



## The Four Divine Presences in al-Jīlānī's (470/1077-561/1165) Thoughts

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**Abstract:** Absence of God (*al-ghiyāb al-ilāhiyya*) in Western cosmology has fostered a mechanistic understanding of the universe as operating independently. In contrast, Islamic cosmology, particularly in the Sufi tradition, emphasizes the continuous and holistic presence of God (*al-ḥaḍrah al-ilāhiyya*). This study explores the cosmological thought of Shaykh ‘Abd al-Qādir al-Jīlānī (470/1077–561/1165), founder of the Qādiriyya Ṣūfī order. Employing a qualitative library research approach, the study analyzes al-Jīlānī’s *Sirr al-Asrār* (*The Secret of Secrets*) alongside other relevant works using an Islamic cosmic levels-cycles framework and expert triangulation of Sufi thought. The findings reveal that al-Jīlānī’s divine cosmology presents an integrated vision linking four divine presences (*al-ḥaḍarāt al-ilāhiyya al-arba’ah*): *lāhūt* (Godhead), *jabarūt* (Divine Power), *malakūt* (Spiritual Sovereignty), and *nāsūt* (Humanity). These four levels are systematically correlated with eight cosmological elements, including the apostles, cosmos, spiritual centers, heavens, spirits, knowledge, existential levels, and human intellect. Al-Jīlānī’s holistic model offers an integrative alternative to mechanistic cosmology and reinforces the spiritual unity of God, humanity, and the universe.

**Contribution:** The findings in this study contribute to reinforcing the concept of integralism in cosmic spirituality, wisdom of cosmology, sacred cosmology, spiritual-holistic cosmology, and mechanistic cosmology.

**Keywords:** Shaykh ‘Abd al-Qādir al-Jīlānī; four divine presences (*al-ḥaḍrah al-ilāhiyyah al-arba’ah*); five levels of reality.

## Introduction

The unity between God's role and the universe (*al-wiḥda bayna al-ilāhiyyah wa al-kawniyyah*) is the key feature of Islamic cosmology in the sufi's point of view.<sup>1</sup> Sufis like al-Jīlānī, Ibn 'Arabī, Ikhwān al-Ṣafā, and Nasr had offered concepts such as cosmic unity (*al-wiḥda al-kawniyyah*),<sup>2</sup> godness cosmology (*al-ilāhiyyah al-kawniyyah*),<sup>3</sup> wisdom of cosmology,<sup>4</sup> and *scientia sacra* cosmology<sup>5</sup> or cosmic spirituality.<sup>6</sup> Accordingly, Nasr criticized the West's mechanistic cosmology as being anthropocentric and characterized by the absence of God (*al-giyāb al-ilāhiyyah*). It possesses neither eternal, noble, nor divine values and has lost its sacrality, metaphysical aspect, and holy dimension.<sup>7</sup> Unlike in the West, the principles of cosmic understanding that constantly refer to the presence of God are clearly articulated in Islamic cosmology, particularly as explicated in Sufi thought.

This was initiated by the Sufi al-Ḥallāj, who offered two divine presences by using the terms divinity and humanity (*lāhūt* and *nāhūt*).<sup>8</sup> Ibn 'Arabī also proposed concepts of duality between creator and creature (*ḥaqq* and *khalq*), the spiritual and phenomenal worlds, essential and reflected light, the divine aspect (*bāṭin*) and the apparent (*ẓāhir*), and the Lord and the vassal (*Rabb* and '*abd*'). Each pair of terms typifies a union for which we have suggested the term *unio*

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<sup>1</sup> Seyyed Hossein Nasr, *Man and Nature* (Chicago: Chicago Press, 1997), 22; Shunhua Jin, "Representing and Experiencing Islamic Domes: Images, Cosmology, and Circumambulation," *Religions* 13, no. 6 (2022): 526, <https://doi.org/10.3390/rel13060526>.

<sup>2</sup> Ibn 'Arabī, *Shajara Al-Kawn Shajara Al-Kawn* (Qāhirah: Riyād al-'Abdillāh, 1995), 343; Ibn 'Arabī, *Al-Tadbīrat Al-Ilāhiyyah Fī Iṣlāḥ Al-Mamlakah Al-Insāniyyah* (Leiden: Brill, 1919), 101–240.

<sup>3</sup> Taufiqurrahman, "The Divinity Cosmological Model of Ibn Al-'Arabi: The Relations between Mystical and Logic," *Jurnal Fuaduna: Jurnal Kajian Keagamaan Dan Kemasyarakatan* 5, no. 1 (2021): 57–69, <https://doi.org/10.30983/fuaduna.v5i1.4164>.

<sup>4</sup> Ikhwān Al-Ṣafā, *Rasā'il Ikhwān Al-Ṣafā*, 1st ed., vol. 4 (Beirut: Dār Islāmiyyah, 1992), 37.

<sup>5</sup> Seyyed Hossein Nasr, *Knowledge and the Sacred* (New York: State University of New York Press, 1989), 34.

<sup>6</sup> Keith Moser, "(Re)-Discovering the Sacred in the Material Universe: An Exploration of Cosmic Spirituality in the Works of Malcolm de Chazal and Michel Serres," *French Cultural Studies* 27, no. 4 (2016): 372–84, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0957155816660686>.

<sup>7</sup> Moh. Anas, "Kritik Hossein Nasr Atas Problem Sains Dan Modernitas," *KALAM* 6, no. 1 (2017): 21–37, <https://doi.org/10.24042/klm.v6i1.391>.

<sup>8</sup> Herbert I. W. Mason, *Al-Hallaj* (London: Routledge, 1995), 81, <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315026220>; Louis Massignon, *The Passion of Al-Ḥallāj: Mystic and Martyr of Islam*, trans. Herbert Mason (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1994), 203.

sympathetica.<sup>9</sup> Al-Ghazālī developed these into three divine presences, namely *mulk*, *malakūt*, and *jabarūt*.<sup>10</sup> After al-Ghazālī, al-Jīlānī, the eponym of the Qādiriyyah Ṣūfī order, the great medieval mystics and one of the poles of saints (*qutb*), who became the eponymous founders of the major Sufi paths,<sup>11</sup> proposed four divine presences based on a personal revelation: God told me: “Any conduit (*tūr*) between humanity (*nāsūt*) and *malakūt* is a revealed law (*sharīʿa*), any conduit between *malakūt* and *jabarūt* is a spiritual path (*ṭarīqa*), and any conduit between *jabarūt* and divinity (*lāhūt*) is an essential truth (*ḥaqīqa*).”<sup>12</sup> It was through al-Jīlānī that Ibn ʿArabī developed the five divine presences, ranging from the divine essence (*hāhūt*), through the world of Names and Qualities (*lāhūt*), the archangelic world (*jabarūt*), the lower angelic and subtle worlds (*malakūt*), and the corporeal world (*mulk*).<sup>13</sup>

Existing studies on Islamic cosmology have examined only its theological and philosophical perspectives, including works by Nasr (1978),<sup>14</sup> Chittick (1982),<sup>15</sup> Netton (2012),<sup>16</sup> Hidayat (2023),<sup>17</sup> and Antombikums (2024).<sup>18</sup> However, Islamic cosmology from a Sufi perspective has not been widely discussed, except in one study edited by Lange and Knysh (2023).<sup>19</sup> Even so, Lange and Knysh had not elaborated on al-Jīlānī's thoughts on the universal levels (*al-marātib al-ʿālam*) in cosmology. While in fact, it was al-Jīlānī (1077-1165) –

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<sup>9</sup> Henry Corbin, *Creative Imagination in the Sufism of Ibn ʿArabī* (London: Routledge, 2008), 247, 361.

<sup>10</sup> Abū Ḥāmid Al-Ghazālī, *IḥyāʾUlūm Al-Dīn*, ed. ʿAbd Al-Muʿtī, vol. 5 (Beirut: Dār al-Fikr, 2000), 350–51.

<sup>11</sup> Rachida Chih, *Sufism in Ottoman Egypt* (London: Routledge, 2019), 97.

