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Hermeneutic's Ibn Arabi: Alternatives in Understanding the Text for Islamic Moderation in Post Pandemic Era

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**Abstract:** The tendency to textually understand religious texts gives rise to the phenomenon of radicalism. According to Ibn Arabi's classical thought, to find a common thread in understanding religious texts a spiritual approach is more needed than a *zahir* (textual) approach. The spiritual approach tends to give a new understanding to comprehend religious texts that are inclusive and universal. The mental approach initiated by Ibn Arabi is called the *ta'wil* approach and in philosophy, it is called hermeneutics. The characteristics of Ibn al-Arabi's knowledge paradigm can be seen from his hermeneutic method which originates from the power of imagination, the use of symbols in understanding texts, as well as the epistemology and sources of knowledge. The characteristics of Ibn al-'Arabi's knowledge will make an epistemological contribution in understanding the text of the Quran and hadith.

**Keywords:** *hermeneutics; imagination; symbol; the Irfani's epistemology*

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### A. INTRODUCTION

Religious panoramas still dominate the religious comprehension that focuses only on the external (*zahir*) power of the external when interpreting the meaning contained in religious texts as is, without social-contextual exegesis as well as the support of other various disciplines. Textual-literalists view the results of the interpretation of the text as final and absolute; as if it were the religion itself. This view led to the emergence of a monopoly of interpretation and gave birth to a superior attitude in religion which ultimately ended on absolute opinion that considered other opinions were incorrect. This tendency is a logical consequence of a

single truth claim that results in the birth of a unilateral sacralization in understanding and interpreting the religion.

Textual-literalistic circles often fight against other groups having a different religious point of view using violence, vandalism, and statements of disbelief and apostasy that ended in bloodshed. They considered this as an attitude following the doctrines of religious texts which are considered authentic so that such an attitude will lead to a viewpoint of exclusivity in religion and easily fall into fanatical attitudes; giving no room for viewpoint differences without clarifying or questioning the possible truth of other points of view.



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Finally, in a social context, it will impoverish the views of the religious community itself.

Ibn 'Arabi's paradigm of thought is slightly different from that of other Sufis. Ibn 'Arabi's investigations are broader and bolder in formulating views regarding philosophy and mysticism. Ibn 'Arabi's study is so completely formulated that it has gone beyond the considerations of other Sufis. Kautsar Azhari Noer, *Ibn Al-'Arabi Wahdatul Wujud Dalam Perdebatan [Wahdat al-Wujud in Debate]* (Jakarta: Paramadina, 1995). Ibn al'Arabi has placed the construction of a spiritual and rational epistemology as well. Through the prism of his thought not only gave birth to the doctrines of the gnostics but also gave birth to other ideas such as fiqh, theology, philosophy, Sufism, literature, cosmology, psychology, ethics, aesthetics, and logos. Afifi, *Filsafat Mistik Muhyi-Din Ibn Al-'Arabi [The Mystical Philosophy of Muhyid-Din Ibn Al-'Arabi]* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994).

Ibn al-'Arabi obtains a metaphysical dimension and openness to expose the network that all forms of collective knowledge possessed by the *wali* (the saints). (Nasr 2014) The researchers quite diverse in defining the characteristics of Ibn al-'Arabi's paradigm of thinking. It is very natural for researchers to dissect it with various approaches and perspectives. Herein lies the greatness of Ibn al-'Arabi's thought which can be studied from various angles of science.

The characteristics of Ibn al-'Arabi's paradigm of knowledge can be seen from the power of imagination, the use of symbols to understand texts, epistemology, and sources of knowledge. The characteristics of Ibn al-'Arabi's knowledge with these aspects will ultimately affect the style and characteristics of the doctrine of mystical philosophy which can be seen from the whole of his work; later on the doctrine of Ibn

al-'Arabi is considered heretical due to the fallacy in understanding his thoughts. The interesting one about the experience of Ibn al-'Arabi in his knowledge cannot be proven by empirical experience and is beyond reasoning. It is interesting to mention that Ibn al-'Arabi was not only a mouthpiece for the Prophet Muhammad, or from angels, but also the word of Allah which was directly received by Prophet Muhammad repeatedly. Ignaz Goldziher, *Mazhab Al-Tafsir Al-Islami [Mahadzibu al-Tafsir al-Islami]* (Beirut: Dar Iqra, 1983).

The hierarchy of hermeneutic methods and the characteristics of Ibn al-'Arabi's paradigm of science will be elaborated so that it is necessary to place Ibn al-'Arabi in the right position to understand the revelation text which tends to be inclusive and universal.

