

AL-'ILM AL-HUDHURI: Philosophical Epistemology and Sufism Common Ground



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Abstract

This article investigates the possibility of finding common ground between philosophy and Sufism. It aims to answer whether these two can converge on an epistemological level. The discourse of *al-'ilm al-hudhuri* was used to answer this question. The main source for this article's study is the works of Mulla Sadra and Suhrawardi, which are analyzed descriptively with a philosophical approach. This article concludes that *al-'ilm al-hudhuri* is a form of real knowledge obtained by individuals directly from God without needing mental representation or linguistic symbolism. This knowledge is spiritual, not sensory-rational. Mulla Sadra and Suhrawardi believe that the only way to obtain this knowledge is through spiritual observation by practicing Sufism, which involves the rites of *mujadah* and *riyadhah*.

Abstrak

Artikel ini menggali kemungkinan titik temu antara filsafat dan tasawuf. Hal ini bertujuan untuk menjawab pertanyaan apakah keduanya dapat menyatu pada tataran epistemologis. Wacana *al-'ilm al-hudhuri* digunakan untuk menjawab pertanyaan ini. Sumber utama studi artikel ini adalah karya-karya Mulla Shadra dan Suhrawardi, yang dianalisis secara deskriptif dengan pendekatan filosofis. Artikel ini menyimpulkan bahwa *al-'ilm al-hudhuri* merupakan suatu bentuk pengetahuan nyata yang diperoleh individu langsung dari Tuhannya tanpa memerlukan representasi mental atau simbolisme linguistik. Pengetahuan ini bersifat spiritual dan tidak rasional-indrawi. Mulla Sadra dan Suhrawardi meyakini bahwa satu-satunya cara memperoleh ilmu tersebut adalah melalui observasi spiritual dengan mengamalkan tasawuf yang melibatkan ritus *mujadah* dan *riyadhah*.

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INTRODUCTION

The issue of knowledge is one of the primary concerns in philosophy. It is undeniable that humans possess knowledge, but how does this knowledge come into existence and become present within us? This question is a fundamental problem in the study of philosophy, specifically in the field of epistemology.

Philosophy, in general, has discussed this issue since its inception. Plato proposed a theory about the world of 'Ideas' (Al-Jurr, 2014; Ellwood, 1969, p. 18). Plato thought that before the soul entered the material realm, it was already in the realm of ideas. Because the soul is non-material, the process occurs when it is released from the realm of perfection so that it then joins and is bound with matter. The process of merging leads to the loss of once-existing perfections. Living with the body requires an effort to recall what already exists in the realm of perfection or the realm of ideas (Walid, 2023, pp. 41 – 42).

Plato based his theory on dividing two realms. First is the world of becoming, namely the realm of our daily lives, which is constantly changing and not permanent. Second, the world of being (the world of existence or the realm of ideas) is the ideal world that is permanent and eternal. This ideal world contains ideal forms or, in Plato's



language, *Eidos*. These two worlds are interconnected because the second world originates from the first and can be known through human conscience.

According to Plato, ultimate reality is not in the world of becoming. It is just a shadow of the real world, namely the world of being. The forms that exist in the world of being are eternal so that every soul that is also eternal, before descending to the material realm, already knows all the forms that exist in that nature; these forms are present in the soul of every human being and never separated forever, but when the soul merges with matter and becomes a human individual, everything that exists and is known to the soul from the realm of the Idea is forgotten. As he mentioned:

"The soul is like the eye. When it looks at something that is illuminated by truth and being, the soul can perceive and understand, and the soul shines with intelligence; but when it is diverted to the dimness of a world where everything changes and perishes, the soul acquires only opinions, while the gleam of its intelligence dims, and once it acquires an opinion, then another, so that it seems to have no more intelligence..." (Russel, 2002, p. 170).

In Plato's view, human knowledge is nothing more than an effort to recall what previously existed in the realm of the soul. The memories of what is in his soul return through specific senses and perceptions of thoughts. All particular concepts in the material realm are shadows reflected from the eternal and immutable realm of Ideas from the world of being in which the soul once lived. If they already know something or have certain ideas, a transformation occurs back into the reality that they knew from the realm of Ideas.