<sup>12</sup> Shaykh ʿAbd al-Qādir Al-Jīlānī, *Sirr Al-Asrār Wa Maḥzar Al-Anwār Fī Mā Yaḥtāju Ilayhi Al-Abrār* (Qāhirah: Dār al-Sanābil, 1994), 445..

<sup>13</sup> Mathieu Terrier, “Sufi Hierarchies of the Worlds or Levels of Existence,” in *Sufi Cosmology*, ed. Christian Lange and Alexander Knysh (Leiden: Brill, 2023), 277–98.

<sup>14</sup> Seyyed Hossein Nasr, *An Introduction to Islamic Cosmological Doctrines* (Harvard: Harvard College Press, 1978), 1–11.

<sup>15</sup> William C. Chittick, “The Five Divine Presences: From Al-Qūnūw? To Al-Qayari,” *The Muslim World* 72, no. 2 (1982): 107–28, <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1478-1913.1982.tb03238.x>.

<sup>16</sup> Ian Richard Netton, *Allah Transcendent* (London: Routledge, 2006), 17–44.

<sup>17</sup> Dudung Rahmat Hidayat, “Analysis of Content and Structure of Sufi Language in The Book of Sirr Al-Asrār of Shaykh ʿAbd Al-Qādir Al-Jīlānī and Their Implications for The National Character Development,” *Man In India* 96, no. 12 (2016): 4817–18.

<sup>18</sup> Aku S. Antombikums, “Divine Presence and Absence: A Theodicy of Narrative Analytic Theology,” *Verbum et Ecclesia* 45, no. 1 (2024): a2915, <https://doi.org/10.4102/ve.v45i1.3058>.

<sup>19</sup> Christian Lange and Alexander Knysh, eds., *Sufi Cosmology* (Leiden: Brill, 2023), 1–14.

through al-Ḥallāj (858-922) and al-Ghazālī (1058-1111) – who connected the concept of sufi cosmology and made it rapidly develop as it is today. From al-Jīlānī, sufi cosmology was then developed into five, six, seven, and forty divine presences<sup>20</sup> by Islamic mystics like Ibn ‘Arabī (1165-1240)<sup>21</sup> – when al-Jīlānī died (d. 1165), Ibn ‘Arabī was born<sup>22</sup> – al-Qūnawī (1207-1274),<sup>23</sup> al-Qayṣarī (d. 1350),<sup>24</sup> al-Jīlī (1365-1409),<sup>25</sup> al-Burhānpūrī (d. 1619),<sup>26</sup> al-Nābulusī (1641-1731),<sup>27</sup> and al-Jazā’irī (d. 1883).<sup>28</sup>

Motivated by spiritual fulfillment rather than by scientific, philosophical, and theological curiosity, the Islamic mystics cultivated a hermeneutical mode of cosmological thinking that wove together all available knowledge into a comprehensive, holistic whole. Mystics included Gnostics such as Ikhwān al-Ṣafā, al-Sijistānī, and al-‘Amulī and Sufis such as al-Hallāj, al-Ghazālī, al-Jīlānī, and Ibn ‘Arabī. Islamic mysticism reached its zenith in the work of al-Jīlānī, whose multilayered, complex, holistic cosmology has since dominated the Islamic world. Unlike the philosopher-scientists and theologians who did not engage the Qur’ān and Ḥadīth literature, the Sufis elaborated the Qur’ānic-prophetic model and integrated holistic terminology into their cosmological doctrines.<sup>29</sup> Therefore, to fill the existing research gap, the current study is aimed at elaborating the Sufi thoughts of Shaykh ‘Abd al-Qādir al-Jīlānī (1077-1165) on divine presences.

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<sup>20</sup> Richard Todd, “Levels of Being in Sufi Thought,” in *Sufi Cosmology*, ed. Christian Lange and Alexander Knysh (Leiden: Brill, 2023), 332–64.

<sup>21</sup> Ibn ‘Arabī, *‘Uqlat al-Mustawfīz* (Leiden: Brill, 1919), pp. 41-99.

<sup>22</sup> Claude Addas, *Quest for the Red Sulphur*, trans. Peter Kingsley (Oxford: The Alden Press, 1993), 296.

<sup>23</sup> Ṣadr al-Dīn Al-Qūnawī, *Miftāḥ Al-Gayb*, ed. M. Khvājavi (Tehran: Dār al-Ḥalabī, 1995), 231.

<sup>24</sup> Dāwūd Al-Qayṣarī, *Sharḥ Fuṣūṣ Al-Ḥikam*, ed. Jalāl al-Dīn Ashtiyānī (Tehran: Dār al-Ḥalabī, 1996), 7.

<sup>25</sup> ‘Abd al-Karīm Al-Jīlī, *Kitāb Marātib Al-Wujūd Wa Ḥaqīqatu Kulli Mawjūd* (Misr: Maktabah al-Jandī, 1990), 1–6.

<sup>26</sup> Al-Burhānpūrī, *Al-Tuḥfah Al-Mursalāh Ilā Rūḥ Al-Nabī [The Gift Addressed to the Spirit of the Prophet]*, trans. Anthony H. Johns (Canberra, 1965), 5–7.

<sup>27</sup> ‘Abd al-Ghanī Al-Nābulusī, *Kitāb Nukhbat Al-Mas’alah Sharḥ Al-Tuḥfah Al-Mursalāh* (New York: M.S. Princeton Garrett, 1990), 72–90.

<sup>28</sup> ‘Abd al-Qādir Al-Jazā’irī, *Kitāb Al-Mawāqif* (Leiden: Brill, 2000), 84–92.

<sup>29</sup> Samer Akkash, *Cosmology and Architecture in Premodern Islam* (New York: State University of New York Press, 2005), 3.

## Literature Review

In Schuon's perspective, the word 'presences' in the current paper is defined as 'presence with' (*al-ḥaḍrah*),<sup>30</sup> instead of 'presence to' (*al-ḥuḍūr*).<sup>31</sup> The basic distinction between the terms *al-ḥaḍrah* and *al-ḥuḍūr* is that the first is typically used to denote the presence of God or some divine reality. In contrast, the second denotes our experience of God's presence. These two are not the same thing.<sup>32</sup> When Ibn 'Arabī used the term *al-ḥaḍrah* without an accompanying attribute, he seemed to have the Divine Presences (*al-ḥaḍrāh al-ilāhiyyah*) in mind. Thus, in one passage, he defined 'the presence' in terms of a standard theological hierarchy that is typically used to refer to God and to the whole domain of His influence. He wrote, 'The Presence in the common usage of the Tribe is the Essence, the Attributes, and the Acts.'<sup>33</sup>

The Qur'ān expresses a fundamental dichotomy in Being, the Unseen (*al-ghayb*) and the Visible (*al-shahāda*).<sup>34</sup> The Qur'ānic premises for the doctrine of the Five Divine Presences are the following: The first presence is the absolute Unity – or non-duality – of God (*Allāhu aḥad*). The second presence is God as Creator, Revealer, and Savior; this is the degree of the Divine Qualities. The third presence is the "Throne" (*'Arsh*), which can be interpreted in many different ways on different planes, but which, from a cosmological perspective, represents most directly the supra-formal manifestation which penetrates all the remainder of the created Universe and which is thus identified with the world in its entirety. The fourth presence is the "Footstool" (*Kursī*) on which rest the "two Feet of God", which means here that animic manifestation, for this is what the Footstool symbolizes, is solely beatific. The fifth presence, namely earth (*arḍ*), corresponds to the "human realm" (*nāsūt/mulk*), because this is the plane of existence of man, who has been created as "vicar on earth" (*khalīfah fī al-arḍ*).<sup>35</sup>

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<sup>30</sup> The Qur'ān 57:4.

<sup>31</sup> Frithjof Schuon, *Survey of Metaphysics and Esoterism* (Bloomington: World Wisdom Books, 1986), 177.

<sup>32</sup> William C. Chittick, "Presence with God," in *Ninth Annual Symposium of the Muḥyī Al-Dīn Ibn 'Arabī Society in the University of California*, 1995, <https://ibnarabisociety.org/presence-with-god-william-chittick/>.

