



Article

The Peak of Ibn Sina's Sufi Views

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Abstract: The article provides a comparative analysis of the spiritual states expressed in Ibn Sina's allegorical works. According to the thinker, a perfect human being multiplies the innate virtues and ethical principles of their soul. The author concludes that such a person can become virtuous and possess karamat (spiritual grace). It is concluded that by purifying their soul, such an individual activates their unique innate gnostic capacity and ultimately reaches the highest stage of perfection. Furthermore, the author pays special attention to Ibn Sina's focus on the secrets of Sufi teachings that the "macrocosm" (olam-i akbar) can be seen with the eye of the heart, and that through the "science of states" (ilm al-hal), one can understand the inner dimension of the Sufi. The article elucidates the essence of Ibn Sina's Sufi views, namely that he highly valued the principle of knowing the "Higher Truth." In Sufism, Sufis do not accept anything else and rely only on truth. According to the author's opinion, a person who achieves the highest form of knowledge and moral beauty manifests as a "perfect human" (al-insan al-kamil). In his allegorical treatises, Ibn Sina stated that every individual has the potential to become a "perfect human." This path is evident in moral purification and the manifestation of ethical virtues.

Keywords: Perfect human being, grace, moral purity, tasavvuf, irfon, tariqat, taskira, makomot, truth, Sufi, allegorical treatise, virtue, morality, purification, spirit.

1. Introduction

A person who embarks on the perfect spiritual path of Sufi teaching encounters very strict requirements. Moreover, one Sufi differs from another; like any person, they are distinguished by their behavior, mental abilities, aesthetic perception of reality, and their social status in society. Therefore, Ibn Sina, dissatisfied with the gossip of his students about the sanctity of Sufi teaching and the role of gnostics (arifs) within it, wrote: "It is majestic that the Supreme Truth and the path to it should be open to everyone who enters it, and all should cognize it gradually" [1].

Sufi teaching, in its striving to comprehend the supreme truth, regardless of the form it takes—intuitive knowledge, transcendental ecstasy, or universal love—in any case, the decisive condition and subject of this activity is the elevation by a person of the stages of their moral perfection towards the blessed goal of Unity through the divine essence. In Sufi teaching, Ibn Sina is attracted by its humanistic orientation, where a person is of interest not as one of the species of living beings of nature, but as a being embodying the highest divine attributes [2].

2. Materials and Methods

This study employs a historical-philosophical and comparative approach to analyze Ibn Sina's allegorical works in the context of Sufi teaching. By applying methods of systemic analysis, synthesis, and hermeneutics, the research investigates the spiritual and

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ethical dimensions embedded in his treatises, such as Hayy ibn Yaqzan and Risalat at-Tayr. A textual-analytical method was used to interpret allegories, symbols, and metaphors within Ibn Sina's writings, while comparative analysis highlighted connections with classical Sufi concepts. Additionally, a problem-oriented and holistic approach ensured evaluation of Ibn Sina's Sufi views as both philosophical constructs and humanistic pathways to moral and spiritual perfection [3].

Analysis of Literature on the Topic

Although the majority of the two hundred and forty of his works that have reached us belong to the field of medicine and philosophy, world scholars recognize the presence of Sufi content within them [4]. In particular, the works of M. Gouachon, Sh. Osman [5], and V. Carral present scientific conclusions that a systematic study of his ontological teaching is an important methodological problem for the correct understanding of Ibn Sina's views on the human soul and heart. M.N. Boltaev conducted fundamental research on the relationship between logic and epistemology in the philosophical heritage of Ibn Sina, and it should be especially noted that the scholar achieved significant results.

It would be simpler to present problems related to Sufi teaching as an integral philosophical doctrine and worldview position and thus classify Ibn Sina as a Sufi. Or, conversely, to immediately reject his Sufi views, explaining them as a simple interest of a truth-seeking sage. Undoubtedly, his attitude towards Sufism was not a consequence of the trends of the era or a fundamental change in his philosophical system. The article utilized historical-philosophical, comparative, and systemic analysis, analysis and synthesis, a comprehensive approach, historicity and systematicity, logicity and problem-oriented methods [6].

3. Results and Discussion

It is important to understand what moral lessons and scientific ideas Abu Ali Ibn Sina drew from the treasury of Sufi teaching in his cognitive activity and what benefit and influence they had on the spiritual and moral perfection of the individual and humanity as a whole. Seeking truth, Ibn Sina rejected any sympathies or antipathies and selflessly defended it in his work. Ibn Sina summarizes the goal of his philosophical research, characterizing his attitude towards Sufism, as follows: "the knowledge contained in this science seems ridiculous to the ignorant, but it serves as a lesson for those thirsty for knowledge. Everyone who has heard its truth but turned away from it, as if saying that they are unworthy of it, slanders their own soul." The thinker's words, addressing the reader with a demand to protect his teaching from arbitrary interpretation by pseudo-philosophers ignorant in philosophy and other fellow travelers of philosophy, are a wise warning: "O brother! Verily, I have granted you in these 'Instructions' the essence of truth and placed into your mouth the food of wisdom with the most exquisite words. Guard it from the ignorant and base people and from those who do not possess a fervent mind, nor have experience and mastery in philosophy" [7].