Plato believed that feeling or contemplating particular concepts is just a means of retrieving lost memories. Rational knowledge, released in the realm of the senses, is immediately tied to the abstract reality that exists in the realm of Ideas or the world of being, in which knowledge basically precedes the sensing process and cannot arise without a memory process.

Aristotle and his instructor differed significantly in their epistemic conceptions prior to Plato. However, Aristotle believed that knowledge could not come from a single source—reason alone. While Plato relies solely on reason, Aristotle also acknowledges the importance of other sources, including the senses. Aristotle vehemently disagreed with the teacher's assertion that there is a realm of ideas because, in his view, knowledge is generated through the absorption of information and is not reliant on the memory of previously learned material. Information in the form of universal ratios or a specific form derived from the senses enters the human soul through human senses and cognitive processes.

Aristotle's view that the human soul is not immature, as Plato claimed, but rather grows and develops in tandem with changes in matter before its formation is a crucial and fundamental difference that gives Aristotle a different way of thinking about epistemology. Preceding the occurrence of perception and thought, the prior soul possesses no knowledge. However, to bolster his arguments, Aristotle demonstrated how the soul may produce universal knowledge about things like humans and animals, among other things.

Aristotle concluded from the preceding material that the perception of particular knowledge comes before universal knowledge, as Ja'far Subhani stated: "Unlike what Plato claims, Aristotle believed that particular perception (*idrak*) came before universal perception." (Subhani, 1991, p. 84). In brief, Aristotle's presentation of the essential foundation for epistemology is that universal propositions arise from the soul's creation

of sensory perception of specific objects; in other words, the soul was ignorant prior to the occurrence of sensory perception.

When these two opposing epistemological stances first appeared in the annals of philosophy, remarkable distinctions began to appear in the philosophical arena. Particularly, there are differing epistemological perspectives within the Islamic community, and among Islamic philosophical schools, such as the *Masya'iyah* and *Isyraqiyyah* schools. The most notable distinction lies between Sufism and philosophy, as well as different schools of thought.

Sufism, one of the esoteric treasures of Islam's mystical traditions, is based on the idea that the external world is only an illusion and cannot be trusted. The spiritual or inner reality, concealed behind the outward world, contains the genuine truth. Sufis view knowledge acquired by reason or the senses as erroneous because it fails to represent reality accurately.

Is there a space for Sufism and philosophy to engage epistemically? Discussing *al-'ilm al-hudhūri* (knowledge by presence) will address this option. Numerous scholarly publications have attempted to clarify this area of knowledge, including *Hudhuri Mulla Sadra's Epistemology of Science* by Fathul Mufid (2012), *Huduri Science and the Consciousness of Mystical Unity: A Critical Review of the Thought of Mehdi Ha'iri Yazdi* by Abdullah (2013), *Hudhuri Science: Treasures of Islamic Epistemology* by Saidurrahman, (Saidurrahman, 2014) *The Role of Hushuli and Hudhuri Science in Proving the Existence of God* by Maulana (2019), *Unraveling the Silence of Mystical Language: From Analytics to Epistemology Hudhūri* by Muhammad Sabri (2017), *Husuli and Hudhuri in the Context of the Philosophy of Hikmat Muta'aliyyah* by Kholid Al Walid (Al Walid, 2020), and *Al-'Ilm al-Hudhuri Knowledge by Presence an Epistemological Bridge Between Philosophy and Mysticism* by Sayyed Mohammad Reza (Hejazi, 2010). Among the numerous scientific publications that examine *al-'ilm al-hudhūri*, this one unifies and explores the encounter of *al-'ilm al-hudhūri* as a common ground for the epistemology of philosophy and Sufism. The descriptive method of analysis and the philosophical Sufism literature, such as *Al-Ḥikmah al-Muta'aliyah fī al-Asfar al-'Aqliyah al-Arba'ah*, *Al-Futūḥat al-Makkiyyah*, *Fushūsh al-Ḥikam The Principles of Epistemology in Islamic Philosophy: Knowledge by Presence*, *Bidayah al-Ḥikmah*, will be filled up by this article.

