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The Essence of Ontology in Islamic Philosophy: Discourse on Wujūd in al-Ḥikmat al-Mashā'iyyat and al-Ḥikmat al-Ishrāq

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This article seeks to analyze the concept of $wuj\bar{u}d$ in Islamic philosophy, including the Peripatetic (*al-Ḥikmat al-Mashā'iyyat*) and Illuminationist (*al-Ḥikmat al-Ishrāq*) schools. The study employs a discourse analysis approach, using data collected from an analysis of Islamic philosophy literature with a focus on the concept of $wuj\bar{u}d$ in these two schools. The findings of the study show that despite using the same term, the concept of external reality has different meanings in different schools of Islamic philosophy. The Peripatetic school interprets $wuj\bar{u}d$ as the basis of reality, but its extension varies depending on the differences in $m\bar{a}hiyat$ (essence). The Illuminationist school, on the other hand, interprets $wuj\bar{u}d$ as an addition to external reality, as the fundamental element is $m\bar{a}hiyat$. One of the novel contributions of this study is to highlight the sensitivity of the concept of essence in Islamic philosophy. However, both schools agree that $wuj\bar{u}d$ is manifested as a mental reality, a predication for $m\bar{a}hiyat$. In mental reality, the fundamental element is $m\bar{a}hiyat$.

Keywords: *Wujūd, māhiyat,* Islamic philosophy, *al-Ḥikmat al-Mashā'iyyat, al-Ḥikmat al-Ishrāq*

Artikel ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis kata 'wujūd' dalam khazanah filsafat Islam. Kata wujūd merupakan salah satu kosa kata yang sangat penting dalam diskursus filsafat Islam di berbagai mazhab, antara lain mazhab al-Hikmah al-Masyā'iyyah dan al-Hikmah al-Isyrāq. Kajian ini menggunakan kajian wacana pemikiran Islam. Data dikumpulkan dari analisis literatur filsafat Islam dengan fokus mengeksplorasi bentuk kata dalam dua aliran filsafat Islam: al-Hikmah al-Masyā'iyyah dan al-Hikmah al-Isyrāq. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa meskipun menggunakan istilah yang sama, realitas eksternal memiliki makna yang beragam di berbagai mazhab filsafat Islam. Al-Hikmah al-Masyā'iyyah memaknai wujūd sebagai dasar realitas, namun berbeda dalam setiap perluasannya karena perbedaan dalam māhiyah. Al-Hikmah al-Isyrāq memaknai *wujūd* sebagai tambahan realitas lahiriah, karena yang mendasar adalah mahiyah. Kebaruan kajian ini adalah untuk menunjukkan kepekaan esensi ontologi di kalangan mazhab pemikiran Islam yang telah dijelaskan melalui pemaknaannya masing-masing terhadap esensi ontologinya, yakni pemahaman wujūd. Kesepakatan para filosof al-Hikmah al-Masyā'iyyah dan al-Hikmah al-Isyrāq adalah wujūd sebagai realitas mental, menjadi predikasi bagi māhiyah. Dalam realitas mental, fundamentalnya adalah māhiyah.

Kata Kunci: *Wujūd, Māhiyat,* Filsafat Islam, *al-Ḥikmah al-Masyā'iyyah, al-Ḥikmah al-Isyrāq*.

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Introduction

The discourse on *wujūd*, or being, is a fundamental element in Islamic philosophy (*al-hikmat*), Islamic theology (*kalām*), and Islamic mysticism ('*irfān*). In Islamic philo-sophy, the understanding of *wujūd* is a determinant of the differences between each school. The three major schools of Islamic philosophy are *al-Hikmat al-Mashā'iyyat* (Peripatetic school), *al-Hikmat al-Ishrāq* (Illuminationist school), and *al-Hikmat al-Muta'āliyat* (Transcendent Theosophy). Each school has a different understanding of *wujūd*.

The study of *wujūd* is essentially the study of the fundamental elements of philosophy. However, there is still a paucity of literature on the study of *wujūd* in Islamic philosophy. Many studies of Islamic philo-sophy focus on certain dimensions of the philosophers' thoughts, such as the axio-logical dimension (offering the principles of Islamic philosophy on the practical dimension). For example, Saleh and Humaidi studied the transformation of human personality based on Ibn Sīnā's philosophical thought about the soul,¹ emphasizing that the essence of happiness is not in material achievements but in the happiness of the soul that arises as a result of the willingness to accept God's will.² Meanwhile, ontological studies, such as studies on *wujūd*, are relatively rare. One notable exception is Mohammad Syifa Amin Widigdo's article, which discusses the transformation of form into light by Shihab al-Dīn al-Suhrawardi and focuses on Mullā Sadrā's critique of al-Suhrawardi.³

This article presents a comparative study of the concept of *wujūd* (being) in two schools of Islamic philosophy: *al-Ḥikmat al-Mashā'iyyat*



(Peripatetic school) and *al-Hikmat al-Ishrāq* (Illuminationist school). The article argues that the meaning and reality of *wujūd* is a fundamental determinant of the differences between each school in Islamic philosophy, and that even within the same school, different interpretations of *wujūd* can lead to significant divergences of thought. To support this argument, the article employs a qualitative research methodology. Data were collected from books written by philosophers of *al-Hikmat al-Mashā'iyyat* and *al-Hikmat al-Ishrāq*, as well as related academic literature.

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Divine Tendency in Islamic Philosophy

The aforementioned reasons demonstrate that Islamic philosophy is a distinct school of thought from Greek philosophy, exhibiting a new identity that distinguishes it from both Aristotelian and Neoplatonic traditions. A key difference between the two is the sharper focus on ontology, or the study of being, in Islamic philosophy. This focus is evident in the work of al-Fārābī, Ibn Sīnā, Shihab al-Dīn al-Suhrawardī, and Mullā Sadrā, who sought to synthesize their predecessors' insights.