The peak of Ibn Sina's Sufi views is reflected in such gnostic (irfani) works as "Hayy ibn Yaqzan," "Salaman and Absal," and "Risalat at-tayr" ("Treatise on the Birds"), where the main ideas of Sufism are presented in an artistic-allegorical form. In these works, he was able to reveal the mystery of the human soul, determine the place and purpose of a human, and restore them to the worthy place rightfully occupied in the ancient philosophy of the Greeks. It is no coincidence that in his eponymous treatise about Hayy (a symbol of wisdom), the elder Hayy explains the mysteries of the universe to his interlocutor, particularly initiating him into "Physiognomy" — the science concerned with problems of human nature. Physiognomy is one of the sciences that "reveal the peculiarities of human nature, striving to keep the secret from others" [8]. Its functional task was not only to determine characteristic features of a person's behavior and character but also to guide them on the path of moral perfection. Therefore, as an applied science, physiognomy included medical-psychological and ethical knowledge intended to liberate a person from

the bad qualities and habits of an earthly being and open the path to the world of intellectual substances.

Thus, preparing for a journey from the West (material world) to the East (spiritual world) (i.e., towards moral perfection and cognition of truth), a person must subdue three inevitable evil companions that will accompany them wherever they go. These figuratively expressed "companions" are contained within the person themselves. Firstly, human imagination, acting as a liar and chatterbox; secondly, the force of anger, called quarrelsomeness; and thirdly, the force of lust, considered depraved lewdness. As long as a person does not free themselves from them, their journey will waver between the world of base passions and the world of spiritual substances and will not be able to reach the goal. And only "flight from one's native land to a country where no one has set foot" [9] can save them from these companions. But not everyone dares to undertake such a journey to uncharted lands, one of which is located beyond the West, the other beyond the East. They form two unknown regions of the earth, each having a forbidden boundary, and "only the chosen ones, possessing by nature a strength never given to ordinary people, can fly over them" [10]. This strength is granted to a person through ablution in a certain "flickering spring, not too far from the Source of Life." Anyone who immerses themselves in it is undoubtedly purified, and if they taste the life-giving taste of the water, then "a creative force spreads throughout the human being, giving them sufficient agility to cross that desert, and they will not drown in the ocean sea, they will not be stopped by the steep cliffs of Mount Qaf, and the troops of hell will not cast them down into hell, and in the end, they will emerge at one of the two boundaries that until now have been beyond their reach" [11]. Preparing his interlocutor for a dangerous and difficult journey, the elder Hayy describes each region to be crossed, with its unique natural and climatic conditions, inhabited by various celestial and earthly beings (angels, devils, jinn, satanic armies), diverse species of mute animals: swimming, crawling, walking, and flying, born and self-generated — as well as various individuals, peoples, and countries with their customs and ways of life, to ultimately reach the Pole and find themselves in the world of eternal bliss. This astrological journey, in a peculiar symbolic sense, reflects the Sufi's entry onto the path of the tariqah, the striving of their soul through moral and intellectual perfection to reach the Kingdom of Light and Good [12].

Human spiritual activity is full of mysteries and puzzles that they must unravel. Inviting them on the journey, the elder Hayy opens before the enchanted interlocutor a world of unknown knowledge and sciences, which culminates in a reflection on the radiance of the Supreme Truth as a reward for the determination and purposefulness of the Sufi on the path to the goal. It shows how important moral qualities are in cognition, namely renunciation of base passions and immoral deeds and resistance to the temptations of devilish forces encountered on the path of truth. To reach the Pole, the symbol of the Supreme Truth, the rational spirit of a human (symbol of wisdom, active consciousness) under the guidance of the elder Hayy must first purify itself in a certain "flickering spring," that is, arm itself with the necessary methodology, which Ibn Sina meant as logic [13]. It is logic, along with the Source of Life (symbol of intellectual intuition), that illuminates the path of human consciousness in cognizing the secrets of the natural and cosmic worlds, stretching from the West (physical world) to the East (world of intellectual substances). By giving his allegorical treatises Sufi symbolism, Ibn Sina, nevertheless, did not change the main direction of his worldview — the recognition of the role of consciousness and philosophy as the highest divine science in the theoretical understanding of existence and humanity. Sufi symbolism added color and refinement that his philosophical construct lacked [14].

