



# Sufism and Maqamat: The Transformation of the Soul in the Divine Dimension

Muh. Idris<sup>a,1,\*</sup>

a Universitas Islam Negeri Alauddin Makassar

<sup>1</sup> [muh.idris@uin-alauddin.ac.id](mailto:muh.idris@uin-alauddin.ac.id)

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## ABSTRACT

*This paper aims to deeply examine the concept of maqāmāt (spiritual stages) and various forms of Sufism such as ethical (akhlāqī), gnostic (‘irfānī), and philosophical (falsafī) Sufism within the Islamic tradition. Employing a qualitative-descriptive method based on library research, this study explores the historical roots, doctrinal development, and both internal and external factors that influenced the emergence of Sufism. Findings indicate that although there are influences from outside Islam, the essence of Sufism grows from core Islamic teachings—namely the Qur’an, Hadith, and the example of the Prophet Muhammad. The spiritual journey in Sufism is structured through maqāmāt such as repentance (taubah), piety (wara’), asceticism (zuhd), patience (ṣabr), trust (tawakkul), acceptance (riḍā), love (maḥabbah), and divine knowledge (ma’rifah). Moreover, the development of Sufism is influenced by the socio-political conditions of the Muslim community, such as responses to profane lifestyles, the rationalistic codification of Islamic law, and the quest for deeper spirituality. This study concludes that Sufism is not merely an individual mystical expression but also a social and spiritual response to the dynamics of the ummah. Sufism plays a significant role in shaping personal and communal piety through ethical and contemplative approaches.*

## 1. Introduction

Sufism, as a mystical aspect of Islam, is essentially the awareness of a communicative relationship between humans and their Creator, which subsequently takes the form of a sense of closeness (qurb) to God. This closeness is understood as a spiritual experience (dzauqiyyah) between the human soul and the Divine, which in turn gives rise to the realization that everything belongs to Him. All relative and contingent existences hold no significance in the presence of the Absolute Existence. (Altabaa, H., & Hamawiya 2019)



Author correspondence email: [muh.idris@uin-alauddin.ac.id](mailto:muh.idris@uin-alauddin.ac.id)



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All Sufis agree that the only path that can lead a person to the presence of Allah is through the purification of the soul. Since the human soul is considered a concept or emanation from the Divine Essence, which is pure, everything must therefore be perfect and pure—although the degree of purity and perfection varies depending on its proximity to the original source. To attain the presence of Allah, Sufis have developed a system of moral and spiritual refinement in three stages: Takhalli, Tahalli, and Tajalli. Takhalli refers to the effort to empty oneself of attachment to worldly pleasures. Tahalli is the endeavor to adorn oneself by cultivating good qualities, attitudes, and behaviors. Tajalli is the unveiling of the Divine Light (*nūr al-ghaib*) to the heart. (Daulay, H. P., Dahlan, Z., & Lubis 2021)

The path of drawing closer to God, according to the Sufis, is divided into *maqāmāt* (spiritual stations). These *maqāmāt* are stages where a Sufi pauses while striving earnestly to purify himself before advancing to the next station. A Sufi cannot reach his goal except through disciplined practice within each of these *maqāmāt*. They are traversed gradually, one by one, until the Sufi's inner self is completely purified and ready to commune with God. Meanwhile, *ḥāl* refers to the psychological or spiritual state experienced when a Sufi attains a particular *maqām*. The Sufis emphasize the distinction between *maqām* and *ḥāl*: *maqām* is characterized by stability, while *ḥāl* is transient and easily lost. A *maqām* is achieved through one's will and effort, whereas a *ḥāl* may arise unintentionally. The journey toward Allah (SWT) is essentially a deep experiential recognition of Him. A person will never truly know their Creator until they embark on the journey toward Him. (Thalib 2014)

The spiritual station (*maqām*) refers to the level of a servant before God in terms of worship and spiritual exercises (*riyāḍah*) performed. Among Sufi practitioners, the sequence of these stations varies. Some of them define the *maqāmāt* in a simple way, such as the sequence beginning with *maqām al-qanā'ah* (contentment). Without *qanā'ah*, *tawakkul* (trust in God) cannot be achieved; without *tawakkul*, *taslīm* (submission) cannot exist; just as without *tawbah* (repentance), *inābah* (turning back to God) will not occur; and without *wara'* (scrupulousness), *zuhd* (asceticism) cannot be realized.