MUKASYAFAH: FOUNDATIONS OF EPISTEMOLOGY IN SUFISM

In Sufism, knowledge is acquired through inner witnessing, known as *mukasyafah*. Mukasyafah comes from the word *k-sy-f*, which means the opening or removal of the curtain between a person and a certain object (Darmawan, 2020). Dawūd al-Qaishari—a Sufi interpreter of Ibn 'Arabi's thoughts—explained that the revelation (*al-kasyf*) linguistically is the removal of the hijab. A sentence indicates that the woman has revealed her face (*kasyafat al-mar'atu wajhaha*), which means she has removed her veil (*niqab*). The term refers to understanding the meaning underlying the hijab, including supernatural and real matters (*ḥaqiqiyyah*), both existentially (*wujūd*) and witnessing (*syuhūd*) (Al-Qaishari, 1382). Al-Jurjani, an expert on terms in Islamic knowledge, defines *mukasyafah* as a presence that cannot be explained in terms of *bayan* (Al-Jurjani, 2012).

According to Imam al-Qusyairi, *mukasyafah* is the result of performing the muḥadharah ritual. The essence of muḥadharah is the heart's presence, perhaps

accompanied by the assertion of truth (*burhan*). The verses of Allah bind the ascetic while he is in this maqam (spiritual degree). The presence of the heart, followed by an explanation (*bayan*), is known as *mukasyafah*. At this point, the ascetic is receptive to the Essence of Allah. Then, *musyahadah* (Ibn Faris, 1994) refers to the presence of the truth without being accompanied by doubt and confusion or senility, in which the person at this level is met with the Essence of Allah (Al – Qusyairi, 2011).

From the above description, it is clearly stated that *mukasyafah* is the result of a spiritual process carried out by a spiritual traveler when he crosses various spiritual levels (*maqamat*) (Al – Anshari, 2007). Using their inner senses, they experience different kinds of witnessing depending on their level of nature. These testimonies come in different forms and are meant as a guidance for the spiritual journey. In addition to the fact that the witnessing typically takes the form of symbols, the emerging messages are difficult to understand. Frequently, the observed messages also lie on a low level. The truth is that *mukasyafah* is nothing but a manifestation of Allah (*tajalli al-asma'*) on the entire part of nature at each level.

ARGUMENT FOR THE EXISTENCE OF MUKASYFAH

From a materialist perspective, some individuals in the Sufi community believe that spiritual testimonies are essentially meaningless. In contrast, others contend that what Sufis frequently say is only a fantasy, not the true world.

A materialistic perspective underlies many objections, yet there is no longer a need to provide evidence for the existence of worlds other than the material one. The material realm is the lowest of all the realms; the upper realms are of a significantly higher caliber. Because material nature is merely causal, its potential is restricted. However, humans differ from other material beings because human nature includes all natural truths.

Humans possess an inner sense called the soul, which allows them to perceive things that are not made of matter. To put it simply, people observe a great deal of non – material things, like love, hate, longing, and so forth. Since none of these objects are made of matter, they can all be measured or have external objects.

The Qur'an has numerous verses that allude to spiritual witnessing, such as:

إِذْ قَالَ يُوسُفُ لِأَبِيهِ يَا أَبَتِ إِنِّي رَأَيْتُ أَحَدَ عَشَرَ كَوْكَبًا وَالشَّمْسَ وَالْقَمَرَ رَأَيْتُهُمْ لِي سَاجِدِينَ

"When Yusuf said to his father, O my dear father! Indeed, I dreamt of eleven stars, and the sun, and the moon—I saw them prostrating to me!" (QS. Yusuf: [12]: 4).

وَقَالَ الْمَلِكُ إِنِّي أَرَى سَبْعَ بَقَرَاتٍ سِمَانٍ يَأْكُلُهُنَّ سَبْعٌ عِجَافٌ وَسَبْعَ سُنبُلَاتٍ خُضْرٍ وَأُخَرَ يَابِسَاتٍ يَا أَيُّهَا الْمَلَأُ أَفْتُونِي فِي رُؤْيَايَ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ لِلرُّؤْيَا تَعْبُرُونَ

"The King said, "I dreamt of seven fat cows eaten up by seven skinny ones; and seven green ears of grain and 'seven' others dry. O chiefs! Tell me the meaning of my dream if you can interpret dreams." (QS. Yusuf [12]: 43).

