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## SCIENTIA SACRA IN SUFISM AS WELTANSCHAUUNG CONTEMPORARY MUSLIM SPIRITUALITY

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### *Abstrak*

#### **Kata Kunci:**

Scientia sacra;  
Reformed  
sufism;  
Excessive; New  
age movement;  
santrinziation

*Studi ini mengkaji wilayah perifer nalar sufistik, di mana manusia modern kehilangan orientasi dan menyebabkan krisis psikologis. Melalui asesmen filosofis mendasar terhadap weltanschauung sebagai poros spiritualitas sufisme dalam Islam, dengan fokus pada cara pandang kontemporer masyarakat modern dan konstruk scientia sacra sebagai weltanschauung spiritualitas Muslim kontemporer. Hasil studi mengafirmasi, bahwa problem mendasar yang merepresentasikan hubungan antara spiritualitas dan masyarakat modern adalah dualisme framework ontologi-epistemik, sebagai akibat split pemahaman antara tasawuf dan pseudo-nya. Para Sufi telah membangun konsep scientia sacra berbasis integrasi nalar teosofis, sifat asketis praksis dan filosofis. Konsep ini diharapkan mampu menghadirkan aktivitas konseptual-praksis yang digambarkan sebagai mujahadah eksklusif, trendi dan introvertistik yang meng-“katarsis” diri dari hiruk-pikuk duniawi namun bernilai komunal, filosofis yang erat kaitannya dengan nilai-nilai rahmat al-khalq. Basis filosofis gerakan ini berawal dari nalar teosofis, menjelma dalam asketis praksis dan berkembang sebagai asketis filosofis. Ketiga hal ini berangkat dari statemen kunci, bahwa sufisme merupakan satu poros (axis) eksistensial bagi manusia, di mana krisis manusia modern adalah gerak sentrifugal dari axis tersebut. Inilah yang menyebabkan nilai-nilai filosofis dalam ajaran sufistik mengalami pergolakan, berakhir pada proses katarsis terhadap scientia sacra sebagai dasar dari pengetahuan, metafisika dan esoterisme.*

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**Abstract**
**Keywords:**

Scientia sacra;  
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sufism;  
Excessive;  
New age  
movement;  
santrinization

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This study examines the peripheral area of Sufistic reasoning, where modern humans lose their orientation and cause a psychological crisis—through a fundamental philosophical assessment of the *weltanschauung* as the axis of Sufism spirituality in Islam, focusing on the contemporary perspective of modern society and the construct of *Scientia sacra* as the *weltanschauung* of contemporary Muslim spirituality. The study results confirm that the fundamental problem that represents the relationship between spirituality and modern society is the dualism of the ontology-epistemic framework, as a result of the split understanding between Sufism and its pseudo. The Sufis have built the concept of *Scientia sacra* based on the integration of theosophical reasoning, ascetic praxis, and philosophical nature. This concept is expected to present conceptual-praxis activities described as exclusive mujahadah, trendy, and introvertistic that “catharsis” themselves from the worldly bustle but have communal, philosophical values closely related to the values rahmat al-khalq. The philosophical basis of this movement originated from theosophical reasoning, transformed into praxis asceticism, and developed as philosophical asceticism. These three elements come from the key statement that Sufism is an existential axis for humans, where the crisis of modern humans is the centrifugal motion of that axis. It is what causes the philosophical values in Sufistic teachings to experience turmoil, ending in a cathartic process towards *Scientia sacra* as the basis of knowledge, metaphysics, and esotericism.

## Introduction

The desacralization of modern humans with all their sciences is a rejection of *Scientia sacra* as the basis of all knowledge. It is the discipline of metaphysics and esotericism from pre-historic times to the contemporary era. *Scientia sacra* is also known as perennial wisdom, a *weltanschauung* owned by traditionalists.<sup>1</sup> Perennial wisdom or *Scientia sacra* in Ancient Greek philosophy is called *gnosis*. In Christianity, it is called *esoteric mysticism*. In Buddhism, it is called *Sanatana Dharma*. While by Lao-Tzu it is called *Tao*, and in Islam, it is called *Sufism*. Sufism as *Scientia sacra* can be used as a syllabus and guide to overcoming desacralization in reconstructing sacred knowledge and reformulating spiritual reality. Because leaving both of them can cause suffering for modern humans.

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<sup>1</sup> Ainur Rofiq Alamin, “Bersama Javidan Khirad Seyyed Hossein Nasr,” *Islamica: Jurnal Studi Keislaman* 1, no. 2 (2007), 184-188.

Muslim scholars are optimistic that Sufism as a *Scientia sacra* can be at the forefront in treating existential crises, mental disorders in industrial society, and environmental "inequilibrium." *Scientia sacra* can be offered as a way out of existential crises. The presumption of modern humans on Sufism, which is seen as old-fashioned, superstitious, and irrational, can be prevented because *Scientia sacra* resulted from a re-definition of reformed Sufism, namely the Sufism landscape is renewed and contextualized with the modern world, not anti-modernity and passive to the changing. Because Sufis are real people in facing life's challenges, Sufism is not an escapism discipline to escape from reality. Likewise, the re-definition of *Scientia sacra*.<sup>2</sup>

This process is certainly not easy to do. As is widely understood, in the early days of its development, Sufism was close to *ẓubud*, self-isolation, continuous *uḡlah*, continuous seclusion until it was released and not burdened by social space. Such an understanding had a significant impact, although, in its development, Sufism has transformed into an onto-philosophical treasure that was entirely theoretical and systematic; known both during the semi-philosophy period; and during the philosophical period with doctrines that were quite typical and considered complicated, such as *bulūl*, *ittibad*, till *wabdat al-wujud* and *al-shubud*.

