

**Ibnu Khaldun's Thoughts on Sufism Through his Books
*al-Muqaddima and Syifa' al-Sail***

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Abstract: The practice of Sufism in the present day has gained significant popularity and widespread adherence. However, a Muslim individual can encounter challenges in comprehending the teachings of Sufism, leading to a sense of disorientation in their knowledge. The primary purpose of this article was to analyze the theoretical framework of Sufism as elucidated by Ibn Khaldun. This study employs a qualitative analytical method based on the conceptual approach to data description and analysis, by drawing on historical sources such as the *Muqaddima* and *Shifa' al-Sail* books and previous relevant research. The findings indicate that Ibn Khaldun's Sufism paradigm offers a logically explicable account of the philosophical and practical aspects. Muslims can practice Sufi teachings in their respective capacities and remain unpolarized in their comprehension of the faith, which appears to be preoccupied with the afterlife and prefers to die rather than remain on earth. There is a contention that Ibn Khaldun preferred a restrained exploration of the spiritual journey, which was grounded in a meticulous commitment to the teachings of the Qur'an and Sunna. Ibn Khaldûn is credited with formulating an Islamic sociological framework that incorporates God as the ultimate legislator, human beings as agents of change, and nature as a resource for human application.

Keywords: Sufism; teachings; Ibn Khaldun; Muslim.

Abstrak: Ajaran Tasawuf dimasa sekarang ini mendapatkan perhatian dan menjadi tumpuan bagi para Muslim untuk lebih dekat dengan Sang Pencipta. Namun, seorang Muslim dapat menghadapi tantangan dalam memahami ajaran Sufisme, yang mengarah pada rasa disorientasi saat berusaha untuk memahami dan mempelajarinya. Tujuan utama artikel ini adalah untuk menganalisis kerangka teoritis tasawuf, khususnya dari pandangan Ibnu Khaldun, seorang yang dianggap memiliki keutamaan sebagai tokoh dalam perkembangan ilmu tasawuf di masa-masa awal. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode analisis kualitatif dan analisis data dengan pendekatan konseptual, serta disajikan secara deskriptif, dengan mengambil sumber-sumber sejarah seperti buku *Muqaddima* dan *Syifa' al-Sail* dan penelitian-penelitian relevan yang telah dilakukan oleh para peneliti sebelumnya. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa paradigma tasawuf Ibnu Khaldun menawarkan penjelasan yang mudah dipahami secara logis, terutama mengenai aspek-aspek filosofis dan praktis. Bagi beliau, umat Islam dapat mempraktikkan ajaran Sufi sesuai kapasitas masing-masing dan tetap tidak terpolarisasi dalam pemahaman mereka tentang iman, kehidupan di akhirat dan kehidupan di dunia. Dalam bertasawuf, beliau berksplorasi perjalanan spiritual yang terkendali, yang didasarkan pada komitmen yang cermat terhadap ajaran Al-Qur'an dan Sunnah. Beliau dianggap pencipta rumusan kerangka sosiologis Islam yang menggabungkan Tuhan sebagai pembuat hukum tertinggi, manusia sebagai agen perubahan, dan alam sebagai sumber daya untuk dimanfaatkan oleh umat manusia.

Kata Kunci: Tasawuf; Pengajaran; Ibn Khaldun; Muslim.



Introduction

Islamic teachings encompass Sufism, which provides guidance on the direct approach to God. Furthermore, Sufism constitutes an academic discipline within Islam. From a scientific standpoint, it emerged as a post-Peaceful branch of Islamic culture. By attaining a direct relationship with God, this teaching hopes to enable one to perceive the Lord's existence in the state of consciousness. One has to manage the Sunna and the Wajib in order to achieve these objectives. *Maqamat* levels, including *taubah*, *zuhd*, *tawakkal*, *ridha*, *mahabba*, *ma'rifa*, and *mujahadah*, are subsequently conquered (Badaruddin & Mahyuddin, 2021).