كَلَّا لَوْ تَعْلَمُونَ عِلْمَ الْبَاقِينَ لَكُنتُمْ لَكَّارُونَ الْجَحِيمِ

"Indeed, if you were to know 'your fate' with certainty, you would have acted differently, but you will surely see the Hellfire." (QS. At – Takathur[102]: 5 – 6)

Many other verses of the Qur'an explain the spiritual witnessing that occurs. Thus, it is difficult to reject the existence of *mukasyafah*.

MUKASYAFAH VARIETIES

Based on the senses that perceive them, various kinds of *mukasyafah* experiences exist. Dawūd Al-Qaishari separated *mukasyafah* into two categories: *al-shūri* and *al-ma'nawī* in the preface of his book *Syarḥ Fushūsh al-Ḥikam*. The five senses are used to experience *Al-kasyf al-shūri*, a revelation that manifests as a sensory experience in the realm of mythology. The five senses include sound, touch, taste, smell, and hearing (Al-Qaishari, 1382).

This revelation can occur through witnessing (*musyahadah*) where a person sees the forms of bodily spirits (*mutajassidah*) and spiritual lights. It can also happen through the sense of hearing (*al-sama'*). Similarly, the Prophet experienced revelations in the form of formally phrased speeches or the sound of bees and bells. According to the sahih (authentic) hadiths, the Prophet immediately understood what this meant when he heard it (Al-Qaishari, 1382).

The text outlines various methods for having a spiritual relationship with the Divine. One way is through the sense of scent (*al-istinsyaq*), in which one can feel the aroma of the Divine breath and *rububiyah*. The Prophet once said that he found the breath of *al-Rahman* from the direction of Yemen. It can also occur by touch, the connection between two light entities, or the union of two imaginary bodies. The Prophet said, "I have seen my Lord in the best forms. He said, "Is there a dispute between the angels, O Muhammad?" I said: "You are the Knowing One, O my Lord." He said. "When Allah laid His palm between my shoulders, I found coldness in my chest, and I knew what is in the heavens and on the earth. Then he reads the verses of An'am [6]: 75". (*al-dhauq*). Like a person who tastes a variety of foods, then after he tastes it or eats it, he knows the magical meanings. The Prophet said, "I saw myself drinking milk until it came out of my nails. Then, I gave the rest of my milk to Umar. I interpreted this as knowledge." (Al-Qaishari, 1382).

The source of all these revelations is the Divine names' appearance (*tajallī asma'iyyah*). Witnessing such disclosures reflects the All-Seeing *Asma' Ilahi (al-Bashīr)*. Similarly, the way of hearing's revelation represents the asma' of the All-Hearing Divine (*al-Sami'*), and so forth.

The disclosure of meaning (*al-kasyf al-ma'nawī*) is in the form of the appearance (*dhuhūr*) of supernatural meanings (*al-ma'ani al-ghaybiyyah*) and external essences (*al-haqaiq al-'ayniyyah*) without accompanying form. This type of revelation is a manifestation of *divine asma'*, the All-Knowing (*al-'Alim*) and the All-Wise (Al-Qaishari, 1382).

'Arif people who are used to purifying the soul (*tazkiyyah al-nafs*) from all actions and thoughts are led to the arms of God. After the completion of purification (*takhalli*), they engage in self-decoration (*tahalli*), which means they do practices that make them feel closer to God, such as fasting, *riyadhah*, *muqarabah*, and others. Then, the phase where God's nature and name shine on the person's soul is called as *tajallī*.

Ibn 'Arabi clarified that God will empower people to be able to discriminate between piety and wickedness if they consistently practice self-purification and walk in the corridor of piety. In this instance, God said "To preserve the soul and the integrity

of His creation, He gives the soul the capability to pursue the route by inspiring his piety and disobedience. The one who sanctifies and develop the soul is truly blessed. And it is really a loss to the one who harbors it, that is, the one who conceals the purity of his soul by giving in to the devil's temptations and lusts or who keeps his soul from reaching its full potential by engaging in immoral behavior." (Ibn 'Arabi, 2011, pp. 127 – 132).