A person who has reached the highest degree of intellectual perfection and moral purity unites with God. According to Ibn Sina, "the highest subject of love is identical to the highest object of love, that is, the highest and sacred essence of the Lord," and like the great Sufi al-Hallaj, they can exclaim: "Ana-l-Haqq" ("I am the Truth"). In Ibn Sina's Sufi

views, the union of a person with the divine Absolute and dissolution in Him (*fana fi-llah*) does not mean the loss of their essential basis and immersion in non-existence, but symbolizes the highest level of self-knowledge of a person who has found their true existence. In Ibn Sina's allegorical treatises, a person appears as a messenger of two worlds. On the one hand, as a product of the evolutionary development of nature, they are a bearer of the physical world; on the other hand, as a product of divine emanation, they signify a cosmic principle. But in the process of spiritual understanding, they eliminate the duality and inseparability of their existence. They restore the destroyed harmony between themselves and the cosmic world. It is in the contradiction between East and West, being a symbol of Light and Darkness, Good and Evil, that a human became the main hero, called upon to ensure the triumph of consciousness and social justice through their participation. Through allegories, Ibn Sina managed to fully express the true meaning of internal quests aimed at self-affirmation of the individual and human dignity, showing the paths of salvation for the individual from the world of lies, darkness, and hypocrisy.

Thus, a human, being the center of the world process, embodying the characteristics of the earthly globe and the transcendent world, is proclaimed the highest value. In their spiritual perfection, "their essence becomes like a shining mirror before the truth. For them, there exist the highest pleasures. They rejoice in themselves to see in them the manifestation of truth. They direct one glance at the truth and another at their soul, moving from one to the other."

Ibn Sina, raised in the best traditions of Aristotelian rationalism and faithful to the principle "nothing is more precious than the truth," highly valued the principle of cognizing the "Supreme Truth." In Sufism, Sufis accept nothing else and rely only on truth, "for it is worthy of worship and is for him a blessed place of worship. That which he dreams of and fears is only the supreme goal towards which he strives."

Thus, an individual who has achieved the highest form of knowledge and moral beauty becomes a universal human being, designated in Sufi terminology as the "perfect human" (*al-insan al-kamil*). In his allegorical treatises, Ibn Sina tried to convey to the consciousness of his followers the idea that every individual can rise to the level of a "perfect person." This path lies through moral purification, mastery of knowledge and sciences, primarily philosophy. But the process of personality formation is not an instantaneous illumination but a pyramidal formation, built hierarchically, like the celestial spheres, and requiring incredible strength, self-control, and volitional actions to overcome the stages of perfection and achieve the goal [15].

The process of forming the "perfect personality" is simultaneously a process of self-knowledge, which represents a person's ability to make a conscious choice between good and evil, placing responsibility on the individual for actions taken by their own will.

But this characteristic of the individual is not an exact copy of the Sufi ideal. It combines Sufi elements with classical descriptions of Eastern peripatetics, whose roots go back to the rationalistic traditions of antiquity, especially the spiritual values of Aristotle's philosophy. Of course, Ibn Sina did not leave us a complete, comprehensive image of the "perfect human." But from individual descriptions of the characteristic features of adherents of the Sufi school, one can understand and reproduce some qualities that he would like to see in people as an ideal; in other words, these traits have a universally significant character. Even in works that are purely Sufi in appearance, the personality types he considered did not belong solely to representatives of one confession; just as, for example, Ibn Sina says, Salaman was "none other than your diversity, and Absal — one of your stages in Sufism." Ultimately, while accepting the Sufi path of self-improvement leading to the Sufi image of the perfect human, Ibn Sina, nevertheless, subjects Sufi principles to rational reworking. And in this paradigm, the individual did not remain within the framework of excessive asceticism and detachment from real life, nor could they become a plaything in someone's hands.

4. Conclusion

The central and local governments played a pivotal role in the demolition of the historic In conclusion, it should be said that the Sufi symbol in the thinker's work testifies that the thinker refined his philosophical principles within the framework of Sufism and expressed his views in a unique way. That is, it was a unique manifestation of the understandable exposition of Sufi ideas. Ibn Sina's turn to Sufism, the idea of the Sufi elevation of a human to the Supreme Truth, corresponded to the Sufi concept of a human whose reason opens the path to truth. It also had an elevated and hierarchical character: its movement begins from practical consciousness, the conscious spirit passes through the stage of actual consciousness and, having reached the highest theoretical form, at the final stage of its movement becomes consciousness that plays an important role in reflecting on abstract forms and ideas. In this process — the process of self-knowledge of the human personality — the "acquired consciousness," reflecting on the essence of the Necessary Existent through "intellectual intuition," reaches its highest perfection, "crowns the genus of living beings," and ultimately, merging with it into a single substantial principle, actually becomes the "Logos of the entire world." Following the principle "to know the truth through knowing oneself", the Sufi remains faithful to the main element of their worldview — the recognition of the role of consciousness and, consequently, the recognition of philosophy as the highest kind of activity in cognizing the Absolute Truth and realizing the human "Self." It should be taken into account that Ibn Sina expressed his attitude towards Sufism starting from the initial stage of its formation. During this period, Sufi teaching had not yet been adapted to the official ideology of the Islamic religion; its independent, rebellious spirit formed the basis of the anthropocentric aspirations and radicalism of its followers, who with such selflessness defended the freedom and dignity of the individual for the achievement of the Supreme Truth.

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