The development of the onto-philosophical aspect of Sufism has met several "challenges" all the time. One of them, which is quite complicated, is the epistemic aspect, namely the liberalization movement. It becomes complicated because not many people can see the flow of each idea. Among the dictions that the writer concerns is the statement that a Muslim must be willing and able to open various dimensions and put forward the religious-ethical spirit above the text's literal meaning, believe in relative truth, be *open-minded* and plural, and separate worldly and *ukhrawi* (hereafter) authorities. Epistemologically, the impact of this statement is quite complicated and profound, especially for those who are already busy

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<sup>2</sup> Tri Astutik Hariyati and Mohammad Kosim, "Tasawuf dan Tantangan Modernitas," *Ulmuna* 14, no. 2 (2010), 423-424.

with daily activities without having enough opportunities to access rigid philosophical sources.

In response to this, Hasib Amrullah said that the statement emerged as the impact of a sophistic thinking framework.<sup>3</sup> While H.M. Rasjidi, caused by excessive admiration for the modern Western scientific tradition.<sup>4</sup> The most fundamental problem in this regard lies in the *relative-sophistry* argument. Arguments like this often end in rejecting scientific authority, which often leads to an agnostic attitude. This kind of perspective is rooted in the spirit of the Renaissance that has spread since the 16th century. The basic idea is the humanization of Western people, with the practical principle of favoring science over religious dogma. The autonomy of science, state politics, and social space from religious dogma have consequences for the secularistic *weltanschauung*.<sup>5</sup>

The secularization effort gave birth to many responses, one of which was The New Age Movement, a movement that becomes a miniature of the long journey of historical wounds. Modernism is "accused" of being hurtful, and recorded by history as an anthropocentric Western-style humanization effort. The separation of church authority from science aims to create a massive humanization of advancing civilization within the scope of Comtian positivism. Undoubtedly, the secularization of science, by abandoning spirituality, undermines humanization efforts, ultimately leading to dehumanization.<sup>6</sup> If referring to Nasr, modern Western humans are alienated because they are on the "periphery of the circle of existence," thus making the Western "cut off" from their "tradition" (read: *Scientia sacra*). In the Scholastic tradition, especially Islamic philosophy, humans are spiritual beings whose identity

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<sup>3</sup> Hasib Amrullah, "Sophist dan Pengaruhnya terhadap Pemikiran Liberal di Indonesia," *Tasfiyah: Jurnal Pemikiran Islam* 1, no. 1 (2017), 72-73.

<sup>4</sup> H. M. Rasjidi, *Koreksi Prof. Dr. H. M. Rasjidi terhadap Prof. Dr. Harun Nasution dalam Uraianannya: Ajaran Islam tentang Akal dan Akhlaq* (Jakarta: Fajar Shadiq, 1985), 40-51.

<sup>5</sup> F. Budi Hardiman, *Humanisme dan Sesudahnya: Meninjau Ulang Gagasan Besar tentang Manusia* (Jakarta: Kepustakaan Populer Gramedia, 2012), 8-13.

<sup>6</sup> Seyyed Hossein Nasr, *Islam and the Plight of Modern Man* (Chicago, London: ABC International Group Inc, 2001), 6.

cannot be separated from their connection to the divine existence. Although this also cannot be generalized absolutely. As the father of modern philosophy, Rene Descartes may be responsible for the impact of dehumanization because his philosophical thought has made "dualism." The most representative critique of the Cartesian is Frithjof Schuon, the perennial thinker.<sup>7</sup>

It is different from the Sufi world. The consistency of science cannot be separated from the dogmatic-theological atmosphere. In the sense that the process of secularization has never occurred in the path of the theology of the Sufis. Sufis never try to leave human spirituality, so this distinguishes it from the theory of dualism. Still, the historical plot of Islamic civilization is also too easy to differentiate between the Age of decline and the Modern Age. The age of decline usually refers to the tariqa phenomenon as the "accused" party because it has contributed to preserving the tradition of *taqlid* and the stagnation of thought. Although it needs to be reviewed again, including the statement about "the door of *ijtihad* has been closed." Meanwhile, the modern era, where the reformist group as the vanguard with Muhammad Abduh as the most influential figure in scientific discourse, seeks to revive the *ijtihad* tradition.<sup>8</sup> However, the views and stigma of this reformist-modernist group by no means can be arbitrarily considered true.<sup>9</sup>

The approach of the reformist group, especially if they look at it from the perspective of the fundamentalists who tend to be textualists and

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<sup>7</sup> Frithjof Schuon, *Transfigurasi Manusia: Refleksi Antroposofia Perennialis (Terj)*, ed. Fakhruddin Faiz (Yogyakarta: Qalam, 2002), 3-15. Frithjof Schuon, *Roots of the Human Condition* (Bloomington: Worldwisdom, 1991), 7-8. Imron Mustofa, "Gagasan Islamisasi Ilmu (Studi Tentang Kerangka Metodologi Institute for the Study of Islamic Thought and Civilization (INSISTS))" (UIN Sunan Ampel Surabaya, 2018), 180.