Research on the history and culture of pre-modern Muslim societies provides valuable insights into the historical Muslim viewpoint on different aspects of life. Studies, particularly in the areas of Sufism, jurisprudence, politics, economics, and theology, offer a deeper understanding of the historical experiences of Muslims in various regions. Undoubtedly, these studies have enabled us to get a profound understanding of the intellectual ideologies and cultural practices of historical Muslim civilizations, including their literary and artistic achievements, as well as their daily routines (Kizilkaya, 2020).

Sufism, as a discipline, has consistently shown itself via several art forms, including music, poetry, dance, and painting. The spiritually and philosophically appealing aspects of Sufism attracted numerous elites, leading them to accept and actively contribute to its development. Ultimately, by means of the creative and philosophical contributions made by these privileged individuals, Sufism transcended the boundaries of various cultures and empires (Küçük, 2016).

Ibn Khaldun took part in an intellectual disagreement that emerged in Andalusia on the essence of the Sufi spiritual journey. He dedicated a complete book called *Shifa' al-Sa'il ila Tahdhib al-Masa'il* to this topic. In a relatively overlooked fatwa of condemnation, he expressed his opinions regarding the potential hazards associated with specific forms of Sufism, Sufis, and Sufi literature. This fatwa has reached us in three somewhat varying versions (Bouhafa, 2021).

There are some studies regarding Sufism and its insight and discourse. According to Sahin et.al. (2021), Sufism encompasses a spiritual endeavor to purify the soul, foster intellectual growth, restrain worldly desires, and combat excessive indulgence in sensual pleasures. Additionally, the author defines Sufism as a scholarly discipline that elucidates how individuals endeavor to purify their souls from the impact of material possessions and the natural world, thereby facilitating their attainment of a spiritual connection with Allah (Sahin & Asroor, 2021).

Some aspects of Sufism that are commonly practiced in the life of a Muslim, as explained by Arvionita et.al. (2023), among others; (1) *Dzikr Allah*, which is the effort to remember Allah and forget everything other than Him, with the aim of drawing closer to Allah, calming the soul in the face of life's trials and difficulties, and benefiting from Allah's goodness and pleasure; (2) *Muhasabah An-Nafs* (Self-Introspection), which is by realizing and correcting oneself for sins, mistakes, immorality, and other omissions against Allah; (3) *Tazkiyah An-Nafs*, that is, by purifying the soul, by strengthening piety to Allah (Arvionita et al., 2023).

Regarding Ibn Khaldun's biography and work of *Muqaddimah*, According to Ahmad Murad Merican (2022), his work

titled *Muqaddima* served as a comprehensive resource or instructional material within the realm of several social science fields. The *Muqaddima* can be seen as a philosophical treatise that encompasses the concept of hikmah, commonly referred to as wisdom in the English language. Hikmah is closely associated with *nashihah*, a genre of guidance writing primarily intended for rulers, albeit in a nominal sense. In accordance with a hadith, it is stated that the act of providing guidance, known as *nashihah*, holds significant religious value (Merican, 2022).

Sufi orders were founded in the twelfth century, and the first Sufi institutions (referred to as *khanaqa*) were established in the thirteenth century. These events were pivotal in the development and spread of Sufism. Sufis perpetually embarked on journeys in pursuit of mystical wisdom, during which they communed with fellow Sufis and philosophers and engaged in meditation. The most effective method to maximize contemplation and avoid anything in social life that inhibits it is to wander. In the end, cultivating any desire is futile because it impedes thought (Ahmed, 2008).

Research on the historical and cultural aspects of pre-modern Muslim societies provides crucial insights into the Muslim perspective on various aspects of life, including Sufism, jurisprudence, politics, economics, and theology. These studies also contribute to our understanding of the historical experiences of Muslims in different regions. Undoubtedly, these scholarly investigations have facilitated a comprehensive understanding of the philosophical ideologies and cultural practices prevalent in historical Muslim communities. These studies have enabled us to get profound insights into the literary and artistic contributions of these societies, as

well as their customary routines (Rijal & Umiarso, 2017).

Historically, station structures served as places of rest for the Sufis during their never-ending journeys. These stations became permanent residences, sites of instruction, congregations, and gatherings for Sufis in the twelfth century; as they grew in number, their teachings became more disorganized (Dickson, 2022).

