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## The Truth on Al-Ghazali Perspective

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**ABSTRACT:** Al-Ghazali's *al-Munqidh min al-Dalâl* has become the subject of study by many Muslim and Western scholars. Most research related to the theory of doubt compared with Descartes' method. However, there is no study on the truth of knowledge, even though this theme is *al-Munqidh's* main theme. This research aims to analyse the concept of the truth of al-Ghazali's knowledge in *al-Munqidh*. In detail, this study discusses four issues. That is the forms of truth, the sources and means of attaining truth. Also, al-Ghazali's criticism of truth seekers. The method analysis used is content analysis with *al-Munqidh* as the main reference. Results research shows that (1) there are two forms of truth for al-Ghazali: ontological and epistemological. (2) the source of truth comes from revelation and reason, (3) the means to reach the truth are the senses, reason and heart. (4) al-Ghazali criticized the four truth-seeking groups and stated that their methods contained weaknesses, namely they could not be verified, mixed with falsehoods or used ratios that were not optimal. The results of this study indicate that al-Ghazali's concept of the truth of knowledge differs from Descartes' concept and modern epistemology. Al-Ghazali acknowledged something not accommodated in modern philosophy, namely the revelation and the heart as a source and means of knowledge.

**KEYWORDS:** the truth of knowledge, source of truth, means of truth, criticism for truth seekers, *al-Munqidh min al-Dalâl*, al-Ghazali,

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### 1. INTRODUCTION

*Al-Munqidh min al-Dalâl* (Deliverance from Error) by al-Ghazali (1058-1111) has attracted many parties, both Western scholars and Muslim circles. Osman Bakar states that Western scholars usually compare this work with the Confessions of Saint Augustine (354-430) and with A Grammar of Assent from John Henry Newman (1801-1890) in terms of its intellectual complexity, as well as compare it with Grace Abounding to the Chief of Sinners from John Bunyan (1628-1688) in his puritanical nature (Bakar, 1995). Meanwhile, Muslim scholars generally study *al-Munqidh* to support the idea that scepticism is an important method in al-Ghazali's system of philosophy. With this statement, al-Ghazali means that he has preceded Rene Descartes (1596-1650), a modern sceptic figure famous for his words cogito ergo sum (Soleh, 2022a, 2022b).

Many studies on *al-Munqidh* by al-Ghazali. Among other things, (1) Albertini, Moad, Zamir and Rayan's research on al-Ghazali's doubt method and comparing it with Descartes' method (Albertini, 2005; Moad, 2009; Rayan, 2004; Zamir, 2010). (2) Shehadi's research on freedom of thought to seek the truth (Shehadi et al., 1982). (3) Sajedi's research on the importance of logical reasoning in faith (Sajedi et al., 2021). (4) Research Wilczyński on al-Ghazali's critique of philosophy (Wilczyński, 2020). (5) Van Ess and Berger's research on *al-Munqidh* as an intellectual autobiographical study (Berger, 2020; van Ess, 2018).

However, research on *al-Munqidh* from the truth of knowledge has yet to be widely carried out. In the last 20 years, researchers have only found two articles that analyse *al-Munqidh* from the aspect of knowledge. Namely, (1) Tamer and Lopez's article analyses the relationship between truth and belief (Tamer & López-Farjeat, 2015). (2) Wahyudi's article, which wrote al-Ghazali's epistemological thoughts (Wahyudi, 2003). The two authors both stated that for al-Ghazali, the truth of knowledge is related to certainty. One must doubt everything known to gain certainty until irrefutable evidence is found. However, the two authors need to explain al-Ghazali's important principles related to truth, especially regarding forms, sources and means of seeking truth.

This description shows that more than studying the truth of knowledge in *al-Munqidh* by al-Ghazali is required. This article aims to fill this big gap. In detail, this research answers four questions. (1) what is the form of truth in al-Ghazali's *al-Munqidh*? (2) from which source is the truth obtained? (3) what is how one can reach the truth? (4) what is al-Ghazali's criticism of truth seekers? This paper is based on two assumptions. (1) truth is an important principle in science and belief. The study of truth, its principles and al-Ghazali's critique of truth seekers, can provide valuable concepts to the academic world. (2) Al-Ghazali's *Al-Munqidh min*

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*al-Dalâl* is often used as a reference in theology studies and scientific scepticism. The study of the truth of this book can provide a new perspective.