## **B. MATERIALS AND METHODS**

### **1. The Power Of Imagination**

A distinctive characteristic of Ibn al-'Arabi is the power of the imagination (Rune, 1942). Henry Corbin, *Imajinasi Kreatif dalam Sufisme Ibn 'Arabi [Creative Imagination in the Sufism of Ibn 'Arabi]* (Princeton: University Press, 1969). and William C. Chittick, *Imaginal Worlds: Ibn Al-'Arabi and the Problem of Religious Diversity* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1994). placed the paradigm characteristics of Ibn al-'Arabi's thought on his most distinctive teaching which is the realm of imagination. Henry Corbin, *Imajinasi Kreatif Sufisme Ibn Al-'Arabi [Creative Imagination in the Sufism of Ibn 'Arabi]*, translated by Moh Khozim and Suhadi (Yogyakarta: LKiS, 2002). For Ibn al-'Arabi, imagination is a fundamental element in the vast constitution-cosmos. William C Chittick, *Dunia Imajinal Ibn Al-'Arabi, Kreativitas*

Imajinasi Dan Persoalan Diversitas Agama [Imaginal Worlds: Ibn Al-'Arabi and the Problem of Religious Diversity], translated by Achmad Syahid (Surabaya: Risalah Gusti, 2001). In Chittick, Ibn al-'Arabi claims that one who does not understand the role of imagination does not understand anything. Chittick, Dunia Imajinal: Ibn Al-'Arabi dan Masalah Keberagaman Agama [Imaginal Worlds: Ibn Al-'Arabi and the Problem of Religious Diversity]. "He who does not know the position of his imagination is one without any knowledge. Ibn al-'Arabi's view is in line with Albert Einstein as quoted by Fredrica R. Halligan. Fredrica R Halligan, "Imajinasi Kreatif Mistik Sufi Ibn 'Arabi [Creative Imagination in the Sufism of Ibn 'Arabi]," Jurnal Agama dan Kesehatan [Journal of Religion and Health] 40, no. 2 (2001): 276. Imagination is more important than knowledge. Imagination is not just a fantasy or meaningless daydreaming experience. These images have creativity or creative imagination which is the emanation of God or is called theophanic imagination. Corbin, Imajinasi Kreatif Sufisme Ibn Al-'Arabi [Creative Imagination in the Sufism of Ibn 'Arabi].

According to William C. Chittick contemporary scholars provide a new perspective on the need for imagination to express religious trends. However, they employ only a modern perspective or a postmodern sensitivity, with the result that imagination is handled broadly following the human subject; even in the view of ES Casey has been considered a servant of the intellectual imagination whose job is considered less noble than other psychical abilities. ES Casey, *Imagining: A Phenomenological Study* (Bloomington: Indiana University, 1984).

Ibn al-'Arabi's view is far different from the view of contemporary thought which places imagination in the environment of objective reality. Ibn al-'Arabi made imagination a fundamental constitutive element not only in the mind but also in the universe at large. Chittick, Dunia Imajinal Ibn Al-'Arabi, Kreativitas Imajinasi Dan Persoalan Diversitas Agama [Imaginal Worlds: Ibn Al-'Arabi and the Problem of Religious Diversity]. For this reason, imagination can be mapped into three basic levels, namely: the cosmos itself, the inter-macrocosm, and the inter-microcosm. Its most striking feature is the ambiguity of its nature. At the level of the entire cosmos, the ambiguity of the imagination relates to everything other than God, because the universe or the existence of the universe is in between the absolute manifestations of absolute absence. If we say God exists, shouldn't we say the same thing in the sense of the cosmos; the cosmos is to be regarded as non-existence. So that the cosmos in a certain sense is a manifestation or self-disclosure (*tajalli*) of God. As well as serving in the mirror of the reality of the person looking in the mirror. Syahrir Mawi and Nandi Rahman, *Filsafat Mistis Ibn Al-'Arabi [The Mystical Philosophy of Ibn Al-'Arabi]* (Jakarta: Gaya Media Pratama, 1995).

Ibn al-'Arabi invented the tools of the imagination at three basic levels in the universe. At the human level, imagination gives substance to spiritual experience, that the soul is in the middle between the physical and mental realities. The imagination has no place but the soul. At the second level, Ibn al-'Arabi uses the term to refer to the realm of the cosmic imagination as semi-independent. In the external world or "macrocosm" there are two fundamental

worlds of being: the spirit world and the concrete abstract physical world, such as the mental and physical in the microcosm. In a third fundamental sense, the term refers to the imagination of all the greatest realities; the cosmos as a whole. The cosmos is in the middle between absolute form and absolute absence. Chittick, *Dunia Imajinal Ibn Al-'Arabi, Kreativitas Imajinasi Dan Persoalan Diversitas Agama [Imaginal Worlds: Ibn Al-'Arabi and the Problem of Religious Diversity]*.

Furthermore, Ibn al-'Arabi distinguishes the role of reason in imagination, namely, reasoning depending on the senses that compose its knowledge; submission of reason to the power of thought. Meanwhile, imagination can influence reasoning. Imagination is the power of imagination and glimpses of everything. According to Ibn al-'Arabi imagination has an important role in science. Intellect can quickly change because of imagination. Certainly, imagination can play with reason.

Ibn al-'Arabi explains the subjugation of reason to the imagination with the statement "God creates descriptive power to do with reason." Imagination has the power to control reason when reason is incapable of understanding something without thinking about it. Thinking itself becomes a part of it. The power of reason will not accept something without thinking, while the thought process is in the corridor of imagination, not the power of pure reason. Imagination is very volatile because it is free while the senses are bound by imagination when he is still doing the thinking process. Muhammad Ibrahim Al-Fayumi, *Ibn 'Arabi: Menyingkap Kode Menguak Simbol Dibalik Paham Wihdat Al-Wujud [Ibnu Al 'Arabi:*

*Unveiling the Code Revealing the Symbols Behind the Wahdat Al-Wujud]*, translated by Imam Ghazali MAskur (Jakarta: Erlangga, 2007).