Thus, authentic knowledge for the ascetic originates from spiritual witnessing received through the heart. To allow the light of knowledge to shine on someone, they must first purify themselves and make space in their hearts for wisdom. Such understanding is referred to as intuitive science knowledge. Whereas Sufism holds that there is no such thing as an external reality, philosophy believes there is an external reality that cannot be denied existentially. It contrasts sharply to the philosophical stream that relies on empirical evidence to support its claims.

Syihabuddin Shuhrawardi, also known as *Shaykh Isyraq*, presented *al-'Ilm al-Ḥudhūrī*, a theory of knowledge, in response to two opposed epistemological views mentioned above. In the author's view, the theory of knowledge offered by Shaykh Isyraq becomes a bridge between the two epistemological views above. To know more about the theory of *al-'ilm al-ḥudhūrī*, let us discuss it more systematically.

MAKRIFAT AL-'ILM AL-ḤUDHŪRI

Mulla Sadra and philosophers who base their philosophical structures on the philosophy of *Al-Ḥikmah al-Muta'aliyah* typically propose two definitions of science, namely *al-'ilmu ibarat an ḥudhūr shuratu syai li al-mudrik* (the presence of an image in mind) and *ḥudhūru shurah al-syai inda al-'aql* (science is the presence of a picture in perceiver) (Shadra, 1981) The underlying idea of both definitions is the same, that is, science is simply an image of a thing in the subject's mind.

"In numerous passages of his writings, the Shaykh (Ibn Sina) claimed that the exterior existential form can be drawn from the sky and its components, as well as its external forms by using the senses to observe its rational shape. In another passage, the form The visual shape of a house to be built, for example, is initially present in the mind because the imaginative capacity and visual form drive the body's members to perform actions until they are realized externally. Perceived visual things are not sense – dependent. As explained in the discussion of mental quality, the scientific visual form derives from mental existence rather than an external object." (Shadra, 1981, p. 151).

The division made by Mulla Sadra above is categorized into two types of knowledge, namely *al-'ilm al-ḥushūli* (correspondence) and *al-'ilm al-ḥudhūrī* (presence). *Al-'Ilm al-ḥushūli*, which is present in the subject's mind, is the visual form of the object entity, while *al-'ilm al-ḥudhūrī* refers to the existence of the object in the subject's mind. As stated by Mohsen Gharawiyān, it is crucial to comprehend that *al-'ilm al-ḥushūli* only relates to material things; it does not apply to non – material forms. In *al-'ilm al-ḥushūli*, our substantial knowledge is the concept that exists in our minds, whereas the outside entity is our only accidental knowledge.

Substantial knowledge can only be attained through *al-'ilm al-ḥudhūrī*. *Al-'Ilm al-ḥushūli* can be studied in various aspects, but the most urgent discussion is regarding the immateriality of this knowledge (Gharawiyān, 2012, pp. 186 – 187). It is said in *al-'ilm al-ḥudhūrī* that we are aware of knowledge itself. This concrete form has been found. However, rather than departing from the domain of self – existence, this

revelation integrates into it. Thus, *al-'ilm al-ḥudhūrī* and self – presence are inextricably linked, just as extensity and material life are. One could argue that self – existence is a *misdaq* of knowledge, as well as a *misdaq* of the soul (the one who knows) (Gharawiyān, 2012, p. 187).

Mehdi Ha'iri Yazdi, in his book, *The Principles of Epistemology in Islamic Philosophy: Knowledge by Presence*, explains that *al-'ilm al-ḥudhūrī* (*knowledge by presence*) is real knowledge for subjects who experience it directly and without the intermediary of mental representation or symbolism of any linguistics (Yazdi, 1992, pp. 1 – 2).

We can distinguish between *al-'ilm al-ḥudhūrī* and *al-'ilm al-ḥushūlī* quite clearly based on the definition and summary provided above. Some of the primary traits of *al-'ilm al-ḥudhūrī* are as follows: [1] It is existentially present within the Subject. [2] It is not a conception formed from a syllogism that occurs in the mind. [3] Freedom from the dualism of truth and error.