## 2. Research Method

Penelitian ini mengadopsi pendekatan kualitatif-deskriptif yang menekankan pemahaman mendalam terhadap konsep tasawuf dan *maqāmāt* melalui studi pustaka (library research) Penelitian jenis ini tidak melibatkan pengumpulan data primer lapangan, melainkan fokus pada bahan tertulis seperti kitab klasik, jurnal akademis, dan literatur kontemporer. Data primer diambil dari karya klasik sufi seperti *al-Luma'* oleh Al-Sarrāj dan teks-teks utama tasawuf lainnya (misalnya Al-Ghazālī, Nawawī Al-Bantānī), sedangkan data sekunder diintegrasikan dari artikel dan jurnal akademik terkini yang membahas *maqāmāt*, *aḥwāl*, dan relevansi psikospiritualnya.

## 3. Results and Discussion

### a. *The History and Development of Sufism*

Sufism in Islam, according to historians, emerged as a distinct field of knowledge around the 2nd or early 3rd century Hijriyah. There are two main theories regarding the origins of

Sufism: one asserts that it originated from within Islam itself, while the other suggests that it was influenced by elements external to Islam. Western Orientalists argue that Sufism is not purely derived from Islamic teachings, whereas Sufi scholars maintain that Sufism is the very essence of Islam. (Aijaz Ali Khoso and Naseem Akhter 2022)

According to Ignaz Goldziher, the origins of Sufism were influenced by non-Islamic elements. He views Sufism as a legacy inherited from various pre-Islamic religions and belief systems that interacted with Islam. For instance, Islamic Sufi teachings show certain similarities with Buddhist doctrines. He draws a parallel between Siddhartha Gautama and Ibrahim bin Adham, both of whom renounced worldly luxury despite their royal lineage. Moreover, the use of prayer beads (tasbeeh), ethical and ascetic culture, as well as intellectual abstraction, are considered borrowed elements from Buddhism. (Hafiu 2012)

There are also opinions that trace the origins of Sufism to Persia. Tholuck, a 19th-century Orientalist, argued that Sufism was derived from Zoroastrian sources. His reasoning was based on the fact that many Zoroastrians in northern Iran continued practicing their religion after the Islamic conquest, and that numerous early Sufi figures originated from the northern Khurasan region. Furthermore, some founders of early Sufi orders came from Zoroastrian backgrounds. (Atif Khalil and Shiraz Sheikh 2014) Meanwhile, Orientalists such as M. Horten and R. Hartman proposed that Sufism originated from Indian sources. They often refer to similarities between certain Sufi doctrines and spiritual practices found in Indian mysticism. (Syamsun Ni'am 2014)

According to At-Taftazani, the Sufis did not merely quote or borrow from Persians, Christians, Greeks, or others, because Sufism is essentially related to inner feelings and awareness. The human soul is one, even though there are differences in nation or race. Anything related to the human soul, through spiritual exercises, can indeed be similar, even in the absence of direct contact between them. This indicates a common thread among the experiences of Sufis, regardless of how different one Sufi's interpretation may be from another's, depending on the cultural context in which they live. (Syamsun Ni'am 2014)

There are various discussions regarding the origin of Sufism, which have led to the identification of several contributing factors behind its emergence. These factors are generally categorized into two groups:

#### 1. External Factors

Many opinions have been put forward regarding these external factors, including the following:

- a) Sufism emerged due to the influence of Christian doctrines that promote withdrawal from worldly life and seclusion in monasteries. This lifestyle of renunciation and detachment from worldly pleasures is clearly reflected in the behavior of Sufis who adopt the concept of *zuhud* (asceticism).

- b) Sufism originated under the influence of Pythagorean philosophy, which holds that the human soul is eternal and exists in the world as a stranger.
- c) The emergence of Sufism in Islam was influenced by Plotinus' philosophy of emanation, which teaches that all existence flows from the essence of God. As the soul enters the material world, it becomes impure. To return to God, the soul must first be purified by abandoning worldly attachments and striving for closeness to God.
- d) Sufism was born under the influence of the concept of Nirvana. According to Buddhist teachings, one must renounce the world and engage in contemplation.
- e) Sufism arose due to the influence of Hindu teachings, which encourage humans to detach from the material world and seek closeness to God.

