The ‘Irfan Concept in Sufism and Its Relation to Islamic Philosophy

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Abstract: This study explores the views of experts regarding the relationship between the science of ‘Irfan in Sufism, and philosophy. Talking about Sufism cannot be separated from the science of ‘irfan. To reach the level of ‘irfan, a Sufi must experience spiritual exercises (riyadhah), then gradually go through various phases, known as maqam (levels) and hals (states), which end with knowing (ma’rifat) to Allah SWT. The level of ma’rifat is a jargon that is generally pursued by Sufis. Then when Sufism meets philosophy, can the two synergize with each other? Sufism talks about the heart, while philosophy talks about reason or reason. This description is the reason for the need for research on the relationship between Sufism (irfan) Islamic philosophy. This research is a literature study using a normative approach. The conclusion of this study is that their studies of the soul in a philosophical approach have made many valuable contributions to the perfection of the study of Sufism in the Islamic world. An understanding of the soul and spirit itself is essential in Sufism. Philosophical studies of the soul and spirit were then widely developed in Sufism.

Keywords: ‘Irfan, Islamic philosophy, Maqam, Sufism.
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Introduction

As a discipline of Islamic science, Sufism cannot be separated from its association with other Islamic sciences, such as fiqh and kalam. Sufism cannot be separated from its association with philosophy. To see further about the attachment of Sufism (‘irfan) to philosophy, the author wants to discuss matters related to ‘irfani, namely the problem of sources and methods of attaining knowledge, in addition to giving problems of differences and similarities between irfan and philosophy.

Discussion and Result

Linguists have different opinions about the meaning of the word Sufism, among their opinions that, first, the word Sufism is taken from the word shuf which means animal fur, because people who enter Sufism wear clothes made of animal hair, because they hate beautiful clothes. Second, the word sufī is taken from the word shifa, which means holy, clean like the lightning of glass. Third, the term Sufism comes from the Arabic word shīfah (cloth made of fur). It is so named because a Sufi’s surrender to Allah is like a stretched woolen cloth. There is an opinion that says that the word Sufism comes from the word shifah (nature) because a Sufi is a person who has characteristics accompanied by noble morals.1 The word tasawuf is taken from the word shūfah, which is a group of the Prophet’s companions who set themselves aside somewhere next to the Prophet’s mosque. Fourth, the word Sufism is taken from the word shufanah, which is clean wood that grows in the desert. Fifth, the word Sufism comes from Greek, namely theosophy, which means divine knowledge. The scope of the meaning of Sufism is not just ethics, but also aesthetics, beauty. Sufism is not only talking about good and bad, but also something beautiful. He is always attached to soul, spirit, and intuition. He not only builds a world of morality, but also a world that is beautiful and filled with meaning. Sufism also not only creates people who live righteously, are diligent in worship, have good character (akhlak al-karimah), but also can feel the beauty of life and the joy of worship. Sufism also tries to answer the essential question of why humans should have good morals (akhlak al-karimah). If ethics can give birth to a spirit of justice and the ability to respond to everything appropriately,

Sufism can also foster meaning and value, and become broader and richer human action and life.²

The statement of the term Sufism comes from the word *shufah*, That's because the practice of an expert in Sufism is the same as the practice of an expert in *shuffah*, such as getting closer to Allah SWT, and living a simple life. According to some of these opinions, it can be said that there is a difference of opinion about the origin of the word Sufism because the dilator is behind different points of view. Sufism which is said to be derived from the word *shuf* is because the view focuses on the outward aspect, namely clothes made of fur that are commonly worn by Sufism experts. Meanwhile, for those who say from the word *shafa*, which means clean because the Sufism expert tries to cleanse the soul from reprehensible qualities. Furthermore, it comes from the word shufanah because most of the masters of Sufism are thin, as a result of fasting a lot and getting up at night so that their bodies resemble trees.³ Sufism in the meaning of the term is usually also equated with Mystik, which is a system of how people want to achieve an intimate relationship with Allah SWT, the Most Eternal, and also the Most Perfect. This relationship is based on love and compassion.⁴

Another opinion says that the origin of Sufism is related to Greek as put forward by Jirji Zaidan. Word *at-taşawūf* with the Greek phrase shopia which means wisdom when combined to become *asshofiyah* means wisdom. This reason is that Sufism has not been known with this characteristic except after the translation of the Greek scriptures into Arabic and the entry of philosophical words into Arabic.⁵

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³ Thus it can be concluded that the location of the differences in the term Sufism is from different points of view, namely from the point of view of the manner, clothing, and results as well as the relationship between the Creator and His creatures. Even though terminologically the scholars differ in their opinion about the meaning and origin of the word Sufism, the most appropriate one comes from the word *shuf*, namely fleece, both from the language context, the attitude of simplicity, and the historical aspect. But what is meant by fleece here is not from the modern sense, namely the prestigious clothing worn only by the rich, but the coarse cloth worn by the poor in the Middle East in ancient times. Sufis want to live simply and also stay away from worldly things, so they live as poor people wearing these coarse clothes. Amin Syukur, *Menggugat Tasawuf*, (Yogyakarta: Pustaka Pelajar, 1999), p. 11.
⁵ This opinion, according to Ibrahim Basyuni, is considered inappropriate. This is because the Greek sigma is synonymous with sin instead of shad. If the origin of the word Shafi is taken from Greece then it is not by the provisions that should be. Attributing it to *as-Shaf* means coarse wool is considered more
Although the origin of the word Sufism varies, it is certain that "Sufism" is a mutually agreed term as mysticism in Islam, while the perpetrators of Sufism are mutually agreed as Sufi. The definition of Sufism itself has a different meaning for each character. According to Imam Junaid, Sufism is defined simply as having high morals and leaving all despicable morals. Among the scholars, some say that Sufism as a whole is morals. Whoever gives you provisions with morals, then he has given you provisions with Sufism.6

Unlike the case with Ibn Khaldun,7 Sufism is a kind of shari'ah that arises in religion. The origin is to be diligent in worshiping, cutting ties to everything except Allah, only to face Him and reject the world's jewels. Besides that, he hates cases that always deceive many people, while at the same time keeping away from the delights of his property and splendor. Sufism also means to be alone towards God in seclusion and worship.8 While al-Thusi formulated that Sufism contains at least five elements, namely science (knowledge), charity (implementation), taḥaqquq (appreciation), wajd (feeling), and fana' (dissolution).9

Al-Ghazali10 argues that Sufism is a way of Allah which can only be achieved by breaking bad passions and cleansing oneself from despicable morals so that the heart is separated from everything other than Allah and always remembers Him. He thinks that the Sufis are the best, their way is the most righteous and their morals are the cleanest. This is appropriate because it seems that there is a relationship between wearing coarse wool with an attitude that excludes worldliness, a tendency to live zuhād and being diligent towards worship. Rivai Siregar DKK, Pengantar Ilmu Tasawuf, (Sumatera Utara: IAIN Sumatera Utara, 1982), p. 10.

