munir Mulkan, epistemology involves all forms of human activity and thought that question the origin of science. Meanwhile, Mujamil Qomar stated that epistemology is a part of philosophy that specifically studies and determines the direction and nature of knowledge. Anton Bakker emphasized that epistemology deals with the scope and nature of knowledge. Achmad Charris Zubair highlighted that epistemology questions in depth what knowledge is and how to obtain it. Jujun S. Suria Sumantri added that epistemology reflects the direction of human thinking in finding and obtaining knowledge by using rational abilities (Makki, 2019) (Rahmatika & Kodir, 2024).

Methods in epistemology vary, including inductive, deductive, positivist, contemplative, and dialectical methods. Each method has its approach to obtaining knowledge. For example, the inductive method focuses on observing general conclusions from specific facts, while the deductive method uses logic to conclude from existing premises (Hasan, 2012a (Rohanda & Kodir, 2025).

Epistemology also answers fundamental questions about how a person can be considered to know. This shows that epistemology is essential to describe humans as knowledgeable beings by answering and solving problems faced in the search for knowledge (Solihin et al., 2024).

Overall, epistemology is not just the study of knowledge; it also includes a critical analysis of how we acquire and understand information. Thus, a deep understanding of epistemology can help individuals develop the capacity to think critically and reflectively about the world around them (Digarizki & Al Anang, 2020 (Solihin & Mubarak, 2024).

### **2.1. Epistemology of Sufism from the Perspective of Ibn Arabi**

Ibn Arabi, known by his full name Abu Bakr Muhammad ibn 'Ali ibn Muhammad ibn Ahmad ibn 'Abdullah al-Ta'iy al-Hatimy, was born in Murcia, Spain, on 17 Ramadan 560 AH (28 July 1165 AD). He came from a family of philanthropists and ascetics who greatly influenced the political and spiritual fields. His father, an imam of fiqh and hadith, sent him to Seville at eight to continue his education. Ibn Arabi studied with various prominent teachers there, deepening his knowledge of the Qur'an, tafsir, hadith, and fiqh. In his intellectual journey, he became one of the leading Sufi figures and philosophers of the 12th century who made significant contributions to Sufism through his profound works. The main concept in Ibn Arabi's Sufism is "Wahdat al-Wujud" or the Unity of Being, which states that everything in this world is a manifestation of God. In his monumental work, Futuhat al-Makkiyah, he explores various aspects of reality and existence, emphasizing that understanding the self and God cannot be separated. Furthermore, in Fusus al-Hikam, Ibn Arabi summarizes the wisdom of the prophets, showing that although each prophet has different aspects of truth, all point to one universal truth integrated in the prophethood of Muhammad. These works focus on metaphysics and theology and invite readers to reflect on their relationship with God through the purification of the soul (tazkiyatun nafs) and the development of divine love (Murtaza, 2022).

In his epistemology of Sufism, Ibn Arabi emphasized the importance of intuitive knowledge or ma'rifah as the highest form of knowledge obtained through direct spiritual experience. He distinguished between 'ilm (rational knowledge) and ma'rifah, where ma'rifah is considered higher because it comes from inner experience (Murtaza et al., n.d.). The kash (revelation) concept is also key in his thinking, where the heart (al-qalb) functions as a spiritual tool to receive divine illumination. Thus, understanding God not only depends on reason but also requires an open heart to receive knowledge from Him (Mutholingah et al., 2020). Through the process of purification of the soul and spiritual efforts, individuals can achieve a deeper understanding of the nature of existence. With this approach, Ibn Arabi provided a unique framework for understanding spiritual reality and existence, making him a pioneer in the tradition of philosophical Sufism that remains relevant today.