### 2. LITERATURE REVIEWS

#### 2.1. Empirics and Rationalism

The tradition of Western thought recognizes two schools of epistemology, namely rationalism and empiricism. Rationalism bases knowledge on ratio sources for two reasons. (1) Ratio can independently determine its truth without needing anything else, the senses or empirical reality. For example, if  $A = B$  and  $B = C$ ,  $A = C$ . Conclusion  $A = C$  does not require sensory and empirical evidence. (2) that concerning empirical reality, the ratio determines empirical reality, not the other way around. Kant (1724-1804) stated that empirical reality does not show its own identity. They declare themselves as they are and in the same position. It is the human ratio that determines and distinguishes one from another. Strictly speaking, the ratio determines the existence of empirical reality, not the other way around (Hartack, 1967).

Empiricism has different reasons. For empiricists, knowledge comes from empirical data, not ratios. John Locke (1632-1704) stated that ratios are only like wax, forming the impressions that come upon him. This empirical data is the source and determinant of knowledge, not ratios that only function as data records (Locke, 1968). Auguste Comte (1798-1857) then called that knowledge based on empirical data, known as positivism, the highest and most convincing knowledge (Comte, 1974). What is called scientific in the academic world refers to these two epistemologies. That is, whether it can be proven empirically or logically ascertained.

Apart from the two sources above, there is intuitionism in the West. However, intuitionism is not recognized as a valid epistemology. Augusto Bunge (1919-2020) stated that intuition is not a safe and valid method because it is easy to mislead and lead to unreasonable claims. Therefore, the truth of intuition must be supported by sense data and rational concepts. Intuitive knowledge not supported by sensory data or common sense cannot be judged as truth (Bunge, 1962).

#### 2.2. Bayan, Burhan and Irfan

The tradition of Islamic thought has its epistemology. The first is the explanation (*Bayan*). This epistemology bases its knowledge on texts which in religion are holy books. For *Bayan*, there is no reliable source of knowledge except revelation. Al-Shafi'i (767-820) stated that the only valid source of knowledge is the revelation, not reason or senses. The ratio is placed as a servant of revelation, explaining the teachings of revelation logically, not as a source of knowledge. The method for finding knowledge from the revealed text uses two ways. Namely, (1) direct interpretation of the revealed text, (2) using analogies. Most Islamic scholars uses the *Bayan* method based on the scriptures (Jabiri, 1991).

The second is logical proof (*Burhan*). This epistemology is similar to rationalism in the West, which is based on the power of reason. The difference between the two has to do with the scriptures. Rationalism in the West does not care about scriptures and does not place scriptures as a source of knowledge. On the other hand, in Islam, even people who think rationally never leave the scriptures (Jabiri, 1991). How to reconcile the scriptures with logical thinking? Muslim philosophers starting from al-Kindi (801-873), al-Farabi (870-950), Ibn Sina (980-1037) to Ibn Rushd (1126-1198) have solved this problem in their way, so there is no conflict between revelation and reason, between religion and philosophy (Soleh, 2018).

The third is intuition (*Irfan*). This epistemology bases its knowledge on spiritual experiences that are felt by the heart (*al-qalb*). For followers of *Irfan*, there is a difference between knowing the definition of fire, seeing fire and being burned by fire. Truth is burning with fire, not just seeing fire or just knowing the definition of fire. Truth is something that is felt or experienced, not witnessed by the senses or understood cognitively. The method of obtaining knowledge is by spiritual practice (*riyâdah*) so that the heart can receive an abundance of knowledge directly from God. The Sufis use Irfan's method (Jabiri, 1991).

These three methods were initially developed independently. There is no dialogue between the three, so that tension arises, which takes its toll. Al-Hallaj (858-922) was a victim of the tension between *Bayan* and *Irfan*. Al-Hallaj was executed because the Islamic jurisprudence could not understand his Sufistic thoughts. Therefore, al-Ghazali tried integrating *Bayan* and *Irfan*, Islamic jurisprudence and Sufism, through his great work, *Ihyâ Ulûm al-Dîn*. However, al-Ghazali (1058-1111) ignored Burhan, so philosophical studies did not develop in al-Ghazali's era. Suhrawardi (1154-1191) then integrated Burhan with Irfan, between philosophy and Sufism, to become illuminative (*ishrâqiyah*). However, Suhrawardi left Bayan, so he became a victim. He was sentenced to death by the Islamic jurisprudence because his philosophy-Sufism teachings were considered deviant. Finally, Mulla Sadra (1571-1635) integrated the three Islamic epistemologies in a transcendent theosophy (*al-Hikmah al-Muta'aliyah*).