Undeniably, the emphasis on the study of *Wujūd Ilāhiyyat* (Divine Being) in Islamic philosophy is not only an attempt to bring philosophy closer to the Muslim world and reduce resistance from religious authorities, but also reflects the religious character and tendencies of its philosophers. For this reason, the Islamic philosophers refer to philosophy as *hikmat* (wisdom). Seyyed Hossein Nasr, a contemporary philosopher and scholar of Islamic philosophy, has argued that Islamic

¹ Saleh Saleh and Humaidi Humaidi, "Transformasi Diri Berdasarkan Filsafat Jiwa Ibn Sīnā," *Kanz Philosophia A Journal for Islamic Philosophy and Mysticism* 8, no. 1 (June 17, 2022): 1–30,

https://journal.sadra.ac.id/ojs/index.php/kanz/article/view/202.

² Mukhammad Zamzami et al., "Physical and Spiritual Dimensions of Happiness in the Thought of Al-Fārābī and Ibn Sīnā," *Teosofia: Indonesian Journal of Islamic Mysticism* 10, no. 2 (December 27, 2021): 229–248,

https://journal.walisongo.ac.id/index.php/teosofia/article/v iew/8629.

³ Muhammad Syifa Amin Widigdo, "Suhrawardi's Ontology: From 'Essence-Existence' To 'Light' (A Suhrawardian Reply to Sadrian Critiques)," Kanz Philosophia : A Journal for Islamic Philosophy and Mysticism 4, no. 2 (December 25, 2014): 117, http://journal.sadra.ac.id/index.php/kanzphilosophia/articl e/view/62.

philosophy is a discussion of *Wujūd* as it is (*ashyā* '*al-mawjūdat bi mā hiya mawjūdat*), or being as such. Philosophy is the knowledge of *Wujūd llahiyyat* and *insāniyyat* (Islamic transcendental humanism), and is a pre-requisite for *hikmah*.

Influenced by Shihab al-Dīn al-Suhrawardī, Mullā Sadrā defined philosophy as an endeavor to perfect the human soul through its abilities to comprehend existence through demonstration, rather than assumptions or opinions. This definition serves to sharpen the meaning of to explain why philosophy and Islamic called al-ḥikmah. philosophy is In his philosophical system, Mullā Sadrā explained that humans embark on four journeys in their lifetime. A philosopher comprehends these four formulates journeys and а conceptual explanation of them. This conceptualization of as evident in Mullā Sadrā's philosophy, definition, is based on the principles of philosophical epistemology, namely solid propositions and right thinking as explained in the science of *manțiq* (logic)⁴ The propositions that are constructed in the terminology of Islamic philosophy (hence the term *al-hikmat*) are in accordance with a philosopher's mystical experience (hence the term *hakīm*). For this reason, Mulla Sadra strongly agrees with Shihab al-Dīn al-Suhrawardī's qualifications for a philosopher, namely that they must have direct experience ($hud\bar{u}r\bar{i}$) and be able to convey that experience in philosophical term.⁵ By basing the conceptualization of intuitive experience on demonstrations, Mullā Sadrā's teachings are slightly demarcated from philosophical Sufism. In philosophical Sufism, demonstration is not necessary as the foundation for knowing the truth of *wujūd* is *kashf hudūrī* (spiritual experience). However, Mullā Sadrā himself

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attached great importance to *kashf hudūrī*. Mullā Sadrā developed a philosophical concept which states that all faculties of the human soul, at all levels, be it sensory experience, rational analysis, or spiritual revelation experience, are the presence of the soul on different levels. He asserts that sensory perception is the presence of the same soul as rational analysis and *kashf*. This view differs from several schools of philosophy, including *al-Ḥikmat al-Mashā'iyyat*, which still treats the soul and body as dualities.⁶

Discourse of Wujūd in School of *al-Hikmat al-Mashā'iyyat*

Al-Kindi (c. 800–870 CE) is credited with being the first philosopher to systematically explore the concept of *wujūd* in Islamic philosophy.⁷ A prolific writer, he authored over 300 works on a wide range of topics, including metaphysics, mathematics, and the natural sciences.⁸ However, only about 10% of his works have been preserved and edited. The paucity of al-Kindi's surviving works can be attributed to a number of factors, including the difficulty of his Arabic prose, which reflected his struggle to adapt Greek philosophical concepts to the Arabic language. It is also possible that some of his works were destroyed during the Mongol conquest of Baghdad in 1258 CE.⁹

Despite the challenges, al-Kindi's contributions to the study of $wuj\bar{u}d$ were significant. He was the first Islamic philosopher to develop a comprehensive Arabic vocabulary for discussing metaphysical concepts. He also introduced the distinction between essential being ($wuj\bar{u}d$ dhātī) and accidental being ($wuj\bar{u}d$ 'aradī), which was to become a central tenet of Peripatetic metaphysics.

⁴ Abdul Hadi Fadli, *Logika Praktis*, (Jakarta: Sadra Press, 2016), 4–12.

⁵ Cipta Bakti Gama, Filsafat Jiwa: Dialektika Filsafat Islam, Dan Filsafat Barat Kontemporer (Malang: Pustaka Sophia, 2018), 118–119.

⁶ Cipta Bakti Gama, Filsafat Jiwa, 118.

⁷ Kiki Kennedy-Day, "Al-Kindi," in *Books of Definition in Islamic Philosophy* (Abingdon, UK: Taylor &

Francis, 2010), 19–31,

https://www.taylorfrancis.com/books/9780203221372.

⁸ Felix Klein-Franke, "Al-Kindi," in *History of Islamic Philosophy Vol. I*, ed. Seyyed Hossein Nasr and Oliver Leaman (London & New York: Routledge, 1996), 168.