### **2.2. Epistemology of Sufism from Al Ghazali's Perspective**

Al-Ghazali, born in 1058 AD in Ghazalah, near Tus, Khurasan, Persia, was a prominent Islamic thinker known by his full name Muhammad bin Muhammad bin Muhammad Abu Hamid Al-Ghazali. He is often called the Hujjatul Islam and has other titles such as Zainuddin and Bahrun Mughriq. Al-Ghazali came from a religious family and had relations with the Seljuk Kings. Since childhood, he showed talent in religious studies and received formal education under the guidance of various teachers in Seville and Baghdad. After completing higher education, he became a professor at the Nizhamiyah Madrasah in Baghdad before spending the rest of his life in worship and teaching.

Al-Ghazali's contribution to Islamic thought is significant, primarily through his monumental works such as Ihya' 'Ulum al-Din, which combines theology, law, and mysticism. This work emphasizes the importance of the spiritual relationship between man and God and his fellow man. It introduces the concept of Sufism as a path to moral and spiritual perfection. Al-Ghazali critiques rational philosophical thought and describes his spiritual journey in other works, such as Tahafut al-Falasifah and Al-Munqidh min al-Dalal. He believed that Sufism should be based on Islamic law and not separate from the teachings of the Qur'an and Sunnah.

Al-Ghazali's epistemology of Sufism reflects a complex intellectual and spiritual journey. He views science as a single entity that originates from God, with knowledge obtained through the five senses, the mind, and the heart. Ma'rifah (intuitive knowledge) is the pinnacle of epistemological achievement in his view, where actual knowledge is obtained through direct experience that connects the heart with God. Al-Ghazali emphasizes the importance of tazkiyah (purification of the soul) and mujahadah (sincerity) in seeking truth. With this approach, he succeeded in integrating spiritual aspects with authoritative Islamic teachings, making him one of the most influential figures in the history of Islamic civilization.

### **2.3. Similarities and Differences in the Epistemology of Tasawwuf Ibn Arabi and al-Ghazali**

The Sufism epistemology of Al-Ghazali and Ibn Arabi offers two different but complementary perspectives in understanding spiritual knowledge and experience. Al-Ghazali, known as "Hujjatul Islam," emphasized the importance of kashf as the highest form of knowledge that involves intuiting through the soul, heart, and mind. In his view, kashf is an abundance from Allah that can only be achieved by individuals with a clean soul and heart. He differentiates between 'ilm (rational knowledge) and ma'rifah (intuitive knowledge), where ma'rifah is considered the peak of knowledge obtained through direct spiritual experience (Hasan, 2012b). Research by Nurcholis Madjid shows that Al-Ghazali integrated various disciplines, including science, into his epistemology, making this approach more inclusive and holistic. (Dahlan et al., 2013a)

Meanwhile, Ibn Arabi developed the Wahdat al-Wujud (Unity of Being), which states that everything manifests as God. In his epistemology, Ibn Arabi emphasized the importance of inner experience and using the heart (al-qalb) to receive divine illumination. He described ma'rifah as intuitive knowledge that is cognitive and involves deep spiritual experience. Research by Ahmad Mursyidi shows that Ibn Arabi views reality as a shadow of the Real (al-Haqq), so that understanding God must go beyond the limitations of reason and depend on mystical experience. (Halim & Ie, 2010a)

The main difference between these two figures lies in their approach to knowledge. Al-Ghazali tended to be more careful in integrating philosophy into his teachings, trying to maintain harmony with the sacred texts and more orthodox Islamic traditions. In contrast, Ibn Arabi was more open to the influence of Greek philosophy and the Bathiniyah teachings, creating a more universal paradigm. Despite their differences, both agreed that spiritual experience was the key to attaining knowledge of God. Both also emphasized the importance of purifying the soul and seeking divine love as an integral part of the spiritual journey. Thus, the epistemology of Sufism of Al-Ghazali and Ibn Arabi provides deep insight into the relationship between humans and God and how to obtain proper knowledge in the Islamic tradition. (Dahlan et al., 2013b)

The results of the study on the study "Dimensions of Epistemology of Sufism: A Study of the Sources and Validity of Spiritual Knowledge in Islam," which focuses on the works of Ibn Arabi and Al-Ghazali reveal several important findings.