### 3. METHODS

Object this research is the concept of truth in *Al-Munqidh min al-Dalâl* by al-Ghazali. The data comes from literature with *Al-Munqidh* by al-Ghazali as the main reference. Other works of al-Ghazali are also used as additional references. Data from primary sources and later additional analysis with content analysis method (Elo et al., 2014). This analysis is used to explore al-Ghazali's

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concept of truth as written in *Al-Munqidh*. In this process, the researcher cross-checked the primary data to anticipate the possibility of misunderstanding the primary sources (Turner, 2003).

The research results described are then discussed using the method of interpretative analysis (Alejandro, 2021). In this section, the researcher further criticizes al-Ghazali's concept of truth by tracing his background, predicting its logical consequences or comparing it with other theories using different methods of comparative analysis (Adams & Collyer, 2019). Based on this, important conclusions are drawn.

### 4. RESULTS

Part of this paper explains three things: the form of truth, the source of truth, the means to reach the truth, and al-Ghazali's criticism of truth seekers.

#### 4.1. Ontological and Epistemological Truths

Al-Ghazali classifies truth into two forms, namely ontological and epistemological truth. The ontological truth in question is the truth of physical and metaphysical reality. Physical truth is the truth whose reality is physical and can be captured by the senses. Metaphysical truths are truths whose reality is not sensory, such as heaven, hell, life in the hereafter, and even about God himself. The existence of this metaphysical truth is obtained from revelation (Ghazali, 1996c).

In addition, the vision (*al-baṣīrah*) can also witness metaphysical truths. The vision is a means of seeing similar to the sense of sight. The difference between the two is that the sense can only perceive physical reality, while the vision is capable of perceiving metaphysical realities. In *Mishkat al-Anwār* al-Ghazali explains the superiority of the vision. (1) the vision can perceive itself as knowing and perceive the knowledge it has simultaneously. Subject and object unite in the vision. (2) the vision is not obstructed by space and time so that the vision can perceive distant and future objects. (3) the vision cannot be covered by something so that it can catch the secret behind the veil (Ghazali, 1996c).

Epistemological truth is related to the truth obtained from the method used. Is the truth resulting from a particular method valid and reliable? In *al-Munqidh* al-Ghazali analyses the truths resulting from the three developing methods at that time. The first is sensory truth. For al-Ghazali, the truth of the results of sensory observations at a certain stage can be trusted. However, the physical senses have many weaknesses, so the truths produced by sensory observations are often erroneous. For example, the volume of the stars in the sky to senses seems small, but in reality, it is very large, and some are even bigger than the earth. Therefore, the truth produced by sensory observation cannot be judged as a reliable truth (Ghazali, 1996a).

The second is rational truth obtained through prior knowledge. For example, the principle that ten is greater than three, that a statement cannot be judged as true and false; at the same time, something cannot be judged as eternal, both possible and impossible. For al-Ghazali, rational truth is more reliable than physical truth. However, rational truth does not mean it cannot be questioned. Al-Ghazali tested rational truths with dream phenomena. In dreams, one may travel very quickly from one place to another or meet and communicate with figures who have passed away. This dream phenomenon cannot be accepted logic because when the condition is awake and not sleeping, one cannot travel so fast, especially during sleep, that all organs are helpless. Rational truths are not ultimate truths and everything because there are other truths that the power of reason cannot comprehend (Ghazali, 1996a).

The third is spiritual truth which is received by the heart (*qalb*) directly. In this third model, Allah pours out the light of His guidance into the human heart. Al-Ghazali named this process of receiving truth directly into the heart with a direct view (*kashf*) and fruition experience (*dhauiq*). The Qur'an alludes to this phenomenon with the statement, "You are in a state of heedlessness, so We remove the curtains that cover your eyes so that your vision on that day becomes very sharp" (Surah Qaf, 22). Prophet states, "Mankind they fall asleep when they die, they wake up". Therefore, *al-Munqidh* al-Ghazali strongly criticizes those who rely too much on rationality. "Whoever states that truth is only related to logical evidence, then he has narrowed down God's grace" (Ghazali, 1996a).

Concerning these two forms of truth, namely ontological and epistemological, Osman Bakar (b. 1946) emphasized that al-Ghazali never questioned ontological truth. On the other hand, al-Ghazali confidently believes that the ontological truth is true. In *al-Munqidh* al-Ghazali states that his belief in ontological truth is unshakable, even stronger because of the support of logical evidence and the postulates of revelation. However, al-Ghazali questioned the truth produced by existing methods. Is the truth generated from the method valid? Therefore, as Osman Bakar wrote, the doubts shown by al-Ghazali in *al-Munqidh* are epistemological, not ontological doubts (Bakar, 1995).