⁹ Michal Biran and Thomas T. Allsen, "Culture and Conquest in Mongol Eurasia," *Journal of the American Oriental Society* (2003), 446.

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Al-Kindi's work on $wuj\bar{u}d$ laid the foundation for the further development of this concept in the Peripatetic school by subsequent philosophers, such as al-Fārābī (c. 870–950 CE) and Ibn Sīnā (c. 980–1037 CE).¹⁰

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Although al-Kindi lived in a time when the translation of Greek philosophy into Arabic was well underway, Felix Klein-Franke argued that al-Kindi himself did not speak Greek or Syriac, the original language of many Greek philosophical texts. Prominent translators of Greek and Syriac works into Arabic included Ibn Nai'iman, Eushatius, and Ibn al-Bithrig. Ahmed Fuad Ehnawy said that al-Kindi played a pivotal role in the harmonization of religion and philosophy in Islamic thought.¹¹ This was a challenging task, given the resistance of many theologians and jurists. However, al-Kindi's efforts laid the foundation for the development of a rich and vibrant tradition of Islamic philosophy.12

Undeniably, the patronage of the rulers at the time facilitated al-Kindi's intellectual career. However, his inability to speak Greek or Syriac makes his work all the more remarkable.¹³ Al-Kindi faced relatively little resistance when reviewing Neo-Platonic works. However, he encountered significant resistance when reviewing the works of Aristotle, whose philosophy was perceived as being too dry and lacking in a focus on the study of *wujūd ilāhiyyah*. Al-Kindi was delighted to discover a treatise that gave a high portion to *wujūd ilāhiyyah*, but it was later discovered that this treatise was not written by Aristotle, but by Porphyry, a student of Plotinus.¹⁴ The Enneads, a collection of philosophical treatises by Plotinus, deceived

Muslim philosophers from al-Kindi to Mullā Sadrā. Al-Kindi, who was eager to find support for Islamic philosophy in the works of Aristotle, was too quick to embrace the Enneads, which he mistook for an authentic work of Aristotle. This led him to be less careful in tracing the work's provenance and to overlook its Neo-Platonic origin.¹⁵

Through his study of the Enneads, al-Kindi formulated the concept of *wujūd ilāhiyyah* from a philosophical perspective. He argued that all realities are interconnected and form a chain of causes that ultimately leads back to a first cause, which is not the result of any other cause.¹⁶ Al-Kindi's concept of *wujūd ilāhiyyah* can be understood as a philosophical rendering of the Islamic concept of "The One" (*al-aḥad*). "The One" is the ultimate source of all being and is not itself caused by anything else. Al-Kindi's prima causa is a similar concept, but it is expressed in more philosophical terms.¹⁷

Al-Kindi laid the foundation for а systematic study of philosophy in Islam.¹⁸ While philosophy had been studied in the Islamic world before, no one had yet compiled it into a system based on a distinctive epistemology. Before al-Kindi, only other sciences, such as mathematics (intermediate philosophy according to al-Fārābī later), and logic (which was taken up by fuqahā and mutakallimīn for arguments in defense of revelation and the preparation of laws), were developed in the Islamic world. The study of form, which al-Fārābī later classified as natural science or philosophy, was not yet well-developed. Despite the limited literature on the subject and the widespread belief that the study of form was

¹⁰ Ahmed Fuad Ehnawy, "Al-Kindi," in *A History of Muslim Philosophy Vol. I* (New Delhi: Low Price Publications, 1995), 427.

¹¹ Ahmed Fuad Ehnawy, "Al-Kindi, 425.

¹² Jackson, What Is Islamic Philosophy?, 33–34.

¹³ Several scholars contend that al-Kindi possessed proficiency in both Arabic and Syriac languages, whereas an opposing viewpoint posits that he lacked such linguistic capabilities. Klein-Franke, "Al-Kindi," 167.

¹⁴ Jonathan Scott Lee, Dominic J. O'Meara, "Plotinus: An Introduction to the Enneads," *The Classical World* (1996), 229.

¹⁵ Kartanegara, Gerbang Kearifan: Sebuah Pengantar Filsafat Islam, 36.

¹⁶ El-Hanawy, "Al-Kindi," in *A History of Muslim Philosophy Vol. I*, ed. M.M. Sharif, III. (New Delhi: Low Price Publications, 1995), 424.

¹⁷ Klein-Franke, "Al-Kindi", 174.

¹⁸ Kennedy-Day, "Al-Kindi", 26.

adequately addressed by revelation, al-Kindi was influenced by the Enneads to initiate a study of form that challenged the prevailing avoidance of Greek metaphysics due to its perceived opposition to revelation.

Al-Kindi divided philosophy into two parts: higher philosophy and lower philosophy. Higher philosophy included the study of *wujūd*, the prima causa (ultimate cause), the soul, and the intellect. Lower philosophy included the study of the physical sciences, the body, creation, matter, and form. Al-Kindi argued that the forms of the underworld were created from nothing in the time dimension. This view was not objectionable to the *mutakallimin*, who also held that nature was created from nothing. In his study of *wujūd*, al-Kindi explained that creation occurs through emanation, a process in which the prima causa constantly radiates itself, giving rise to the forms of nature at various levels.¹⁹ Despite the abundance of scholarship on *wujūd ilāhiyyat*, some *mutakallimīn* still resist al-Kindi's views on the subject because they perceive him as giving too much weight to reason. Al-Kindi identified the Active Intellect with the Angel Gabriel and sees revelation as an achievement of the soul. However, he also used the term "intellect" as a philosophical term for wujūd ilāhiyyat itself. Al-Kindi himself admitted that human reasoning is incapable of reaching knowledge of the Absolute Existence.²⁰