Syaikh Abdul Qadiq Isa, Hakekat Tasawuf, p. 6. Imam Junaid as a well-known Sufi figure from Iraq also added that Sufism is not achieved if only with a lot of prayer and fasting, but it is a security of the heart and generosity of soul. Imam Junaid is also known to have made a definition stating that he saw the prototypes of the Sufis in the apostles mentioned in the Qur'an. Annemarie Schimmel, Dimensi Mistik Dalam Islam, (Jakarta: Pustaka Firdaus, 2003), p. 16.

Ibn Khaldun is a famous scientist whose ideas about Arab society in the book "Muqaddimah" are considered the seeds of the birth of sociology. He was born on the continent of Africa, precisely in Tunisia, May 27, 1332 AD. Ahmad Bangun Nasution and Rayani Hanum Siregar, Akhlaq Tasawuf, (Jakarta: Raja Grafindo Persada, 2013), p. 272.


Al-Ghazali's full name is Abu Hamid al-Ghazali, born near the city of Thus, Khurasan Province in 450 AH (1058 AD). He is a sunni character of Sufism with his most famous work Ihya 'Ulumuddin, a book which is a combination of fiqh and tasawwuf. The influence of this book has pervaded the entire Islamic world and is still strong today. Abdul Basir Solissa dkk, Studi Tasawuf, (Yogyakarta: FA PRESS, 2017), p. 64
because their movement and silence, both physical and mental, are taken from the light of prophecy, which is considered a brighter light.\textsuperscript{11}

Seeing the opinions expressed by some of the figures above, Sufism is universally defined as a step closer to Allah, by leaving the sparkling world and prioritizing moral improvement and processing of taste through certain acts of worship to arrive at love and knowledge of Allah.

**Source of Sufism Teachings**

Sufism is the name given to mysticism in Islam. By orientalists\textsuperscript{12} is called Sufism. The word Sufism in Western literature is specifically used for Islamic mysticism (Islamic Mysticism) or mysticism that grows in Islam.\textsuperscript{13} Sufism or Sufism is not used for mysticism in other religions and is a specific term to describe mysticism in Islam. Thus, it is clear that Sufism has been recognized by the Western world as a pure mystical and is recognized as having its scientific systematics.\textsuperscript{14}

Every religion has the potential to give birth to a mystical form of religion. This fact can at least be traced to Islam, Christianity, Hinduism, and Buddhism. Since the beginning of the 19th century until recently, there have been various views of orientalists who have paid attention to Sufism, about the origin and source of Sufism. Some opinions say that the source of the collection is solely the religion of Islam, namely the Qur'an and Hadith. Many Western Orientalists say that the point is the take is Persian, Hindu, Christian, and Greek philosophy. Other opinions also say that the source of Sufism comes from all of these.\textsuperscript{15}

Matignon states that the orientalists of the lama group were stunned to investigate the causes of the great disagreement in the beliefs of the Sufism which based their belief in "the unity of all" (Pantheism, Wihdat al-Wujud) at the height of his progress in the

\textsuperscript{11} Ibid., p. 237.
\textsuperscript{12} The name of a Western scholar who conducts special studies of the East. They study customs, both culture and religion. Recently, orientalists have a negative image because their work is considered not objective, especially writing about Islam. See Edward Said, *Orientalisme*, (Bandung: Pustaka Salman, 1985), p. 5.
authentic School of Sunnah scholars. Therefore they argue that Sufism is a school from outside that is incorporated into Islam, taken from one that according to Marx from the Ruhbaniat school in Syria. 

Though, an orientalist from the 19th century, argued that Sufism originated in Persian sources. This was taken from the source of the Magi because a large number of the Magi in North Iran, after the conquest of Islam, still embraced their religion and many figures Sufi originating from the Khurasan region. Even though some of the founders of the first generation of Sufi schools came from the Magi group. Meanwhile, M. Horten and R. Hartman argued that Sufism originated from India. They refer to the part of the theory of Sufism and certain forms of practical spiritual practices in similar practices in Indian mysticism.

The orientalists agreed that the influence of Greek philosophy on Sufism was enormous. Greek philosophy has influenced the realm of Islamic thought. Islamic thought has used Aristotle's philosophy to strengthen belief in the Creator of Nature. The new philosophy, namely the combination of Greek thought with Sufi mysticism, was created by Plutin in Alexandria which was later known as Neo-Platonism.

In contrast to some of the opinions that have been stated above, R.A Nicholson denied the opinion that said that the source of Sufism came from outside teachings that entered Islam. Pay close attention to the fact that since the birth of Islam, there is life Sufism has arisen among Muslims because of reading the Qur'an and Hadiths. The reading has influenced their lives, thus bringing about several incidents and leading the believers to several stages of perfection in life.

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16 Ibid.
18 However R. A Nicholson did not deny the existence of outside influence of Islam, but not as a source. Through his work The Mystics of Islam, he argues that Sufism is an Aryan intellectual reaction to the Semitic religion that conquered him or Sufism is nothing but the pure product of Persian and Indian thoughts. Because if Sufism is a rebellion of the Aryan soul, then we cannot interpret the fact that some of the figures of Sufism came from Syria and Egypt who were Arabs. Likewise with the Christian influence on the development of Sufism which has similarities between forms of asceticism between Islam and Christianity. Because the foundation of asceticism in Sufism itself is Islamic. Ibid, p. 27.
19 Hamka, Tasawwuf: Perkembangan dan Pemurniannya, p. 53.
Starting from casual and informal gatherings for discussing religious matters and doing spiritual practice, to developing into popular preaching activities and orators devout masses, the Sufis claim that Sufism comes from pure Islam. The spirituality that helps them stand, says that the source of spiritual life is Islam itself. First the Quran, the second the Hadiths of the Prophet, and also the lives of his companions.