These three primary characteristics emerge because there is no longer a distinction between internal and external things. Starting from an epistemological point of view, let us consider the pain we experience. We know that this agony exists existentially within our mental state and is never found outside of it. Second, the formation of pain is not predicated on several assertions that we reject one from the other. Third, its existential presence prevents us from making moral judgments, unlike in *ḥushūlī*, where we leave mental and outward things. *Al-'ilm al-ḥudhūrī* was described by Allamah Tabathaba'i as follows:

"From the part of knowledge: A form of knowledge in us is present with its essence, which is implied by (I) because it (I) never disappears under any circumstances, whether alone or busy, asleep or awake, or in any other state. It is not an accidental essence (I) in us, as described by the science of correspondence, which is present in the form of understanding; instead, the understanding that is present in the mental, regardless of how it is described, can not be separated from its relationship with the plural and identified in external existence, and this is what we witness from ourselves; what we call (I) is an identity that is essentially unstructured and identified in the dimensions of existence, then we know our essence (I) and present ourselves with an external existence which is the basis of identity that has the effects; and this is another kind of knowledge called *ḥudhūrī*." (Tabathaba'i, 1415, p. 139).

"The real I is a mental existence that exists within every individual self." Its presence is not only an entity but existential. Therefore, the objective object is not something outside the objective self of the subject; it is present and is an inseparable part of us. Because of their existential presence, no correspondence separates the two. Mulla Sadra specifically explains this existential presence:

"The only way that existence can be understood through its accidents is by its existential selfhood, not mental fantasy. If we visualize this reality, then there is no question in our thoughts that we know it based on its essence; in this case, knowing does not necessitate debate." (Shadra, 1981, p. 294).

According to Mulla Sadra, knowing *Me* is the most fundamental consciousness that all people possess; it is obvious and doesn't require reasoning. We have the most noticeable presence in ourselves in such a situation because, as previously stated, the object's (I) presence is no longer odd and distinct from the subject's identity.

When comparing the characteristics of *al-'ilm al-ḥushūli* and *al-'ilm al-ḥudhūr*, we can observe fundamental differences. According to the philosopher *Al-Ḥikmah al-Muta'al iyah*, *al-'ilm al-ḥushūli* as knowledge acquired through correspondence with external objects, fundamentally returns to and derives from *al-'ilm al-ḥudhūrī*. It is because the knowledge produced in the subject takes the form of an object that exists in the subject's mental state. Its presence in the mental realm is solely in the form of mental existence. Therefore, the subject's perception of the incoming object is a perception of mental existence, which is the meaning of *al-'ilm al-ḥudhūrī*. As stated by Allamah Tabathaba'i:

"Then, the production of knowledge within us signifies the arrival of an object within us because knowledge is the substantive identity of an object. However, knowledge refers to the production of an object within us. The production or presence of an object is essentially its existence and this existence is inherent to the object itself." (Thabathaba'i, 1415, p. 139)

The object present in the subject is a visual created mentally as a mental existence from external existence, and the presence that occurs in the subject is an existential presence, so the subject's perception is of the mental existence that is present rather than external existence. *Al-'Ilm al-ḥushūli* in principle goes back to and originates from *al-'ilm al-ḥudhūrī*. It is because when visual external entities enter the subject's soul, the soul carries out the process of creating the mental existence of the object. Mulla Sadra (1981) and his followers put forward the following arguments (Shadra, 1981, pp. 300–304; Subhani, 1991, pp. 37–50; Thabathaba'i, 1415, p. 139):

1. External objects are external entities that the subject perceives through the correspondence process, giving them a visual form. Since the substance of an object is its existence, its visual form is not its substance. Skepticism will arise if the subject's understanding of the object is based only on the visible form of the entity present, even if the form of the object entity is not the object itself. In this case, the subject does not know the external object.
2. Unlike external objects, which are confined to space and time and undergo changes over time, mental objects—a scientific representation of external objects—are permanent and do not depend on space or time. As a result, the mental object will always be present on the subject whenever and wherever the subject desires. It demonstrates that the subject perceives a mental representation of the object's physical existence.
3. Even while the outward item doesn't change from its initial state, the subject can alter its mental form to create a new existence. Naturally, no modifications can be made to mental objects in response to external object situations if they are linked to them.
4. External objects have specific effects, such as the vast sky, the great earth, the boundless ark, and the high mountains. In the process of Ḥushūli, perceiving the form as an external existence is impossible. We return to the first argument if the mind perceives only a visual entity. Therefore, the soul creates mental existence from this external existence.
5. The mind can distinguish between accidents and the substances contained in mental objects. For example, the mind can separate the blue color of the sky from the external object, blue sky, which is impossible to separate between the accident and the substance.