Felix Klein-Franke²¹ argued that al-Kindi, the first philosopher in the Islamic world, rejected the absolutist conception of matter that was accepted by the *kalām* theologians.²² Al-Fārābī, a pivotal figure in the development of Islamic philosophy, radically developed the Neo-Platonic characteristics introduced by alResearch Article

Kindi. He was also a leading exponent of alhikmat al-mashā'iyyat. In addition to his radicalization of the emanation of form in Islamic philosophy, al-Fārābī systematically developed a logical system. He distinguished logic as the science of the rules of correct thinking from grammar as the science of correct language. Al-Fārābī's mastery of grammar enabled him to make philosophical explanations more accessible.²³ Therefore, it is not surprising why Ibn Sīnā would later be able to understand Aristotle's teachings well after studying althoughts. This Turkish-born Fārābī's really understood Aristotle's philosopher thoughts. This is also what makes al-Fārābī known as the second teacher (al-mu'allim althānī), while the title as the first teacher (almu'allim al-ulā) was attributed to Aristotle.²⁴ Al-Fārābī's linguistic contributions made Arabic a more suitable vehicle for philosophical discourse, thereby facilitating the naturalization of philosophical principles from Greek and Syria. ²⁵ The rich philosophical language developed by al-Fārābī was also instrumental in the initiation of Ibn Sīnā's philosophy. It thus contributed to other intellectual schools in the Islamic world, such as the study of *wujūd* in kalām and irfān.

According to Al-Fārābī, God is the First Being (*al-Mawjūd al-Awwal*) and the First Cause (*al-Sabab al-Awwal*) of all that exists (*mawjūd*). This means that God is the ontological and causal foundation of all reality. ²⁶ Al-Fārābī's metaphysical study of *wujūd* revolutionized Islamic thought, imbuing it with a new sense of divinity. He also pioneered the development of logic and reasoning in the Islamic world, providing essential tools for the rigorous pursuit

establishes the demarcation between the philosophies of Leibniz and Spinoza. Miswari, *Filsafat Terakhir*, 258–259.

¹⁹ Abû Ishâq Al-Kindî, "Risâlah fî Hudûd Al-Asyyâ," in *Rasâ`il Al-Kindiy Al-Falsafiyyah*, ed. Muhammad 'Abdulhâdî (Kairo: Dâr al-Fikr al-'Arabiy, t.t.), 18.

²⁰ Abû Ishâq Al-Kindî, "Risâlah", 19-20.

²¹ Klein-Franke, "Al-Kindi", 171.

²² M. Saeed Sheikh,, *Islamic Philosophy* (London: The Octagon Press, 1982), 131. In the realm of modern Western philosophy, it is this distinction in principles that

²³ Fakhry, A History of Islamic Philosophy, 107.

²⁴ Corbin, History of Islamic Philosophy, 160.

²⁵ Deborah L. Black, "Al-Farabi," in *History of Islamic Philosophy Vol. I*, ed. Seyyed Hossein Nasr and Oliver Leaman (London & New York: Routledge, 1996), 222.

²⁶ Al-Fârâbî, Ara Ahl al-Madînah al Fâdhilah, (Mesir: Dâr wa Maktabah al-Hilal, 1995), 5.

of knowledge.²⁷ However, as an Aristotelian, al-Fārābī developed a philosophical system based on the centrality of concepts (*taṣawwur*) and affirmations (*taṣdīq*) in the production of definitions and demonstrative syllogisms. For al-Fārābī, knowledge must be certain.²⁸ This principle will serve as the foundation for later philosophers to develop the principle of certainty in the reality of being, which is the standard for exact knowledge.

Al-Fārābī was the first Muslim philosopher to classify wujūd in its manifestations as the power of the soul, dividing it into the power of nutrition, perception, and intellect. Ibn Sīnā later systematically refined this classification. Al-Fārābī also provided a systematic explanation of the imaginative power, which he viewed as a component of the soul. He argued that the imaginative power stores images from sensory perception and can also modify them. For example, the imagination can combine the image of a horse's body with the image of bird's wings to create the image of a pegasus.²⁹ Al-Fārābī's sophisticated explanation of the soul's power led him to the view that revelation is the soul's ability to reach a higher natural reality. This view was highly controversial, contradicting the prevailing theological doctrines of kalām, but it inspired both Sufis and philosophers who came after him.30

The manifestation of *wujūd* (being) in the form of an intellectual system is a central concern for philosophers. Al-Fārābī distinguished four classifications of the intellect (*'aql*): potential intellect (*al-'aql bi al-quwwah*), actual intellect (*al-'aql bi al-fi'l*), acquisition intellect (*al-'aql al-mustafad*), and active intellect

³¹ Black, "Knowledge ('ilm) and Certitude (Yaqīn) in Al-Fārābī's Epistemology.", 20-23 Research Article

(al-'aql al-fa'āl). Al-Fārābī's scheme, knowledge begins with the potential intellect's formation of the concept (*māhiyah*) of an extended entity in the sensory realm. This intelligible conception is through contemplation, then actualized culminating in the acquisition intellect. Through further contemplation, the intellect ascends to the active intellect, the source of all knowledge.³¹ Al-Fārābī ingeniously infused the Aristotelian concept of the soul with divine nuances by asserting that prophecy is the culmination of the soul's ascent to the active intellect. 32 Black 33 argued that al-Fārābī was aware of the Neo-Platonic origins of the theory of emanation, which he intentionally used to fill the void of divine discourse in Aristotelian philosophy.³⁴ In Plotinus' metaphysics, the One Being, the ultimate reality, is so perfect that it cannot produce a plurality of forms directly. Therefore, it produces the first intellect, nous. Nous then produces the soul, and the soul produces matter (hyle). Matter is the passive substrate that, when united with form, produces material existence.³⁵

Al-Fārābī was the first philosopher to discern that Aristotle had alluded to the distinction between *māhiyat* and *wujūd*. He elaborated on this distinction in his scheme of differences in *wujūd* and *māhiyat*, which later became a cornerstone of the philosophy of Mullā Sadrā and Mullā Hadī Sabzawarī.³⁶ Aristotle's prima causa, or first cause, is the perpetrator of the activity of thinking about thinking (noesis noeseos).³⁷Al-Fārābī described this First Cause as Being thinking about Himself, because at the dawn of creation there was nothing but Him, the First. Al-Fārābī's theory of emanation describes how the First Intellect (*al-Awwāl*) emanates from

³³ Black, "Al-Farabi,", 216.