Thus, Ibn al-'Arabi actually does not negate the role of reason and the role of imagination, and its existence is equally recognized, only Ibn al-'Arabi sees the role of reason and imagination in his relationship and must be limited to knowing *Kashf* as the Sufis do. When the station of existence that is behind its role is to go there armed with the faith that comes from the prophets and mystics. God gave them *Kashf's* ability to achieve something that cannot be achieved by reason and something that cannot be made sense. And this is one of the characteristics of the path of Sufism. *Kashf*, according to Ibn al-'Arabi, is the only way to achieve the highest *ma'rifat*. *Ahlu kashf* are people who are in truth, knowledge, and reality. Muhyi al-Din Ibn 'Arabi, *Al-Futuh al-Makkiyah* (Kairo: Dar Al-Kutub Al-'Arabiyyah Al-Kubra, 1911).

Furthermore, understanding/reason according to Ibn al-'Arabi has two strengths, namely the first power, and the second force, namely the life force. First power down, the understanding to know something through the senses and everything related to it is thought. The first sense cannot be used to solve things related to the nature and essence of God because the mind and senses often make mistakes. While the second understanding or reasoning above is considered capable of achieving things related to the nature and essence of God because it is the power of pure reason. Concerning pure reason, Ibn al-'Arabi said that pure reason is to think and bind what has been produced by the mind, besides that al-Haq (God) gave *ma'rifat* to feel and direct it, because it

makes sense and is not the way to think. ('Arabi, 1911)

Furthermore, Ibn Sina and Ibn al-'Arabi have similarities in sharpening the power of imagination, namely by subduing lust, because lust can often lead to a quiet soul (al-Lust al-Mutmainnah). Submitting lust causes sanctity of life and abstinence from worldly matters. This ability can be honed to worship selflessly to get physical and afterlife rewards or rewards. Such efforts by Arif are an exercise to control our desires and powers of imagination and illusions to avoid being lulled and the desire to gain the world and to submit to the divine side and inner soul when the light of al-Haq begins to manifest. Another thing that can help print the imagination Ibn Sina, *Al-Isyarat Wa Al-Tanbihat* (Kairo: Dar Al-Ma'arif, nd). is the advice given by a clever man with heartfelt language and beautiful songs and poetry. (Hilal, 1979)

## **2. The Use of Symbols**

To Ibn al-'Arabi the use of symbols (Whitehead, 1985) is very necessary for understanding the Quran and Hadith FW Dillistone, Daya Kekuatan Simbol [The Power of Symbols] (Yogyakarta: Kanisius, 2006).. So it can be said that the characteristic of Ibn al-'Arabi Subkhan Anshori, *Tasawuf Islam Telaah Historis Dan Perkembangannya* [Islamic Sufism: Historical Study and Development ] (Jakarta: Gaya Media Pratama, 2008). is the use of a very closed symbolic language style of the commentary meaning: Abu Wafa AL-Ghanimi AL-Taftazani, *Madkhal Ila Al-Tasawuf Al-Islami*, terjemahkan. Subkhan Anshori (Kairo: Dar Al-Tsaqofah li Al-Nasrah, 1989). He did not explain the substance first but explained it with symbols. He

has a purpose behind those symbols. Ibn al-'Arabi as a great philosopher and Sufi is honored to have analyzed the problems that are complicated by thoughts that play in the textual. He analyzed intuition and the physical nature that is not the spirit realm. His approach uses more symbols and gestures to express the soul. Ibn al-'Arabi views the use of symbols as something very important so that the universe speaks to them in the language of symbols and everything also has a symbolic meaning in addition to its external value.

In this case, Ibn al-'Arabi said: "Understand my instructions and symbols. Look at my symbols, surely you will understand what I mean". Next, he said, "Understand and solve the mystery. This is my symbol that I aim for those who are smart". Al-Fayumi, Ibn Al-'Arabi: *Menyingkap Kode Mengungkap Simbol Dibalik Paham Wihdat Al-Wujud* [Ibnu Al 'Arabi: Unveiling the Code Revealing the Symbols Behind the Wahdat Al-Wujud]. The symbol is also acknowledged by al-Ghazali, who said 'that if one can understand the meaning of the symbol expressed by the Sufis, then he will get the correct meaning. But if he is only able to capture the meaning of the physical symbol, then he will get a sense of heresy and far from what the Sufis mean. The Prophets according to Al Ghazali in conveying his message to his people are filled with symbolic language in the form of parables as they are given the task to convey their message to the level of intelligence of his people. Al-Ghazali, *Ihya 'Ulum Ad-Din*, IV (Indonesia: Maktabah Dar Ihya Al-Kutub Al-Arabiyyah, nd).

For Ibn al-'Arabi, symbols are a method to parse the ultimate reality related to basic concepts, namely: truth, nature, and human beings. Al-Fayumi,

Ibn Al-'Arabi Menyingkap Kode Menguak Simbol Dibalik Paham Wihdat Al-Wujud [Ibnu Al 'Arabi: Unveiling the Code Revealing the Symbols Behind the Wahdat Al-Wujud]. These symbols may include gestures, eye blinking, lips, or mouth movements. Symbols are not limited to the senses. Symbols can also be used in the description, thought, and theology. The term Ibn al-'Arabi's isharat symbol is the most widely used of other terms. Ibn al-'Arabi states: 'symbolic relations: To give isharat for truth is a charm'. Muhyi al-Din Ibn 'Arabi, *Al-Futuh al-Makkiyah* (Beirut: Dar al-Fikr, 2007). In this case, it is in line with and in line with Imam Ja'far al-Siddiq's view that the book of Allah consists of four contents, namely: 'Ibarah, Isharah, lataif, and essence, four different designations. 'Ibarah is for the layman, isharah is for special people, lataif is for the saints and essence is for the Prophet.' Arabi, *Al-Futuh al-Makkiyah*, 1911.