The present research aims to analyze Ibn Khaldun's perspective on the definition of authentic Sufism, as delineated in *Shifa' al-Sail*, in addition to his critique of specific Sufi viewpoints in particular circumstances. This research is crucial for the advancement of Islamic understanding regarding the application of Sufism (*tasawwuf*). This research has the potential to make a specific contribution towards the advancement of Islamic teaching integration and practical implementation, which the Muslim ummah can adopt.

Research Method

This current research utilizes a qualitative method by using descriptive and explanatory approaches. It employs contents analysis to review systematically the facts derived from various literatures and related documents. Certain issues on background of Ibn Khaldun and his autobiography, his thoughts on Sufism through his book *Muqaddima* and *Shifa' al-Sail* are studied and analyzed proportionally.

Result and Discussion

A Brief Biography of Ibn Khaldun

Ibn Khaldûn's full name is Walî al-Dîn 'Abd al-Raḥmān ibn Muḥammad ibn Muḥammad ibn Muḥammad ibn al-Ḥassan ibn Muḥammad ibn Jâbir ibn Muḥammad ibn Ibrâḥim 'Abd al-Rahman ibn Khaldûn. He was born in Tunisia on May 27, 1332, M. He died in Egypt on March 17, 1406, M. Al-



Ta'rīf bi Ibn Khaldūn's historical record states that his family originally came from Hadramaut, Yemen, before moving to Spain. The descendants of Ibn Khaldūn had key positions in the administration of kingdoms. His father held a role as a government officer. Later, his father focused on the field of science and became a specialist in Arabic literature (Merican, 2022).

Historically, Banu Khaldun (Ibn Khaldun's family) was one of the most involved and important families of the kingdom of al-Moravids and al-Mohads in al-Andalus until the 11th century (Merican, 2022). During the reign of Sultan Abu Ishaq and his assistant Abu Muḥammad Ibn Tafragin, Ibn Khaldun's position was as the Shahib al-'Allāmah. Then, he was appointed as a secretary under the reign of the Magi in Fas. After that, he went to Granada to serve under the reign of Sultan Muhammad, while Ibn al-Khatib was the minister in charge. But, after a misunderstanding and problem between him and Ibn al-Khatib, he returned to Africa. In 1375 M, when he was 43 years, he took the approach of seeking refuge from Awlad 'Arif or Bani 'Arif in Qal'ah Ibn Salamah. In 1382 M, he migrated to al-Qahirah, Egypt to gain knowledge and experience. There, he was also appointed as a lecturer at the leading institution at that time, al-Azhar University. When Sultan al-Zhahir Barquq (1382-1399 M) ruled in 1384 M, he was appointed as a Professor at the Quahmiyah College and Barquqiyyah College and subsequently appointed as a chairman of Mazhab Maliki (Ahmad, 2014).

Ibn Khaldun lived in a time of contradiction. On one hand, Islamic regimes presided over more territory than they ever had. However, in the aftermath of the Black Death and centuries of invasions, beginning with the Christian Crusades and Reconquista and culminating with the

Mongol conquest of South Asia, governance, infrastructure, and trade in many regions had fallen into a state of disrepair. Ibn Khaldun tried to leverage state power toward the end of reviving and reforming his society, serving as a diplomat, chief minister, and close adviser for a number of sultans in Spain and North Africa. He played a pivotal role in many of the power struggles of his day and as a result spent several years of his life in exile, in prison, and on the run (al-Gharbi, 2021).

Ibn Khaldūn, however, made efforts to reconcile these issues and concerns. He consistently made modest efforts to address this social issue throughout his life. In 1400 M, Timur decimated the majority of Syria's population. The Egyptians were apprehensive about the potential for the jihadists' influence in Timur to extend to Egypt. Thus, to oppose Timur, Barqq persisted in directing his men towards Syria. Upon Ibn Khaldūn's inclusion in this military entourage, the trip became immortalized in the records of historiography. Despite his efforts to alleviate Timur's anger through discourse, Ibn Khaldūn took on the role of a diplomatic middleman but ultimately failed. Upon the conclusion of the great war, he returned to al-Qahirah in the year 1400-1401 M. and was reinstated as a prominent judge. Prior to his demise on March 16, 1406 M (26 Ramadan 808 H), he held that ultimate status (van den Bent, 2016).