<sup>33</sup> Ibn 'Arabī, *Al-Futūḥāt Al-Makīyyah*, vol. 9 (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub 'Ilmiyyah, 2011), 407; William C. Chittick, *The Sufi Path of Knowledge* (New York: Albany, 1989), 3–30.

<sup>34</sup> The Qur'ān 59:22.

<sup>35</sup> Frithjof Schuon, *Form and Substance in the Religions* (Bloomington: World Wisdom, 2002), 55.

**Table 1: Schuon's Five Levels of Reality<sup>36</sup>**

|                                                                     |                                               |                                                            |                                                                                |                                                                    |                  |                                      |                                      |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| The Divine<br><br>The Unmanifest<br>The Uncreated<br>The Metacosmic |                                               |                                                            | (1) BEYOND-BEING<br><br>(the Divine Essence,<br>the Supra-Personal<br>God)     | A<br>B<br>S<br>O<br>L<br>U<br>T<br>E                               | Ā<br>T<br>M<br>Ā | D<br>I<br>V<br>I<br>N<br>E           | I<br>M<br>M<br>O<br>R<br>T<br>A<br>L |
|                                                                     |                                               |                                                            | (2) BEING<br><br>(the Personal God,<br>Creator, Judge;<br>Divine Qualities)    | U<br>N<br>C<br>L<br>R<br>O<br>E<br>G<br>A<br>O<br>T<br>S<br>E<br>D | R<br>E<br>M<br>Ā | I<br>M<br>M<br>O<br>R<br>T<br>A<br>L | I<br>M<br>M<br>O<br>R<br>T<br>A<br>L |
| EXISTENCE                                                           | Universal or<br>Supra-formal<br>Manifestation |                                                            | (3) Spirit, Intellect<br><br>(Spiritual,<br>Intellectual, or<br>Angelic realm) | C<br>R<br>L<br>E<br>O<br>A<br>G<br>T<br>O<br>E<br>S<br>D           | A<br>Y<br>Ā      | H<br>U<br>M<br>A<br>N                | I<br>M<br>M<br>O<br>R<br>T<br>A<br>L |
|                                                                     | The Manifest<br>The Created<br>The Cosmic     | indi-<br>vidual<br>or<br>formal<br>mani-<br>festa-<br>tion | (4) soul<br><br>(animic or<br>psychic realm)                                   | I<br>V<br>E                                                        | E                | N<br>A<br>R<br>T<br>H                | M<br>O<br>R<br>T<br>A<br>L           |
|                                                                     |                                               | gross                                                      | (5) body<br><br>(corporeal realm)                                              |                                                                    |                  |                                      |                                      |

Table 1 describes Schuon's Five Levels of Reality by Stoddart. In a useful chart, Stoddart consolidates Schuon's writings about the Five Divine Presences, making clear the various "boundaries and syntheses" to which Schuon alludes. The Five Divine Presences can be compiled into Three Divine Presences: Individual (body, soul, spirit), Universal Man (Being), and God (Beyond-Being) – *Mu'min, Muḥammad, Allāh*.<sup>37</sup> The most all-inclusive metaphysical doctrine in Islam is the five levels of reality, or the Five Divine Presences (*al-ḥaḍrāh al-ilāhīyyah al-khamsah*). In Persia, it was expounded by 'Azīz al-Nasafī. It is summarized in the following terms in Arabic and with English explanations: *hāhūt* (Beyond-Being or Divine Essence), *lāhūt* (Being or God as Creator, Helper,

<sup>36</sup> William Stoddart, *Outline of Sufism* (Bloomington: World Wisdom, 2012), 31–32.

<sup>37</sup> Al-Jīlānī, *Sirr Al-Asrār Wa Mazhar Al-Anwār Fī Mā Yaḥtāju Ilayhi Al-Abrār*, 23.

Judge), *jabarūt* (Spirit, Intellect, Heaven, Angelic World), *malakūt* (soul), and *nāsūt/mulk* (body).

*Māyā* is radiation from *Ātmā*,

For *Ātmā* radiates: It is the Highest Light.  
In *Māyā* lie the cycles of the worlds –  
But they are illusions; they touch not *Ātmā*.  
Worlds and cycles arise and vanish –  
Before *Ātmā*'s Reality, nothing endures.

What you experience of places, times, and things  
It's but a dream. This is the doctrine in a few words.  
However, O man: from *Ātmā* fell a spark  
Mysteriously into the stream of thy heart.  
Thy deepest depth is not blinded by *Māyā* –  
It is none other than *Ātmā* –<sup>38</sup>

Everyone knows the distinction between God and man, and within man, everyone knows the distinction between soul and body. We thus immediately have three “levels”: God, soul, and body. Then there is the distinction (mentioned above) that exists within God Himself, namely, between the Divine Essence (“Beyond-Being”) and God the Creator-Helper-Judge (“Being”). The Divine Essence and God the Creator constitute the first two of the five “levels”; they are Divine and Uncreated. The soul and the body are the fourth and fifth levels; they are human and created. The third or intermediate level is that of the Spirit or Intellect – it is the Logos in its created aspect. The terms creation and created are synonymous with the terms manifestation and manifested.<sup>39</sup>

The human levels (the fourth and the fifth) constitute “formal manifestation”, which comprises both subtle manifestation (soul) and gross manifestation (body). The third level, also created or manifested, is “supra-formal or universal manifestation”; this is the spiritual or intellectual level (the latter term being understood in the Medieval or Scholastic sense). The Divine levels (the first and the second) are Unmanifested or Uncreated. The term “Intellect” must not be confused with “mind” (the faculty of discursive reason). The mind, along with the imagination, sentiment, and memory, is a content of the soul (*anima* or *psyche*).<sup>40</sup>

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<sup>38</sup> Frithjof Schuon, *Poems by Frithjof Schuon* (Bloomington: World Wisdom, 2003), 235.

<sup>39</sup> William Stoddart, *Frithjof Schuon and the Perennialist School Features in Remembering in a World of Forgettin*, ed. Mateus Soares De Azevedo and Alberto Vasconcellos Queiroz (Bloomington: World Wisdom, 2008), 61.

<sup>40</sup> Stoddart, 61.

The Spirit (Latin: Spiritus, Greek: Pneuma) or Intellect (Latin: Intellectus, Greek: *Nous*) corresponds to the “angelic” or “celestial” realm, the realm of the Platonic “Ideas”. It represents the only “archetypal” or objective element in the constitution of man. (This use of the term “archetype” has nothing to do with the Jungian misuse of the term, where it designates sub-human elements of an obscure nature, and not, as in Platonism, supra-human elements, the nature of which is clarity). The “Intellect” is the “measure” of the soul; the soul can never be the “measure” of the Intellect. “Spirit” and “Intellect” are the two sides of the same coin, the latter about Truth (or doctrine), and the former about Reality (or spiritual realization). The distinction between “Intellect” and “soul” is absolutely cardinal. The chaos of modern philosophy and modern psychology arises precisely from the confusion of these two and, as often as not, from the total loss of the concept of “Intellect”. It is the abolition of the capacity for objectivity, which is the distinguishing feature of man, and the only thing that makes us truly human.<sup>41</sup>

Space, time, form, number, matter:

These are the fundamental categories of sensorial existence.

Then ether, fire, air, water, earth:

These are also loaned to the world by God.

On the one hand, there are mass and energy;

On the other hand, there is life and consciousness,

And, above them all, Pure Spirit.