Thus, to understand Ibn al-'Arabi the absolute thinker needs an understanding of sign language, and symbols, since almost all of Ibn al-'Arabi's works use sign language and symbols, such as *al-Futuh al-Makkiyah*, *al-Fusus al-Hikam*, *Musyahadah al Asrar*, *Mawaqi 'al-Nujum*, and other books. Because for Ibn al-'Arabi, the principle that includes the use of symbols and gestures is the basic principle in interpreting the text of the Quran. The process of using the symbol is then Ibn al-'Arabi explains the method of ta'wil, so that ta'wil considers it as the basic thing for any reason in loading phenomena and noumena, or in Islamic terms, any external reality or outside the definite form in it has no inner reality or depth of form.' Al-Ghazali, *Al-Iqtisad Fi Al-I'tiqad* (Beirut: Dar Al-Kutub Al-'Ilmiyyah, 1988)..

The use of ta'wil can be applied to all-natural phenomena and everything that surrounds man in his worldly life. Besides, religious teachings and events that occur in the human soul are also a fundamental problem for the process of inner absorption and symbolic interpretation. In Arabic, natural phenomena, Quranic verses containing revelation, and the state of the soul, all refer to the verse. Ibn al-'Arabi states that the external is tafsir, the inner aspect is ta'wil, hadd limits the ability to understand and matla is the peak of the ascent of his servant where he witnessed God. Muhyi al-Din Ibn 'Arabi, *Tafsir Al-'Arabi*, I (Lebanon: Dar Al-Kutub Al-'Ilmiyyah, 2006). Meanwhile, according to Imam Ali who quoted Ibn al-'Arabi al-Quran contains four dimensions: Zahir, batin, hadd, and matla. Muhammad 'Abid Al-Jabiri, *Bun-Yah 'Aql Al-'Arabi: Dirâsah Tahliliyah Naqdiyyah I Nuzhum Al-Ma'rifah* (Beirut: al-Markaz al-Tsaqafi al-'Arabi, 1991). The outward aspect of the Quran is for study, the inner aspect is understanding, the hadd aspect is the provision of purity and najis, and its matla is what Allah has for His servants. Because the inner meaning is related because it can be captured through ta'wil. Nasr, *Tiga Mazhab Utama Filsafat Islam: Ibnu Sina, Suhrawardi, Dan Ibnu 'Arabi* [Three Main Madhabs of Islamic Philosophy: Ibn Sina, Suhrawardi, and Ibn 'Arabi]. Later the ta'wil method was synonymous with hermeneutics so that all of the works of Ibn al-'Arabi by William C. Chittick are essentially the hermeneutics of the Quran. William C Chittick, *Ibn 'Arabi Heir To The Prophets* (Inggris: One World Oxford, 2005).

Seyyed Hossein Nasr sees Ibn al-'Arabi's writings clearly describing the application of the symbolic hermeneutic

method of the revealed text (Al-Quran) and also to the creation of the universe which is based on the form of 'Al-Quran' a macrocosm. "He also adopted them on the soul which contained the universe within him. Then there are the macrocosmic and microcosmic aspects of revelation, for there are" aspects of Revelation from each macrocosm and microcosm, In man and the universe. Against all the dominant ones, Ibn al-'Arabi applied the symbolic interpretation method or the ta'wil process. Nasr, Tiga Orang Bijak Muslim: Avicenna, Suhrawardi, Ibn Al-'Arabi [Three Moslem Scholars: Avicenna, Suhrawardi, Ibn Al-'Arabi]. Using ta'wil criticism, Hasan Hanafi's mistake sharply criticized the method of the Sufis trapped in ta'wil, without language terms and asbabul nuzul. As a result, tafsir keeps away from its original reality and becomes a separate goal-directed at satisfying theological intuition, changing law into mutasyabihah, zahir into muawwal, mubayyan becoming mujmal, essential to becoming majazi. Yudian Wahyudi, Metode Tafsir Dan Kemaslahatan Umat [Method of Interpretation and Benefits of Ummah] (Yogyakarta: Nawasea, 2007).

The use of ta'wil for Ibn al-'Arabi certainly does not mean to eliminate the role of revelation itself or to praise the role of reason, the use of ta'wil for Ibn al-'Arabi is only used to understand the inner meaning In the text of the Quran, Ibn al-'Arabi even once criticized tafsir ta'wil for the sole reason used by mutaklimin and philosophers to stand firm in interpreting revelation following criteria and rational proof. Ibn al-'Arabi refers to the reminder of the hadith of the Prophet: "Whoever interprets or says something about the Quran according to his personal view has booked his seat in hell".

