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The Problem Of Sufi Worship In The Ethical Views Of Ibn Arabi

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ABSTRACT

This article examines the views of the famous medieval mystic Muhyiddin Ibn Arabi (1160-1240) on Sufi worship. The ideas of the mystic in this regard were compared with the thoughts of Sufis and philosophers such as Rabia al-Adawiya, Abu Hamid Ghazali.

Keywords:

Sufi, prayer, spiritual worship, status, action, human perfection, mystical knowledge, behavior, divine revelation.

Insights regarding the nature of worship can be found in the book "Ibādāt-i Islāmiyya" and in the works of Muhammad Zahid Kotku, such as "The Two Wings of the Bird of Faith". As stated in the Holy Quran, "Allah loves His creation and guides it toward His love." When discussing worship performed without expectation of reward, Western scholars of Sufism often highlight the perspective of Rabia al-Adawiyya (born c. 713–718; died 801), one of the early Sufis. Her sole desire was to attain union with Allah; for her, asceticism and worship were not driven by self-interest but were acts performed sincerely from the heart—"fi sabilillah" (for the sake of Allah). Rabia said: "Let not people worship out of fear of the fires of Hell or in hopes of gaining Paradise; rather, let worship become the adornment of the heart".

Entering the path of Sufism occurs in the traditional manner—that is, by adhering to the Sharia and fulfilling its obligatory acts. Access to the higher level of worship is gained through "ibadat al-ma'na" ("spiritual worship, عبادة المعنى

"). In this context, the Sufi emphasizes the specific role of Sharia rules and regulations. While observance of Sharia rulings is essential, the central element of this path is the Sufi's personal experience and spiritual realization. According to Ibn Arabi, "Sufism means transitioning from the worship of the Sharia to the worship of inner meaning" [2]. A Sufi's worship must embody spiritual worship while simultaneously manifesting itself through obedience to the rulings of the Sharia.

"Maqam" (Arabic: place, station, or abode) is a concept specific to Sufism within Islam, representing a stage that every Sufi must traverse. While the number of "maqams" cited varies across different Sufi orders ("tariqas"), four are most frequently mentioned: "Sharia" (Law), "Tariqa" (Path), "Ma'rifa" (Gnosis/Spiritual Knowledge), and "Haqiqa" (Ultimate Truth). However, prominent figures in Sufism have recognized a greater number of stations; for instance, Fariduddin Attar described seven stations, while Al-Ghazali described nine.

Advancing to spiritual worship depends on the Sufi's proficiency, as they ascend to stations commensurate with their aptitude and capability. These stations are categorized into practical and spiritual stages.

Practical positions are determined by the Sharia's rules of worship. The Sufi advances to certain positions as he gains a deeper understanding of the Sharia's rules and requirements of worship. According to Ibn Arabi, these positions are divided into four:

1. Moving from action to action (من فعل إلى فعل) should be without any obstacles or doubts..
2. Transitioning from one form of renunciation to another (*من ترك إلى ترك*); for this to occur, specific obstacles must arise.
3. Moving from action to abandonment (من فعل إلى ترك) in which obstacles must be mixed with doubts.
4. Moving from abandonment to action (من ترك إلى فعل) in which all obstacles and doubts disappear.

The stages are the perfection of a person in his nature, which can later be distracted from his activity as a result of the influence of the environment. According to Ibn Arabi, the practical stages mean the return of a person to the level of perfection, to his state in his nature, that is, to his essence.

Sufis explain the stages as the goal of gradually moving from one spiritual state to another with the help of God. These stages are three:

1. Statures of Names (مقامات الاسماء) This is the understanding of the meaning of the attributes of Allah.
2. Tajalli status (مقامات التجلي). This is the different manifestation of reality and abstraction in the Sufi soul.
3. Statures of the soul (مقامات النفس). It is a state of self-cultivation and purification.

Ibn Arabi divides those who follow the path of Sufism into the following groups according to their abilities and capabilities:

1. The traveler who sets out on a journey with his Lord (سالك بربه) Allah gives strength to this group.
2. The traveler who sets out on a journey with his own self (سالك بنفسه). This group is those who have drawn closer to Allah.

3. The traveler who sets out on a journey with his Lord and his own self. (سالك بالمجموع) This group is with Allah and his own self at the same time.

4. The traveler who does not set out on a journey (سالك لا سالك) This group is those who do not believe in being able to travel on their own without the help of Allah [2].

The peculiarity of mystical knowledge is understood in the fact that a person turns to his inner world, connects his inner world with the divine world, and receives the answer directly from the Source. Mystical knowledge is based on individual inner experience, that is, wisdom is reflected through the identification of interconnected horizontal (spiritual values, ideological gaps) and vertical (spiritual perfection, spiritual maturity, representing the transition from one quality to another). Russian orientalist I. Petrushevsky defined the doctrine of Sufism based on the concept of "mysticism": "Mysticism or mysticism is usually understood as a worldview that recognizes the possibility of direct communication with God through "insight", inner "experience", ecstasy (impression). Hakim Tirmidhi noted the dialectical interrelationship of perception (knowledge, experience, skills), science, morality, and the heart in knowledge, emphasizing that their combined influence on human spirituality and thinking is strong: "The best of the saint is the one who can speak in the manner of science... Science is the beginning, science is the measure (quantity - measure) and science is the path" (opening the way for tomorrow), science is the letters. And this is the method of philosophy (philosophy) and this is the wisdom of the scholar. Science appears from the great Messiah" [3].