See how, in the limitless cosmos, everything that must be

Praises the Exalted Creator –

And how everything, born as it were of naught,

Circles round the one, uncreated Center.<sup>42</sup>

Schuon’s Five Divine Presences places the status of the Spirit/Intellect (created logos) as the bridge between God and humans. In Sufism, it is called *rūḥānī* (Spirit) – Advaita Hinduism calls it *anandamayakosha*, and Mahayana Buddhism uses the term *alaya*; English refers to it as spirit (*intellect*), Latin uses the term *spiritus* (*intellectus*), Greek uses the term *pneuma* (*nous*), and Arabic uses the term *rūḥānī* (*‘aql*). For Integralists, human history is the expression of the *rūḥānī* on earth, replicating the life journey of liberated individuals: the enlightened Mystics and Prophets. The *rūḥānī* and the body constitute a twofold unity of the human individual. It is this belief in the existence of the individual *rūḥānī* that has been ‘discarded’ from the scientific study of human beings, both

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<sup>41</sup> Stoddart, 61.

<sup>42</sup> Frithjof Schuon, *World Wheel Volumes I-III* (Bloomington: World Wisdom, 2006), 76.

as individuals and as groups. The issue is that the *rūḥānī* cannot be measured quantitatively. Therefore, the phenomena of the *rūḥānī* – thought, feeling, and volition – are regarded as functions of the processes of the brain and the body in general. Consequently, the marginalized *rūḥānī* has been replaced by the abstract noun called ‘consciousness’.<sup>43</sup>

Schuon's Pentadic of Five Divine Presences can complement Wilber and Capra's tetradic integralistic model. Wilber offered an integrative relationship between four categories: individual exterior objectivity (nervous system, organ systems, framework), social exterior interobjectivity (theosphere, noosphere, biosphere, physiosphere), social interior intersubjectivity (theology, ideology, sociology, technology), and individual interior subjectivity (*sukṣma/rūḥānī*, soul, mind, body, matter).<sup>44</sup> These four elements are parallel to the categories of matter, energy, information, and value in Integralism.<sup>45</sup> Meanwhile, Capra constructed a structural tetradic pyramid with ‘meaning’ as its apex and the ‘matter-pattern-process’ triangle as its base. Schuon positioned the Spirit (*rūḥānī*) as a connecting bridge between God and human. In the traditions of Buddhism, Hinduism, and Taoism, this dimension of transcendence is called *Sunyata*, *Brahman*, and the ‘Unnamed Tao’. Whereas, in the traditions of Jewish Kabbalism, Christian Mysticism, and Islamic Sufism, it is called *Ain Soph*, the Godhead, and *hāhūt*.<sup>46</sup>

The Pentadic of Five Divine Presences is a development of the tetradic, triadic, diadic, and monadic models. In Sufism, the five categories correspond to *jism* (body), *nafs* (soul), *‘aql* (Intellect), Being, and Beyond-Being. In the tradition of *fiqh*, they correspond to the hierarchy of *‘urfī* (instrumental), *ijmā’ī* (social), *ijtihādī* (cultural), *sunnah* (universal), and Qur’ānī (transcendental). In the category of theology, they correspond to *khalqillāh* (creation), *sunnatullāh* (behavior), *amrullāh* (creation), *ṣifātullāh* (attributes), and *dhātullāh* (substance). In the tradition of *ḥikma* (philosophy), they correspond to *maddiyyah* (material cause), *fā‘iliyyah* (efficient cause), *ṣūriyyah* (formal cause), *ghā‘iyyah* (final

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<sup>43</sup> Armahedi Mahzar, “Menuju Islamisasi Paradigma Sains Postmodern,” in *Menyibak Tirai Kejahilan*, ed. Mulyadhi Kartanegara (Bandung: Mizan, 2003), xvii–xxiv.

<sup>44</sup> Ken Wilber, *A Theory of Everything* (Boston: Shambhala, 2000), 45.

<sup>45</sup> Armahedi Mahzar, “Integrasi Sains Dan Agama: Model Dan Metodologi,” in *Integrasi Ilmu Dan Agama: Interpretasi Dan Aksi*, ed. Zainal Abidin Bagir, Jarot Wahyudi, and Anfan Anshori (Yogyakarta: Mizan and Suka Press, 2005), 100.

<sup>46</sup> Armahedi Mahzar, “Dari Tao Fisika Ke Tao Kehidupan: Evolusi Pemikiran Fritjof Capra,” in *The Tao of Physics: Menyingkap Kesejajaran Fisika Modern Dan Mistisisme Timur*, trans. Auliya Ilhamal Hafizh (Yogyakarta: Jalasutra, 2005), iii–xvii.

cause), and *tāmmah* (prime cause).<sup>47</sup> Therefore, Schuon's Transcendent Unity of Five Divine Presences, inspired by Perennial Philosophy and Sufism, can be aligned with other concepts of life to find integralistic relations.

## Method

This study employed the textual or document study method in qualitative research.<sup>48</sup> Research data were divided into primary and secondary data. The primary data of the research refers to the manuscript of *Sirr al-Asrār wa Maẓhar al-Anwār fī Mā Yaḥtāju Ilayhi al-Abrār* (The Secret of Secrets) written by Shaykh 'Abd al-Qādir al-Jīlānī, which was examined thoroughly and in detail (*taḥqīq*) by Khalīd Muḥammad and Muḥammad Ghaṣṣān (1994).<sup>49</sup> In the English version, I used the manuscript translated by Shaykh Tosun Bairak al-Jerrahi al-Halveti titled *The Secret of Secrets* (2014).<sup>50</sup> As for the secondary data, they were collected from authoritative, recent, and relevant literary sources. Data obtained from both primary and secondary literary sources were subsequently analyzed using Schuon's five levels of reality (beyond-being, being, spirit/intellect, soul, body). The data were then categorized thematically and structured according to the acquired information. The categorization was organized to address the proposed research question. Ultimately, the data are presented in conceptual themes as new research findings.

## Results and Discussion

### Shaykh 'Abd al-Qādir al-Jīlānī (1077-1165)

There are two major streams of Sufi periodization in Baghdad. First, in the third/ninth and early fourth/tenth-century Baghdad among the likes of Ma'rūf al-Karkhī (d. 200/815), Bishr bin al-Ḥārith (d. 227/841), al-Ḥārith al-Muḥāsibī (d. 243/857), Sarī al-Saqāṭī (d. 253/867), Abū al-Ḥusayn al-Nūrī (d. 295/907), al-Junayd (d. 298/910), al-Ruwaym (d. 303/915), and Abū Bakr al-Shiblī (d. 334/945).<sup>51</sup> Second, in the sixth/twelfth century, it was home to several major figures who would have a considerable impact on the subsequent development of

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<sup>47</sup> Mahzar, "Integrasi Sains Dan Agama: Model Dan Metodologi," 101.

<sup>48</sup> Glenn A. Bowen, "Document Analysis as a Qualitative Research Method," *Qualitative Research Journal* 9, no. 2 (2009): 27–40, <https://doi.org/10.3316/QRJ0902027>.

<sup>49</sup> Al-Jīlānī, *Sirr Al-Asrār Wa Maẓhar Al-Anwār Fī Mā Yaḥtāju Ilayhi Al-Abrār*, 51–67, 104–7.

<sup>50</sup> Shaykh Tosun Bairak al-Jerrahi Al-Halveti, *The Secret of Secrets by Shaykh 'Abd Al-Qādir Al-Jīlānī* (Cambridge: The Islamic Texts Society, 2014), 13–25.

<sup>51</sup> Pascal Held, *Baghdad During the Time of 'Abd Al-Qādir Al-Jīlānī* (USA: Gorgias Press LLC, 2022), 249–50.