<sup>8</sup> Beside Abduh, his predecessors such as Kemal Atatürk, Jamal al-Din al-Afghani, and others also became important figures in the era of Muslim reform. In order not to "accuse" Abduh, basically almost all reformist groups have accused "sufism/tariqa" of the cause of the stagnation of Islamic intellectuals. Julia Day Howell, "Modernitas dan Spiritualitas Islam dalam Jaringan Baru Sufi Indonesia", In Martin Van Bruinessen and Julia Day Howell, eds., *Urban Sufisme* (Jakarta: Rajawali Press, 2008), 373-374.

<sup>9</sup> Martin Van Bruinessen and Julia Day Howell, eds., *Urban Sufisme*, 4.

formalistic, of course, finds the essence of Islam as "spirituality" without an epistemic system as a logical consequence. So, it is not surprising if Sufism/*tariqa* in a certain period becomes marginalized because it is considered irrational, heresy, and superstitious.<sup>10</sup>

On the other hand, Sufism/*Tariqa* also needs to overcome the "existential crisis."<sup>11</sup> In this context, what once dominated Indonesia, with a rationalistic and anti-superstition perspective (the antithesis of *kebatinan*/Javanese belief), deserves to be affirmed. What Howell proclaimed was that there was a discontinuity of the "view" of urbanists towards Sufism, which previously had stigmatized accusations and a stagnant "religious way."<sup>12</sup>

The point of the actions of the *mujaddid* Sufism is to return to its fundamental sources, namely the Qur'an and hadith. In this section, some things need to be observed, namely, the accuracy of the purification period, which seems sharper if compared to the reformation period of al-Qushayri and al-Ghazali. This second period of purification is what Fazlur Rahman calls neo-Sufism. The essence of the neo-Sufism critique of Ibn Taymiyah and other *mujaddids* is that Sufism must be relevant to the Shari'a and does not exceed beyond normal limits.

This phenomenon becomes interesting to study epistemically and sincerely to find answers in the Sufistic scientific tradition that is considered too ascetic, especially regarding the offer to make Sufism a *weltanschauung* and a solution for the modern society and its development. To get a comprehensive answer to this offer, the analysis of Sufistic epistemology, which has been rarely discussed becomes very urgent.

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<sup>10</sup> Nur Kafid, "Sufisme dalam Dinamika Kehidupan Masyarakat Muslim Kontemporer," *Mimbar Agama dan Budaya* 37, no. 1 (2020): 23=32, <http://journal.uinjkt.ac.id/index.php/mimbar/article/view/18232>.

<sup>11</sup> Seyyed Hossein Nasr, *Islam and the Plight of Modern Man*, 218-220.

<sup>12</sup> Martin Van Bruinessen and Julia Day Howell, eds., *Urban Sufisme*, 23-28.

## New Age Movement as Momentum Scientia Sacra

The term "New Age" is quite controversial, not least in the discourse of perennial philosophy. Rene Guenon, a French perennial, argued that what *New Age* proclaimed was "pseudo-mysticism" with its syncretistic elaboration. Haidar Bagir also views the stigmatization of the *New Age* as a lifestyle with a fashionable spatial temporality. The *New Age Movement* itself is a phenomenon that swings back from the modernity movement due to practical-technological developments.<sup>13</sup> Sufism, in this position, is necessary to consider oneself so that it can be verified rationally. For example, there is a term commonly believed by the traditional Javanese Muslim community, namely the issue of "karamah", without intending to refute it. Still, there have been many misunderstandings in practice because it is too exalted in such a way.<sup>14</sup>

The "spiritual" urgency needs to be reborn from the pressure of modernism.<sup>15</sup> Why did Sufism rise in urban areas and spread to rural areas (spreading from city to rural place)? Situations that are contrary to its history, from rural to urban.<sup>16</sup> The city is a showcase of progress from a civilization built by humans, a repository of common sense, industrialism kiosks, and an abundance of super-sophisticated goods. Its multidimensional role makes urban areas the pillars of modernity. Suppose it is true that modernism is the main alibi that causes Sahara spirituality. In that case, it is not wrong if urban communities are affected by the predicate of *causa prima* for this excessive phenomenon. Considering that so far, the heart of modernistic urban citizens' *weltanschauung* is hedonistic-materialism. All this time, urbanists have premised on the matter as *alpha* and *omega*, which then impacts self-alienation, spiritual dryness, and mental

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<sup>13</sup> Ahmad Najib Burhani, *Sufisme Kota: Berpikir Jernih Menemukan Spiritualitas Positif* (Jakarta: Serambi, 2001), 16.

<sup>14</sup> Haidar Bagir, *Mengenal Tasawuf: Spiritualisme dalam Islam* (Jakarta: Naura Publishing, n.d.), 10-11.