The validity of theories that emphasize external factors cannot be confirmed with certainty. Everything is possible, as Sufism emerged at a time when Muslims had already established contact with the outside world and other religions. (Harun Nasution 1973)

## 2. Internal Factors

A scholar emphasizes the internal factors, arguing that the emergence of Islamic Sufism is rooted in elements inherent within Islam itself, rather than external influences. These internal factors are found in the Qur'an, Hadith, and the behavior of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him). Certain verses in the Qur'an convey mystical meanings, which has led to the theory that Sufism originated and developed from within Islamic teachings themselves, not as a result of outside ideologies. As explained in Surah Al-Baqarah (2:186), the verse states:

وَإِذَا سَأَلَكَ عِبَادِي عَنِّي فَإِنِّي قَرِيبٌ ۗ أُجِيبُ دَعْوَةَ الدَّاعِ إِذَا دَعَانِ فَلْيَسْتَجِيبُوا لِي وَلْيُؤْمِنُوا بِي لَعَلَّهُمْ  
يُرْشَدُونَ

Terjemahnya:

“Apabila hamba-hamba-Ku bertanya kepadamu (Nabi Muhammad) tentang Aku, sesungguhnya Aku dekat. Aku mengabulkan permohonan orang yang berdoa apabila dia berdoa kepada-Ku. Maka, hendaklah mereka memenuhi (perintah)-Ku dan beriman kepada-Ku agar mereka selalu berada dalam kebenaran.” (Al-Qur'an Kemenang 2019)

Furthermore, the internal factors that can be seen as the cause of the emergence of Sufism in the Islamic world are more clearly reflected in the behavior of the Prophet Muhammad. Thus, even without external factors, Sufism would still have emerged in the world. (Ahmad Bangun Nasution dan Rayani Hanum Siregar 2013) Based on the explanation above, the primary sources of Sufi teachings originate from the Qur'an and Hadith. In the Qur'an, numerous verses discuss the core principles of Sufism, such as fear (khauf), hope (raja'), repentance (taubah), asceticism (zuhud), trust in God (tawakkul), gratitude (shukr), patience (sabr), acceptance (ridha), annihilation of self (fana), and divine love (mahabbah), among others. These concepts are also found in the Hadith, which provide detailed insights

into the spiritual life practiced by the Sufis. Two well-known Hadiths narrated by Bukhari and Muslim state: "Worship Allah as if you see Him; and if you do not see Him, know that He surely sees you," and "Whoever knows himself, will surely know his Lord." These Hadiths serve as strong foundations affirming that Sufi teachings are rooted in the core tenets of Islam. (Hafiun 2012)

#### *b. Sejarah Perkembangan Tasawuf*

Based on historical records, the first figure to be given the title "Sufi" in the Islamic world was an ascetic scholar named Abu Hasyim al-Kufi, who died in Baghdad in 150 AH. Since the late decades of the 2nd century Hijri, Sufism had become popular among communities across the Islamic world, as a further development of the spiritual practices of the *zāhid* (ascetics) and *ʿābid* (devout worshippers), whose piety was centered around the porticos of the mosque in Medina. This early phase is also referred to as the phase of asceticism, which laid the foundational seeds for the growth of Sufism in Islamic civilization. (Ahmad Midrar Sa'dina and Agung Ahmad Zaelani 2023)

This period was marked by the emergence of individuals who increasingly pursued the afterlife, thereby focusing their attention on worship while neglecting worldly pleasures. This ascetic phase lasted at least until the end of the second century Hijri, and by the beginning of the third century, a transition from asceticism to Sufism had begun to emerge. This stage can be referred to as the second phase, characterized by the shift in terminology from *zāhid* (ascetic) to *sufi*. During this period, the discourse among the *zuhhad* (ascetics) evolved to encompass deeper discussions on the nature of a purified soul, the essence of morality, its cultivation, and other aspects of spiritual development.