## **C. RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

### **1. Epistemology 'Irfani And Patterned Theosophy**

Starting from the use of the symbol of Ibn al-'Arabi, the method of 'Irfani in capturing knowledge through direct inspiration that appears in his writings has no logical relationship so that it is hoped that voting on ordinary works will come from pure human inspiration. The method of 'Irfani which has the advantages of Ibn al-'Arabi's paradigm is different from other Sufi al-Kindi, for example, 185/801-260/873), al-Farabi (258H/870M-339H/950 M), Ibn Sina (428H/1027M-1037M ), Nasir al-Din al-Tusi Philosophy method moves. (Hasting, 1974)

In the Islamic philosophical tradition, the peripatetic called masha'iyah comes from the root word-yamshi masha-mashan which means feet from one place to another, sooner or later. Louis Al-Ma'luf, Al-Munjid Fi Al-Lughah Wa Al-A'lam (Beirut: Penerbit Dar Al-Mushreq, 1984). Irfan's methods are not based on text or bayani but with a spiritual formation that gives rise to the kashaf that the knowledge obtained by revealing the secrets of reality by God directly is through the improvement, purification, and sanctity of life.

The characteristics of Ibn al-'Arabi's paradigm of science can be seen from his knowledge method using the 'Irfani method because Ibn al-'Arabi's Sufism thought is characterized by theosophical. Antonie Falvre, The Encyclopedia of Religion, XIV (New York: Simin dan Schuster Macmilan, 1995). In producing mystical

knowledge, Ibn al-'Arabi departed through spiritual knowledge together with al-Suhrawardi (1153-1191 AD), methodologically spiritual knowledge can be obtained through three stages, namely the preparation stage, the acceptance stage, and the disclosure stage, either orally or in writing. Hossein Ziai, *Knowledge and Illumination: A Study of Suhrawardi's Hikmah Al-Israq*, translated by Afif Muhammad dan Munir A Muin (Jakarta: Sadra Press, 2012). According to another opinion, according to al-Suhrawardi spiritual science goes through four phases, namely: the preparation phase, the reception phase, the concept formation phase in the mind, and the written contemplation phase. Parvis Morewedge, *Filosophi Islam dan Mistisisme [The Philosophy of Islam and Mysticism]* (New York: Caravan Books, 1981).

The preparatory phase receives the outpouring of Kashaf knowledge about God with the resolution of traveling long distances through maqamat or stages or stations in English terms. Harun Nasution, *Filsafat Dan Mistisme Dalam Islam [Philosophy and Mysticism in Islam]* (Jakarta: Bulan Bintang, 1978). Sufis have different opinions about the number of maqamat to be inherited, there are at least seven maqamat which are considered popular from the basic to the highest level, but all are almost the same maqamat the first must start with repentance, then wara', ascetic, faqir, patient resigned, and willing.

The acceptance phase is the phase where a person will get an abundance of direct knowledge about God which is illuminative. In this phase, a person will get a reality of

self-awareness that is so absolute or so-called kashaf, revealed kashaf, because he is familiar with spiritual practice, so that to achieve what is called mushahada, Al-Qusyairi says the meaning that one can see the state or reality of consciousness itself. Ihsan Saduddin, "Tajdid Hadfi Al-Soufiyyah Al-Ifradiyyah Wa Al-Ghaibiyah Ila Al-Ijtima'iyah Wa Al-Tajribah Fi Makhtutah Khaqiqah Al-Ma'rifah (Dirasah Filolojiyyah Wa Takhliliyyah)," *Jurnal Al-Bayan: Jurnal Jurusan Pendidikan Bahasa Arab [Journal of Arabic Education]* 9, no. 2 (2017).

This was experienced by Ibn al-'Arabi himself when he received the knowledge of 'Irfani without representation or obtained through sensory data. The science of Irfani Ibn al-'Arabi by Mehdi Yazdi is called huduri knowledge or the science of object self-knowledge (Yazdi, 1992), or in Wittgenstein's language game theory, Irfani is none other than the "existent" language itself. (Wittgenstein, 1968) The next phase of disclosure, this phase is the phase of achieving Irfani science as the peak phase as a mystical experience to be expressed to others through oral or written, this is what Ibn al-'Arabi did with his deafness in writing in various books.

However, it should be noted that the characteristics of the knowledge paradigm 'Irfani Ibn al-'Arabi do not use ah through shatahat Carl W Ernst, *Kata-kata Ekstasi dalam Sufisme [Words of Extacy in Sufism]* (Albany: Universitas Negeri New York, nd). because prayer by Ibn al-'Arabi is futile narcissism, the result of uncontrolled and subjective ecstasy. Heppi Sih Ruddatin, *Ekspresi Ekstase Dalam Sufisme [Expressions*



of Extacy in Sufism] (Yogyakarta: Putra Langit, 2003). The historian al-Zahabi describes Carl W. Ernst noted that Ibn al-'Arabi did not use the word *shatahat* in his writings, but he still thought that Ibn al-'Arabi had experienced a state of unconsciousness, however, unlike *shatahat*. Ernst, *Kata-Kata Ekstasi dalam Sufisme [Words of Extacy in Sufism]*.