<sup>15</sup> Said Aqil Siradj, "Tasawuf sebagai Revolusi Spiritual dalam Kehidupan Masyarakat Modern" (Surabaya, 2014), 36-40.

<sup>16</sup> Julia Day Howell, "Indonesia's Urban Sufis: Challenging Stereotypes of Islamic Revival," *ISIM News Letter*, 2001.

illness. So don't be surprised if later urban people shift their position to zones that provide spiritual antidotes to achieve peace of mind and clarity of mind.<sup>17</sup>

The interest in Sufism in urban areas is a phenomenon taking place in Indonesia and almost all Muslim countries. It has become a phenomenon favored by most Westerners, which is contradictory to experts' predictions, who think that Sufism will not develop amid the swift currents of modernization and globalization. The increasing practice of Sufism in the modern era cannot be separated from various complex determinations, ranging from socio-cultural, religious, economic, and political conditions.<sup>18</sup> Azyumardi Azra has predicted this phenomenon since the 1980s because religiously, there are escalating symptoms of affection to Islam, commonly known as *santrinizasi*. According to Azra, this process is very likely to occur because the Muslim middle class has begun to form during a change in the ruling regime's political direction, accommodating Muslims. Meanwhile, the emergence of the term urban Sufism in Indonesia is also inseparable from the developing political and cultural conditions. The term urban Sufism is becoming popular after Howell used it in an anthropological study of the Sufism movement that was widespread in cities in Indonesia in 2003.<sup>19</sup>

The search for profane glories and denying the metaphysical and eschatological world is the main goal of modernity. In the Islamic world itself, this phenomenon and perspective also arise. It is more due to the dominance of the Western view in translating modernism. According to Seyyed Hossein Nasr, modern men are on the outskirts of existence (*rim*)

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<sup>17</sup> Ahmad Najib Burhani, *Sufisme Kota: Berpikir Jernih Menemukan Spiritualitas Positif*, 3-4.

<sup>18</sup> Martin Van Bruinessen and Julia Day Howell, eds., *Urban Sufisme*, 155-196.

<sup>19</sup> R Rofhani, "Budaya Urban Muslim Kelas Menengah," *Teosofi: Jurnal Tasawuf dan Pemikiran Islam* 3, no. 1 (2013), 201. Julia Day Howell, "Modernitas dan Spiritualitas Islam dalam Jaringan Baru Sufi Indonesia", dalam Bruinessen and Howell, *Urban Sufisme*, 397-410. Following what was proclaimed by Fazlur Rahman with the term "neo-sufism" to refresh the negative stigma "already" attached in the body of "sufism/tariqa", almost all scholars agree with Rahman's term, for example Nurcholis Madjid, who defines neo-sufism fresher and more social than the lameness of its traditional understanding.

because they have lost the vision of divinity and have negated spiritual dimension so that they can not interpret the deepest nature of their existence on earth. This position makes modern humans lose their orientation and causes a psychological crisis that cannot be overcome through self-developed technological advances. Even the progress of science and technology that is used to exploit nature and life is the cause of the crisis.<sup>20</sup>

According to Eastern wisdom, human crises and conflicts among people are caused by human exploitation and domination of nature. Men's negation of divine reality causes men's domination and exploitation of nature. Men's negation of this Divine reality is the result of men not knowing what and who they are, a crisis, and blindness to self-identification.<sup>21</sup> It is where the wild modern civilization begins. The reduction of self-existence as a mere empirical reality becomes the root of the problem of humanity as a whole. The exploitation of nature by considering it as an inanimate object and an object that deserves to be exploited massively is the cruelty of humans who have lost the vision of divinity. The reason is the cutting of the metaphysical sky so that the universe is considered a purely physical and astronomical reality. This form of secularization that undermines an effort to humanize a person from an Islamic perspective should be assumed to eliminate human dignity.<sup>22</sup> In other words, *Scientia sacra*, as Nasr puts it, has no place in the laboratory of modernism.<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>20</sup> Saleh Nur, "Krisis Barat Modern Menurut Nasr," *Jurnal Ushuluddin* 17, no. 1 (2011), 16-18.

<sup>21</sup> Jusuf Sutanto, *Spiritual Wisdom: Belajar Mengelola Kehidupan dari Penggembala Kuda* (Jakarta: Hikmah, 2006), 105-120.

<sup>22</sup> Abd Kadir Riyadi, *Antropologi Tasawuf: Manusia Spiritual dan Pengetahuan* (Jakarta: LP3ES, 2014), 198-204.

<sup>23</sup> Ali Maksum, *Tasawuf sebagai Pembebasan Manusia Modern: Telaah Signifikansi Konsep Tradisionalisme Islam Seyyed Hossein Nasr* (Surabaya: PSAPM, 2003), 70-87.