Rooted in ritual practice taught in the Qur'an, Sufism reflects the various attitudes of Muslims towards the world. The Qur'an not only contains descriptions of Allah and the Hereafter but also regulates the practical and moral life of people and para the Sufi carefully follows his orders. Furthermore, the recitation of the Qur'an is an important means of leading the soul towards a state of meditation or some mystical bliss.

The Qur'an is the source and basis of Sufism and its practice, at least in four ways. First, the Qur'an is full of descriptions of the life of Sufism and stimulates life Sufi. Second, the Qur'an is the source of the concepts that develop in the world of Sufism. Third, the Qur'an speaks a lot with heart and feeling. Here the Qur'an has shaped, influenced, or changed people with the language of the heart, Sufi language, to become a human with a Sufi personality and one with God. Thus the Qur'an becomes the true source of the tarekat method. Fourth, the Qur'an often depicts God in an image that can only be accurately approached through Sufism.

The Qur'anic verse that talks about the possibility that humans and God can love each other in QS Al-Maidah (5): 54. The order for people to always repent and cleanse themselves to ask forgiveness from Allah in QS Tahrim: 8. The indication that humans will always meet God wherever they are in QS Al-Baqarah (2): 110. After the Qur'an, the second basis is the Hadiths of the Prophet, especially the Hadith Qudsi. Qudsi hadiths are

21 It also allows ideas outside of Islam to be incorporated into popular Islam as previously stated. See Fazlur Rahma, Islam, p. 191.
25 Tarekat is an institutional form of Sufism that developed in the 5th century Hijriyah or 13 AD as a continuation of the activities of the previous Sufis. Each tarekat has its shaykh, kaifiyah dhikr, and ritual ceremonies. Usually, a shaikh or murshid teaches his students in a spiritual practice dormitory called the sulûk or ribât house. See Sri Mulyani dkk, *Tarekat-tarekat Muktabarah Di Indonesia*, (Jakarta: Kencana, 2004), p. 660 see also, Bahrudin, *Pengantar Ilmu Tasawuf*, p. 12.
26 Ibid., p. 12.
special hadiths that were received by the Prophet Muhammad as if God himself were talking to him. However, the Hadith Qudsi and the sound of the Qur'an can be clearly distinguished by all Muslims. The sound of the Hadiths of Qudsy which is often used as the basis for life in Sufism, namely

"I am a hidden treasure, so I want it to be known who I am, so I make it My creature. So they know me by me." 28

According to the Sufis, this Hadith is the basis of love for the true God. Allah is the beginning of all events with no beginning. Allah is a beginner and nothing else is with him. This way of thinking is considered the basis of the term Wahdat al-wujud which develops in Sufism. 29

The life of the Prophet himself was also inseparable from the behavior of Sufism, namely a simple lifestyle that did not escape being practiced in Sufism which was then followed by his friends. 30 The Prophet himself directly also gave an example that Sufism was not only seclusion, and worship but also jihad and active in building society. This was then continued by his successors, namely the khulafa al-Rosyidun, that is, they saw that the position and position of the state were the noblest fields for good deeds. The Companions also apply the Islamic experience in a synchronized manner between dhikr, thought, and real deeds. So that there is a simultaneous development between religious belief (faith), external action (Islam), and moral-spiritual feelings (ihsan) which later became a source of Sufism by Muslims afterward. 31

Principles of Sufism Teachings

The teachings of Sufism are grouped into three characteristics, namely Sufism akhlaki (morally oriented), amali (practice-oriented), and philosophical Sufism (a combination of mystical and philosophical visions). The teachings of Amali Sufism are takhalli, tahalli, and tajalli. To uncover the veil that limits man to God, the expert of Sufism created a system composed of three levels, namely takhalli, tahalli, and tajalli. Takhalli means to cleanse oneself of the despicable qualities of immoral and mental

29Ibid, p. 41.
30Abuddin Nata, Akhlak Tasawwuf, p. 183.
31Simuh, Tasawwuf dan Perkembangannya Dalam Islam, p. 21.
immorality. Takhalli also means emptying oneself from an attitude of dependence on the delights of worldly life.32

Tahalli, that is, filling oneself with praiseworthy qualities by being physically and mentally obedient and adorning oneself with good qualities and attitudes and actions. Tahalli is the stage of filling the empty soul in the takhalli stage. This filling is done with repentance, anxiety, hope (khawf and raja’), zuhud, fakir33, patient, pleased, and muraqabah34. Tajalli functions as a series of complementary mental education in the tahalli phase. In this tajalli phase, human nature is revealed which is replaced by divine nature.35

The teachings of Amali Sufism begin with the inspiration of the harmony between shari’ah, tariqat, and nature. The Shari’ah is all the commands of Allah and His prohibitions which become His laws and regulations. Tariqat is the implementation of these laws and regulations as well as possible. As its essence is to explore and contemplate what is hidden from these laws and regulations and wholeheartedly aware that the work done is only from Allah. The three concepts are interrelated so that the practitioners of Sufism should not leave one of them to achieve the aims and objectives of tasawuf or Sufism.36

Imam Junayd’s famous limitation on Sufism that “Sufism is something in which God makes you die for yourself and arise in Him”, we will understand that obtaining spiritual virtues and levels and ranks goes through so many stages.37 The Sufi then distinguishes the soul’s experience on that path between a lasting state called maqam (maqamat as the plural form) and a momentary state called hal (ahwal as the plural form).38

Maqamat according to Ath-Thusi’s view is the position of the servant (salik) on his way to God through worship, sincerity against obstacles (mujahadah), and spiritual