### **2.4. Sources of Knowledge in Sufism**

Analysis of Ibn Arabi's and Al-Ghazali's works shows that both recognize three primary sources of knowledge in Sufism. Revelation, including the Qur'an and Hadith, is the primary

and authoritative source. Both figures place revelation as a literal text and a medium for forming spiritual reality and deep meaning.

In "Futūḥāt al-Makkiyyah," Ibn Arabi prioritizes the esoteric dimension of revelation. For him, literal understanding is not enough to reach the depth of ma'rifat. He developed the concept of "ilmu laduni," which is direct knowledge given by God without intermediaries, often through tajalli (divine manifestation). This perspective shifts epistemology from objective observation to subjective experience, which includes inner illumination and spiritual appreciation. Understanding revelation for Ibn Arabi is a dynamic process that demands purity of heart as a container of knowledge.

Al-Ghazali, in "Iḥyā' 'Ulūm al-Dīn," sees revelation as the foundation that governs all forms of spiritual knowledge, but with a more structured approach. He divides knowledge into a hierarchy, from the lowest (sensory knowledge) to the highest (divine knowledge). For Al-Ghazali, revelation is the only bridge that guarantees absolute truth in ma'rifat. However, he also emphasizes the importance of reason as a tool to understand revelation within its limits so there is harmony between reason and heart (Zaini, 2017). From an epistemological perspective, Ibn Arabi emphasizes intuitive epistemology (gnoseology), where knowledge is obtained through direct experience and openness to the tajalli of Allah. In contrast, Al-Ghazali uses an integrative epistemological approach that combines revelation, reason, and intuition in a complementary process (Kusuma & Rahmadani, 2023). This difference shows how each figure arranges priorities in the epistemological hierarchy, where both still uphold revelation as the primary source but differ in method and emphasis.

These two approaches do not negate each other but offer complementary perspectives that enrich the Islamic intellectual tradition in understanding the sources of knowledge.

Intuition (inspiration and kasyf) is considered a unique source of knowledge in Sufism. Ibn Arabi discusses the concept of "fath" or spiritual opening that allows one to receive knowledge directly from God. Although more cautious, Al-Ghazali acknowledges the validity of inspiration as a source of knowledge in "Mishkāṭ al-Anwār", but emphasizes the importance of verification through shari'a (Huda, 2010).

Spiritual experience, which includes ahwal (spiritual states) and maqamat (spiritual stations), is a source of experiential knowledge. Both figures emphasize that true knowledge in Sufism is theoretical and must be experienced directly

## **2.5. Methods of Validating Spiritual Knowledge**

According to both figures, consistency with the Shari'a is the main criterion in validating spiritual knowledge. Al-Ghazali explicitly stated in "Iḥyā' 'Ulūm al-Dīn" that any spiritual experience that contradicts the Shari'a must be rejected. Ibn Arabi, although known for his more esoteric thoughts, also emphasized the importance of harmony with the Shari'a in "Fuṣūṣ al-Ḥikam".

The experiences of previous Sufis were used as references and validation. Both Ibn Arabi and Al-Ghazali often referred to the experiences and teachings of the great Sufis before them to strengthen their arguments. In this case, Sufism scholars' consensus also became a validation method, especially for complex spiritual experiences. Al-Ghazali was more explicit in using this method, while Ibn Arabi tended to rely more on his personal experience (Wiyono, 2016).

Ibn Arabi and Al-Ghazali have fundamental similarities in making the Shari'a the foundation of Sufism. For both of them, Shari'a is an external rule and a path to makrifat and spiritual perfection. Al-Ghazali emphasized the integration between sharia and morals in Iḥyā'

'Ulūm al-Dīn, while Ibn Arabi in *Futūḥāt al-Makkiyyah* saw sharia as the entrance to a deep metaphysical understanding (Hasan, 2012b).