Sufism. Such as Aḥmad al-Ghazālī (d. 520/1126), Abū Ya'qūb al-Hamadānī (d. 535/1140), Abū al-Najīb al-Suhrawardī (d. 563/1168), Ibn al-Jawzī (d. 597/1201), Abū Ḥafṣ 'Umar al-Suhrawardī (d. 632/1234),<sup>52</sup> and Shaykh 'Abd al-Qādir al-Jīlānī (d. 561/1165) – Ḥanbalism, Shāfi'ism, and Shaykh Baghdad.<sup>53</sup> Al-Jīlānī came to Baghdad from Jīlān in A.H. 488 and pursued a legalistic course of Hanbali training, refusing to study at the Nizamiyyah, where the Sufī, Aḥmad al-Ghazālī, had succeeded his brother Abū Ḥāmid al-Ghazālī.<sup>54</sup> Al-Jīlānī's full name and title is 'The Crown of Saints' (*Ṣulṭān al-Awliyā'*) Abī Muḥammad 'Abdul Qādir bin Abī Ṣāliḥ 'Abdillāh bin Jankī Dūsāt al-Jīlānī al-Shāfi'ī al-Ḥanbalī Raḥimahullāhu Ta'ālā.<sup>55</sup>

Al-Jīlānī was a Sufī from the Persian region of Jīlān, which is currently located in southern Iran. Al-Jīlānī was born in 1077 and died in 1165<sup>56</sup> during the Abbasid Empire. Al-Jīlānī had a perfect lineage. On his father's side, he was a descendant of Sayyid Ḥasan, and on his mother's side, of Sayyid Ḥusein. These two were both sons of Imām 'Alī bin Abī Ṭālib, making them the grandchildren of the Prophet Muhammad PBUH. The most elaborate biography of al-Jīlānī, which completely obscures his personality and presents him as a great miracle-monger, *Bahjah al-Asrār* by 'Alī ibn Yūsuf al-Ṣaṭṭanawfī (d. 713/1314), was written over a hundred years after his death (a.d. 1166).<sup>57</sup> The shorter, later notice of al-Dhahābī (d. 748/1348), based on Ibn al-Najjār and edited and translated by Margoliouth, is more valuable because he adopted a critical attitude and was sceptical of the more extravagant miracles ascribed to al-Jīlānī. Still later works include al-Yāfi'ī (d. 768/1367), *Khulaṣat al-Mafākhīr fī Ikhtisār Manāqib al-Jīlānī*.<sup>58</sup>

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<sup>52</sup> Held, 4–5.

<sup>53</sup> Al-Jīlānī, *Sirr Al-Asrār Wa Maḥzar Al-Anwār Fī Mā Yaḥtāju Ilayhi Al-Abrār*, 20.

<sup>54</sup> J. Spencer Trimingham, *The Sufi Orders in Islam* (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1971), 41.

<sup>55</sup> Al-Jīlānī, *Sirr Al-Asrār Wa Maḥzar Al-Anwār Fī Mā Yaḥtāju Ilayhi Al-Abrār*, 19; Ibn Rajab, *Al-Dayl 'alā Ṭabaqāt Al-Ḥanābilah* (Beirut: Dār Kutub al-'Ilmiyyah, 1997), 2; Ibn Al-Wardī, *Tatimma Al-Mukhtaṣar Fī Akhbār Al-Basyar*, vol. 2 (Beirut: Dār Kutub al-'Ilmiyyah, 2000), 107; Khairuddīn Al-Dharkālī, *Al-A'lam: Qāmuṣ Tarajīm Li Ashḥār Al-Rijāl Wa Al-Nisā' Min Al-'Arab Wa Al-Mustāribīn Wa Al-Mustashāriqīn*, vol. 5 (Beirut: Dār al-'Ulūm, 1970), 47.

<sup>56</sup> John Renard, *The A to Z of Sufism* (Toronto: Scarecrow Press, 2009), xxx.

<sup>57</sup> Nūriddīn Al-Ṣaṭṭanawfī, *Bahjah Al-Asrār Wa Ma'dan Al-Anwār* (Lebanon: Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmiya, 2000); Al-Jīlānī, *Sirr Al-Asrār Wa Maḥzar Al-Anwār Fī Mā Yaḥtāju Ilayhi Al-Abrār*, 320.

<sup>58</sup> Trimingham, *The Sufi Orders in Islam*, 41.

Al-Jīlānī wrote several works, of which four are the most monumental and most commented by sufi scholars, which are *Sufficient Provision for Seekers of the Path of Truth and Religion (al-Ghunya li al-Ṭālib Ṭarīq al-Ḥaq wa al-Dīn)*,<sup>59</sup> *Revelations of the Unseen (Futūḥ al-Ghayb)*,<sup>60</sup> *The Sublime Revelation (al-Faṭḥ al-Rabbānī)*,<sup>61</sup> and *The Secret of Secrets (Sirr al-Asrār)*.<sup>62</sup> According to Seppala, *Sirr al-Asrār* is a work that presents the essence of Sufism from a perspective that focuses on inner states.<sup>63</sup> The term *Sirr al-Asrār* comes from two words, *sirr* and *asrār*, which are rooted in the word *sirr*. The term *sirr* signifies both ‘secret’ and ‘heart’.<sup>64</sup> In *Futūḥ al-Ghayb*, al-Jīlānī uses three layers of the heart: the outermost layer (*ṣadr*), the heart proper (*qalb*),<sup>65</sup> and finally the innermost (*sirr*).<sup>66</sup> Regarding this matter, one of the Ḥadīth Qudsī highly emphasized by al-Jīlānī in this book is *al-insānu sirrī wa [anā sirru]hu* (humankind is my secret, stated Muhammad PBUH, and I am the one who knows the secret, stated Muhammad PBUH).<sup>67</sup> This is how the term *anāsir* (*anā* + *sirr*) came to be, *anā* means ‘I’ (Muhammad PBUH) and *sirr* means ‘secret’ (of humankind).

<sup>59</sup> Shaykh ‘Abd al-Qādir Al-Jīlānī, *Al-Ghunya Li Al-Ṭālib Ṭarīq Al-Ḥaq Wa Al-Dīn* (Beirut: Dār al-Fikr, 1905); Shaykh ‘Abd al-Qādir Al-Jīlānī, *Sufficient Provision for Seekers of the Path of Truth [Al-Ghunya Li Al-Ṭālib Ṭarīq Al-Ḥaq Wa Al-Dīn]*, trans. Muhtar Holland, vol. 5 (Florida: Al-Baz Publishing, Inc, 2008); Sabrina I. Sohbi, “Killing or Sparing Inedible Animals: Ādāb and Internormativity in Al-Jīlānī’s Kitāb Al-Ghunya,” *Journal of Islamic Ethics* 6, no. 1 (2022): 94–121, <https://doi.org/10.1163/24685542-12340077>.

<sup>60</sup> Shaykh ‘Abd al-Qādir Al-Jīlānī, *Futūḥ Al-Ghayb* (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-‘Ilmiyyah, 2000), 2–10.

<sup>61</sup> Shaykh ‘Abd al-Qādir Al-Jīlānī, *Al-Faṭḥ Al-Rabbānī Wa Al-Fayd Al-Raḥmānī* (Germany: Al-Kamel Verlag, 2007), 4–11; Shaykh ‘Abd al-Qādir Al-Jīlānī, *The Sublime Revelation [Al-Faṭḥ Al-Rabbānī]: A Collection of Sixty-Two Discourses*, trans. Muhtar Holland (Florida: Al-Baz Publishing, Inc, 2009), 1–7.

<sup>62</sup> Al-Halveti, *The Secret of Secrets by Shaykh ‘Abd Al-Qādir Al-Jīlānī*, 25–30.

<sup>63</sup> Serafim Seppala, “In Speechless Ecstasy: Expression and Interpretation of Mystical Experience in Classical Syriac and Sufi Literature” (University of Helsinki, 2022), 41.

<sup>64</sup> The root *s-r-r*, from which *sirr* derives, occurs in various forms in the Qur’ān, but the word *sirr* in particular appears five times (The Qur’ān 6:3; 9:78; 20:7; 25:6; 43:80) usually in the sense that God knows man’s secrets (*sirr*). It also turns up a few times in its adverbial form (*sirrān*), meaning ‘secretly’.

<sup>65</sup> Al-Jīlānī, *Futūḥ Al-Ghayb*, 45, 50.

<sup>66</sup> Many Sufis appear to agree with the idea of three layers of the heart, while others, like al-Nūrī (d. 295/907) propose four layers adding *fu’ād* (another word for ‘heart’) between the heart proper (*qalb*) and the innermost (*sirr*). Also, rather than *sirr*, al-Nūrī uses the term ‘*lubb*’ to refer to the innermost. See, Alexander Knysh, *Islamic Mysticism: A Short History* (Leiden: Brill, 2000), 62.