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32 Asmaran As, Pengantar Studi Tasawuf, (Jakarta: Raja Grafindo Persada, 1994), p. 66.
33 Fakir is the attitude of not demanding more than what you already have and feeling satisfied with what you already have, so you don’t ask for anything else. M. Solihin and Rosihon Anwar, Ilmu Tasawuf, (Bandung: Pustaka Setia, 2011), p. 117.
34 Muraqabah is feeling watched over by Allah. All of his life activities are aimed at being as close as possible to Allah. Ibid, p. 119.
35 Asmaran As, Pengantar Studi Tasawuf, p. 71.
36 As Sayid Abu Bakar Ibn Muhammad Syata, Menapak Jejak Kaum Sufi, (Surabaya: Dunia Ilmu Offset, 1997), p. 20
37 Sayyid Husein Nasr, Tasawuf Dulu dan Sekarang, (Jakarta: Pustaka Firdaus, 1994), p. 79
38 Technically maqamat is the rank while the end is the level. Ibid, p. 82.
exercises (riyaḍah). The first level is repentance by asking for forgiveness accompanied by a promise not to repeat it. Second, zuhud by leaving the life of the world and prioritizing happiness in the hereafter. Third, wara ', which means leaving everything that is syubhat (it is unclear whether it is halal or haram). Fourth, faqir by not asking for more than what has been received. Fifth, patience, namely being steadfast in carrying out God's commands and being calm in facing trials. Sixth, tawakkal, which is surrendering to the power and decision of Allah. Seventh, be pleased by not trying to oppose the power of Allah.

While maqamat are obtained by gradual effort, it is a gift from Allah. The momentary state or thing is something that comes from Allah into a person's heart, without the can refuse it when he comes or withdraws it if he leaves by his means. If the state belongs to the category of actions then a thing is the category of grace. It is a mental state, such as feelings of sadness/crying, fear, joy, and so on. The terms are muraqabah wa qurb (a kind of ma'rifat to Allah), mahabbah (love), khauf wa raja' (fear and hope), tuma'nineh (feeling of calm and serenity), musyada'ah (witnessing in your inner sight), yaqin (full of confidence and stability), uns (feeling of friends), tawadhu' (humility and humility), taqwa (obedience), wajd (joyful heart), gratitude (gratitude) and sincerity.

Ma'rifat is the highest goal of most Sufi in tasawuf. According to Al-Ghazali ma'rifat coincides with mahabbah because mahabbah arises from ma'rifat. Mahabbah is a person's love for those who do good to him, love that arises from God's love and grace for humans who give humans life, sustenance, pleasure, and so on. Ma'rifat and mahabbah are the highest levels attained by Sufis.

The concepts of Fana, Baqa', and Ittihad are concepts that argue that humans can unite with Allah which was pioneered by Abu Yazid al-Bustami. Fana' is the loss of awareness of one's existence, so that he is no longer aware of his body as a human. Baqa

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40 Bahrudin, Pengantar Ilmu Tasawuf, p. 45.
41 Sayyid Husein Nasr, Tasawwuf Dulu dan Sekarang, p. 85.
42 Bahrudin, Pengantar Ilmu Tasawuf, p. 47.
44 Abu Yazid was the first to popularize the designation al-Fana' and al-Baq'a in Sufism. He was born in Bustam, part of the Northeast of Persia in the years 874-947 AD. He is the highest shaykh of his maqam and glory, he is very special among the Sufis. He is also recognized as one of the greatest Sufis. Ahmad Bangun Nasution and Rayani Hanum Siregar, Akhlak Tasawuf, p. 178.
'means continuity in Allah. \(^{45}\) Meanwhile, *ittihad* is the impact of the concept of *fana*” and *baqa*. *Ittihad* is the highest level that can be achieved in the journey of the human soul. A person who has reached this level, he and his God have become one, a wall is opened for him that has never crossed his heart. At that time, strange and strange utterances called *syatahat* were often spoken.

Another concept namely *Hulul*. *Hulul* is an understanding that Allah can take a place in humans according to al-Hallaj\(^{46}\) In humans there are basic characteristics, namely *lahut* (divinity) and *nasut* (humanity). If the divine nature that exists in humans is united with the human nature that is in God, then Hulul will occur. *Hulul* can be achieved by first eliminating his human characteristics through the mortal process *fana*.\(^{47}\)

The teachings of philosophical Sufism include *Wahdat al-wujud* pioneered by Ibn 'Arabi,\(^{48}\) namely, Allah revealed everything from the form of knowledge to the material form. The purpose of Allah in creating creatures so that He can see and know Himself in a form with which His attributes are visible, as well as His names in a natural mirror or external form. Then it appears in what appears and is in harmony with His existence, by which He is also revealed from the hidden gift, namely the Absolute Essence which is free from all relations and attachments.\(^{49}\)

Starting from the concept *wahdat al-wujūd* Two further concepts emerge, namely *haqiqah al-Muhammadiyah*\(^{50}\) and *wahdat al-adyan* (religious unity. Ibn 'Arabi’s opinion about the perfect human being and the essence of Muhammad made him come to the view

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*\(^{45}\)Asmaran As, *Pengantar Studi Tasawuf*, p. 155.*

*\(^{46}\)Al-Hallaj’s full name is Husain Ibn Mansur Al-Hallaj. He is a Sufi scholar who was born in the city of Thur which is Arabic in the Baidhah region, Southeast Iran on March 26, 866 AD. He produced 47 works. Other than hulul’s other teachings of Sufism, the most famous of which is Wahdat ash-syuhud which later gave birth to whdat al-wujud which was later developed by Ibn ’Arabi. Ahmad Bangun Nasution and Rayani Hanum Siregar, *Akhlak Tasawuf*, p. 196.*

*\(^{47}\)Abuddin Nata, *Akhlak Tasawuf*, p. 240.*

*\(^{48}\)Ibn 'Arabi's full name is Muhyiddin Ibn Arabi Ibn Ali, born in Murcia, Spain in 560 H or 1164 AD. He is a figure of philosophical Sufism who has been productive writing with about 400 book titles including fusus and futuhat. See H. A. Rivay Siregar, *Tasawuf: Dari Sufisme Klasik ke Neo-Sufisme*, (Jakarta: Raja Grafindo Persada, 1999), p. 172.*


*\(^{50}\)Haqiqah al-Muhammadiyah or the essence of Muhammad Ibn 'Arabi was influenced by al-Hallaj's idea of Muhammad's former Light, because no one had discussed the idea before. This idea was also influenced by Neoplatonism and various other philosophical sources. *Ibid*, p. 204.*
of the unity of religions. Consequently, all religions are single and all of them belong to Allah). A truly wise person is someone who worships Allah in every area of his life.\(^{51}\)