³⁴ Kartanegara, Gerbang Kearifan: Sebuah Pengantar Filsafat Islam, 45.

 35 Lee and O'Meara, "Plotinus: An Introduction to the Enneads." 229.

³⁶ Izutsu, Struktur Metafisika Sabzawari, 15.

³⁷ Reeve C. D. C., "Good and Bad in Aristotle," in *Evil in Aristotle* (Cambridge University Press, 2018), 17–31, https://www.cambridge.org/core/product/identifier/97813 16676813%23CN-bp-1/type/book_part.

²⁷ Deborah L. Black, "Knowledge ('ilm) and Certitude (Yaqīn) in Al-Fārābī's Epistemology," *Arabic Sciences and Philosophy*, 2006, 11-45.

²⁸ Nicholas Rescher, "Al-Farabi on Logical Tradition," *Journal of the History of Ideas* (1963), 127.

²⁹ Black, "Al-Farabi", 224.

³⁰ Humaidi, Paradigma Sains Integratif Al-Farabi, 215.

³² Humaidi, Paradigma Sains Integratif Al-Farabi, 36.

the One Being (al-Wāhid). The First Intellect then thinks about itself and its source of emanation, producing the Second Intellect. This process continues until the Ninth Intellect is produced.³⁸ Drawing on Aristotelian, Neo-Platonic, and Ptolemaic cosmological concepts, al-Fārābī's posited that the tenth intellect gives shape and actualizes human reason, while the ninth intellect produces the moon and the tenth intellect. The moon, in turn, produces matter. The set of three entities-matter, form, and intellect-produces humans and all other creatures of the material realm. Al-Fārābī's concept of noesis noeseos, or thinking about thinking, connects these Aristotelian and Neo-Platonic elements of his cosmology, while also incorporating Islamic concepts of revelation.³⁹ The Our'an describes that God created the seven heavens and the world in seven times. These postulates are connected with the concept of emanation, which posits that all of reality emanates from a single, transcendent source.

Following al-Kindī and al-Fārābī, the next Islamic philosopher from the Peripatetic school to continue the discussion of *wujūd* was Ibn Sīnā, known as the Shaykh al-Rais. His precocious intelligence and prodigious memory enabled him to master a wide range of scientific disciplines at a young age. Ibn Sīnā authored many works, the most famous of which is the encyclopedic al-Shifā', which covers metaphysics, logic, mathematics, physics, biology, and medicine. Another important encyclopedic work by Ibn Sīnā, al-Ishārāt wa al-Tanbīhāt, discusses ontology, logic, physics, and sufism.40

Ibn Sīnā's metaphysical discourse in Islamic philosophy continues the tradition of manifest discourse inherited from al-Fārābī. One of the Research Article

important discussions Islamic most in metaphysics is that of *wujūd*. The term *wujūd* is derived from the Arabic word wujida, which means "to find". It corresponds to the term "existence" in Western philosophy. While the term *wujūd* is often translated as "existence", it is important to note that it has a unique meaning in Islamic thought.⁴¹ Ibn Sīnā's elucidation of the distinction between *wujūd* and *māhiyat* is one of his most significant contributions to Islamic metaphysics. Al-Fārābī first made this distinction, but Ibn Sīnā developed it in much greater detail. Ibn Sīnā analyzed a single entity in the mental realm (mind) and discovered that each entity is divided into its existence (*wujūd*) and its whatness (*māhiyah*). In external reality, an entity is a single, non-dual entity, but it can be mentally analyzed into its wujūd and māhiyah. Anything that can be an answer to the question "what is it" is *māhiyat*.⁴²

Ibn Sīnā argued that *wujūd* is more fundamental than *māhiyah*, which is merely an addition to wujūd. Since each extension (mawjūdat) is a single, non-dual entity, if māhiyat were a fundamental form, it would be only a conception with no reality. Muslim philosophers after Ibn Sīnā, such as Shihab al-Dīn al-Suhrawardī and Mīr Dāmād, opposed his view, arguing that *māhiyat* is more fundamental than *wujūd*. They reasoned that *wujūd* is always only a predicate for *māhiyat*. For example, in the statements "The table is exist" and "The horse is exist," *wujūd* is merely a predicate that asserts the existence of the subject, which is defined by its māhiyat (tablehood or horseness). Since the predicate is only a copula that connects the

³⁸ Majid Fakhry, "Al-Farabi and the Reconciliation of Plato and Aristotle," *Journal of the History of Ideas* (1965), 469.

³⁹ Majid Fakhry, "Al-Farabi, 469.

⁴⁰ Jon McGinnis, "Scientific Methodologies in Medieval Islam," *Journal of the History of Philosophy* 41, no. 3 (2003): 307–327,

http://muse.jhu.edu/content/crossref/journals/journal_of_t he_history_of_philosophy/v041/41.3mcginnis.html.

⁴¹ Alparslan Açıkgenç, Being and Existence in Ṣadrā and Heidegger: A Comparative Ontology (Kuala Lumpur: ISCAC, 1993), 21–23.