As a result, various conceptions arose regarding the spiritual path that a Sufi must undertake (*al-maqāmāt*), as well as the characteristics possessed by a *sālik* (spiritual aspirant) at particular stages (*al-aḥwāl*). During this era, discussions also began to develop concerning the degrees of *fanā'* (annihilation of self) and *ittiḥād* (union with the Divine). Simultaneously, several prominent Sufi authors emerged, such as al-Muḥāsibī (d. 234 H), al-Ḥarrāj (d. 277 H), and al-Junayd al-Baghdādī (d. 297 H), among others. The conceptual and textual formulation of Sufism only began during this period, whereas earlier it existed merely as personal knowledge or a form of religious expression.

The rapid development of Sufism appears to have been driven by at least three significant factors. The first is the glamorous and profane lifestyle, as well as the materialistic and consumerist patterns of life exhibited by most rulers of the time, which soon spread widely among the general public. From this aspect, the strongest motivation for Sufism arose as a reaction in pursuit of pure ethical values through a deepening of spiritual life. A prominent figure who represents this group is Hasan al-Basri (d. 110 AH), who had a strong influence on Islamic spiritual well-being through the doctrines of *al-zuhd*

(asceticism), al-khauf (fear of God), and al-raja' (hope in God). In addition to him, there were also Rabi'ah al-Adawiyah (d. 185 AH) with her famous teaching of al-mahabbah (divine love), and Ma'ruf al-Karkhi (d. 200 AH) with his concept of al-sauq (longing for God), who was also a pioneer of this generation.

Secondly, the emergence of an apathetic attitude served as a maximal reaction to the radicalism of the Khawarij and the political polarization it caused. The violent struggle for power at that time led those who wished to preserve piety in an atmosphere of spiritual peace and fraternal love to choose a path of withdrawal from public life. They opted for solitude and distanced themselves from direct involvement in political conflict. This attitude gave rise to the doctrine of 'uzlah (seclusion), whose conceptual pioneer was Surri al-Saqathi (d. 253 AH). From a sociological perspective, this group can be categorized as a splinter movement— a segment of the community that deliberately adopted a collective 'uzlah, tending to be exclusive and critical of the ruling powers. In terms of motivation, the inclination to choose a mystical spiritual life appears to have been a form of escape or a search for compensation to win an otherworldly battle in the midst of worldly turmoil. In a world saturated with deceit and bereft of compassion, they sought to build a new world— a new reality free from greed and cruelty— a spiritual realm full of love and wisdom.

Third, it appears that one of the contributing factors is the codification of Islamic law (fiqh) and the formulation of kalam theology, which are dialectical and rational in nature, yet often lack ethical motivation. This leads to a loss of spiritual value, rendering religious understanding as an empty vessel—form without soul. The formalism of religious doctrines has increasingly dried up and suffocated the spirit of religion (rūḥ al-dīn), resulting in a breakdown of direct communication and personal intimacy between the servant and the Creator. This spiritually barren state of law and theology, confronted with the essential role of morality in religion, prompted the zuhhād (ascetics) to turn their focus toward ethical spirituality. As a result, the earlier trend of pious asceticism shifted toward sufism. For instance, the doctrine of zuhd (asceticism), which was initially motivated by fear of Hell's punishment, evolved into an expression of love and devotion solely for the sake of God, to enable continuous communion with Him. The concept of tawakkul (trust in God), which once carried an ethical connotation of piety, then took a diametrical turn toward a rejection of profane, worldly life and embraced a central doctrine of the human-divine relationship, later popularized as al-ḥubb (divine love). This doctrine serves as a prelude to ma'rifah—direct knowledge of God through inner experience. According to some Sufis (particularly within Sunni Sufism), ma'rifatullāh (gnosis of God) is the ultimate goal and represents the highest state of happiness achievable by a human being in this world. To attain such a level of knowledge requires a long, multi-staged process of spiritual initiation, accessible only to a select few.