The *Insan kamil* (perfect human being) is the philosophical Sufism teaching of Al-Jili. The perfect man begins to know God as God in Himself and at that moment the same as manifesting the attributes of God through the form of their existence in the cosmos. The modalities of human perfection vary widely, but the highest stage of perfection demands that God's attributes be manifested in a balanced and harmonious manner so that one can portray the perfect image of "Divine Presence".\(^ {52}\)

**Sufism (Irfani): The Essence of 'Irfani**

Islamic mysticism understood in this sense is the path of knowledge (al-*ma’rifah*, *‘irfan*). There are at least five schools in Islamic philosophy: *First*, Dialectical Theology (*'Ilm Al-Kalâm*); *second*, Peripateticism (*Masyysyâ’iyyah*); *third*, Illuminism (*Isyrâqiyyah*); *fourth*, Sufism/Theosophy (*Tashawwuf or ‘Irfân*), especially those developed by Ibn' Arabî; *fifth*, Philosophy of Wisdom (*Al-Hikmah Al-Muta’âliyah*). However, this research will focus on Sufism or *‘Irfân* and its relation to philosophy.

The term *‘irfan* itself from the Arabic root word *Arafa* is a shrub with *makrifat*, which means knowledge, but is different from science (*‘ilm*). Irfan or *makrifat* relates to knowledge obtained directly from God (*kasyf*) through spiritual practice (*riyâdlah*) which is carried out based on the *hubb* (love) or *‘irradah* (strong will), while science refers to knowledge obtained through transformation (*naqil*) or rationality (*aqil*). In the perspective of Mehdi Hairi Yazdi, this *irfan*'s knowledge is called "presented knowledge" (*ilm hudluri*) which is different from rational knowledge which is called "knowledge sought" (*ilm muktasab*); or in Henri Bergson's perspective, this *irfân* "knowledge of" an intuitive knowledge that is obtained directly, which is different from "knowledge about" (knowledge about) a discursive knowledge obtained through intermediaries, either senses or ratio.\(^ {53}\)

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\(^{51}\)Ibid. p. 205.

\(^{52}\)Zaprulkhan, *Ilmu Tasawuf: Sebuah Kajian Tematik*, (Jakarta: Raja Grafindo Persada, 2016), p. 181

The analytical review of Sufism shows how para Sufi with its various streams has a conception of the path (tarekat) to Allah. This path begins with spiritual practices (riyadhah), then progressively goes through various phases, known as maqam (levels) and hal (states), which ends with knowing (ma’rifat) to Allah. The level of ma’rifat is a term that is generally pursued by many Sufis. Sufi attitudes and behavior frameworks are manifested through certain practices and methods called Tariqa, or the path to find the knowledge of Allah. The scope of the journey to Allah to obtain ma’rifat prevailing among Sufis is often referred to as an ‘irfani framework.

As a science, ‘irfan has two aspects, namely a practical aspect and a theoretical aspect. First, the practical aspect is the part that explains the relationship and responsibility of humans to themselves, the world, and God. As a practical matter, this section resembles ethics. This practical part is also called sayr wa suluk (spiritual journey). This section explains how a spiritual traveler (salik) who wants to achieve the ultimate goal of humanity, namely Tawheed, must start his journey in sequence, and the state of the soul (thing) he will experience along the way.54

Second, the theoretical aspect of ‘irfan discusses the nature of the universe, man and God, so that theoretical ‘irfan has something in common with a philosophy which also discusses the nature of the universe, focuses its attention on the problem of being (ontology), discusses man and god. By itself, this section includes theosophy (divine philosophy) which also explains existence. Like philosophy, this section defines its principles and problems. However, if philosophy only bases its arguments on rational principles, Irfan bases himself on mystical disengagement which is then translated into the rational language to explain it.55

People who are ‘irfan/makrifat to Allah are those who know Allah through dzauq, and kasyf (disclosure). Expert ‘irfan is a person who has the meaning of Allah. Sometimes, the word is identified with certain inherent qualities that appear in an ‘arif (who has a character for Allah) and becomes a thing for him. In this context, Ibn ’Arabi said: "Arif" is someone who has the appearance of God so that in himself certain conditions of the heart

55 Ibid.,
appear (ahwal). 'Irfan obtained someone starting the path of *al-idrak al-mubasyir al-wujdani* (emotional direct arrest),\(^{56}\) not rational arrest. The discussion about 'irfan or makrifat among the Sufis began around the 3rd and 4th centuries H. The very prominent Sufi figure who talked about it was Dzu An-Nun Al-Mishri (d. 245 H / 859 AD).\(^{57}\) Therefore, there are three characteristics of a wise person according to Dzun Nun al-Misri, namely: his light of knowledge does not fade the light of humility, he does not inwardly affirm knowledge that denies outer law, and the many gifts of Allah do not make him violate the curtains of His prohibitions.\(^{58}\)

**Method of Reaching Irfani**

The potential for obtaining a makrifat already exists in humans. In the world of Sufism, *qalb* is knowledge of nature, including the nature of makrifat. Irfan's knowledge is not based on texts like *bayani*, nor rational powers like *burhani*, but on kasyf, the disclosure of the secrets of reality by God. Therefore, 'irfan knowledge is not obtained based on text analysis or logical clutter but based on the abundance of direct knowledge from God, when the *qalb* (heart) as a means of attaining knowledge, *irfan* is ready to receive it. For that, certain preparations are needed before someone can receive an abundance of knowledge directly.\(^{59}\)

The preparation referred to, as mentioned above, is that one has to take a spiritual journey through "certain stages" (*maqam*) and experience certain mental states (*hâl*). There are at least seven levels (*maqâmât*) that must be passed by a person. As can be understood, the heart (*qalb*) is a means to obtain makrifat. *Qalb* will be able to know the nature of knowledge because *qalb* has been equipped with the potential to dialogue with God. This suggests that makrifat is not spontaneously owned by just anyone, but only by people who