<sup>67</sup> Al-Jīlānī, *Sirr Al-Asrār Wa Maṣḥar Al-Anwār Fī Mā Yaḥtāju Ilayhi Al-Abrār*, 52.

There are eight kinds of titles for the manuscript (*nuskha*) of *Sirr al-Asrār*. First, *Sirr al-Asrār wa Maẓhar al-Anwār fīmā Yaḥtāju Ilayhi Abrār*. Second, *Risālah fī 'Ilm al-Zāhir wa al-Bāṭin*. Third, *al-Sulūk fī Bāṭin al-Asrār*. Fourth, *al-Asrār fīmā Yaḥtāju Ilayhi Abrār*. Fifth, *Risālah fī al-Taṣawwuf*. Sixth, *Kitāb fī al-Taṣawwuf*. Seventh, *Asrār al-Asrār*. Eighth, *Asrār al-Ṭālibīn*.<sup>68</sup> According to these titles, *Sirr al-Asrār* discusses three key issues, which are sufism, *asrār*, and the dualistic relations between the outer (*ẓāhir*) and inner (*bāṭin*) dimensions such as *sharī'a wa ṭarīqa*, *jismāniya wa rūhāniya*, *daraja wa qurbā*, *'ābid wa 'ārīf*,<sup>69</sup> and *ṣalāt mu'aqqatatun-ṣalāt jawāriḥ-ḥāfiẓū 'alā al-ṣalawāt* (the five prayers) *wa ṣalāt mu'abbadatun-ṣalāt qalb-wa al-ṣalāt al-wuṣṭā* (the continuous prayers [*ṣalāt dā'im*]).<sup>70</sup> Accordingly, the delivery of al-Jīlānī's book, which discusses universal levels in sufi cosmology, can be perceived from two aspects in a dualistic-holistic manner, i.e., outer-inner (*ẓāhir-bāṭin*), physical-metaphysical, *sharī'a-ḥaqīqa*, manifestation-essence, and humanity-divinity (*nāsūt-lāhūt*). The Book of *Sirr al-Asrār* comprises 24 chapters (*faṣl*). Al-Jīlānī explicated two secrets in the use of the number 24 in relation to the number of chapters. First, 24 constitutes the number of letters in the *Tahlīl* utterance: *Lā Ilāha Illa Allāh - Muḥammad Rasūlullāh*. Second, 24 constitutes the number of hours in a single day and night (24 hours).<sup>71</sup>

### The Four Divine Presences

Al-Jīlānī explained that God first created the Light of Muḥammad (*Nūr Muḥammadiya*) from the Light of Allāh (*Nūr Allāh/Ḥaqīqa Muḥammadiya*), and this Muḥammadan Reality (*Ḥaqīqa Muḥammadiya*) is named a light because it is completely purified from the darkness [associated with] Majesty (*jalāl*). The Muḥammadan Reality is the quintessence of all created things, the first of them and their origin from [his spirit] were created all the spirits in the realm of divine nature, in the true 'best of forms' (*aḥsan al-taqwīm*).<sup>72</sup> It is the name for the bridal chamber of intimacy in that [primordial] world, and the original homeland. After four thousand years had elapsed, God created the Throne ( '*Arash*) from the light

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<sup>68</sup> Al-Jīlānī, 10–12.

<sup>69</sup> Al-Jīlānī, 107.

<sup>70</sup> Al-Jīlānī, 102–3.; The Qur'ān 4:104; 70:23; 2:238.

<sup>71</sup> Al-Jīlānī, 50.

<sup>72</sup> The Qur'ān 95:4.

of the essence of Muḥammad, and from it the rest of creation; then the spirits were sent down to the lowest level of creation, i.e., the corporeal bodies.<sup>73</sup>

Several Ḥadīth Qudsī serve as al-Jīlānī's basis for the origin of the cosmos, deriving from the Light of Allah or the Muhammadan Reality. For instance, *I created Muhammad initially from the Light of My Countenance (Khalaqtu Muḥammadan awwalan min Nūrī Wajhī). That which Allah initially created was My Ruh and My Light (Awwalumā khalaqallāhu Rūḥī wa Nūrī)*,<sup>74</sup> *that which Allah initially created was Qalam and 'Aql (Awwalumā khalaqallāhu al-Qalam wa al-'Aql)*, and *I am from Allah [said Muhammad], and the Believers are from me (Anā min Allāh wa al-mu'minūna minnī)*.<sup>75</sup> From the Light of Allah (*Nūr Allāh*), which is named 'Muhammad', the Light of Muhammad (*Nūr Muḥammad*) was created and called '*Mu'min/Rūḥānī*'. This is in line with the Ḥadīth Qudsī: "I am the father of all rūḥ" [said Muhammad], and "Adam is the father of all bodies" (*Anā abū al-arwāḥ wa Ādam abū al-bashar*).<sup>76</sup> *Rūḥānī*, according to al-Jīlānī, was initially placed by God in '*Ālam Lāhūt*' or 'Place of Origin' (*al-Waṭan al-Aṣl*).<sup>77</sup> The 'Place of Origin' of *rūḥānī* is stated in the Qur'ān by using several terms such as the House of God (*Baytullāh*),<sup>78</sup> the Holy Earth (*al-Ard al-Muqaddasah*),<sup>79</sup> and the Blessed Place (*Munzalan Mubārakan*).<sup>80</sup>

With regards to its position in the 'Place of Origin', al-Jīlānī called *rūḥānī* by the name *rūḥ qudsī*.<sup>81</sup> Then *rūḥānī* was sent down, consecutively, by God to the lower realms, namely *jabarūt*, *malakūt*, and *mulk*, where the name changed in those realms into *rūḥ ṣultānī*, *rawānī*, and *jasmānī*, respectively—a single object with various names. According to al-Jīlānī, the human spirits descend in

<sup>73</sup> Al-Jīlānī, *Sirr Al-Asrār Wa Maḥzar Al-Anwār Fī Mā Yaḥtāju Ilayhi Al-Abrār*, 69.

<sup>74</sup> The Qur'ān 5:15.

<sup>75</sup> Al-Jīlānī, *Sirr Al-Asrār Wa Maḥzar Al-Anwār Fī Mā Yaḥtāju Ilayhi Al-Abrār*, 44–50.; Sunan Abū Dāwūd, 'Bab Qadr', 4700.

<sup>76</sup> Al-Jīlānī, 44–50.

<sup>77</sup> Al-Jīlānī, 44–50.

<sup>78</sup> The Qur'ān 3:96. The Thirteen Developments of the House of God, which are: Throne of God ('*Arash/Kursī*'), The Frequent House (*Bayt al-Ma'mūr*), House of the Beneficent (*Bayt al-Raḥmān*), House of the Merciful (*Bayt al-Raḥīm*), The Ancient House (*Bayt al-'Atīq*), The large stone where the She-Camel of God emerged during the time of Ṣāliḥ the prophet, The gushing springs from three furnaces during Nūḥ's doomsday, The wood where Mūsā made his supplication to Allah, Heart of the Universe (the *Taurāt*), Center of the World (the *Zabūr*), Axis of Nature (the *Injīl*), House of God/*Baytullāh* (the Qur'ān), and The Palace of God (*Khazā'in 'Indallāh*).

<sup>79</sup> The Qur'ān 5:21.

<sup>80</sup> The Qur'ān 23:29.