Mulla Sadra in this connection stated:

"Indeed, a small matter cannot give rise to a large material visual form, a mountain can't enter through dust particles, nor can an ocean enter into a pond; this kind of thing contradicts the existence of perception because the receptivity of the soul is the same between the big and the small. The soul can instantly present visuals from the sky and the earth to its imagination and anything between the two without losing any of it, as described by our leader Muhammad Saw. : 'Truly the heart of a believer is bigger than the Throne.' Similarly, Abu Yazid Bustami told himself, 'If only the Throne and others were in the corner of his heart, it would go unnoticed by him'. The reason behind this is that the soul does not have a measure and a place for it; otherwise, it must be limited to certain limits and a specific place so that it is not receptive to anything else except to increase its breadth or subtract something from it. Consequently, something within the soul persists that is not perceived by the soul or remains within it, such that something is known and unknown or is informed or uninformed, and this is not possible based on arguments or thoughts. Because we know that the soul from ourselves is a single identity, if we perceive something large, we must perceive the entire thing without exception and not just a portion, because there is no part for it due to its simplicity." (Sadra, 1981, pp. 300 – 301).

Mulla Sadra's reasoning demonstrates that our internal knowledge is *al-ʿilm al-ḥudhūri* and affirms the existence of the mind. The sole purpose of *Al-ʿilm al-ḥudhūri* is to catalyze the soul to express its creativity and recognize the mental presence of outside objects.

HOW TO OBTAIN *AL-ʿILM AL-ḤUDHŪRI*

Al-ʿilm al-ḥudhūri refers to knowledge obtained directly from Allah through divine withdrawal rather than through study and effort. This classification is based on the preceding explanation. This presence imparts inner (spiritual) knowledge rather than sensory (or logical) understanding (Bagir, 2018, p. 118). Three impediments, or principles or roots in Mulla Sadra's phrase, stand in the way of humanity's acquisition of *al-ʿilm al-ḥudhūri*. It is important to note that these obstacles impede spiritual growth rather than epistemic in the contemporary sense of the word. It makes sense in the framework of Mulla Sadra's theory, which connects existence with truth (science). The "epistemology" of Mulla Sadra's writings centers on the purification of the soul as the site of the experience of being, that is, on vital knowledge (presence). In his writing, Haidar Bagir says that there are three different kinds of roots to the biggest evil that destroy the soul. The first is the lack of self-knowledge or the understanding of human reality. He bases this on Sadra's book *Se 'Ashl*. Love of riches, power, passion, and sensual pleasure comes in second. The third is the soul's impulse toward evil, which works in concert with Satan's deceit to make us view virtue as evil and evil as virtue (Bagir, 2018, p. 133).

Sadra says that humans might connect to the holy or sacred realm through several actions that lead to this kind of knowledge (*al-ḥudhūri*), such as: 1) Increase your introspection (*tafakkur*) with the true aim of becoming closer to Allah. 2) Determining Allah's will and consciously reciting the *dhikr*. 3) Use fasting to manage your cravings. 4) Shun off the influence of the outside world and keep your distance from people. Sadra concurs with Suhrawardi in this instance, stressing the components of worship, *riyadhah*, and *mujahadah* rather than enhancing the role of proportion and asserting that *al-ʿilm al-ḥudhūri* can only be attained through spiritual observation based on *mukasyafah* and *enlightenment* (Drajad, 2005, pp. 135 – 136).

MENTAL CREATIVITY

The presented arguments have demonstrated that while knowledge initially originated from the perception of external objects, it presently occurs from *experiencing* the mental existence within us. The upshot of mental creation is the existence of the mind within us. Visual forms of entities that originate from external existence can be used by the mental to produce mental existence. This mental capacity is described by Mulla Sadra as follows:

"Indeed, Allah created the human soul by allowing him to make the form immaterial and material things because it is part of the malakut dimension and the realm of ability and height. Angels can give rise to forms of reason (shuwar al-'aqliyah) that rely on their essence and visual universes that depend on their material." (Shadra, 1981, p. 264).