The difference lies in the dimensions of their Sufism approach. Ibn Arabi was more symbolic and metaphysical, focusing on the concept of *wahdat al-wujūd* and inner experiences such as *tajalli* (Halim & Ie, 2010b). Al-Ghazali used a more practical and moral approach, emphasizing *maqāmāt* such as *khawf* and *rajā'* as stages for achieving spiritual awareness (Mutholingah et al., 2020). Both align the sharia with the inner dimension of Islam, although using different terms and methods.

Comparative analysis shows that both Ibn Arabi and Al-Ghazali recognize the existence of a hierarchy of knowledge in Sufism. In *Futūḥāt al-Makkiyyah*, Ibn Arabi explains the concept of *marātib al-'ulūm* (levels of knowledge), with *ma'rifah* as the pinnacle of knowledge, which is obtained through direct enlightenment from God. In comparison, Al-Ghazali in *Mishkāt al-Anwār* establishes a hierarchy of knowledge, from sensory knowledge to divine *ilm*, which is sourced from the light of God.

As quoted in his second book, Ibn Arabi stated about *maqamat* and *ahwalnya* "The highest knowledge is the knowledge that Allah instills in the heart of a servant, without intermediaries, as a reflection of His *tajalli*." (*Futūḥāt al-Makkiyyah*). In contrast, Al-Ghazali stated that "The highest light of truth is the light of Allah, which radiates into the soul, illuminates the heart, and gives birth to true knowledge." (*Mishkāt al-Anwār*) this refers to the discussion of divine light as the highest source of knowledge in the work (Faisal & Nur, n.d.). This concept is related to the metaphor of light in the Qur'an, as explained in the verse *An-Nur* (24:35), which is the basis of the central theme in Al-Ghazali's work.

## 2.6. *Comparison with Western Epistemology*

Compared to Western epistemology, the epistemology of Sufism promoted by Ibn Arabi and Al-Ghazali shows several significant differences. First is recognizing intuition and spiritual experience as valid sources of knowledge, which is rare in modern Western epistemology. Second, the integration of the rational and spiritual dimensions in the process of attaining knowledge. Third, the emphasis on self-transformation as a prerequisite for attaining the highest knowledge is an aspect that has received little attention in Western epistemology.

This paper provides a comprehensive overview of the epistemology of Sufism in the Sunni tradition, primarily through the thoughts of Ibn 'Arabi and Al-Ghazali, and highlights the unique contributions of Sufism to the theory of knowledge in Islam.

Al-Ghazali shares a similar view with Ibn 'Arabi regarding the relationship between *shari'a* and *haqqat*. For Al-Ghazali, *shari'a* and *haqqat* are not separate things but closely related and complementary. Al-Ghazali emphasizes that *shari'a* is an essential foundation for the spiritual journey. In his work "*Ihya 'Ulum al-Din*", he describes *shari'a* as the outer path (*zahir*) that must be traversed to reach *haqqat* or the inner path (*batin*). He says practicing the sharia seriously and consistently will open the door to a deeper understanding of spiritual reality. Like Ibn 'Arabi, Al-Ghazali also believed that the correct practice of sharia will produce the fruit of *ma'rifat* (spiritual knowledge) and *hakikat*. He likened sharia to medicine, while *hakikat* is healing. A person cannot achieve healing without first taking medicine.

Al-Ghazali emphasized the importance of balance between religion's external and internal aspects. He criticized those who only focused on external rituals without understanding their inner meaning, while warning of the dangers of ignoring sharia on the pretext of having achieved *hakikat*. In Al-Ghazali's view, *riyadah* (spiritual training) and *mujahadah* (struggle against lust) must be based on the correct practice of sharia. He believed

that true spiritual knowledge and mystical experiences can only be obtained through obedience to the Qur'an and the Sunnah of the Prophet Muhammad SAW. He also emphasized that the path to Allah must go through stages (maqamat) which begin with repentance and end with ma'rifat. Each of these stages must be carried out by referring to the Shari'a. He viewed that true love for Allah (mahabbah) can only be achieved through obedience to His commands and avoiding His prohibitions.