⁴² Seyyed Hossein Nasr, *Islamic Philosophy From Its Origin to the Present* (New York: State University of New York Press, 2006), 65.

subject to its existence, *māhiyat* is the more fundamental reality.⁴³

The debate over the fundamentality of wujūd and māhiyat arose because the scholars involved, both supporters and opponents of Ibn Sīnā, interpreted his statement that wujūd was more fundamental in the mental realm. Ibn Sīnā himself did not explicitly explain this distinction. It was Nasr al-Dīn al-Thūsī who later clarified that Ibn Sīnā intended wujūd to be more fundamental than *māhiyat* in the external domain, but accepted *māhiyat* as more fundamental in the mental realm.44 Mullā Sadrā argued that *wujūd* is more fundamental than *māhiyāt*, but not on the basis of the classification of form from Ibn Sīnā's perspective. Ibn Sīnā held that existence is fundamental to external reality, and that each *wujūd* is different in each extension (huwiyyah). Mullā Sadrā, on the other hand, maintained that external reality is graded into each extension, becoming different until the emergence of diversity due to differences in mentally projected *māhiyat*.⁴⁵

Al-Fārābī divided form into two parts, while Ibn Sīnā divided form into three parts: Wājib al-Wujūd (necessary being), mumkīn al-wujūd (possible being), and mumtanī al-wujūd (impossible being). Ibn Sīnā's tripartite division is more nuanced and captures the full range of beings that can be conceived by human reason. Mumtanī al-wujūd refers to beings that are impossible to have reference to reality, such as shārik al-Bārī (God's partner).⁴⁶ In Ibn Sīnā's philosophy, *wujūd* is divided into two categories: wājib al-wujūd and mumkīn al-wujūd. Wājib al*wujūd* is a being that exists by necessity, while mumkīn al-wujūd is a being that exists by possibility. *Wājib al-wujūd* is further divided into

two types: *wājib al-wujūd bi nafsihī* (necessary being by itself), which is the one who gives *wujūd* to *mumkīn al-wujūd*, and *wājib al-wujūd lī ghayrihī* (necessary being by another), which is *wājib al-wujūd* that is given *wujūd* by *wājib alwujūd bi nafsihī*.⁴⁷

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In Ibn Sīnā's thought, *māhiyat* is divided into two types. The first is *māhiyat* which is the answer to every question, "What is it?" This type of *māhiyat* is universal and can be applied to all beings of the same kind. For example, the *māhiyat* of "human" is the set of essential attributes that makes something a human, such as having two arms, two legs, and the capacity for reason. The second is *māhiyat* which does not separate from *wujūd* namely what is attributed to *wājib al-wujūd bī nafsihī*. This type of *māhiyah* is unique to each individual being and is inseparable from its existence. For example, the *māhiyat* of the specific human being Socrates is inseparable from his existence as Socrates.⁴⁸

The of the philosophers' case misunderstanding in interpreting Ibn Sīnā's explanation of the fundamentality of *wujūd* on māhiyat highlights the importance of distinguishing between the conceptual and real *wujūd* in understanding philosophy. This distinction is essential for clearly interpreting explanations of the concept of wujūd and its reality, as well as explanations of motion. Conceptually, motion is the abstraction of the mind over two moments of time. In external reality, however, motion occurs in several accidental parts, namely quality, quantity, position, and place. Motion is also related to six things: a moving subject, the cause of the move, the location of the motion, the origin of the motion, the purpose of the motion, and time as

⁴³ Izutsu, Struktur Metafisika Sabzawari, 47.

⁴⁴ Seyyed Hossein Nasr, "Existence (Wujūd) and Quiddity (Māhiyyah) in Islamic Philosophy," *International Philosophical Quarterly* 29, no. 4 (1989): 409–428, http://www.pdcnet.org/oom/service?url_ver=Z39.88-2004&rft_val_fmt=&rft.imuse_id=ipq_1989_0029_0004_040 9_0428&svc_id=info:www.pdcnet.org/collection.

⁴⁵ Susilo, "Teori Gradasi: Komparasi Antara Ibn Sina, Suhrawardi Dan Mulla Sadra."

⁴⁶ Mulyadhi Kartanegara, *Menembus Batas Waktu: Panorama Filsafat Islam,* 2005, 34–35.

⁴⁷ Hanafi, *Filsafat Islam*, 126.

⁴⁸ Syah Reza, "Konsep Nafs Menurut Ibnu Sina," *Kalimah* 12, no. 2 (September 15, 2014): 263, http://ejournal.unida.gontor.ac.id/index.php/kalimah/artic le/view/239

an abstracted measure of the displacement of something that moves.⁴⁹

Causality arises from the observation of motion. For Ibn Sīnā, motion is the change of the accidental parts of a substance, such as its quality, quantity, position, or place. ⁵⁰ The substance itself is not considered to be moving, because motion is a matter of two extensions, or two moments in time.⁵¹

Ibn Sīnā views the soul as a manifestation of *wujūd* and a part of the substance, and thus it is not involved in the laws of motion. According to him, the soul only uses the body as an instrument, like a machinist driving a train. This is why the soul is said to only come to the body after the body is perfect, and hence Ibn Sīnā defined the soul as the first perfection of the body.⁵² Ibn Sīnā's definition of the soul as the first perfection of the body is based on the argument that the soul remains intact even when the body is damaged or reduced. For example, if a person loses a limb, they still retain their knowledge about themselves.⁵³ Therefore, the perfection of the body that Ibn Sīnā refers to is the first perfection of the soul, because the soul continues to journey towards endless perfection even after it is separated from the body.54