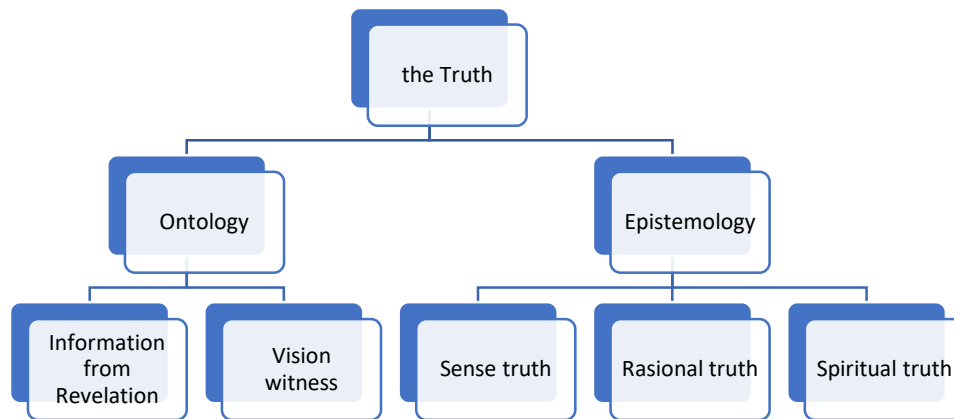


Figure 1: Ontological and Epistemological Truths.

4.2. Sources and Means of Truth

Al-Ghazali discusses truth from two aspects: the source and the means to achieve it. From the aspect of sources, al-Ghazali mentions two sources of truth: revelation and reason. The revelation in question is the codified word of God in the form of a holy book, namely the al-Qur’an. In addition, included in the category of revelation are the words of the Prophet because the words of the Prophet were not based on his desires but were orders from Allah (Surah Al-Najm, 3). For al-Ghazali, revelation is an essential and absolute source of truth because revelation is the word of God (Ghazali, 1995). In addition, revelation is the source of the criterion of right and wrong. Al-Ghazali stated that the parameters of thinking he formulated in *The Correct Balance (al-Qisṭās al-Mustaqīm)* are based on the teachings of the Qur’an (Ghazali, 1996b). The religious sciences were born from this source of revelation.

The ratio is a source of knowledge other than revelation. In this context, al-Ghazali defines ratio as the potential in humans that emerges from adulthood. Theologians define this ratio as necessary knowledge, such as  $2 \times 2 = 4$ , or philosophers define it as theoretical knowledge. This potential is what distinguishes humans from other creatures. Concerning knowledge, al-Ghazali describes this ratio as the sun and its light or like vision and the senses of the eye, so that ratio is a source of truth that cannot be denied. From ratios emerge the rational sciences (Ghazali, 1995).

Al-Ghazali places these two sources of truth as an inseparable unit. This concept differs from the views of theologians, who generally separate and contradict revealed and rational truths. For al-Ghazali, revealed and rational truths are complementary, so there is no conflict between religious knowledge and rational science (Sherif, 1975). However, al-Ghazali needed to place the two sources of truth on an equal footing. For al-Ghazali, revelation is the word of God, while the ratio is the potential in humans. Something that comes from God is more important than anything that exists in humans. Therefore, revelation is more important than reason, and religious knowledge that emerges from revelation is superior to rational science that arises from reason (Soleh, 2013).

On aspects of the means to reach the truth, al-Ghazali said there are three potentials. First, external senses or five senses. For al-Ghazali, external senses are the lowest means of knowledge because they have many weaknesses. Al-Ghazali notes at least four weaknesses regarding external senses. (1) the external senses cannot see objects too close or far away. (2) external senses cannot perceive objects covered by a veil. (3) the external senses can only perceive the surface part of the object, unable to perceive the inside. (4) external senses can only perceive a small part of reality. The sense of sight, for example, is unable to perceive objects of hearing, unable to perceive objects of smell, let alone objects of reason and heart (Ghazali, 1996c).

Second is the ratio (*al-aql*). Al-Ghazali places ratios in two positions, namely as a source and a means of obtaining knowledge. In a position as a means of knowledge, al-Ghazali defines ratio as a certain ability with the potential that humans can know a variety of knowledge. Al-Ghazali sometimes also defines this mind as a potential with which humans can decide what to do or refrain from something harmful (Ghazali, 1995).