Thus, Ibn 'Arabi and Al-Ghazali saw the Shari'a as an inseparable path from reality. Both emphasized the importance of istiqamah (consistency) in practicing the Shari'a physically and mentally as the key to achieving a higher spiritual level and attaining Divine love.

This study reveals several important findings regarding the epistemology of Sufism in the thoughts of Ibn Arabi and Al-Ghazali. First, both figures recognize three primary sources of knowledge in Sufism: revelation, intuition, and spiritual experience. Revelation (the Qur'an and Hadith) is placed as an authoritative source. At the same time, intuition (inspiration and kasyf) and spiritual experience (ahwal and maqamat) are considered unique sources of knowledge in Sufism (Faricha, 2021).

Second, the methods of validating spiritual knowledge used by both figures include consistency with the Shari'a, referring to the experiences of previous Sufis and the consensus of Sufism scholars. These findings indicate that although Sufism emphasizes individual spiritual experience, it remains closely tied to religious tradition and authority.

Third, both Ibn Arabi and Al-Ghazali recognize the existence of a hierarchy of knowledge in Sufism, with intuitive knowledge (ma'rifah) at the top of the hierarchy. This shows that in the epistemology of Sufism, there are levels of knowledge that can be achieved through a spiritual journey.

#### Research Contribution to Philosophy of Science and Islamic Studies

This research significantly contributes to the philosophy of science and Islamic studies. In the context of philosophy of science, the findings broaden our understanding of the source and validity of knowledge by including the spiritual dimension that is often neglected in modern Western epistemology. This research shows that intuition and spiritual experience can be considered as valid sources of knowledge, at least in the context of the Sufism tradition.

For Islamic studies, this research deepens our understanding of the complexity and depth of Islamic thought, especially in epistemology. By comparing Ibn Arabi's and Al-Ghazali's thoughts, this research shows the diversity and dynamics in the Islamic intellectual tradition. In addition, this research also emphasizes the importance of integration between the exoteric (sharia) and esoteric (hakikat) dimensions in Islam, which are often considered contradictory (Hafiun, 2012)

### 3. Conclusion

This study shows that the epistemology of Sufism, as reflected in the thought of Ibn Arabi and Al-Ghazali, is a complex, integrative, and profound system of knowledge, which goes beyond the limits of mere rationality. Both of these figures place spiritual experience as the main source of ma'rifah (intuitive knowledge), but through different paths.

Al-Ghazali emphasizes the process of purification of the soul (tazkiyat an-nafs) through strict spiritual stages, culminating in tajalliyy, which is the revelation of divine truth through inner light (kashf). Meanwhile, Ibn Arabi emphasizes more on the aspect of wahdat al-wujud, a metaphysical understanding that all reality is a manifestation of the singular existence of



Allah while still respecting reason as a means of understanding the Shari'a, but emphasizing its limitations in reaching the true truth without the light of faith and divine revelation.

Although using different approaches and symbolism, they agree that true knowledge of the Divine reality cannot be attained by logical reason alone, but must be achieved through deep spiritual experience, revelation guidance, and self-purification. Their epistemology of Sufism offers a model of knowledge that harmoniously combines rational, ethical, and intuitive aspects.

The relevance of the thoughts of these two figures remains significant in answering the crisis of meaning and spirituality in the modern era. By re-excavating the epistemological legacies of Ibn Arabi and Al-Ghazali, Muslims can find a rich spiritual map to navigate the challenges of the times, as well as bridge the gap between empirical science and spiritual wisdom in a more complete and inclusive paradigm of Islamic epistemology.

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