## The Construct of *Scientia Sacra* in Sufism

*Scientia sacra* is etymologically constructed from two words, *scientia* and *sacra*. The Latin word *scientia* means science or knowledge, and *sacra* means sacred. *Scientia sacra* means a system of knowledge that puts forward the principles of sacredness. In Islam, this kind of concept is most evident in the study of the Sufis. *Scientia* (*'ilm*) from *'ayn-lam-mim*, from the same root as *'alamah*, sign or pointer, similar to *ma'lam* which means road sign. *Scientia* is something with which one can guide a person. The addition of *sacra* (sacred) emphasizes that the guidance emphasizes the importance of the holiness of a thing. In Sufism, sacredness is incarnated in the form of a set of Islamic values. So that *scientia sacra* becomes a set of systems that guide a person in understanding the universe, by emphasizing the coherence between various principles in Islam. Based on this understanding, Wan Mohd Nor Wan Daud concluded that the most appropriate meaning of *scientia* is the arrival of the human heart (*qalb*) to meaning and at the same time the presence of meaning in the heart (*busul al-qalb ila al-ma'na, wa budur al-ma'na fi al-qalb*).<sup>24</sup>

This kind of condition encourages Muslims to translate *'ilm* as the Qur'an, Sunnah, Islam, faith, wisdom, *fikrah*, *makrifat* and *nur* (light). Referring to the last half of the definition of science (...*budur al-ma'na fi al-qalb*) the classification of *'ilm laduni* was born. These various entities are all located in a vessel called the heart. Al-Qur'an surah al-Hajj: 46, *lahum qulub la ya'qiluna biba* (they have a heart but do not use it for *ta'aqqul*). That is, the relationship formed between *scientia sacra* and heart (*qalb*) shows that the organ performing *ta'aqqul* is the heart. The heart is an organ that *ya'qil* (binds) a series of information whose climax presents a distinctive meaning. The heart is a device that presents meaning as well as a place where meaning resides. In short, *scientia sacra* is a set of processes that produce meaning related to reality which can be perceived by the five

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<sup>24</sup> Wan Mohd Nor Wan Daud, *The Beacon on the Crest of a Hill Quotes* (Malaysia: ISTAC, 1991), 9.

senses.<sup>25</sup>

The important point of the sacredness of science lies in the possibility of the two meanings of the definition of "*busul*" and "*budur*". *Hudur* (arrival) is the process of coming from one place to another. A process that requires an active soul and spiritual readiness on the part of the seeker of knowledge. On the other hand, it also requires the pleasure of the party who brings knowledge, Allah. A definition that implies a series of *qalb* journeys to meaning, as a spiritual process. The reality of this meaning illustrates that science is not just a collection of phenomena, skills or facts that are popularly called positivistic science. However, we cannot simply deny these various realities, because *scientia sacra* essentially contains one or a combination of these three things.

Undeniably, science is a tenet that is built on various processes and supporting propositions. Although this tenet in the Sufistic tradition is not merely a proposition of ideas, it is an intuitive one. One element based on spiritual effort (*mujahadah*) uses all the potential that humans have. In the world of Sufism, perhaps the clearest example is the knowledge of God. The knowledge of God cannot be co-opted or only presented in the form of linguistic proposals that represent the names and attributes of God. At a deeper level, the knowledge of Allah is the fruit of a real spiritual experience, when a Sufi is able to "witness", "meet" and even "unite" with the reality of *al-Haqq*. This kind of spiritual experience cannot be represented by linguistic statements. Like a person who lived all his life in the desert without a single piece of information about the existence of a place full of ice at the poles. Suppose, when someone told of the existence of two poles on the earth filled with ice, then that person needed a long explanation and even needed proof of the validity of the story. In short, *scientia sacra* is a scientific system based on faith, which is not only a statement of approval of a proposition of ideas but involves spiritual affirmation and physical validation. *Scientia sacra* is truth visualized in terms

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<sup>25</sup> Mustofa, "Gagasan Islamisasi Ilmu (Studi tentang Kerangka Metodologi Institute for the Study of Islamic Thought and Civilization (INSISTS).", 223-227

of *haqq*, which encapsulates ontological, epistemological, and axiological processes. Therefore, the scholars view the importance of science to describe it as *al-'ilm fi al-sadr la fi al-satr*, knowledge that resides in the chest, not just a record.

*Qalb* is the abode of the experience, thought, and soul of a human being. This is the logical impact of the definition of science, as unity between individuals who know about meaning (*ma'na*), not between people who have knowledge and objects or problems that are known. Due to the various levels of thought and experience, the quality of meaning one can obtain must be different. Because the meaning of an object of knowledge presenting in a person's heart is very dependent, overriding *'ilm huduri*, on the process through which it is passed. The elements of meaning which are produced by the *qalb* of the object of knowledge can be properly apprehended by the senses only when it attains enlightenment (*nur*) from Allah. This means the nature (meaning) of science is not inherently in the object. With this basis, an individual can know everything, including things that are visible and abstract. This confirms that knowledge, which in obtaining its essence an individual requires a set of efforts to obtain it, is a gift from Allah to whomever He wills. So that someone who has the potential to gain knowledge needs intellectual and spiritual preparation that is qualified.