In contrast to other Sufis who use *shathahat* such as Abu Yazid al-Bustami (D. 877 AD) with the phrase "The Almighty" which produces the understanding of *Fana* and *Ittihad* Al-Qusyairi, *Ar-Risalah Al-Qusyaeriyah*, ed. Hani Al-Haj (Al-Maktabah At-Taufiqiyah, nd). and al-Hallaj (W.913) with the expression "Ana al-Haq" (I am God) which produces the understanding of *Hulul*. (Al-Tusi, 1960)

The assumption saying that Ibn al-'Arabi took al-Hallaj's understanding and that of Abu Yazid al-Bustami, as stated by AE. Afifi is incorrect. Afifi, *Filsafat Mistik Muhyi-Din Ibn Al-'Arabi*. For Ibn al-'Arabi himself a strong critic of the idea of *Ittihad* and *Hulul* liked his attitude: "Whoever says he has never experienced *Hulul*, then he is a disabled person, and no one says *Ittihad* unless they believe in God." and avoid saying "I am He (God)", you are a wrong person if you do so, because in fact if you are Him then you know His will because He knows the essence of Himself. Kholil Abu Fateh, *Membersihkan Nama Ibnu Al-'Arabi, Kajian Komprehensif Tasawuf Rasulullah [Cleansing the Name of Ibn Al-'Arabi, A Comprehensive Study on the Prophet's Sufism]* (Banten: Fattah Arbah, 2010). Al-Shar'ani justifies Ibn al-'Arabi's attitude towards the

doctrine of *Hulul* and *Ittihad* by saying: -Arabi is a proof of people's lies". Abd Al-Wahab Al-Shar'ani, *Al-Yawaqit Wa Al-Jawahir Fi Baina 'Aqaid Al-Akbar* (Mekah: Maktabah Al-Haramain, nd).

Ibn al-'Arabi developed with the mystical knowledge of the Irfani paradigm 'which produced the *mukashafah* of nature' Arabi, *Al-Futuhat Al-Makkiyah*, 1911., *mushahadah alam* (Testimony of authenticity) ('Arabi, 1911) , and natural *tajribah* (What he has experienced himself) as proof of his spiritual experience he did not follow the path from bottom to top, but from top to bottom, had Ibn al-'Arabi not learned to swim in a pool, but to swim in a river or even, straight into the sea. With experience and experimentation that had brought him to the top level or in the deepest oceans, even he was immersed in it. That is what makes it difficult for someone to understand Ibn al-'Arabi's mystique, even condemning him and calling him an infidel and heretical.

However, Ibn al-'Arabi himself by Riyad Musthafa Abdullah tried to bridge two paths that divide logic, first, *mantiq al-Aql*, with *mantiq* sense, second, *mantiq al-Zauq*, namely with a sense of *mantiq*. Hasan Abrari, *Hakikat Lafad Allah Menemukan Rahasia Ketuhanan Melalui Studi Teks Jalalah [The Essence of Allah's Spelling to Find The Secret of Divinity through Study of Jalallah Texts ]* (Surabaya: Pustaka Progressif, 2002). Two logics used by Ibn al-'Arabi in answering mystical problems that make it easier to understand his thinking. For example, one time a student of Ibn al-Arabi told him, "Many people deny our knowledge, they answered," If

someone comes and asks for evidence and arguments for his footing ". Ibn al-'Arabi said: "If someone comes and asks for proof or argument about God's secret knowledge, tell him: What is the proof that honey is sweet? People will surely tell you that it will not be known, except by tasting it, and then tell him: Likewise, the same divine secret knowledge is no different from the world of honey!".(Abrari, 2002)

## **2. Ibn al-'Arabi's Sources and Systems of Knowledge**

The source of the mystical system of knowledge and Ibn al-'Arabi is direct from God and does not depend on outside or foreign influences. As explained by Sayyed Hossein Nasr that Ibn al-'Arabi received his knowledge through the enlightenment in his heart by God theophany and only in the expression and formulation of his inner experience and is the main source of knowledge that 'Irfani received in a state of contemplation and made possible through the grace of the Prophet which he received through ordination to enter the Sufi path. to enter the Sufi path. Nasr, Tiga Orang Bijak Muslim: Avicenna, Suhrawardi, Ibn Al-'Arabi [Three Moslem Scholars: Avicenna, Suhrawardi, Ibn Al-'Arabi]. This is evidenced by his work as al-futuh in al-Makiyyah, which was explained by Ibn al-'Arabi himself as previously mentioned, that this book was dictated directly by God through the inspirational Angel, as well as the book *Fusus al-Hikam*. , the book consists of twenty-nine chapters of prophetic science, its writings were inspired by the Prophet. Annemarie Schimmel, *Dimensi Mistik Islam* [Mystical Dimensions in Islam]

(Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1975).

Sufism before Ibn al-'Arabia emphasized a lot of practice guidance or practical guidelines for santri or phrases that reveal the *sufi al-ahwal* (spiritual state) or *al-Maqam* (spiritual experience) they have experienced. But with the presence of Ibn al-'Arabi, suddenly we are faced with the doctrine of 'Irfani, cosmology, including monumental psychology and anthropology, has become a turning point in the Sufism tradition. Ibn 'Arabi had expressed the doctrine of Sufism in a theoretical form and formula. The teachings of Sufism which were previously only implied in the Sufi shaekh words in the hands of Ibn 'Arabi were formulated. Ibn al-'Arabi has been a presenter par excellence of Islamic Sufism.