Ibn Khaldun in his life experience does not limit him to his homeland but travels the different scenarios of the Islamic world, from the Al-Andalusian territory of his lineage to the very heart of the empire in Mecca to finally culminate his days in Persian lands, in Damascus during the court of the great Mongol conqueror Tamerlan. His stories not only have the strength to collect the testimonies and affirmations

attributed to tradition, but he is able to elaborate his own arguments derived from his personal observations. Islam always urges its followers to be careful in all that they do, such as organizing (Lelli, 2014).

However, Ibn Khaldun is always wary of engaging in speculation or fancifully elaborate judgments. As a historian and social philosopher, Khaldun maintains a critical and scientific realist method, something very unusual in his time. It is not only about the versatility and forcefulness of his arguments, but in his works there is a constant intention to establish a scientific perspective of history. Khaldun's *Muqaddima* is a work where the thought embodied in its pages is ahead of its time in topics as varied as the philosophy of history, economics, sociology and other sciences related to human behavior. His work, the *Muqaddima* or introduction to history, was conceived as a preamble to another work of greater magnitude. However, it is in this prologue that the author deposits all the strength of his thought, formed through his refined education, direct experiences in his travels and his participation in the various positions of public administration, even in political conspiracies (Arenas et al., 2023).

Sufism Defined and Spiritual Life of Sufis

Some scholars think the word *sufi* came from the Arabic word “*shuff*”, which means wool. Some Arab conquerors collected wealth and lived in luxury in the countries they conquered. It is believed that some individual Muslims reacted against the corruption of the Muslim conquerors, and chose a bohemian way of life as a way of rejecting and protesting against what the conquerors did. These individuals chose to wear simple and cheap coats made of wool “*suf*” in order to show their indifference to worldly pleasures and material goods. Then

they were called Sufis after their way of dressing (Bilqies, 2014).

In terms of language, the word Sufism does not have original syllables in Arabic. The word Sufism is an absorption and lexical change of words from several words that linguists mention them. At least the word change is taken from the word *tashawwafa-yatashawwafu-tashawwufan* that means clean, pure, and clear (Rijal & Umiarso, 2017).

Sufism, known in the Islamic world, became an established discipline after the 3rd century Hijriyah or 9th century AD. At least in the middle of the 4th century Hijriyah or the 8th AD, it became the starting point for Sufism to be introduced in the Islamic world. This makes Sufism a new discipline that was born later in Islam. At this time great Sufism thinkers were born such as al-Bishr, Abu Hasan al-Hallaj, Ibn 'Arab and al-Jilli. They all introduced how their Sufism thought based on their inner experiences. That inner experience is conveyed symbolically through various revelations. Sufism became an important scientific discipline that also gave a pattern in the intellectual treasures of Islam, both in classical, medieval, and modern times (Pribadi, 2014).

The word Sufism as most mentioned comes from the word *suf* which means wool. The wool here is the clothes of the ancient people who were simple and rough as a form of their modesty and modesty. There is also the word *ahl al-shuffah* which means the porch of the mosque. Because at the time of the Prophet SAW, friends who did not have a home and were classified as poor chose to live in one of the porches of the Prophet's mosque. Then from the word *shuff* which means rows in prayer. Because a Sufi as exemplified by a friend always targets the front row in prayer. Then from the absorption of the word *sophos* which means



wisdom. This word has been adapted from Greek to Arabic which means wisdom. A Sufi is a wise person (Effendi, 2021).

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Seeing the many definitions given by some Sufism experts, then at least Sufism can be interpreted as a way or way for someone to get closer to Allah SWT to have the closest relationship without any limitations by passing certain procedures.