The meaning of *ma'na* in the definition of science, Hamid F. Zakasyi asserts that it is an entity that has quality, quantity, position, and place that is obtained as an inference from the external senses and undergoes a fit and proper test by the internal senses.<sup>26</sup> It is a picture of the *dhibni* (mental image) of the individual. Knowledge can exist and reside within a person, as long as he deserves it. That is, science and humans as individuals are two separate entities. To be precise, knowledge is the nature of an *'alim*. So it becomes natural that science is strongly influenced by the perspective of the individual. For example, if the glass is assumed as a person who

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<sup>26</sup> Hamid Fahmy Zarkasyi, *Alghazali's Concept of Causality: With Reference to His Interpretations of Reality and Knowledge* (Kuala Lumpur: IIUM Press, 2010), 214-215.

knows, then the shape of the water that changes according to the shape of the glass is science itself. In short, *ma'na* is the recognition of the right place or position in a series of ongoing systems, where the relationship between one thing and another in the system becomes clear, real, and can be understood well.

Therefore, *scientia sacra* in the Sufism tradition emphasizes the importance of two main aspects, coming (*hbussul* and *hbuddur*) and meaning (*ma'na*). The affirmation of the two elements visualizes that *scientia sacra* is not only concerned with coherence and correspondence but requires both to be in harmony. The main rule in this harmony, in Islam, is referred to as *tawhid*. As a mental image, *ma'na* which is the essence of *scientia sacra* are expressions and words, but after being transformed into an idea or concept, it is called understanding.

When the heart catches the meaning of an object of knowledge, it will be stored in it. It will be well understood if it can be expressed and narrated properly. When this process occurs, then indirectly humans have tried to answer the question "what is this? (*mahiyah*)" of an object. *Scientia sacra* is not a human imagination. It is a real existence, truly exists and stands alone, not merely rely on reason. The object of knowledge which is generally known as *haqiqah* (reality), can also be specified as one *huyiyah* (existence, embodiment). Therefore, in the study of Sufism, several terms are known to describe this. Such as the existence of *haqiqah* (real), *bissi* (sensory), *khayali* (imagination), *'aqli* (intellectual), *shibbi* (analogy), and transcendence.

### **Crystallization of *Weltanschauung* in the Tradition of Modern Sufism**

The meaning of Sufism is not singular and easy to define. It could even be that the definition is as many as the authors because it is subjective. Sufism is a personal science, always open to being talked about and discussed without completeness. Seen positively, it has a good impact on Sufism which can be dynamic by itself and has a multidisciplinary context. That is, the ideas and thoughts of a Sufi can be studied with other

sciences, such as philosophy, psychology, science, or even social and political.<sup>27</sup>

Tracing the development of *scientia sacra* in the Sufism tradition cannot be separated from the world of old and new Sufism. Initially, the term Sufism appeared in the 8th century AD, which was pinned on an alchemist from Kuffah, Jabir ibn Hayyan (d. 815 AD).<sup>28</sup> The early Sufis are known as very ascetic people. Individuals who are part of the *maqamat* (activity) of individual or social moral improvement.<sup>29</sup> Often the first known Sufis are Hasan al-Bassri (d. 728 AD); who contributed the idea of *kehanf* and *raja'*.<sup>30</sup> He was known as a Sufi who opposed the glamorous lifestyle at that time, confronting through the practice of *zuhud*. Sufism was originally a *zuhud* movement, avoiding worldly interests and only concerned with the hereafter. The *zuhids* competed to perform many acts of worship and suppress their passions so as not to be tempted by the profane desires that hinder the path to God.

The scientific approach in this phase emphasizes the ascetic element. Sufis are known as ascetics, one of them is Ibrahim ibn Adham (d. 782 AD). He was a king, who then realized and left worldly life. Ibrahim ibn Adham's ascetic activity began with total *zuhud*. Outwardly, it could be seen from the replacement of his luxurious robes with shabby clothes. While inwardly, it was done by turning to the interests of the *ukhrawi* (hereafter).<sup>31</sup> At the beginning of its emergence, *zuhud* was an exclusive, trendy, and introverted movement so that it was firm in its stance in terms of self-purifying from all the hustle and bustle of the world by abandoning or ignoring socio-political activities. Political conflict with a theological

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<sup>27</sup> Abd Kadir Riyadi, *Arkeologi Tasawuf: Melacak Jejak Pemikiran Tasawuf dan Almuhasibi bingga Tasawuf Nusantara* (Bandung: Mizan, 2016), 9.

<sup>28</sup> H. A. R. Gibb and J. H. Kramers, *Shorter Encyclopedia of Islam* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1961), 580. Tasawuf secara etimologi berasal dari bahasa Arab yang diambil dari kata *tasaawwafa-yatasaawwafu-ittasawwufan*. Samsul Munir Amin, *Ilmu Tasawuf* (Jakarta: Amzah, 2012), 2-4.

<sup>29</sup> M. Amin Syukur, *Zuhud di Abad Modern* (Yogyakarta: Pustaka Pelajar, 2004), 1-14.

<sup>30</sup> Abd Kadir Riyadi, *Arkeologi Tasawuf: Melacak Jejak Pemikiran Tasawuf dan Almuhasibi bingga Tasawuf Nusantara*, 9.

<sup>31</sup> M. Amin Syukur, *Zuhud di Abad Modern*, 72-77.

pretext, at that time, was a stimulus for apathy for the *zāhid*. This political apathy was pursued for the sake of resistance and personal piety through self-isolation or *uzlab*.<sup>32</sup> This phase did not discuss much scientifically about everything related to Sufism. The main approach that was applied was the path of a *salik*.