\(^{56}\)According to the Sufis, the reason for the disclosure of the veil is when a person can leave things that are outward in nature and decide himself to do things inner. Through certain training, his spiritual sensitivity will become stronger and his internal sensitivity will become thinner. This has only been achieved over a relatively long period, going through a step-by-step (maqamat) and state-by-state (ahwal) process. See Asmaran, *Pengantar Studi Tasawuf*, (Jakarta: PT Raja Grafindo, 2002), p. 34.4

\(^{57}\)M. Solihin dan Rosihon, *Ilmu Tasawuf*, p. 145.


have made efforts to obtain it. For this reason, apart from going through the stages of *maqamat* and *ahwal*, to obtain knowledge, one must go through certain efforts. The efforts referred to include the following;

1. **Riyadhah**

*Riyadhah* is a physical and mental exercise to fight the vibrations of lust by fasting, seclusion, waking up in the middle of the night (*qiyaamullail*), dhikr, not talking much, and worshiping continuously for self-perfection consistently. All states of peak happiness, peak suffering, peak joy, and peak sadness are manifestations of riyadhoh. Humans prepare themselves with various mental exercises for inner purity. The key to success from Riyadhoh is submission, accepting sincerely and gracefully of all that the Khaliq gave.\(^{60}\)

*Riyadhah* must be accompanied by *mujahadah*. *Mujahadah* referred to here is a seriousness in the struggle to leave bad qualities. Giving up bad qualities is very heavy so it requires seriousness in its *Riyadhah*. The difference between *riyadhah* and *mujahadah* is that riyadhah is in the form of real stages, while the *mujahadah* (struggle to seriously) suppress or control each stage of *riyadhah*. However, riyadhah cannot be separated from the *Mujahadah*, because both are like two sides of one coin. On the other hand, the relationship with *Riyadhah* relates to the following three things:

*First, Takhalli* As it is known that the purpose of religion is for humans to abandon prohibitions, namely to distance themselves from immorality and carry out all the commands of Allah SWT, namely doing good deeds. *Riyadhah* or ascetic discipline or *zuhud* training is understood by Ibn Arabi as *tahdzib al-akhlak* (moral development), namely *tankiyyatuha watathiiruha mimma laa yaliiku biha* (purification and cleansing of the soul from all things that are not proper to the soul). Therefore riyadhoh is a tool and not an end. Apart from the term *Riyadhah*, Sufism scholars also use the term 'mujahadah'. The urgency of *riyadhoh* or *mujahadah* was put forward by many scholars, including Abu Ali Addaqoq, the teacher of Imam Qusyairi, who stated: "Whoever adorns his body with mujahada (riyadhah) then Allah beautifies his mind with the ability of musyahadah".\(^{61}\) So it can be concluded that Takhalli means cleansing oneself of despicable qualities, among the

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\(^{60}\) Ibid.

\(^{61}\) Ibid.
despicable qualities that pollute the human soul are hasad (envy), ikrah (resentment), su'u al-zann (prejudice), takabbur (arrogant), 'ujub (pride), riya' (showing off), bakhl (miser), and ghadab (grumpy).

Second, Tahalli (Tahalli nafsaka bil akhlaaqil mahmuudah, fill your soul with a commendable morality). To fill praiseworthy deeds, including by doing dhikr and performing sunnah prayers, tahalli also means adorning oneself by familiarizing oneself with good qualities and attitudes, and actions. Trying to ensure that every movement of behavior always runs above religious provisions, both obligations that are "outside" or obedient or that are "in" or inwardly obedient. What is meant by external/outward obedience, in this case, is a formal obligation such as prayer, fasting, zakat, hajj, and so on. Meanwhile, what is meant by inner obedience is such as faith, sincerity, and so on. This tahalli is a stage where the soul has been emptied at takhalli stage. In other words, After the stage of cleansing oneself from bad mental attitudes and attitudes can be passed (takhalli), the effort must continue to the next stage called tahalli. 62

The three Tajalli (Obviously your Lord in front of you, meaning that Allah is clear in the dzahir of the soul's life, the veil is exposed to become kassyaaf or the disappearance/loss of the veil from the qualities of basyariah (humanity), Nur explained during that time unseen, fana'l disappearance of everything else when it appears the face of Allah For the stabilization and deepening of the material that has been passed in the Tahalli phase, the series of mental education is perfected in the Tajalli phase. Tajalli means the disclosure of the hidden Nur for the heart. 63

2. Tafakkur

Tafakkur is often referred to as "Tammul" (contemplating), "Tadabbur" (thinking of looking for the best alternative or considering), Nazar (looking at), and I'tibar (paying attention). The tafakkur referred to here, is not an activity of reason to analyze natural and social phenomena, then becomes a science for the benefit of worldly life, but is meant as

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Tafakkur to strengthen beliefs about the greatness and power of Allah, then become an attitude that always motivates individuals to actively make dhikr and worship Allah SWT. So the Tafakkur here, not the tafakkur of scientists and scholars, but the tafakkur of Sufism (Sufi) scholars who proceed from the condition of 'Ainu al-yaqin, knowledge of al-yaqin, then become Haqqul al-yaqin. Then do contemplation (tafakkur) to wait for the mortal and baqa conditions.

‘Imad Al-Din Al-Amawi said that the tafakkur performed by servants forms certain attitudes in humans so that it can be divided into five types, namely: First, Tafakkur towards Allah's creation, can give birth to makrifat (knowledge of Allah). Second, Tafakkur for power and all the blessings that humans have obtained from Allah can give birth to the love of servants for Him. Third, Taffakur on promises and rewards from Allah can give birth to the urge to do good and the hope of getting a reward from Allah. Fourth, Tafakkur against threats and punishment from Allah can give birth to an attitude to stay away from bad deeds and fear of His torment. Fifth, Tafakkur against lust perversion that is often done by humans can give birth to shame towards Him.64

3. Tazkiyat An-Nafs

Tazkiyat An-Nafs is the process of cleansing the human soul. The process of cleansing the soul within the framework of Sufism can be done through the stages of takhalli, and tahalli as explained above. Tazkiyat An-Nafs is the core of Sufism activities. Sahl bin Abdullah Ash-Shufi argues that anyone with a clear mind is in a contemplative state. Sufis are people who always purify their hearts and souls. The manifestation is a need for God.