Ibn Sīnā identified eight mental faculties, which he divided into three divisions: nutritive faculties (the power to absorb nutrients, the power to grow, and the power to reproduce), perceptive faculties (the power to move with the will, the power to perceive, the power to imagine, and the power to estimate), and rational faculties (the power of intellect). The first three faculties are possessed by plants, the first seven faculties are possessed by animals, and only humans possess all eight faculties. The power of intellect is the most unique human faculty, and it is divided into practical thinking and theoretical reasoning. Theoretical intellect is further divided into four types: *hayūla* intellect (the potential to think that has not yet been actualized), *malakūt* intellect (the mind that is trained to accept abstract things), actual intellect (the mind that is used to think abstract things), and acquired/*mustafad* intellect (the mind that is able to receive an abundance of *wujūd* from the active intellect).⁵⁵

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Ibn Sīnā held that the soul and the body are two distinct substances. Consequently, when the body dies, the soul's *wujūd* is free to leave it. According to Ibn Sīnā, only the soul will be resurrected on the Day of Judgment. This view was strongly opposed by theologians, such as Abū Hamid al-Ghazalī.⁵⁶ Another criticism of Ibn Sīnā is his view of the origin of the universe.⁵⁷ Abū Hamid al-Ghazalī insisted that the universe was created in time from nothing. He argued that if the universe were eternal, it would have existed alongside God, which is impossible because only God is eternal.⁵⁸ Ibn Sīna held that the universe did not come into existence from nothing, but rather from something that has always existed.⁵⁹ Such a view was attributed to the fact that in the principles of philosophy, it is impossible to give. In other words, it is impossible to incarnate existence from nothing, just like what occurs to the universe. Another contradiction of the kalām views between Abū

⁵⁶ Farouk Mitha, *Al-Ghazali and the Ismailis: Debate on Reason and Authority in Medieval Islam* (London & New York: I.B. Taurus Publisher, 2001), 86–88.

⁵⁷ Qadir, C.A., *Philosophy and Science in The Islamic World* (London & New York: Routledge, 2013), 82.

⁵⁸ Sheikh, Islamic Philosophy, 87–88.

⁵⁹ Nurcholish Madjid, *Ibn Taimiyah tentang Kalam dan Falsafah*, (Jakarta, Nurcholish Madjid Society, 2020), 149-150.

⁴⁹ Hanafi, *Filsafat Islam*, 131–132.

⁵⁰ Miswari, Filsafat Terakhir, 146–147.

⁵¹ Kiki Kennedy-Day, "Ibn Sina," in Books of

Definition in Islamic Philosophy (Abingdon, UK: Taylor & Francis, 2010), 51,

https://www.taylorfrancis.com/books/9780203221372.

⁵² Sīnā, Ibn, al-Nafs min Kitâb al-Syifā, (Qum: Markaz al-Nasyr-Maktab al-Islām al-Islāmī, 1417 H.), 28-29.

⁵³ Nusution, Harun, Falsafat dan Mistisme dalam Islam: Filsafat Islam, Mistisme Islam, dan Tasawuf (Jakarta: Bulan Bintang, 2018), 23.

⁵⁴ Hanafi, Filsafat Islam, 133.

⁵⁵ Sînâ, Ibn, al-Nafs min Kitāb al-Syifā, 32-35.

Hamid al-Ghazalī's to Ibn Sīnā's philosophy is about God's knowledge of the particular.⁶⁰

According to Abū Hamid al-Ghazali, God can know the particulars known to humans. Ibn Sina, on the other hand, argued that God does not know particulars in the same way that humans do. If God did know particulars in the same way that humans do, then God's knowledge would be the same as human knowledge, which is impossible. Al-Ghazali was one of the few theologians who had a deep understanding of philosophy. He was able to challenge the philosophical postulates of the Peripatetic school (al-Hikmah al-Mashā'iyyah) quite effectively. His understanding of philosophy is evident in his works on logic, such as Mi'yār al-'Ilm fī al-Manțiq, and epistemology, such as al-Maqāşid al-Falāsifah. The latter work was written as a prelude to his critique of Peripatetic philosophy.⁶¹

Discourse of Wujūd in School of *al-Hikmah al-Mashā'iyyat*

The next thinker closely related to the thought of Mulla Sadra is Shihab al-Dīn al-Suhrawardī. According to Ziai,62 in contrast to the Peripatetic school, Suhrawardi replaced Ibn Sina's terminology of *wujūd* with the analogy of light. He termed *wājib al-wujūd bī nafsihī* as Nur al-Anwār (light of all lights). Similarly, he replaced the levels of intelligence with anwār almujarradah (abstract intellects).63 Shihab al-Dīn al-Suhrawardī held that the true knowledge comes from within.⁶⁴ This view is similar to the recognized knowledge of the Sufis. However, Suhrawadi uniquely arrived this at understanding through a dream encounter with Hossein Ziai has Aristotle. stated that Suhrawardi's presence symbolizes the victory of Platonism over Aristotelianism.65

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The accuracy of awareness-based knowledge is the spirit of Shihab al-Din al-Suhrawardi's critique of the Peripatetics' fundamental foundation: definition. definition is a formula that reveals the essence of a thing and its constituent elements. According to Suhrawardi, defining something requires an understanding of the terms used in the definition. For example, the definition "Humans are thinking animals" requires knowledge of what "thinking" is. If "thinking" is not known, then it is necessary to first define "thinking". But this new definition will also require knowledge of new terms, and so on. This process of defining terms leads to an infinite regress, which is impossible.