The path of *salik* connoted that to be a Sufi one must do various activities to keep oneself busy with God. How? through meditation or seclusion. In this phase, the practitioner (*salik*) was known as a poor wanderer, with tattered clothes and an unkempt body. In this way, the Sufis tried to build the quality of their heart to embrace the freshness of spiritual water. The dualism model of body and soul was the main trend. The Sufis regarded the body as matter that must be trained to submit to the soul or its mental state, which was "immaterial". This was done to obtain achievement, in the form of "understanding" and "feeling" of the essence.<sup>33</sup>

This scientific and sacred "test" activity which seems hyperbolic and frenzied usually occurs in a collective practice of *zīker* (remembrance). Through remembrance, sacred scientific activities were indirectly taught and transmitted from one to another. This value transfer activity had been known since the 12th century AD to be quite massive as a *tariqa* or Sufi order, which in its development had received a positive response as a spiritual practice. An order was characterized by the existence of structurality, continuity, and hierarchy between teacher-students and solid bonds within the order.<sup>34</sup>

At this time, Sufism which was previously only an individual activity had now become a communal activity. Informal meetings involving spiritual practice turned into religious scientific discussions, thus forming

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<sup>32</sup> A. Rivay Siregar, *Tasawuf dari Sufisme Klasik ke Neo Sufisme* (Jakarta: Raja Grafindo Persada, 2002), 38.

<sup>33</sup> M. Amin Syukur, *Mengugat Tasawuf: Sufisme dan Tanggung Jawab Sosial Abad 21* (Yogyakarta: Pustaka Pelajar, 2002), 30-31.

<sup>34</sup> Agus Riyadi, "Tarekat sebagai Organisasi Tasawuf: Melacak Peran Tarekat dalam Perkembangan Dakwah Islamiyah," *Altaqaddum* 6, no. 2 (2016), 362-382.

halaqah in various places. H.A.R Gibb considered that the embryo of tariqa activity stemmed from the statement that learning about Sufism must go through a teacher, "whoever learns Sufism without a teacher, the teacher is Satan". As a result, a very crystallized opinion emerged among some Muslims, that anyone who wanted to get closer to Allah, must learn from a Sufi who had perfected his Sufism (*mursbid*).<sup>35</sup> From here the tariqa became institutionalized and formalized scientifically and conceptually. Such simple Sufi practices, according to Fazlur Rahman, developed into mature and perfect spiritual concepts, with various rituals in them. Such as dancing and listening to music, and making the mosque a center of scientific-spiritual civilization.<sup>36</sup>

The end of the 20th century became the starting point for the development of Sufism. Fazlur Rahman echoed the term neo-sufism, referring to the Sufism promoted by Ibn 'Taymiyah (d. 1328 AD). Meanwhile, Arthur J. Arberry, believed that Sufism had been victorious and established by the ideas of Ibn 'Arabi (d. 1240 AD) and Rumi (d. 1270 AD), then followed by its collapse through the disguised practices of pseudo-tariqa. Many superstitions, heresy, occult, and other things that were not in the initial teachings. Pseudo-tariqa used ordinary people to be 'guided' irrationally by displaying *karamah*, *amulets*, and occult potions to gain the cult of the masses.<sup>37</sup>

For Fazlur Rahman, Ibn 'Taymiyah was a pioneer who tried to reconstruct the dark image of Sufism at least in three (3) ways; first, by trying to restore the correct understanding of *uzlah* and *kehalwat*. He criticized excessive efforts to neglect the mandate of *kehalifah fi al-ard* to spread *rabbmatan li al-'alamin* in social spaces. So, the horizontal (*habl min al-nas*) and vertical (*habl min Allah*) aspects must be balanced and equal.

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<sup>35</sup> Noer Iskandar Albarsany, *Tasawuf dan Tarekat Para Sufi* (Jakarta: Raja Grafindo Persada, 2001), 71. Noer Iskandar al-Barsany, *Tasawuf dan Tarekat Para Sufi* (Jakarta: RajaGrafindo Persada: 2001), 71.

<sup>36</sup> Fazlur Rahman, *Islam (Terj)*, ed. Senoaji Saleh (Jakarta: Bumi Aksara, 1992), 210.

<sup>37</sup> Arthur J. Arberry, *Pasang-Surut Aliran Tasawuf (Terj)*, ed. Bambang Herawan (Bandung: Mizan, 1993), 154-159.

Second, by rejecting the cult of a Sufi figure and sanctification of a place.<sup>38</sup> That is, the practical reasoning ability must be owned by the *salik*. Third, the rejection of blind devotion to the spiritual teacher. This can risk the deviation of Islamic law, because of blind *taklid* without consideration of text and sane sense.<sup>39</sup>

These three efforts indirectly emphasize scientific values in the study of Sufism. First, the reorientation and reconception of the basic concepts in Sufism. Various things that were previously focused only on individual efforts to spiritual attainment have to be imbued with socio-scientific values. *Uzlah* and *khalwat* which are believed to be efforts to approach God must also contribute to the development of the social life of the community. Second, based on the understanding that science is closely tied to the quality of intellectual *mujabadah* and individual praxis, consequently, humans can make mistakes. Therefore, it is necessary to avoid the cult of one particular individual. Cults have the potential to lead to the negation of other similar efforts, or better.