A Sufi is someone who practices Sufism in the world of Sufism. Sufis live an ascetic lifestyle through various *maqamât* and *ahwâl*. The plural of *maqamât* is *maqam*, which implies position, stage, or station. Sufism requires a person to go through several phases before reaching a point where there is no barrier (*hijâb*) between him and God. This *maqamât* ranges from repentance to *zuhd*, gratitude, *qana'ah*, and others. While *ahwâl* is a state, *ahwâl* is the plural of *hâl*. Sufism is defined as the state of mind felt by the Sufi in every attainment of *maqam*, which is a gift from God (Bilqies, 2014).

Sufis hold various beliefs regarding concepts such as *fanâ'* and *baqâ'*. The acquisition and instruction of the concepts known as *maqamât* and *ahwâl* are integral components of a Sufi practitioner's spiritual voyage, also referred to as *mujâhadah*. The distinction lies in the fact that the attainment of *maqamât* is a personal endeavor for the Sufi practitioner, whereas *ahwâl* is bestowed upon them as a divine blessing (Saepullah, 2021).

Eventhough, another opinion says that the term "*Sufi*" is commonly considered to have its origins in the Greek word "*Sophia*," denoting wisdom. Sufism represents the spiritual dimension of the Islamic faith. The ultimate objective of a Sufi practitioner is to attain a state of unity with Truth, divine Being, the oneness of Being, or God. According to the perspective of a Sufi practitioner, there exists a singular and ultimate Truth, which posits that God permeates all aspects of existence boundlessly, so bestowing actuality upon all manifestations. According to the Quran, it is stated that the dominion of God encompasses both the Eastern and Western regions, and wherever one may direct their attention, the divine presence of God is there. The concept of God is characterized by being omnipresent and possessing omniscience (Solehah et al., 2021).

The pursuit of perfect Truth or God necessitates a route that ultimately leads to the inherent truth, as the inherent truth is synonymous with the absolute truth. In order to attain the inherent truth, a Sufi must achieve complete enlightenment. Awakening, or complete consciousness, encompasses both perceiving the truth and achieving unity with the truth. *Dhikr*, a significant practice in Sufism, serves the objective of spiritual awakening. *Dhikr*, in the context of Sufism, refers to the act of recalling or recollecting the truth. This is because the ordinary human consciousness is akin to being trapped in a dream-like condition or a state of amnesia (*ghafla*). In Sufi practice, *dhikr* refers to the act of focusing on the divine truth, which bears a strong resemblance to Plato's idealistic concept of memory. *Dhikr* is a practice that enables a dervish to attain spiritual enlightenment or the utmost level of awareness. By engaging in repetitive *dhikr*, the dervish undergoes a state of *hâl*, characterized by intense ecstasy, during

which the dervish undergoes a temporary transformation into the divine Being. At that moment, the dervish undergoes a complete awakening, merging with the absolute truth (Ahmed, 2008).

The term "truth," also known as "*haqiqa*" or "*haq*," holds significant importance in the realm of Sufi philosophy, as I will elaborate upon after that. According to a Sufi, a singular truth exists that is attributed to the supreme deity, and there is a singular deity that embodies the ultimate Truth. Sufism is a direct route towards the objective of attaining union with Truth or the state of being unified with Existence. At that juncture, the Sufi attains a state of divinity, which is the ultimate objective of a Sufi. Nevertheless, this principle is rarely recognized, even among Sufis who adhere to it literally, as it is widely regarded as shirk, a transgression, by the majority of Muslims (Abrahamove, 2013).

God is the sole truth, as per the beliefs of Sufism. Within the Sufi concept, all obligations manifest in a state of utmost spiritual purity. For instance, within the context of Sufism, Jihad refers to a personal struggle against one's inner self rather than a physical conflict against an external enemy. Sufism is a spiritual tradition that encompasses mystical teachings and practices aimed at attaining what Sufis perceive as genuine knowledge. It is a method of acquiring knowledge that leads to the ultimate truth. Furthermore, it serves as a pathway to achieve complete unity with God, therefore being referred to as a 'Path of Love' (Anshori et al., 2021).