During the same period, Dhu al-Nun al-Misri (d. 245 AH) emerged with a spiritual methodology concept towards God, known as al-maqāmāt, which progressed in parallel with psycho-gnostic aspects. Since the widespread acceptance of the concepts of al-maqāmāt (spiritual stations) and al-aḥwāl (spiritual states), the development of Sufism reached a point of clear distinction from mere ascetic piety, both in terms of its goals and teachings. Furthermore, from this period onward, the path to becoming a Sufi appeared increasingly difficult and demanding—comparable to a second birth for a human being, and even more challenging than the first. While the first birth ushers one into the alluring worldly life, the second requires one to relinquish and discard material pleasures to return to the spiritual realm—marked by devotion, love, and unity with the divine world (‘ālam al-malakūt). Meanwhile, in the third century AH, Abu Yazid al-Bustami (d. 260 AH) advanced further with the doctrine of al-ittiḥād through al-fanā’—a state of annihilation where the human (nasut) characteristics dissolve into divine attributes, resulting in the union of the human with God in the state of fanā.

Since the emergence of the doctrines of al-fanā and al-ittiḥād, there has been a shift in the ultimate goal of Sufism. Initially, Sufism aimed at ethical objectives—namely, maintaining closeness with Allah in order to communicate directly with Him. However, this goal evolved into a higher level: the unification of the self with God. This concept is based on the paradigm that human beings, by their biological nature, are a type of creature capable of undergoing transformation and transcendence through a spiritual ascent (mi’rāj) into the divine realm. Alongside this development, debates and disagreements arose surrounding the concept of al-ittiḥād, becoming one of the sources of conflict within Islamic thought—both within the Sufi tradition itself and in relation to fuqahā’ (jurists) and theologians. These two groups jointly accused followers of al-ittiḥād Sufism of being a deviant sect that corrupted the principles of Islam. From the perspective of Sufism as a discipline, this period marks the third phase—characterized by the entry and eventual syncretism of non-Islamic elements with Sufi practices. Another important issue to note is that during this period, tensions also arose between orthodox Muslims and proponents of early Sufism (ascetic piety) on one side, and followers of the ittiḥād-oriented Sufism on the other (Zuherni AB 2011)

The Sufis themselves are divided into two main groups. The first group consists of those who approach gnosis (ma’rifah) through knowledge and scholarship. For this group, everything they witness—in the form of cycles, transformations, and formations within all entities—conveys to them hundreds of messages originating from the divine presence of Allah’s Power and Will. Every event whispers various forms of hymns in different tongues, each bearing spiritual meaning. The second group, meanwhile, comprises those who pursue the path of spiritual discipline (sulūk) solely in search of spiritual taste (dzauq),

ecstasy (*wajd*), and unveiling (*kashf*). These individuals are capable of bringing “remoteness” to life within the realm of “closeness,” as they sometimes forget the ultimate goal, despite their deep seriousness in journeying through the spiritual path, discipline, and asceticism. (Dimiyati sajari 2015)

### c. *Patterns in Sufism*

#### 1. Irfani Sufism

Irfan, etymologically, means “knowledge.” Irfan and Islamic Sufism represent a form of knowledge, where the spiritual journey (*suluk* or *riyadha*) of a servant towards Allah necessitates a deeper kind of understanding—one that surpasses conceptual knowledge (*tashawwur*) and rational affirmation (*tashdiq*) based on sensory perception and intellect. (Farhan, I., & Arafat 2021) Therefore, Irfani knowledge is of a *hudhuri* (presentational) nature, a type of presence-based awareness that is regarded as the highest form of knowledge. Irfani Sufism aims to unveil the essence of truth (*ma'rifah*), not through logic or discursive thinking, but through divine bestowal.

The teachings of Irfani Sufism in human life, for example, are reflected when an individual refuses to let their intellect be confined solely to material things and does not view the world purely from a materialistic perspective. At the same time, such a person does not deny the existence of the material world either—indicating that they possess an Irfani mode of thought. Not all forms of Irfani thinking are rooted in religious doctrines, either in the past or in the present. (Jannah 2021) here are four main historical periods that serve as key reference points in the development of Irfani Sufism:

#### a) *Riyadhah* (from the emergence of Irfan to the era of Hallaj and Rabi'ah)

*Riyadhah* refers to spiritual training through efforts to habituate oneself to avoid anything that taints the soul. It involves continuous and consistent practices that lead a person to become truly disciplined, especially in restraining oneself from committing sins or immoral acts. *Riyadhah* is not an easy task; therefore, it requires *mujahadah*, which is the sincere and determined effort to abandon negative or harmful behaviors.