Before Rahman, Hamka (d. 1981 AD) had sparked the idea of Modern Sufism, which Rahman referred to as neo-sufism.<sup>40</sup> The core idea emphasizes that Sufism has both positive and negative sides. The positive side of Sufism is following the Qur'an and hadith; namely knitting self-servitude to Allah and spreading goodness to humans and the universe. That is, Sufism does not mean neglecting the mandate of *khalifah fi al-ard*, but it must play a role in spreading *rahmatan li al-'alamin* in the social space. Sufism is not synonymous with material and intellectual poverty because of *taklid*. Because Islam emphasizes optimism in struggling and in doing things that are lawful by Allah. The Sufism style proposed by Hamka is oriented to intellectual-based worship in understanding the Qur'an and

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<sup>38</sup> Azyumardi Azra, "Tasawuf dan Tarekat," in *Ensiklopedi Tematis Dunia Islam*, ed. Taufik Abdullah (Jakarta: Ichtiar Baru Van Hoeve, 2002), 379.

<sup>39</sup> Muhammad Fauqi Hajjaj, *Tasawuf Islam dan Akhlak* (Jakarta: Amzah, 2011), 187-189. Rahman, *Islam (Terj)*, 234-235.

<sup>40</sup> A. Rivay Siregar, *Tasawuf dari Sufisme Klasik ke Neo Sufisme*, 247-248.

hadith, with *taubid* as the main node.<sup>41</sup>

Hamka views Sufism activities as progressive. In contrast to the old style of Sufism which seemed passive and submissive. The progressiveness of Sufism offered provides active *tawakkal* motivation because it views the world as the field of the hereafter; sows goodness in this world and reaps its fruit in the hereafter. In the scientific world, Hamka places Sufism as a worldview that fights lust, cleanses the soul, elevates character, and is logical. Therefore, Hamka rejects organizational Sufism as manifested in Sufi orders. According to him, Sufism in the form of a Sufi order can call on someone to cult and sanctify certain figures, thus hampering the dynamics of one's knowledge. Because cults are full of *taklid* culture, paternalistic and trigger dull thinking.<sup>42</sup>

What Hamka offers is indeed an alternative solution for the spiritual needs of modern humans, which are dominated by arid secularism and rigid rationalism. This means that the practice of Sufism must adhere to Islamic texts, and avoid ritual excesses that are not known to Islam. A Muslim must not run away from the existing reality, must be actively involved in overcoming problems and at the same time still have to do *mujahadab*. This model prioritizes aspects of morality, rather than aspects of ecstasy and self-disappearance. This model offers a spirituality that does not ignore the existing social reality.<sup>43</sup>

So, the Sufism approach in the contemporary era is more appreciative of the values of *scientia sacra*, has a big responsibility in restoring the chaotic era and restoring humanity. Banal modernity, which has dragged people to the threshold of confused and aimless thinking, shows that Sufism has an important role in enlightening the confusion and uncertainty of the people. Sufism also has a role in overcoming

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<sup>41</sup> Sutoyo, "Tasawuf Hamka dan Rekonstruksi Spiritualitas Manusia Modern," *Islamica: Jurnal Studi Keislaman* 10, no. 1 (2015), 113-115. Mohammad Damami, *Tasawuf Positif dalam Pemikiran Hamka* (Yogyakarta: Fajar Pustaka Baru, 2000), 199-200.

<sup>42</sup> Sutoyo, "Tasawuf Hamka dan Rekonstruksi Spiritualitas Manusia Modern.", 114

<sup>43</sup> Damami, *Tasawuf Positif dalam Pemikiran Hamka*, 187-188. Silawati, "Pemikiran Tasawuf Hamka dalam Kehidupan Modern," *Alnida': Jurnal Pemikiran Islam* 40, no. 2 (2016), 123-124.

psychological crises, by re-awakening human nature which is dependent on God. This is very relevant to the existing moral aspect, which is increasingly degrading.<sup>44</sup> Besides being able to function as a cathartic splash for scientific and social activities, Sufism also has ethical implications in supporting social sensitivity.

## Conclusion

The fundamental problem that represents the relationship between spiritualists and modern society lies in the dualism of the ontology-epistemic framework in thinking. As a result of the split understanding between Sufism and its pseudo. So it takes an epistemic concept that can relate coherently; between the ontological and epistemological aspects of the Islamic tradition. As one of the Islamic traditions, Sufism has built the concept of *scientia sacra* based on three things: theosophical reasoning, praxis, and philosophical ascetic nature. The implementation of these three things is expected to be able to present conceptual-practical activities that are described as exclusive *mujahadah*, trendy, and introvertistic that becomes catharsis for themselves from the worldly bustle yet have communal and philosophical values, which are closely related to the values of *rahmat al-khalq*.

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<sup>44</sup> Imron Mustofa, "Fisika Atom sebagai Basis Filosofis Ilmu dalam Perspektif Alghazali," *Episteme: Jurnal Pengembangan Ilmu Keislaman* 12, no. 1 (2017), 53-75.

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