The third is the heart (*al-qalb*). For al-Ghazali, the heart is a spiritual potential that functions to receive an abundance of knowledge directly from God (*kashf*). These potential processes knowledge not based on sensory data or empirical data, nor is it based on logical reasoning but a direct spiritual experience. Therefore, for al-Ghazali, knowledge obtained through *kashf* is more guaranteed for validity and has a higher position than knowledge obtained through ratios or external senses (Dunya, 1971).

According to al-Ghazali, humans do not have innate knowledge. In the initial stages, God created in man the faculty of senses (*al-hiss*) to perceive physical objects of the senses. In the second stage, Allah gives rational ability (*al-aql*) to understand

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objects that the senses cannot perceive. In the next stage, Allah gives the ability of the heart (*al-qalb*) to understand objects that cannot be captured by reason and senses. Therefore, the quality of these three means of knowledge is different for al-Ghazali. The lowest quality is the external sense used to perceive physical objects; the above is the reason for perceiving rational objects, and the highest quality in the heart for metaphysical objects (Ghazali, 1996a).

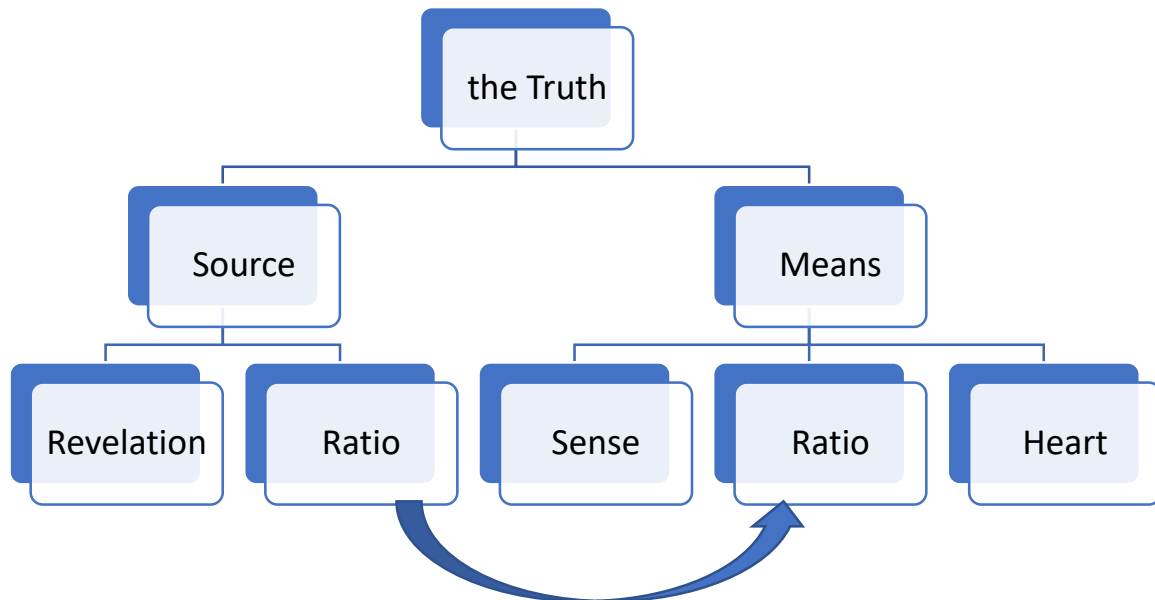


Figure 2: Sources and Means of Truth

### 4.3. Criticism for Truth Seekers

Al-Ghazali classified the truth seekers at that time into four groups. This classification is based on the methodological claims of each group for the truth. First, theologians. Al-Ghazali describes the theologians as a group with strong intellectual abilities and rational reasoning. With this ability, theologians can explain the principles of religious beliefs and defend religious teachings from outside attacks. Al-Ghazali praised the achievements of the theologians for safeguarding religious teachings and exposing the heresy of heretics. Nevertheless, al-Ghazali criticized Islamic theology in three aspects. Namely, (1) the term *ilm al-kalâm* used in Islamic theology is not by the traditions prevailing at the time of the Prophet. (2) Charities in theology have not been used optimally, so it loses validity to philosophical methods. (3) The study of theology is only beneficial for certain people in need, not everyone. For al-Ghazali, the method of Islamic theology was not intellectually satisfying (Ghazali, 1996a).