#### b) *Tafakkur/Reflection* (from the era of Rabi'ah to the era of Bayazid and Abu Sa'id Abul Khair)

Literally, *tafakkur* means thinking deeply, systematically, and in detail about something. According to Imam Al-Ghazali, when knowledge reaches the heart, the state of the heart will change; and when the heart changes, other behaviors will also change.

#### c) *Tazkiyat An-Nafs* (from the era of Abul Khair to Ibn Arabi)

Literally, *Tazkiyat An-Nafs* consists of two words: *tazkiyat* and *an-nafs*. The word *tazkiyat* comes from Arabic as a verbal noun (*ism mashdar*) of the word *zakka*, which means purification, while *an-nafs* means the soul. Thus, *Tazkiyat An-Nafs* refers to the



purification of the soul, which is one of the missions entrusted to the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him).

d) Dzikrullah (From the Era of Ibn Arabi to the Present Day)

The term Zikr originates from the Arabic language, meaning to indicate, glorify, mention, or remember. Zikr of Allah, or Dzikrullah, means to remind oneself of Allah as the One truly worthy of worship—The Most Glorious and The Most Holy. Dzikrullah is a spiritual necessity, relating to matters of the soul or inner spiritual experiences.

2. Moral Sufism

Moral Sufism (Tasawuf Akhlaki) encompasses a system of moral development, which includes the following stages: First, Takhalli is the initial step that one must undertake, involving the effort to empty oneself of disgraceful behavior or immoral character. This can be achieved by avoiding all forms of sin and striving to eliminate the impulses of base desires. Second, Tahalli refers to the effort to adorn oneself by cultivating noble attitudes, behaviors, and commendable morals. This stage is carried out after the soul has been cleansed from negative traits. Third, Tajalli is the reinforcement and deepening of what has been internalized during the tahalli phase, in which the chain of virtuous morals is perfected. This stage also includes the completion of the soul's purification..(Anik Faridah 2023)

3. Philosophical Sufism

Philosophical Sufism is a concept within Sufi teachings that approaches the knowledge of God (ma'rifah) through rational (philosophical) means, aiming not only to recognize God (ma'rifatullah) but also to reach a higher level—wahdat al-wujud (the unity of existence). (Mustamain 2020) It can also be said that philosophical Sufism is a form of Sufism enriched with philosophical thought.

The methodological approach of philosophical Sufism emphasizes theoretical aspects, making its concepts heavily reliant on rational principles and philosophical reasoning, which are often difficult to apply in everyday life, especially for laypeople.

*d. Various Maqamat*

1. Taubat

Repentance (Taubah) in Arabic means "to return" or "to turn back." In Sufi understanding, repentance refers to seeking forgiveness for all sins, accompanied by sincere remorse and a firm commitment not to repeat the sinful acts, along with performing righteous deeds as encouraged by Allah.

In Sufi teachings, the concept of repentance is further developed and interpreted in various ways. Repentance is distinguished between the ordinary repentance of common believers ('awām) and the elevated repentance (maqām of repentance) of the spiritual elite

(*khawāṣ*). In this context, the Sufi scholar Dhu al-Nun al-Misri states: “The repentance of ordinary people is from sins, while the repentance of the elect is from heedlessness (*ghaflah*) in remembering God.” According to the seekers (*sālikīn*), repentance is the initial step in the path of Sufism. At this stage, a Sufi purifies himself (*tazkiyat al-nafs*) from behaviors that cause sin and guilt. Repentance is also a foundational term developed by the *sālikīn*—those journeying toward God—to progress through the spiritual stations (*maqāmāt*).

## 2. Wara’

Literally, *al-wara’* means piety; the term *wara’* implies avoiding things that are not good. In Sufi terminology, *wara’* refers to abstaining from anything that involves doubt between what is lawful (*halal*) and unlawful (*haram*)—referred to as *shubhat* (ambiguous matters). This aligns with the hadith narrated by al-Bukhari:

“Whoever keeps himself away from doubtful matters, indeed he has safeguarded himself from what is unlawful.”

Sufi scholars categorize *wara’* into several levels. Yahya ibn Mu’adh stated that *wara’* consists of two levels: outward *wara’*, which means that one should not act except in worship of Allah, and inward *wara’*, which means that nothing should enter the heart except Allah.