<sup>81</sup> The Qur'ān 2:87.

successive clothing of light from the divine realm (*lāhūt*) to the world of divine omnipotence (*jabarūt*), where they are arraigned as rulers (*ṣultān*), to the angelic realm (*malakūt*), where they become spiritual travelers, and finally the physical world of the kingdom (*mulk*), where they become embodied but due to their connection with corporeality forget the agreement they had made on the Day of Alast.<sup>82</sup> Thereafter, God created the human body (*jasad*),<sup>83</sup> and He instructed *rūḥ* to enter the body.<sup>84</sup> However, when *rūḥ* (*lāhūt*) comes into contact with *jasad* (*nāsūt*), it would have forgotten its promise to God.<sup>85</sup> According to al-Jīlānī, for the *rūḥ* to return to its 'Place of Origin' (*al-Waṭan al-Aṣl/Baytullāh*) in the *Ālam Lāhūt*, then it must employ the role of God's messengers (*Ayyāmillāh*) – 124.000 Prophets and 313 Messengers.<sup>86</sup> Ultimately, *al-Rūḥ al-A'ẓam al-Muḥammadī* was sent down as the *Khatam Anbiyā'*.<sup>87</sup>

The four divine presences introduced by al-Jīlānī are *lāhūt*, *jabarūt*, *malakūt*, and *mulk*, which are originally from emanations (*tajallī*) of 'ālam *dhāt*, *ṣifāt*, *asmā'*, and 'aḫl.<sup>88</sup> Essence (*Dhāt*) leads to the existence of Nature/Attribute, Nature/Attribute results in the existence of Name, and Name leads to Action. Conversely, Action demonstrates Name, Name indicates Attribute, and Attribute reveals Essence (*Dhāt*). 'Ālam *Mulk* is also known as 'ālam *al-shahāda* or 'ālam *al-aḥsām* or 'ālam *al-suflā* or 'ālam *al-jasad*. 'Ālam *Malakūt* refers to 'ālam *al-ghayb* that is specifically for *rūḥ* and lust. 'Ālam *Jabarūt* is the intermediary realm (*barzakh*) between 'ālam *lāhūt* and *malakūt*. In this realm, God arranges all human affairs and their laws. Lastly, 'ālam *lāhūt*, 'ālam *aṣl*, or *al-waṭan al-aṣl* is the initial place of *rūḥānī*. Angels and others are unable to reach this realm. The Light of Muhammad (*Rūḥānī/Nūr Muḥammad*) that was created in this realm originally derived from the Light of Allah (*Nūr Allāh*).<sup>89</sup>

Al-Jīlānī juxtaposed the four divine presences with five other dimensions in fours. The relations between the four world levels ('ālam) with the four levels of knowledge ('ilm), spirits (*rūḥ*), emanations (*tajalliyāt*), intellect ('aql), and

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<sup>82</sup> Al-Jīlānī, *Sirr Al-Asrār Wa Maẓhar Al-Anwār Fī Mā Yaḥtāju Ilayhi Al-Abrār*, 69–70, 83.

<sup>83</sup> The Qur'ān 20:55.

<sup>84</sup> Al-Jīlānī, *Sirr Al-Asrār Wa Maẓhar Al-Anwār Fī Mā Yaḥtāju Ilayhi Al-Abrār*, 45.; The Qur'ān 15:29, 32:9.

<sup>85</sup> The Qur'ān 7:172.

<sup>86</sup> The Qur'ān 14:5.

<sup>87</sup> The Qur'ān 12:108, 33:40.

<sup>88</sup> Al-Jīlānī, *Sirr Al-Asrār Wa Maẓhar Al-Anwār Fī Mā Yaḥtāju Ilayhi Al-Abrār*, 91.

<sup>89</sup> Al-Jīlānī, 39–40.

heavens (*jannat*). First, world levels: *mulk*, *malakūt*, *jabarūt*, and *lāhūt*. Second, knowledge levels: *‘ilm sharī’a*, *ṭarīqa*, *ma’rifā*, and *ḥaqīqa*. Since there are two dimensions within the human self, namely *jasmānī* and *rūḥānī*, then there are two distinct kinds of knowledge revealed by God, which are *‘ilm zāhir (sharī’a)* or *‘ilm bi al-lisān* or *‘ilm jasmānī* and *‘ilm bāṭin (ṭarīqa)* or *‘ilm bi al-jinān* or *‘ilm rūḥānī*.<sup>90</sup> The Qur’ān mentions two kinds of knowledge, *al-‘ilm fī ṣudūr*<sup>91</sup> and *al-‘ilm ‘indallāh*.<sup>92</sup> Third, spirit levels: *rūḥ jasmānī (jism)*, *rawānī (qalb)*, *ṣultānī (fu’ād)*, and *qudsī (sirr)*.<sup>93</sup> Fourth, emanation levels: *tajallī athār*, *af’āl*, *ṣifāt*, and *dhāt*. Fifth, intellect levels: *‘aql ma’āshī*, *ma’ādī*, *zamānī*, and *kullī*. Sixth, heaven levels: *jannat al-ma’wā*, *na’īm*, *firdaws*, and *tawhīd*.<sup>94</sup>

In this respect, as in the quotation given above ascribed to al-Jīlānī: *nāsūt/mulk* is the natural human state in which one lives following the rules of the *sharī’a*; *malakūt* is the nature of angels, to reach which one treads the *ṭarīqa*, the path of purification; whilst *jabarūt* is the nature of power, to attain which one follows the way of enlightenment, *ma’rifā*, until one swoons into *fanā’*, absorption into Deity, the State of Reality (*lāhūt/ḥaqīqa*), often called in the order literature *‘ālam al-ghayb*, the (uncreated) world of the mystery.<sup>95</sup> The three levels of *sharī’a*, *ṭarīqa*, and *ma’rifā* are attributed to humans in general (*al-insān al-‘āmm*), and the *ḥaqīqa* level is for specific individuals (*al-insān al-khāṣṣ*). The three places where people in general return are *Jannat al-Ma’wā* in *‘Ālam Mulk*, *Jannat al-Na’īm* in *‘Ālam Malakūt*, and *Jannat al-Firdaws* in *‘Ālam Jabarūt*. Meanwhile, the place where specific individuals (*al-insān al-khāṣṣ*) return to is the ‘Place of Origin’ (*al-Waṭan al-Aṣl*), which is the *‘Ālam Lāhūt (Baytullāh)*.<sup>96</sup>

In his concept of the four divine presences, al-Jīlānī stated only three levels of heaven: *Jannat al-Ma’wā*, *Na’īm*, and *Firdaws*. He named what is above them as *Tawhīd*.<sup>97</sup> The four rakat prayers of zuhur and the four rakat prayers of ‘ashar open the eight gates of the heavens. *Jannat al-Ma’wā*, *Na’īm*, *Firdaws*, and *Tawhīd* were likened by al-Jīlānī as places where the four *rūḥ*, i.e., *rūḥ jismānī*, *rawānī*, *ṣultānī*, and *qudsī*, reside.<sup>98</sup> Once entering the human body, *rūḥ jismānī*

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<sup>90</sup> Al-Jīlānī, 46.

<sup>91</sup> The Qur’ān 29:49.

<sup>92</sup> The Qur’ān 67:26.

<sup>93</sup> Al-Jīlānī, *Sirr Al-Asrār Wa Maḥzar Al-Anwār Fī Mā Yaḥtāju Ilayhi Al-Abrār*, 137.

<sup>94</sup> Al-Jīlānī, 97–98.

<sup>95</sup> Trimmingham, *The Sufi Orders in Islam*, 160–61.

<sup>96</sup> Al-Jīlānī, *Sirr Al-Asrār Wa Maḥzar Al-Anwār Fī Mā Yaḥtāju Ilayhi Al-Abrār*, 51–54.

<sup>97</sup> Al-Jīlānī, 51–54.