Second, philosophers. Al-Ghazali describes philosophers as people who can use logic and demonstrative (*Burhan*) and are qualified. In general, al-Ghazali divides philosophers into three categories: atheists, theists and naturalists. Atheists are a group of philosophers who do not believe in the existence of a God who created the universe, while theists are the opposite group. Meanwhile, naturalists are a group that believes in God as the Creator, but He is no longer in power after the universe develops in its order. This third group is called deism in modern philosophical terms (Blackburn, 2008). Furthermore, al-Ghazali criticized the weakness of the philosophical method. Al-Ghazali stated that the methods and teachings of philosophy were tainted with error and inconsistency. For al-Ghazali, this can be seen in the metaphysics of philosophy, which falls into heresy and even disbelief. In *Tahâfut al-Falâsifah*, al-Ghazali classifies philosophical and metaphysical thought in twenty discussions: three of which can lead to disbelief, while the other seventeen fall into the category of heresy (Ghazali, 1972). These weaknesses, at the same time, show that the philosophical method cannot reach metaphysical truths.

However, al-Ghazali did not attack philosophy as a whole. Al-Ghazali pointed out in *al-Munqidh* that parts of philosophical science are acceptable, so they are not worth rejecting. For al-Ghazali, rejecting these sciences is stupidity. These sciences are (1) the science of logic. Logic is a methodological science that can be used in philosophy and to develop religious knowledge. (2) pure mathematical science is concerned with facts that are demonstrated exactly. (3) natural science, namely the study of the elements, positions and relationships of objects in the universe. For al-Ghazali, these sciences are unrelated to religious beliefs, so there is no reason to reject them (Ghazali, 1996a).

The third is the Shia mysticism group (*ta`limiyah*). Al-Ghazali describes this group as a group that claims to be the only owner of the truth obtained through teaching from a priest who is awake from sin. For them, truth is not achieved through logical reasoning like philosophers and theologians but is obtained from the authoritative teaching of priests. These priests are heirs to the

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Prophet's esoteric function to interpret the esoteric meaning of the teachings of the Qur'an. Al-Ghazali did not reject the teachings of mysticism about the importance of an authoritative imam as the source of truth. However, al-Ghazali criticized the concept of a priest free from mistakes other than the Prophet. For al-Ghazali, the only priest who is authoritative and never wrong is only the Prophet, no one else. Anyone other than the Prophet can fall into error so that it cannot be a source of truth. Apart from that, the priest referred to in mysticism has died, so it cannot be confirmed (Ghazali, 1996a).

The fourth is the Sufis. Al-Ghazali describes the Sufis as a group with spiritual vision (*mushâhadah*) and enlightenment (*mukâshafah*). Therefore, they are not only people attaining metaphysical truths but also witnessing the Divine's presence. This knowledge is the highest truth which in the Qur'an is called the ultimate truth. As explained by al-Ghazali, the Sufis reached this level in two ways. (1) through understanding, and (2) soul cleansing. This self-cleansing process starts from immersing oneself in the remembrance of God to melting oneself into God. According to al-Ghazali, if someone does this process seriously, he will experience a perfect soul transformation to witness the spiritual vision. Al-Ghazali considered the Sufi method the perfect way to gain knowledge of the Ultimate Reality. Therefore, for al-Ghazali, Sufis are the most important people among truth seekers (Ghazali, 1996a).

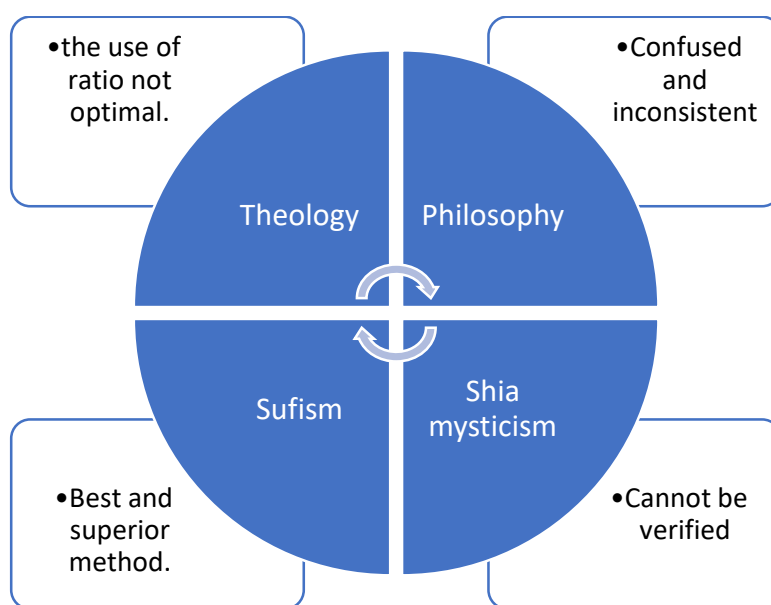


Figure 3: Al-Ghazali's critique of Truth Seekers.