The Sufi experience is different from the personal and ideological education of other thinkers. The Sufi path is based on enlightenment (understanding of God) through the education of the soul and the self, and on this path he walked alone, without imitating anyone. This is a personal, unique experience of the Sufi, which is constantly enriched by new things.

Ibn Arabi also came to this conclusion because he had experienced such an experience. We can see that the Sufi's method of reaching

the Truth is different from other Sufis. Because he expressed his opinion boldly. The Sufi points to the path of Sufism as the most correct way to comprehend the Truth, emphasizing that this is the path of special people. This path is taken based on two methods: this is the purification and education of the soul (تحرير النفس و تهذيبها) and the purification of the heart (تنقية القلب).

Understanding the truth is a person's understanding of himself. When a person reaches God with his divine virtue, spiritual purity, and knowledge and wisdom, and realizes that everything from a particle to the vast Galaxy is under God's control, that there is no one else to control it, and that there is no absolute, he will enjoy the secrets of divine truth: there is no doubt about God's control [4].

Truth is a philosophical-epistemological characteristic of thinking in relation to an object or event, which is determined by the correspondence of thought, knowledge to objective reality. Truth is studied in two ways. First, through human rational and irrational knowledge. The only way to scientifically resolve the issue of truth is through the similarity of the relationship between human knowledge and real objects and events in the objective world, their qualities and characteristics. Second, through inner knowledge, that is, through understanding the Truth and reaching the "tajalli" of Allah. The second method is important for knowing Allah, and on this path, not science, but passion, writing, inspiration, and love are the main fundamental principles [5].

Ibn Arabi considers the spoken word to be the most powerful influence on the human soul. In the view of this mystic, the soul dislikes receiving counsel, hearing direct admonitions, or being subjected to instruction and correction. When approached in such ways, it feels humiliated and manifests its displeasure; it is unwilling to accept the advice and reproof directed at it.

Bahauddin Naqshband gave the following definition of the word:

Se nishon buvad valiro, ki naxust on bama'ni,

Ki chu ro'i o' bubini, dili tu bar o' garoyad.

Duvvum on, ki dar majolis, chun suxan kunat zi ma'ni.

Hammaro zi hastii xud, bi hadis meraboyad.

Sevum on, ki ba ma'ni, vali axassi olam.

Ki zi hech uzv o'ro, harakoti bad nayoyad. [6].

Content:

There are three signs of a Wali, the first of which is that he is a saint,

When you see his face, your heart is drawn to him.

Second, when he speaks meaningfully in a gathering,

He draws everyone to him with his being and words.

Third, he is the most unique in the world in terms of his saintliness.

No evil action emerges from any part of him.

A person's language determines his eloquence. An eloquent word is a balm for the human spirit and a source of spiritual strength (energy). There is a difference between a sweet-talking, smooth-tongued person and a person who is venomous, whining, heartbreaking, slanderous, meddling in everything, speaking in vain, obscene and unpleasant words. Since the human spirit is delicate, it cannot digest unpleasant and illogical words. As a result, spiritual gaps appear. In particular, the origin of diabetes mellitus is explained by the fact that a person's language deviates from the norm of eloquence.

"This method," explains Ibn Arabi, "is accepted among jurists and represents a standard norm in the relationship between teacher and student. However, this approach is not applied to Sufis; indeed, it is fundamentally incompatible with the path they follow." As an alternative, Ibn Arabi proposes "dhikr" («الذكر»). Conveying a message or information to a person in the form of "dhikr"—that is, as a reminder—does not provoke resistance or rebellion within their soul [7].

Ibn Arabi used the method of "dhikr" in practice with his students and followers. The Sufi conveyed the information that needed to be conveyed to those around him in a way that reminded them or to himself. Ibn Arabi

conveyed his moral views and rulings to his students in the form of dialogue, that is, he avoided delivering them in the form of advice or recommendation [1].

Allah's closeness to his friends and conversation with a pir (sheikh, murshid) accelerates the spiritual development of the lover who has entered the path of love, and in the second level of the heart, which has fought against the nafs and burned with the pain of love, a lover who is high in virtue and ready to sacrifice his life for Allah appears. Conversation with a pir (sheikh, murshid) leads to the path that leads to Allah.

Ibn Arabi also writes about his relationships with his teachers, their interactions, and the benefits he gained from their conversations, and evaluates them. He expresses deep respect for his Sufi teachers, calling them "the vicegerents of the Truth on earth." He also evaluates them as those chosen by God for their time, as the establishers and teachers of His law, and as the successors of the Prophet's work [1]. Ibn Arabi emphasizes the role of his teachers and Sufi sheikhs as guardians of the law and "protectors of hearts" and as moral educators. He also pays attention to the sources and causes of human behavior, the ability of Sufi mystics to guide and direct them. That is, Sufi sheikhs control their souls and thoughts, diagnose and cure human diseases. They understand the essence of time and life, know space and time. They educate character and understand what corrupts it, and distinguish between divine and imaginary revelation. They know how to bring their disciples from "childhood" to "adolescence" and from there to "adulthood" by experiencing the divine manifestation. The elders know well that their disciples can be masters over their nature, can rule over their minds, and can believe in their own thoughts. They also know what the laws that the soul is subject to (ما للنفس من الأحكام) are [7]. Ibn Arabi showed the pedagogic and psychological roles of sheikhs in the education of students and revealed the importance of students in forming their skills and abilities. This is of great importance in the implementation of the master and apprentice system.

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