Mulla Sadra holds that God endows the soul with the capacity to generate both material and immaterial mental forms in mental existence based on conception or imagination. Regarding *al-'ilm al-ḥudhūri*, this is evidence from the fact that our perception of an object is a perception of its mental existence and that the soul creates that existence. It indicates that we possess knowledge due to the soul's creative capacity. In summary, Mulla Sadra stressed that, in addition to the soul's capacity to create mental existence, if the soul is perfect and attains the realm of *al-quds*, or holiness, it is also capable of simultaneously manifesting its mental state in an external reality with external effects. Particularly comprise:

"O Allah, except for some who have freed themselves from ordinary human limitations and are spiritual journeyers, for them, because of the strength of their bond with nature al-quds and the center of karamah and the perfection of potential, they can realize problems (forms) in external existence with its external effects." (Shadra, 1981, p. 266).

According to Mulla Sadra, this unlimited ability of the soul results from the fact that God created the soul as a personification of Himself so that the nature and actions of God are reflected in the soul:

"God created the human soul as the personification of His substance, characteristics, and actions so that recognition of them will lead to recognition of God. It is made into a substance (soul) free from form, dimensions and sides and equipped with abilities, knowledge, desires, life, hearing, and sight. His creation also has power as His power creates and chooses what it wants, except the soul, even though it is part of the world and the realm of abilities and the great and high treasures. He (soul) is a low and weak existence because of his position, located at the level of derivative substances and an intermediary between Himself and His creatures. The large number of intermediaries between something and the source of existence causes the weakness of its potential and the lowness of its existence." (Shadra, 1981, pp. 265–266).

Mulla Sadra demonstrates that the soul can accomplish anything and has boundless potential because God created it as a manifestation of Himself; the soul's existential quality differs in that it is a creature that has undergone multiple degrees of descent, and as such, its quality is inferior to that of the cause. This understanding of the Gradual Unity of Existence is grounded in Mulla Sadra's ontological perspective. Mulla Sadra held this belief in the boundless potential of the soul, and Ibn 'Arabi, the principal Gnostic figure who preceded Mulla Sadra, also hinted at this idea:

"With the power of estimation (bi al – Wahm), through the power of imagination, something is created that has no existence except for it (the Imaginal Nature), which is a common problem for all humans. With his power, an Arif creates an existence that does not exist outside the place of creation (Mahal al – Himmat). However, what is created cannot be separated from guarding because if Arif is negligent, the creation will be lost, unless Arif has grasped all the hadharat. He will not be able to forget it completely; even the hadharat must have witnessed it. If Arif uses his power creates a creation, the situation for him is as follows: the presence of the creation in its form throughout all the hadharats, mutually supporting one another. Similarly, suppose the Sufi forgets one of the hadharats or various hadharats but only focuses on one hadharat of these many hadharats and guarding what is in them. In that case, all forms are maintained due to the Sufi's awareness of a single unforgettable hadharat." (Ibn Arabi, n.d., pp. 196 – 197).

Mulla Sadra believes that the soul can express creativity in all ways, including the creation of mental images that enter the mind and serve as the foundation for understanding a subject.

CONCLUSION

Al-'ilm al-ḥudhūrī (knowledge by presence) is true knowledge for the subject who experiences it immediately and without using any language symbols or mental representation. Humans receive this information directly from God rather than learning it through effort or study. Consequently, this understanding is spiritual rather than sensory – rational. According to Mulla Sadra and Suhrawardi, the only way to become aware of its presence is by spiritual observation or practicing Sufism. It includes restraining your wants, rejecting the outside world's influence, isolating yourself from people, increasing your meditation to become closer to Allah, keeping Allah's orders, and performing dhikr with full appreciation. Mulla Sadra's emphasis on the elements of worship, *riyadhah*, and *mujahadah* appears to be following Suhrawardi's assertion that *al-'ilm al-ḥudhūrī* can only be attained through spiritual observation based on *mukasyafah* and illumination.

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