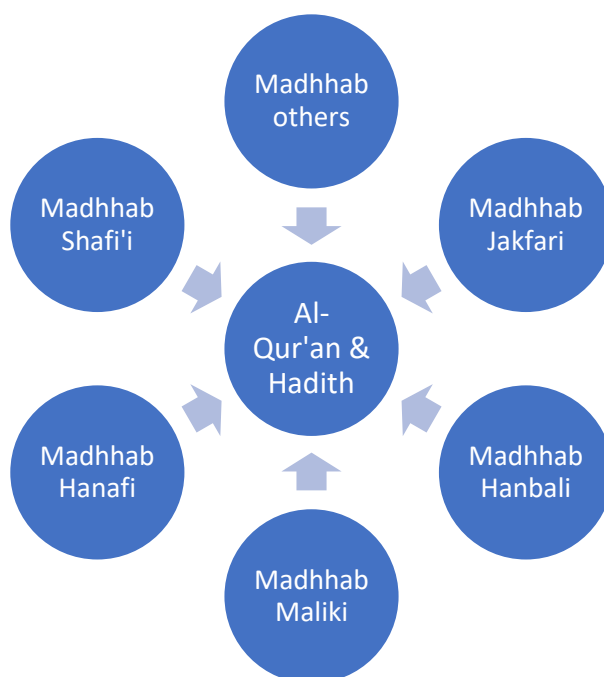
## 5. DISCUSSIONS

This section discusses the results described above, first, about ontological and epistemological truths. Historically, this concept was conveyed by al-Farabi (870-950). Al-Farabi stated that there is a difference between reality and what is understood from reality. Reality exists as it is known or not by humans, while what is understood from reality is the result of human understanding of reality. The reality, as it is, is ontological truth, while the result of human understanding of reality is epistemological truth. Ontological truth is different from epistemological truth (Farabi, 1970). The concept of al-Farabi and al-Ghazali above was also followed by Ibn Rushd (1126-1198). Ibn Rushd states that the understanding of reality is different from reality itself. The reality, as it is, is an ontological truth, while an understanding of reality is an epistemological truth (Imarah, n.d.). In the modern era, the concept of the difference between reality and understanding of reality was also conveyed by John MacMurray (1891-1976). As with al-Ghazali's concept, MacMurray stated that there is a clear difference between the object that is understood and the understanding of the object, so there is a difference between epistemological and ontological truth (MacMurray, 1933).

Al-Ghazali's concept of truth necessitates several things. (1) that the result of understanding the object is not the same as the object itself. If it is related to religion, then the results of understanding the Qur'an are not the same as the Qur'an, so claiming that someone's understanding is the same as the Qur'an is a mistake and arrogance. (2) that the understanding of the object is influenced by the method used. The different methods result in different understanding results. Because of that, al-Ghazali stated the importance of mutual communication between methods and understandings, called *ijma'*, so that the results of understanding become valid. (3) Our understanding of objects is only one perspective of the object, not covering the whole object. If it is related to religion, then the understanding of the Shafi'i school of thought, for example, represents only one perspective on Islam and does not cover the whole of Islam. Therefore, Abd al-Wahab al-Sha'rani (1492-1565) advised us not to be content with understanding one school of thought but to cover many schools of thought. Whoever is self-sufficient in one madhhab means he only knows the

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authentic hadiths according to the imam of his madhhab but leaves many other authentic hadiths according to the imams of his madhhab (Sha`rani, 1985).



**Figure 4: Different Perspectives on Religion**

Second, about the sources and means of acquiring knowledge. Al-Ghazali's concept of two sources of knowledge differs from the West's sources of knowledge. As is known, the West does not recognize revelation as a source of knowledge. In contrast, the West only recognizes empirical and rational sources. More than that, Auguste Comte (1798-1857) in the West even placed positivism, the peak of empiricism, as the pinnacle of civilization (Comte, 1974). Meanwhile, al-Ghazali places empirical reality at the bottom, not even considering it. The empirical reality, which is at the highest position in the West, is actually at the lowest in al-Ghazali's hierarchical sources of knowledge. Al-Ghazali even only takes into account the sources of ratios and revelations, not including empirical sources of reality,

The concept of means of attaining knowledge of al-Ghazali is in harmony with previous Islamic thought. Al-Farabi (870-950) and Ibn Sina (980-1037) stated that acquiring knowledge consists of external senses, reason and intellect. These three means are hierarchical: the senses occupy the lowest position, and the intellect is at the highest. Al-Ghazali's concept is different from the West's. The West only recognizes senses and reason as a means of gaining knowledge, while al-Ghazali admits that there are three means: senses, reason and heart. The potential of the heart is placed in the highest position, above reason and senses. For al-Ghazali, the heart has an advantage over the means of ratios and senses.