<sup>98</sup> Al-Jīlānī, 55.

is placed within the body (*jasad*) along with its *zāhir* body parts (where they are placed between flesh and blood). Meanwhile, *rūḥ rawānī* resides in the heart, *rūḥ ṣultānī* in *fu'ād*, and *rūḥ qudsī* in *sirr*.<sup>99</sup> Based on this hierarchy of *rūḥ*, al-Jīlānī also categorized seven levels of *dhikr*, namely *dhikr al-lisān*, *dhikr al-naḥs*, *dhikr al-qalb*, *dhikr al-rūḥ*, *dhikr al-sirr*, *dhikr al-khāfī*, and *dhikr akhfā al-khāfī*.<sup>100</sup> Al-Jīlānī also juxtaposed the four of them with the four knowledges (*'ulūm*), which are *'ilm sharī'a*, *ṭarīqa*, *ma'rifa*, and *ḥaqīqa*. The relationship between them is similar to that between trees, branches, leaves, and fruit.<sup>101</sup>

Al-Jīlānī considered the four divine presences as a single unitary set not unlike a human being (*majmū'a al-kawn*).<sup>102</sup> The four divine presences model, developed by al-Jīlānī, was also enhanced by the ṣūfī order of his peer, namely, Abū al-Najīb al-Suhrawardī (d. 563/1168). According to al-Suhrawardī, in Sufism, four stages must be passed before man's corporeal veil can be removed; and his emancipated soul, mixed with the glorious essence, once it has been separated but not divided.<sup>103</sup> First, *sharī'a* (*'ālam nāsūt*). The disciple (*murīd*) observes the *shar'ī* and the rites of Islam; ever bearing his shaykh in mind; in him effacing himself through meditation; making him his shield against evil thoughts; and believing his spirit as his guardian spirit. This is 'effacement in the shaykh.' Second, *ṭarīqa* (*'ālam malakūt*). The disciple (*murīd*) attains power, entering sufism, and abandoning the observance of religious form, exchanging outward for inward worship. Without great piety, virtue, and fortitude (based on a knowledge of the dignity of the soul of man), he cannot attain this stage. The shaykh passes the *murīd* to the influence of the Pir (long since deceased), and then, in all things, the *murīd* sees the Pir. This is 'effacement in the Pir.' Third, *ma'rifa* (*'ālam jabarūt*). The *murīd* has attained supernatural knowledge and is, therein, equal to the angels. By the shaykh, he is led to Muhammad, whom, in all things, he sees. This is 'effacement in the Prophet.' Fourth, *ḥaqīqa/truth* (*'ālam lāhūt*). The *murīd*

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<sup>99</sup> Al-Jīlānī, 56–57, 61.

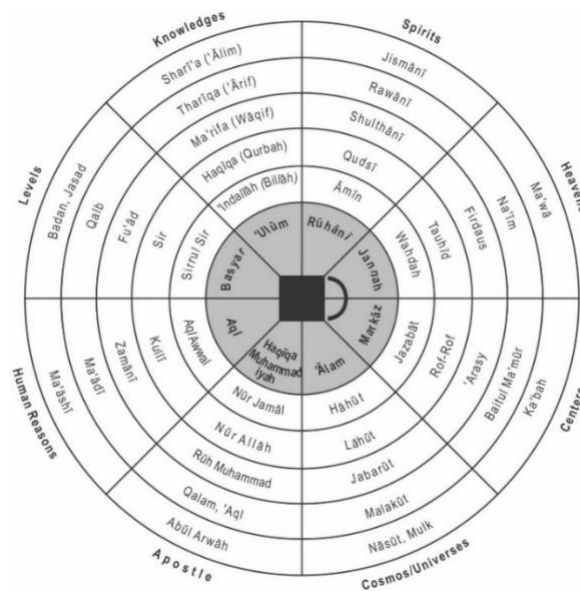
<sup>100</sup> Al-Jīlānī, 80.

<sup>101</sup> Al-Jīlānī, 62–66.

<sup>102</sup> Al-Jīlānī, 94.

<sup>103</sup> Abū Nājīb Al-Suhrawardī, *'Awārif Al-Ma'ārif* (Cairo: Maktabah al-Thaqāfah al-Dīniyah, n.d.), 3–4.

has become joined to truth (God), whom he sees in all things. This is ‘effacement in God.’<sup>104</sup>



**Figure 1: Al-Jīlānī's Four Divine Presences (by Author)**

Figure 1 demonstrates al-Jīlānī's four divine presences, consisting of eight layers that are respectively divided into five chambers. I have added the fifth chamber comprising the Light of Beauty (*Nūr Jamāl*), *Hāhūt*, *Jazabāt*, *Waḥda*, *Āmīn*, *Indallāh*, *Sīr al-Sīr*, and *'Aql Awwal*. The eight layers can be categorized into eight themes, which are *Ḥaqīqa Muḥammadiya*, *'Ālam*, *Markāz*, *Jannat*, *Rūḥānī*, *'Ulūm*, *Bashar*, and *'Aql*. These eight categories can also be featured into Apostle, Cosmos/Universes, Centers, Heavens/Paradise, Spirits, Knowledges, Levels, and Human Reasons/Intellects. The relation of fours in the four divine presences by al-Jīlānī through the eight relations makes up a 32 regular pattern, namely: (1) *Nūr Allāh*, *Rūḥ Muḥammad*, *Qalam/'Aql*, *Abū al-Arwāḥ*; (2) *'Ālam Lāhūt*, *Jabarūt*, *Malakūt*, *Nāsūt/Mulk*; (3) *Raf-raf*, *'Arash*, *Bayt al-Ma'mūr*, *Ka'ba*;<sup>105</sup> (4) *Tawhīd*, *Jannat Firdaws*, *Jannat Na'īm*, *Jannat Ma'wā*; (5) *Rūḥ Qudsī*, *Ṣultānī*, *Rawānī*, *Jismānī*; (6) *'Ilm Ḥaqīqa*, *Ma'rifa*, *Ṭarīqa*, *Sharī'a*; (7) *Sirr*, *Fuād*, *Qalb*, *Badan/Jasad*; (8) *'Aql Kullī*, *Zamānī*, *Ma'ādī*, *Ma'āshī*. Figure

<sup>104</sup> Syihābuddīn 'Umar bin Muḥammad Al-Suhrawardī, *The 'Awārif Al-Ma'Ārif*, trans. Wilberforce Clarke (Calcutta: Government of India Central Printing Office, 1891), 165.

<sup>105</sup>

1 also describes the cycle by which the Light of Muhammad (*Nūr Muḥammad/Mu'min/Rūḥānī*) returns to its 'Place of Origin' (*al-Waṭan al-Aṣl/Baytullāh*) in 'Ālam Lāhūt, for it to be consecrated (*qudsī*) back before rejoining the Light of Allah (*Nūr Allāh*). The universe in al-Jīlānī's perspective does not stand alone/utonomously, but is always in the continuous presence of God, if compared to Western cosmology.

## **Conclusion**

This study found that al-Jīlānī's concept of the four divine presences. This finding can reconnect the missing link between the three divine presences by al-Ghazālī with the five divine presences by Ibn 'Arabī. This is because the concept of the four divine presences by al-Jīlānī was developed from al-Ghazālī's three divine presences. Subsequently, al-Jīlānī's four divine presences were expanded by Ibn 'Arabī and his followers into five, six, seven, and forty divine presences. The four divine presences al-Jīlānī proposed consist of the worlds of the absolute universe or Godhead (*lāhūt*), the transcendent universe or power (*jabarūt*), the celestial universe or sovereignty (*malakūt*), and the terrestrial universe or the world of humanity (*nāsūt*). Al-Jīlānī then juxtaposed the four divine presences with the eight pertinent elements, namely the apostle, the cosmos/universes, the centers, the heavens, the spirits, the knowledges, the levels, and the human reasons/intellects.

Theoretically, it affects the development and integration of Sufi cosmological concepts. As for the practical implication, it leads to the integral values of Sufi cosmology, reiterating that human behavior towards the universe can no longer be arbitrary, since all cosmic levels are characterized as integral, eternal, and holy. On the other hand, the present research remains limited, as the study of Sufi cosmology focused solely on the Book of the Secret of Secrets (*Sirr al-Asrār*) among the myriad works of al-Jīlānī. Accordingly, it is highly recommended that other follow-up studies on Sufi cosmology be conducted by comparing the thoughts of al-Jīlānī as the Crown of Saints (*Ṣultān al-Awliyā'*), Ibn 'Arabī as the Greatest Master of Saints (*al-Shaykh al-Akbar*), and Jīlī as the Pole of Religion (*Quṭb al-Din*). This is because al-Jīlānī's thoughts on Sufi cosmology were developed by Ibn 'Arabī and perfected by al-Jīlī.

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W.F.R. is the sole author of this research article.

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