Efforts to do soul perfection need to be done by everyone who wants knowledge of makrifat. This is because knowledge of makrifat cannot be accepted by humans whose souls are dirty. Five things become a barrier for the soul to grasp its essence, namely: First, the soul is not yet perfect. Second, the soul is defiled by immoral acts; third, obey the desires of the body; Fourth, the covering which prevents the entry of essence into the soul (taqlid), and fifth, cannot think logically. It takes effort to return the soul to its perfection to

remove these hindrances. In this context, soul refinement can be done with *Tazkiyat An-Nafs*.

*Tazkiyat An-Nafs* The concept of Sufism is based on the assumption that the human soul is like a mirror, whereas science is like images of material objects. The activity of knowing is really like a mirror capturing images. The number of images captured and the clearness of the catch depends on the level of cleanliness of the mirror in question. Thus, the purity of the soul is a prerequisite for the entry of nature or knowledge *makrifat* into the soul, while a dirty soul, for example by following worldly lusts, will make humans veiled from Allah.

### 4. Dhikrullah

*Dzikir* is defined as the most effective method for cleansing and attaining the presence of Allah. Other acts of worship are the same because they emphasize the importance of dhikr. For example, the real spirit of prayer is *dhikr Allah*. *Dzikirullah*, for the mind, is a formulation of the nature of truth. To the will of a person, it is a commandment of truth. For the heart (heart) and its various intuitive extensions (inspiration) and beliefs, it is a single-name synthesis of the truth that belongs to the highest category of *Asma Allah*.

The dhikr that is meant here is if the *dzikir* that is certified by a murshid or shaykh is in a special procession (*bai’at, talqin, or khirqah*). *Dzikir* is done solely for worship and to get closer to Allah, in a Sufi view, dzikir will open the veil of the realm of malakut, namely by the arrival of angels. It is a general agreement that dhikr is the key to opening magic, attracting goodness, taming anxiety, and opening guardianship. Dhikr is also useful for cleansing the heart. About the function of dhikr, Al-Ghazali also explained in *Ihya* that a bright heart is the result of Dzikir to Allah. Takwa is the pimtu of the kasyaf gate (the opening of the hijab). Meanwhile, the kasyaf are the great gates of victory. Still, according

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66 Ibid.,
to al-Ghazali, dhikr also serves to bring inspiration. Satan's space for movement becomes obstructed so that Satan goes away from the human heart. At that time, the angel will give inspiration to the heart.68

**The Relationship of Sufism (Irfani) with Philosophy**

The most important link that connects philosophy with Sufism is Shadr Al-Din Al-Qunawi. He was a friend and student of Ibn 'Arab (the great 'arif) as well as a student of Al-Thusi. It was in Qunawi for the first time that the traditions of philosophy and Sufism met. The Qunawi legacy, coupled with the Islamic scientific tradition developed by Syihab Al-Din Suhrawardi (among others through Qutb Al-Din Al-Syirazi), would later become a strong basis for the development of the *Al-Hikmah Al Muta’âliyah* school, which was supported by Mulla Shadra. So it is in Mulla Sadra that joins the tradition of peripatetic, 'irfân, and illuminism, as well as theology and Islamic tradition.

Usually, Sufism and philosophy are always viewed as opposites. Sufism and philosophy are often understood dichotomically, both epistemologically and side-historically. Epistemologically, Sufism is considered as a discipline that ignores the role of reason or intellectual and only focuses on intuition, inspiration, and the whisper of the heart, although sometimes it contradicts the principles of rationality. Meanwhile, the discipline of philosophy is considered a discipline that is very adherent to the principles of rationality. However, the relationship between Sufism and philosophy was fractured when Al-Ghazali carried out a very crushing attack on the philosophers.

Efforts to reconcile the relationship between Sufism and philosophy have been carried out by many groups. The most concrete example is Suhrawardi al-Maqtul (1154-1191 AD) especially in his Hikmah al-Isyraq (philosophy of enlightenment). Although this work is stated to be an illuminating philosophy that challenges the domination of peripatetic philosophy, as the author himself says, this work consists of two important elements: *first*, an element of intuition or, more popularly, with mystical insight; *second*, elements of scientific demonstration or logical principles. A Philosophy that later develops

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into a synergy between intuition and reason, between heart and mind, between dzawq and reason continues to process through the next illuminations philosophers such as Mulla Sadra. If traced further, philosophy and Sufism have a close and harmonious relationship, especially since peripatetic philosophers, such as Ibn Sina, accepted the truth from both philosophers and Sufis. At the same time, many Sufis were familiar with the philosophy and many philosophers were at the same time Sufi, especially during the last periods of Islamic history. Ibn Sina, for example, in addition to the great figure of peripatetic philosophy, also wrote "imaginary stories" and told about a special form of knowledge that was open to Sufis after a long spiritual practice, indicating that he was besides a philosopher he was also a Sufi who adhered to the doctrine of Being.

Sufism developed in the Islamic world cannot be denied as a contribution to philosophical thought. This can be seen, for example, in Sufism studies which talk about the soul. Honestly, it must be admitted that the terminology of soul and spirit is a term that has been studied in many philosophical ideas. Several well-known Muslim intellectuals have also studied soul and spirit, among them are Al-Kindi, Al-Farabi, Ibn Sina, and Al-Ghazali.

Studies They are about the soul in a philosophical approach that has made a lot of valuable contributions to the perfection of Sufism studies in the Islamic world. Understanding of the soul and spirit itself is essential in Sufism. Philosophical studies about the soul and spirit then developed a lot in Sufism. From the combination that emerges between Sufism and philosophy originating from philosophical teachings whose teachings combine the mystical vision and the rational vision of its foundation, philosophical Sufism uses philosophical terminology derived from philosophical teachings and its characters. And figures representing philosophical Sufism include Suhrawardi al-Maqtul, Muhyiddin Ibn Arabi, Ibn Umar al-faridh, Ibn Sab’iin, and others. They are the ones whose teachings combine mystical visions and rational visions.