Third, about al-Ghazali's criticism of truth seekers. Al-Ghazali's criticism of Islamic theology appears to have been given in a different personal capacity, namely as a theologian and Sufi. As a theologian. Al-Ghazali praised the theologians who guarded the main points of religious belief, but in his capacity as a Sufi al-Ghazali criticized Islamic theological methods, which he considered unable to solve his academic problems. Meanwhile, al-Ghazali's criticism of the teachings of Shia mysticism is more related to political interests. As al-Ghazali wrote, his research on mysticism was commissioned by caliph al-Mustazhir (1094-1118), who at that time competed with the Caliphate of the Fatimid (9909-1171) in Egypt who had a Shia school of thought. In addition, following the notes of Osman Bakar (b. 1946), this criticism was also to downplay the meaning of the Shia religion in the face of the ruling Sunni orthodoxy in Baghdad (Bakar, 1998).

For philosophy, al-Ghazali's criticism is motivated by certain reasons. Osman Bakar (b. 1946) states that al-Ghazali's criticism is based on two reasons. (1) declaring a monopoly on spiritual truth for the Sufis. Minimizing the importance of supra-rational experience in the method of the philosophers means guaranteeing the superiority of the Sufi method, which al-Ghazali himself incorporates. (2) want to defend a theological perspective that places reason under revelation. This perspective states that metaphysical truths are in the realm of faith based on revelation. Therefore, any claim that states the ability of reason to reach metaphysical truths must be rejected so that rational abilities in philosophy must be criticized.

Al-Ghazali's harsh criticism of this philosophy resulted in two things. (1) philosophers' super image is lost in some Muslim communities. Al-Ghazali wants the fall of the philosopher's image. In *Tahâfut*, al-Ghazali stated that one of his goals was to disappoint people who looked up to philosophers or judged that philosophers were always right (Ghazali, 1972). (2) philosophical

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thought does not develop in Islamic society. The philosophy that was built since the time of al-Kindi (801-873) and developed rapidly under al-Farabi (870-950) and Ibn Sina (980-1037) became dim due to al-Ghazali's attacks. New philosophical thought developed again in the Islamic world during Ibn Tufail (1105-1185) and Ibn Rushd (1126-1198) in Andalusia. Al-Ghazali supports the theological teachings which subordinate reason to revelation and reinforces the teachings of Sufism, which place reason under intuition (*kashf*).

### 6. CONCLUSIONS

Based on the description above, several things are conveyed. First, that al-Ghazali's concept of truth is classified in terms of forms, sources and methods to achieve it. In its form, the truth can be divided into ontological truth and epistemological truth. At its source, the truth can be divided into two: the truth that comes from revelation and the truth from ratios. In the aspect of the method, the truth can be achieved with the power of the senses, reason and heart.

Second, al-Ghazali's concept of truth has several advantages. (1) the distinction between ontological and epistemological truths from al-Ghazali can suppress unilateral truth claims from certain groups, which often act in the name of religion for personal and group interests. (2) al-Ghazali accepts the truth of revelation, which is not recognized in the West. This recognition of revelation and reason can be the basis for integration between religion and philosophy or religion and science, which is currently being carried out more and more. (3) al-Ghazali's concept of truth does not eliminate the ability of the senses and reason. The means to reach the truth are acknowledged but placed in a position by their competence. Sensory potential, which is considered to have many deficiencies, is placed at the lowest position, then the ratio potential,

Third, this research makes an important contribution. (1) provide complete data on the concept of truth in al-Ghazali's knowledge, namely the forms, sources and means of truth. In addition, it also discusses al-Ghazali's criticism of the methods of truth seekers who existed at that time. (2) Al-Ghazali's concept of two sources of truth, namely revelation and reason, can be the basis for integrating religion and science, which Ian G Barbour (1923-2013) considered the best pattern of relations between religion and science. (3) the use of the potential of the heart (*al-qalb*) by al-Ghazali as a means of reaching the truth can be an alternative to the limited potential of the senses and ratios in modern epistemology. (4) al-Ghazali's critique of truth seekers at that time taught us always to be critical of every school of thought and classify thoughts, including religious thought. There are no methods and groups of thought that are free from criticism and analysis so that the sacralization of religious knowledge does not occur.

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