However, even though it is done for the sake of introduction, it is nonsensical to separate both knowledge and affection or their respective methods. For a Sufi, the path to acquiring knowledge aligns with the path of love, as both seek the ultimate truth and the divine presence of God. Truth and God

are synonymous with Sufis. The essence of this union is eloquently captured in the following Sufi proverb: "Truth dissolves like snow in the hands of someone whose soul does not dissolve like snow in the hands of Truth" (Al-Haramain, 2011). As a

Ibn Khaldun regarded the field of tasawwuf as encompassing two aspects: a hidden aspect, which concerns the understanding of mystical experiences (*ahwal*) and spiritual levels (*maqamat*), and a moral aspect, which deals with the spiritual methods to counteract the lower inclinations of the soul. Acquiring knowledge of this second ethical principle is obligatory for all Muslims. It can be easily obtained through books if a mentor is unavailable, unlike the first aspect, which can only be gained from a mentor. Books exploring the esoteric realm might pose a significant risk by potentially misleading the practitioner (Rajab, 2020).

Individuals with a broader perspective and strong self-discipline require a *shaykh al-tarbiya* (teacher of education) who can provide them with specific spiritual practices. However, they may still benefit from *ta'lim* (teaching), which refers to the guidance offered by the first kind of shaykh. Therefore, the two categories are not completely separate, while the roles and characteristics of the *shaykh al-tarbiya* include those of the *shaykh al-ta'lim*, but not vice versa (Hidayatullah & Arif, 2022).

The shaykh's magnetic personality had turned into a secret for gaining political and social influence. For example, a lot of shaykh in Kurdistan fooled a lot of uneducated farmers into believing they could communicate supernaturally with the heavenly force. People flocked to the sheikh in all sorts of difficulties to pray to him to keep them safe. A sheikh's men are usually gathered around him, their primary



responsibility being to accentuate the charismatic ambience within the sheikh's khanaqah. Because the sheikh is supposedly too preoccupied with worshipping to handle any material or technical issue in the khanaqah, Sheikh's men rigorously organize the agenda and forbid, if not outright forbid, direct communication with the shekh. Anybody who happens to stop by a khanaqah is expected to be fed and given shelter. Because of this, the majority of khanaqahs serve as social and political organizations with specific goals for amassing power via acquiring sway over sizable populations (Dickson, 2022).

Mujahadah as an Aspect of Sufism

Ibn Khaldun noted that sufism had a historical trajectory, as it originated during a specific period, saw growth, and, in his view, had slightly diminished during his era. Sufism, like any other cultural feature, emerged as a response to a specific need. The initial three or four generations of Muslims lived virtuous and holy lives in complete conformity with the *shari'a*, prioritizing their inner spiritual conduct and actions over external ones exclusively. Following a period of spiritual harmony and stability, divisions and conflicts arose within the Islamic community, leading to a departure from the previous virtuous commitment to the correct path (Razak et al., 2020).

The jurists found it imperative to establish uniform practices for religious rituals (*'ibadat*) and to systematize the laws concerning human interactions (*mu'amalat*). This paved the path for numerous individuals to disregard the significance of one's inner essence and actions. The waning emphasis on heartfelt activities, coupled with the regrettable infiltration of heretical beliefs and doctrines and their acceptance by a significant number of Muslims (Ulfa et al., 2021).

According to Ibn Khaldun's perspective, Sufism originated as a separate field of study in response to the increasing preoccupation of Islamic culture with superficialities and the prioritization of material aspects of life over spiritual ones. He perceives the subsequent inclination as an inherent characteristic of civilization (*hadara*) itself. He expanded upon his examination of Sufism's relevance to the spiritual guide by establishing a three-fold model of historical cycles that explain the origin, progression, and demise of Sufism. Initially, Sufism was primarily a profound and reflective comprehension of religion (Ahmad, 2014).