## 3. Zuhud

Terminologically, *zuhd* refers to directing one’s desires solely toward Allah SWT, expressing one’s will to Him, and becoming more preoccupied with Him than with any other worldly matters, so that Allah may give attention to and guide the *zahid* (one who practices *zuhd*). Al-Junaid al-Baghdadi stated, “*Zuhd* is when the hands possess nothing and the heart is free from worldly aspirations. In this state, a Sufi owns nothing of material value, but has closeness to God. Yahya ibn Mu’adh defined *zuhd* as “abandoning what has already been abandoned.

## 4. Faqr

Literally, *faqr* (poverty) is defined as a person in need, dependent, or poor. However, in the view of the Sufis, a *faqir* is someone who does not ask for more than what they already have. They do not seek sustenance except solely for fulfilling their obligations. Even when they lack something, they do not ask for it, but if it is given to them, they accept it. They do not request, yet they do not reject.

## 5. Patience

*Sabr* (patience) is not something to be accepted passively; rather, it is a sincere effort and also a noble and exalted attribute of Allah. *Sabr* means restraining oneself while enduring suffering, whether it involves facing undesirable situations or the loss of something one loves.

## 6. Tawakkul

In general, *tawakkul* means surrendering and fully entrusting oneself to Allah after a person has made plans and exerted effort through *ikhtiar* (striving). However, among the Sufis, the understanding of *tawakkul* is much deeper. For example, Al-Syibli (d. 945 CE) stated that *tawakkul* means one should feel that there is no other hope but Allah, and that Allah is always present before them. This implies that in all matters—both attitudes and actions—a person must accept sincerely. Whatever happens is beyond one's will and effort, but everything is believed to come solely from Allah. *Ridho*

*Ridho* (contentment) is a teaching that encourages one to respond to and transform all states of the soul whether happiness, pleasure, suffering, misery, or hardship into joy and delight, derived from the bliss of accepting everything granted by Allah SWT. Al-Ghazali stated, 'Being willing to accept whatever happens—everything one has experienced and is experiencing is the best for him; there is nothing better than what he is currently going through.' Ibn Khaff described *ridho* as 'a heartfelt acceptance of God's decree and wholehearted agreement with what Allah has destined for him.'

#### 7. Mahabbah

Literally, *mahabah* or *al-hubb* is often interpreted as love and affection. *Mahabah* refers to the effort to manifest feelings of love and devotion directed toward Allah. It can also be understood as the outpouring and turbulence of the heart when overwhelmed by the longing to meet the beloved, namely Allah SWT. In Sufism, *mahabah* is considered a spiritual station for those who strive to attain divine love; it becomes the goal of the devout and the ultimate aspiration of those who truly love their Lord.

#### 8. Ma'rifah

Literally, *maḥabbah* or *al-ḥubb* is often interpreted as love and affection. *Maḥabbah* refers to the effort to manifest a sense of love and devotion directed toward Allah. It can also be understood as the outpouring of the heart and its emotional turbulence when overwhelmed by the longing to meet the Beloved, namely Allah SWT. In Sufism, *maḥabbah* is regarded as a spiritual station for those who strive to attain divine love, becoming the goal of the devout and the ultimate aspiration of those who truly love their Lord.

### 4. Conclusion

Sufism in Islam represents an integral and historical spiritual path within the Islamic tradition. Its teachings are firmly rooted in the Qur'an and the Sunnah, although its development has not been entirely isolated from external influences. Sufism not only promotes a theocentric approach but also encompasses moral cultivation, purification of the soul, and the existential closeness of humans to God. The concepts of *maqāmāt* (spiritual stations) and *aḥwāl* (spiritual states) form the foundational structure of a Sufi's spiritual journey. The presence of ethical (*akhlaki*), gnostic (*irfani*), and philosophical (*falsafi*) forms of Sufism reflects its adaptability in addressing diverse spiritual needs. Moreover, the

evolution of Sufism can be seen as a response to the socio-political dynamics and the spiritually dry formal-legal religious practices. Thus, Sufism is not merely an individual mystical practice, but also a spiritual and ethical system that shapes Islamic culture and civilization. Therefore, Sufism remains relevant as a spiritual path that bridges the outer and inner dimensions of religious life

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