The knowledge of Ibn al-'Arabi can be ensured that it is fully sourced or not out of the mainstream of Islam based on the Quran and Sunnah. All the works of Ibn al-'Arabi in essence are the embodiment of the hermeneutics of the Quran, so the true truth can only be captured with the help of divine guidance, and divine guidance that manifests in certain forms. William C Chittick, *The Sufi Path Knowledge: Ibn Al-'Arabi Metaphysics of Imagination* (New York: State University, 1989). In this case, William C. Chittick emphasized that Ibn al-'Arabi was at odds with the philosophers and scholars of Kalam, who based his knowledge on other sources. Ibn al'Arabi emphasized his logocentrism by repeatedly stating that the knowledge obtained through the "opening" or the *Kashaf* method which is based on the meaning of the Quran is one of the most fundamental issues that is often neglected in Ibn

al-'Arab's studies. This is the method that Kashaf Ibn al-'Arabi is satisfied with and has brought to science. For example the book *alfutuhah al-Makiyyah* or other books, there is no meaning if it is not based on the interpretation of the holy book al-Quran. (Chittick, 1989) It seems that activists like William C. Chittick regretted Ibn al-'Arabi who thought that Ibn al-'Arabi's knowledge greatly influenced other sources besides the Quran.

Furthermore, the subject matter of Ibn al-'Arabi on which his work is based is inseparable from the correct teachings that were directly seen by the Prophet Muhammad SAW, whereas, Ibn al-'Arabi's knowledge, both inborn and inborn knowledge directly from the Prophet, without the need for a teacher to guide him to various realms and secrets. All knowledge comes from his heart when he takes it and even from God, whether it be attributes and theories. Ibn al-'Arabi states that the most obvious proof of wali and the term is taken from a teacher of wali science who is not a creature, as happened to Prophet Khidir he took divine knowledge directly without intermediaries, instead of faqihs or exoteric scientists. 'Arabi, *Al-Futuhah Al-Makiyyah*, 1911.

Ibn al-'Arabi did not write new sects or bring up existing ideologies. Ibn al-'Arabi said: "And *alhamdulillah*, we do not do taqlid except to the Messenger of Allah as the bearer of the Shari'ah," I know al-Hamdulillah, never wrote this at all in my book from anything that comes from outside the Shari'ah, I never went out from the Quran and the Sunnah. Fateh, *Mensucikan Nama Ibnu Al-'Arabi, Kajian Komprehensif*

*Tasawuf Rasullah* [Cleansing the Name of Ibn Al-'Arabi, A Comprehensive Study on the Prophet's Sufism]. Al-Dhahabi was a scholar who influenced Ibn Taimiyyah's thoughts, where Ibn Taimiyya himself did not sympathize with Ibn al-'Arabi's thoughts, but al-Dhahabi had a positive attitude towards Ibn al-'Arabi, when commenting on the book *Fusus al-Hikam*, al-Dhahabi said that Ibn al-'Arabi did not take the ideas contained in the book but came from the teachings of the Prophet. al-Dhahabi commented that such an Ibn al-'Arabi would never lie. (Fateh, 2010)

One example is Ibn al-'Arabi using the hadith of the saints: "If I love him, then I will hear that he used to hear; and uses his sight to see, and he uses his hands to strike." The hadith uses Ibn al-'Arabi as an argument for *Wahdat al-Wujud* theory. Ija Suntana, *Tasawuf Antara Agama Dan Filsafat [Sufism: Between Religion and Philosophy]* (Bandung: Pustaka Hidayah, 2002). That is the superiority of Ibn al-'Arabi's paradigm of knowledge in capturing the secrets of divinity and psyche to be a distinctive feature of Ibn al-'Arabi, so that Ibn al-'Arabi is seen as a great Sufi who made a great contribution. in the arena of mystical thinking and the role of spiritual science is beyond doubt. Ibn al-'Arabi had great influence, both in the East and in the West. If Sunni mysticism has the final form in the teachings of al-Ghazali, then philosophical mysticism is a perfect achievement in the teachings of Ibn al-'Arabi. With his very rich knowledge, both in the field of philosophy and in the field of Islam, he succeeded in producing great works such as *Futuhah al-Makiyyah*

and *Fusus al-hikam*. Kautsar Azhari Noer, *Ibn Al-'Arabi Wahdat Al-Wujud Dalam Perdebatan [Wahdat al Wujud in the Debate]* (Jakarta: Paramadina, 1995).

*Kitab al-Futuhat al-Makiyyah* has 560 chapters that discuss metaphysical principles and various sacred sciences and it also lists Ibn 'Arabi's spiritual experiences. Two books of Sufism contain philosophy, because they have been equipped with various understandings such as prophethood, holiness, and *wahdat al wujud*, commonly known as *tasawuf Wahdat al-Wujud*.