Shihab al-Din al-Suhrawardi argued that Aristotelian definitions prioritize knowledge over the essence to be known. For example, the definition "Humans are thinking animals" prioritizes knowledge of what "thinking" is over knowledge of what "human" is. Suhrawardi further argued that the term "animals" is even more obscure than the term "human" in explaining the essence of "human". In other words, the essence of "thinking" is the essence of "human", but it is impossible to define "thinking" using other terms. Therefore, Suhrawadi rejected the basis of Peripatetic epistemology, which is to build knowledge through definitions, propositions, and syllogisms.⁶⁶ All reasoning, whether inductive or deductive, depends on the acceptance of definitions. For example, in the deductive reasoning "All men will die; Aristotle is a man; therefore, Aristotle must die," the validity of the argument depends on the definition of "man." If

⁶⁰ Louay Safi, *The Foundation of Knowledge* (Selangor: IIUM Press, 1996), 96.

⁶¹ Safi, The Foundation of Knowledge, 96.

⁶² Ziai, "Shihab Al-Din Suhrawardi: Founder of the Illuminationist," 434.

⁶³ Ziai, Suhrawardi Dan Filsafat Illuminasi, 225–227.

⁶⁴ Syihab al-Dîn Suhrawardî, "Hikmah Al-Isyrâq," in *Majmû'ah Muśannafât Syaikh* Al-*Isyrâq Vol. II* (Teheran: Pezhuhesgâh Olûm-e Insânî va Moțâla"ât-e Farhangge, 1979), 11.

⁶⁵ Ziai, "Shihab Al-Din Suhrawardi: Founder of the Illuminationist,", 437.

⁶⁶ Suhrawardi, "Hikmah Al-Isyrâq", 13.

the definition of "man" is incomplete, then the reasoning becomes meaningless.⁶⁷

Shihab al-Din al-Suhrawardi and some other philosophers argued that Aristotelian definitions cannot provide knowledge because they require knowledge that has already been proven. Such knowledge is self-evident and does not need a definition. Suhrawadi termed this knowledge the "vision of illumination," which he analogized to light. Nothing is brighter than light, so any attempt to define light using other terms is useless. Self-evident knowledge is acquired through direct experience or vision. Suhrawardi argued that self-awareness is a prerequisite for true knowledge (*al-'ulūm alhaqīqiyyah*).

For Shihab al-Dīn al-Suhrawardī, Knowledge must be comprehensive, not partial or redundant. The definition "Humans are thinking animals" is a combination of several terms, and if each term is defined separately, the definition will be redundant.⁶⁸ Knowledge of something requires self-awareness (mudriq). Both the Source of Light and its rays are selfaware, except for those that are completely devoid of light (darkness).

Shihab al-Dn al-Suhrawardī replaced the system of reason (intellect) that reaches 'aql mustafad derived from knowledge of the active mind with the idea of light. The idea of light is obtained through vision and illumination. Vision is self-preparation to attain direct knowledge. Vision occurs when $N\bar{u}r$ al-Anw $\bar{a}r$ illuminates everything so that vision and illumination are an inseparable whole. Human knowledge in this system occurs because of self-awareness through the principle of light that controls (al-anw $\bar{a}r$ al-q $\bar{a}hirah$) and the light that governs (al-anw $\bar{a}r$ al-mudabbirah) who came from $N\bar{u}r$ al-Anw $\bar{a}r$.⁶⁹ The knowledge that is present to humans in this system is called $n\bar{u}r$ al-isfahbat.

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This experience is called the apocalyptic light (*al-anwār al-sanihah*).⁷⁰ The teachings of Shihab al-Dīn al-Suhrawardī were then continued by Qutb al-Dīn Shirazī and his teacher Mullā Sadrā, Mīr Dāmād.

Shihab al-Din al-Suhrawardi's system of direct knowledge through self-awareness can be said to have inspired Mulla Sadra in formulating his concept of the union of the subject and object (*ittihad al-'āqil wa al-ma'qūl*). However, Sadra's concept is more similar to that of Ibn 'Arabi. Suhrawardi's philosophy greatly influenced Sadra, especially in his view that a good philosopher must have a broad mind and sound reasoning abilities. Meanwhile, Sadra criticized Suhrawardi on the fundamental issue of *māhiyat* (essence). For Suhrawardi, *māhiyat* is the basis of reality, while Sadra argued that *wujūd* (existence) is fundamental.

Conclusion

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The Peripatetic school of Islamic philosophy, pioneered by al-Kindi, developed systematically by al-Farabi, and perfected by Ibn Sina, is characterized by its emphasis on the distinction between essence ($m\bar{a}hiyat$) and existence ($wuj\bar{u}d$). In the intellectual dimension, $wuj\bar{u}d$ is an addition to $m\bar{a}hiyat$), but in external reality, $wuj\bar{u}d$ is fundamental. There are various wujud in external reality, which differ according to their $m\bar{a}hiyat$).

In contrast to the Peripatetic school, Shihab al-Din al-Suhrawardi, the founder of the Illuminationist school, replaced $wuj\bar{u}d$ with $n\bar{u}r$ (light) as the fundamental principle of reality. In the Illuminationist system, $wuj\bar{u}d$, as in mental reality, is only an addition to *mahiyah*. The distinction between the Peripatetic and Illuminationist schools can be used to develop a more effective approach to teaching Islamic thought. In particular, students should be taught

⁶⁷ Husein Heriyanto, *Refleksi Kritis Terhadap Persepsi* Populer tentang Logika Modern dan Indonsivisme (Jakarta, 2019), 3–4.

⁶⁸ Muhammad Muslih, "Kesadaran Intuitif Plus Cahaya Ilahiyah: Husserl Di Muka Cermin Suhrawardi,"

TSAQAFAH 5, no. 1 (May 31, 2009), 29, http://ejournal.unida.gontor.ac.id/index.php/tsaqafah/artic le/view/146.

⁶⁹ Suhrawardî, "Hikmah Al-Isyrâq,", 11-12.

⁷⁰ Ziai, Suhrawardi dan Filsafat Illuminasi, 225–227.

to identify the key differences between the two schools in order to better understand the diverse range of Islamic thought.

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