Ibn Khaldun associated this with an internal struggle (*mujahada*) in which the individuals had a sense of reverence towards Allah, referring to it as *mujahadat al-taqwa*. During the initial phase, the individual seeker must, like the early Muslim community, make every effort to refrain from any violation of the *shari'a* and wholeheartedly pursue virtue. The second phase is known as *mujahadat al-istiqama*, which refers to achieving a state of unwavering righteousness characterized by a firm commitment to moral rectitude and virtuous conduct. According to him, certain believers who had attained a high level of perseverance entered a third and ultimate phase of battle, known as *mujahadat al-kashf*, where the barrier between the Sufi and their divine Lord is ultimately removed (Badaruddin & Mahyuddin, 2021).

However, according to Ibn Khaldun, these sufis failed to sustain the tradition of careful approach toward truth as exemplified in the first two cycles. Due to this neglect, some later sufis pursued the third *mujahada* outside of the protective perimeter of the rigorous adherence to *shari'a* which was so strongly cultivated in the first two *mujahadas*. This led to a

proliferation of speculations and abstractions which had no relation to spiritual truth because they were not the result of genuine spiritual practice and thus, many went astray .

In *Shifa' al-Sa'il*, Ibn Khaldun reaches very similar conclusions, but discusses the question in relation to his understanding of sufism's history. Sufism for Ibn Khaldun is a science ('ilm), but like any other phenomenon pertaining to human existence, tasawwuf is also liable to change (*tabddul*) in its external, relative and contingent aspects and in this sense is a historical phenomenon (Ahmad, 2014).

In the combative cycle of mujahadat al-taqwa, which corresponds to the level of islam, a spiritual guide is not absolutely necessary and one may traverse this stage with the aid of books, although it is more difficult to do so without a shaykh. Thus, though not an absolute necessity, the significance of the shaykh is in no way diminished. In the second combative cycle of mujahadat al-istiqama, which corresponds to the level of iman, the seeker must actualize the virtues of the Qur'an in him or herself and thus rid the heart of its imperfections. This form of struggle—unlike the first one—is not an obligation on every person and here too the shaykh is not an absolute necessity as there are some who may traverse this stage by themselves through recourse to the relevant books dealing with the Qur'an and the hadith but it is once again better to have a shaykh and this is more so than in the first mujahada. In the third and final combat, mujahadat al-kashf, which corresponds to the level of ihsan and is also not incumbent on all Muslims, a shaykh is absolutely necessary. None can pass through this stage without the guidance of a spiritual master (Mustofa, 2018).

Ibn Khaldun's stance on the dispute that emerged in Andalusia on the necessity

of a spiritual guide, as elaborated in his work "Shifa' al-Sa'il," demonstrates his preference for a restrained and disciplined form of Sufism, rooted in his concept of three stages of spiritual struggle known as *mujahada*. By issuing a fatwa and including significant sections in the *Muqaddima*, he not only rejects the teachings of Ibn al-'Arabi and Ibn Sab'in but also disavows Ibn al-'Arabi's notion of the Perfect Man. Hence, Ibn Khaldun's fatwa of condemnation should be seen as a repudiation of any concepts of personal, saintly transcendence that he perceived as leading to the convergence of spiritual influence and political control (Ahmad, 2014).

Ibn Khaldun's Thoughts on Sufism

Ibn Khaldûn was a defender of Sufism. Following Abu al-Hasan al-Ash'ari, Ibn Khaldûn believed in God's omnipotence in for example "He creates the acts of men by creating in men the power to do each act." This means God's will not only determines what men do but He also wills that the man should will what they do. This was known as the doctrine of kasb (literally: acquisition). In al-Ghazali, there is no link between cause and effect unless God wills it to be so. What we call cause and effect is nothing more than God's habit. This is called occasionalism – that things only appear to have continuous existences over time because at every instant, God wills their continuous existence. And men's souls are shaped by their habits, hence worship and good deeds purify the soul (Merican, 2022).

Sufism discourse in the criticism of Ibn Khaldun cannot be separated from Sufism itself. Ibn Khaldun framed it in the systematization of knowledge in Islam. However, in reality it is necessary to criticize Sufism both in practical and theoretical terms. Because there is no doubt that the idea of Sufism also contains contradictory values for Islamic society.