Ibn al-'Arabi's thoughts through his philosophical Sufism have become a magnet and have attracted the enthusiasm of the Sufis in the Muslim world, especially through the students, either directly or indirectly. Students and followers have provided analysis, interpretation, and review of his works, such as al-Qunawi (D. 673 H/1274 AD), al-Farqani (D. 700 H/1300 AD), al-Kasyami (D. 730 M). AH/1327 AD), al-Qaishari (D.751 AH/1350 AD), Jalaluddin Rumi (D. 672 AH/1300 AD), al-Jami (D. 898 AH/1492 AD), al-Jilli (D. 805 AH/1403 M) and others. Ibn al-'Arabi's Sufism acquired fertile soil, especially in Persia. Generally, Islam is between Shia and Shia. Therefore, to be precise, philosophical Sufism can also be called Shiite Sufism. Abdul Aziz Dahlan, "Tasawuf Sunni Dan Tasawuf Falsafi: Tinjauan Filosofis [Sunni Sufism and Philosophical Sufism: A Philosophical Review]," *Jurnal Ulumul Quran VI* (1991): 31. until AJ Arberry states that at the time of Ibn al-'Arabi, was the golden age of Sufism, theoretically and practically. (Arberri, 1978)

The study of Ibn al-'Arabi will never be finished, because of his vast knowledge. Through Muhammad ibn Fadlullah al-Burhanpuri (W.1029) a Sufi from India Gujarat Azyumardi Azra, *Jaringan Ulama Timur Tengah Dan Kepulauan Nusantara Abad XVII - XVIII [Network between Middle Eastern and Nusantara Archipelago Ulamas in XVII - XVIII Century]* (Bandung: Mizan, 2009)., as explained Yunasril Ali that Ibn al-'Arabi's Sufism spread in South Asia. Here, Ibn al-'Arabi's mysticism was reviewed and introduced by several Sufi scholars such as Hamzah Fansuri (d. 1527 AD), Syams al-Din al-Sumatrani, 'Abd al-Samad al-Falimbani, Dawud al-Fatani, Muh Ammad Nafis al-Banjari (born in 1735 AD), and others. It turns out that the influence of Ibn 'Arabi was not only retained in the Sunni theological tradition but spread far and wide to the Persian-majority country with the Shiite sects.

One of the Iranian philosophers who influenced Ibn 'Arabi was Mulla Sadra (979-1050 AH/1571-1640 M). He founded a new sect. In the stream called Sadra itself as *Hikmah al-Muta'aliyah*, all elements of the Islamic school of thought before that formed an independent stream. Therefore, those who consider him to be adherents of Ibn Sina's philosophy or his reformers, or Ibn Sina's philosophy as a complement to philosophy, are trapped in an error. In short, they do not know Mulla Sadra's philosophy, Sadra's philosophy is a "blend" of different schools of thought such as Ibn Sina's philosophical schools, Kalam Shia, and Ibn al-'Arabi's Sufism. Dahlan, "Tasawuf Sunni Dan Tasawuf Falsafi: Tinjauan Filosofis [Sunni Sufism and

Philosophical Sufism: A Philosophical Review].”

How vast the knowledge of Ibn al-'Arabi and the depth of his spiritual realm is so understandable that there are people who "sanctify" Ibn al-'Arabi as the chosen guardian of Allah and have karamah and after his death, Ibn al-'Arabi obtained the title. His nicknames were as varied as Muhyi al-din (Beginner of Religion), Shaekh al-Akbar (Guru Petara), and Bahrul al-Haqaiq (Ocean of Truth). On the other hand, some are contra and some oppose openly and vulgarly to the thoughts of Ibn al-'Arabi, they are punished as superstitious makers of nature explaining that this imagination is a liar and a liar and even an infidel because of the Teachings and its facts, the biographer says that The verdict on Ibn al-'Arabi ranges from several different levels namely pagan, zindiq and Qutub wali who draw closer to God. Ignaz Goldziher, *Mazhab Tafsir Dari Aliran Klasik Hingga Modern [Madhab of Interpretation From Classical to Modern]*, translated by M Alaika Salamullah (Yogyakarta: El Saq, 2003).

Ibn al-'Arabi responded to his opponents who were considered descriptive scholars or ulama al-Rusum. He regretted their attitude which was beating the drums of hostility by descriptive scholars. He said, “God did not create humans who were more wretched and more unfortunate than descriptive scholars, because they opposed God's family who served Him with concentration. People are very aware of him through divine grace, they are a community that God has blessed his secrets in his creation. Understand the meaning of his book and the signs

of His word. Then descriptive of the position of scholars before this community like Pharaoh before the Prophet. (Goldziher, 1983)

#### **D. CONCLUSION**

The emergence of various acts of violence is due to the fallacy in understanding the text that only focused on the zahir area text. Religion was originally present to raise morals, bring the spirit of civilization, and a pillar of resistance to uphold social-ethics. However, often when religion is practiced among textual adherents, it is seen as an institution of dogmas that tend to compel the will and make religious services limited; merely a ritual institution with no positive implications for social domain. Understanding the revelation text should be the right methodology so that it does not cause confusion which leads to the birth of phenomenal religious radicalism.

Ibn Arabi as a scholar in the field of mysticism and philosophy has a peculiarity in understanding religious texts both in the Quran and hadith. He applied not just a literal approach but also a rational-intuitive approach so that it can produce a moderate-tended understanding in studying the text. Ibn 'Arabi's hermeneutics is the method used by Ibn Arabi in understanding the revelation text. The hermeneutic method of Ibn Arabi showed that a philosopher and a Sufi do not only understand the text and aspects of the zahir context but tend to interpret the spiritual aspect which can lead to understanding which tends to be moderate, inclusive and universal. Ibn Arabi's hermeneutics can produce a deep and universal understanding of the logical and analogical text of revelation.

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