However, it should also be noted that the more developed term in Sufism is the term qalb (heart). The term qalb is indeed more specifically developed in Sufism. However, that

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does not mean that the term *qalb* does not affect the spirit and soul. According to some Sufism experts, *an-nafs* (soul) is a spirit after it is united with the body. The union of the spirit with the body gives birth to the effect that the body has on the spirit. These influences eventually give rise to the needs of the body constructed by the spirit. If the body does not have unhealthy guides and there is no work of restraint of lust, while the heart (*qalb*, heart) remains healthy, the guides of the soul continue to develop, while the body perishes for serving the soul.

From the description above, there are points of similarity and difference between Sufism and Islamic philosophy. The similarity lies in the process of searching for everything secret (*unseen*) which is considered the ‘farthest truth’ which not everyone can do and of the three trying to find what is called Truth (*al-haqq*). The truth in Sufism is the disclosure (*kasyaf*) of the True Truth (*Allah*) through the eyes of the heart. Sufism finds the truth by going through several paths, namely: *maqomat*, thing (state) then *fana*. The truth, in the science of kalam, is in the form of knowing the truth of religious teachings through rational reasoning and then referring to the texts (*al-Qur'an & Hadith*). Truth in philosophy is in the form of speculative truth about everything that exists (existence), that is, it cannot be proven by research, empirical, and experiment. Philosophy finds the truth by pouring out reason radically, integrally, and universally. Meanwhile, the differences between Sufism and philosophy are not as broad and as much in common. The two are different, but the difference lies in how to find the truth itself differently; Sufis rely more on the inner eye, while *mutakallim* tries to combine heart and mind, while philosophers rely more on reason.

Philosophy is based on logic, while Sufism is based on the heart. In philosophy full of question marks. What, how, where, and what is the cause? Whereas in Sufism there is no question. So that people who do not enter the realm of Sufism by themselves will not feel what they perceive (in their thinking beliefs). Even for Sufis, the power of feeling is higher than the power of words. They are not subject to the arrangement of letters and sounds. Can not these words show only part of the intended meaning? With philosophy, people know

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the meaning of understanding. Therefore, Sufism becomes high in dignity if it is accompanied by knowledge and philosophical skills. In this case, the figures are Imam Ghazali, Suhrawardi, Ibn Arabi. So that it becomes chaotic and confusing if Sufism is owned by people who have no basis in knowledge. Thus it is clear that the relationship between Sufism and philosophy is closely related.  

However, ‘irfan is still not the same as philosophy. First, philosophy bases its arguments on postulates or axioms, while Irfan bases his arguments on vision and intuition. Second, in a philosophical viewpoint, the existence of nature is as real as the existence of God, while in ‘irfan's view, the existence of God includes everything and everything is a manifestation of various asthma and His attributes. Third, the highest goal in philosophy is to understand nature while the ultimate goal of ‘irfan is to return to God, in such a way that there is no distance between the wise and God. Fourth, the means used in philosophy are reason and intellect, while the means used in ‘irfan are qalb (heart) and mental clarity that is obtained through continuous riyadhah.

Practical irfan study that discusses the obligations that must be performed by a person is similar to the science of ethics. However, these two fields of science are different. First, ‘irfan does not only talk about himself and the world but also talks about the relationship between man and God, while ethics does not talk about the relationship between man and God, except for ethics that comes from religion. Second, in the process of spiritual or mental formation, ‘irfan demands that there are stages of behavior that must be followed strictly and disciplined, while in ethics there is no such condition. If this moral formation is likened to fixing and decorating a house, ‘irfan demands a certain order in the process, while ethics does not demand that so it can be done from any side and angle. Third, the spiritual element in ethics is very limited, while the spiritual element in ‘irfan is very broad. Meanwhile, the theoretical aspect of ‘irfan discusses the nature of the universe, man, and God, so that theoretical ‘irfan has similarities with a philosophy that also discusses the nature of the universe.

Conclusion

From the description above it can be concluded into several things including First, the teachings of Sufism are grouped into three characteristics, namely Sufism akhlaki (morally oriented), Sufism amali (practice-oriented), and philosophical sufism (a combination of mystical and philosophical visions). The teachings of Amali Sufism are takhalli, tahalli, and tajalli. To uncover the veil that limits man to God, the expert of Sufism created a system composed of three levels, namely takhalli, tahalli, and tajalli. Takhalli means to cleanse oneself of the despicable qualities of immoral and mental immorality. Takhalli also means emptying oneself from an attitude of dependence on the delights of worldly life.

Second, the essence of Irfan and the method of reaching Irfan, an expert irfan is a person who has the meaning of Allah. Sometimes, the word is identified with certain inherent qualities that appear in an ’arif (who has a character for Allah) and becomes a thing for him. In this context, Ibn ’Arabi said: ‘Arif” is someone who has the appearance of God so that in himself certain conditions of the heart appear (ahwal). ’Irfan is obtained by someone starting the path of al-idrak al-mubasyir al-wujdani (direct emotional capture) and his methods of reaching irfan include Tafakkur, Riyadhah, Tazkiyat An-Nafs, and Dzikrullah.

Third, Sufism (irfan) relates to Islamic philosophy. If traced further, philosophy and Sufism have a close and harmonious relationship, especially since peripatetic philosophers, such as Ibn Sina, accepted the truth from both philosophers and Sufis. At the same time, many Sufis were familiar with the philosophy and many philosophers were at the same time Sufi, especially during the last periods of Islamic history. Ibn Sina, for example, in addition to the great figure of peripatetic philosophy, also wrote "imaginary stories" and talked about a special form of knowledge that was open to Sufis after a long spiritual practice, indicating that he was besides a philosopher he was also a Sufi who adhered to the doctrine of Being. Philosophy is based on logic, while Sufism is based on the heart. In philosophy full of question marks. What, how, where, and what is the cause? Whereas in Sufism there is no question. So that people who do not enter the realm of Sufism by themselves will not feel what they perceive (in their thinking beliefs). Even for Sufis, the power of feeling is
higher than the power of words. They are not subject to the arrangement of letters and sounds. These words are not only shown part of the intended meaning? With philosophy, people know the meaning of understanding. Therefore, Sufism becomes high in dignity if it is accompanied by knowledge and philosophical skills. In this case, the figures are Imam Ghazali, Suhrawardi, Ibn Arabi. So that it becomes chaotic and confusing if Sufism is owned by people who have no basis in knowledge.

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