This can be tolerated for those who are anti-Sufism and the opposite of Sufism supporters. There needs to be improvements while straightening out the teachings of Sufism which allegedly came from the Prophet SAW. This discourse begins with a discussion of the meaning of Sufism, the elements of Sufism, the dimensions of Sufism, to the practice of Sufism (Effendi, 2021).

Ibn Khaldun saw Sufism as part of the science of the Shari'a. That is, Sufism is a science that has a theological basis in Islam. It is impossible for this knowledge to be born and practiced without a solid foundation. Judging from the way of life of the Prophet SAW and his companions has indicated the practice of Sufism long before Islam developed rapidly. Ibn Khaldun relies on Sufism on the practice of living closer to God.

Ibn Khaldun also highlight the practice of Sufism throughout the early history of Islam until their time. Ibn Khaldun considers that the practice of Sufism based on the word *ahl al-shuffah* and the word *showf* can be justified. The justification in terms of terminology is simplicity (*faqîr*) and staying away from the world (*zuhûd*). The practice of living a simple Sufism and staying away from the world is carried to get closer to Allah SWT. A Sufi or *sâlik*, who follows a certain path or way of life must do and go through various stages in order to arrive at the highest degree. Ibn Khaldun agree that the highest degree for a *sâlik* is *taqwâ*. Because the best of people those who are pious (Effendi, 2021).

Ibn Khaldun said the same thing in the Muqaddimah. Sufism became a separate discipline in Islam after this paradigm shift. Previously, Sufism was only a science that developed as well as the knowledge of the Qur'an, interpretation, hadith, and fiqh. Even just a living practice (Benabed, 2022). Ibn

Khaldun asserts in several discourses on Sufism that the misinterpretation of Sufi teachings, particularly in relation to asceticism and *syathahât*, is erroneous. This misinterpretation extends to the notions of *ittihâd*, *Hulûl*, and *Wahdat al-Wujûd*. According to the perspective of Ibn Khaldun, the aforementioned principles possess the potential to engender fragmentation among the ummah due to the existence of divergent mystical perspectives. While jurists, in their capacity as legal authorities, decline, spiritualists, conversely, embrace the matter with immense enthusiasm. He further stated that this particular interpretation of philosophical Sufism is not appropriate for effectively conveying and spreading to a wider audience (Effendi, 2021).

The discussion of Sufism in the perspective of Ibn Khaldun at least gives the meaning that Sufism can be accepted as a science in Islam. Ibn Khaldun discusses Sufism in the frame of systematization of knowledge. He shows Sufism as a science that was born later in Islamic civilization and also experienced significant developments. Some of the concepts of philosophical Sufism did not escape criticism by using the concept approach of well-known Islamic scholars. At least Ibn Khaldun's efforts in grouping the knowledge can give an idea of the importance and depth of the study of Sufism from ancient times to the present.

Conclusion

Ibn Khaldun is known as an expert in Islamic history and sociologist who later became known as the Father of Sociologists. With such a background, it does not mean that he did not study Sufism. He also studied Sufism as a scientific discipline in the midst of Muslims. Ibn Khaldun sees Sufism in terms of the systematization of knowledge, which builds a rational-empirical

civilization. Ibn Khaldun has the spirit of reviewing the treasures of Islamic scholarship, not spared from it, namely Sufism. For him Sufism is a science that came later in Islam. Because it came later, the definitions made also varied. He agrees that the meaning of Sufism comes from the words *suf* and *suffah*, which indicate the simplicity of a Sufi in his life. He states that Sufism is carried out by someone who must go through certain *maqām* and get certain conditions (*hāl*) as well.

In his works, the *Muqaddima* and *Sifa' al-Sail*, Ibn Khaldun asserts that within the teachings of Sufism, there exist concepts that are accessible to and can be acquired by ordinary individuals. Still, others can only be comprehended by a select few (*khawas*). Ibn Khaldun emphasizes this aspect to offer Muslims a full perspective on Sufism. Ibn Khaldun aimed to elucidate and disseminate certain aspects of Islamic teachings, such as Sufism, which is an integral component of esoteric Islam, through his work, the *Muqaddima*.

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