

THE MAIN DIRECTIONS OF IBN AL-ARABI'S SUFI VIEWS



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Annotation: This scientific article provides information about the life and works of Abu Bakr Muhammad Ibn Arabi, his teachings and worldview, his divine-religious views in the fields of philosophy and Sufism, as well as a brief discussion of his scholarly works and their essence.

Key words: *Islamic philosophy, philosophy of Sufism, Great Sheikh, asceticism, philosopher, order, Cairo, Damascus, Baghdad, reconquests.*

Nowadays, studying the philosophy of Sufism based on new approaches, researching the Sufi works of great thinkers, and demonstrating their social significance to the wider public remain among the pressing tasks of socio-humanitarian research. Especially in Uzbekistan's new development strategy, specific measures have been outlined to widely promote the rich scientific and spiritual heritage of our great ancestors. These include translating 100 works authored by renowned scholars from our country into accessible language, creating scientific and popular publications based on them, and deeply studying and promoting the rich intellectual legacy of our ancestors. Additionally, supporting the activities of the Uzbekistan International Islamic Academy, the Center for Islamic Civilization, and the international research centers of Imam Bukhari, Imam Termizi, and Imam Maturidi further highlights the relevance of studying the scientific and spiritual heritage of the East.

At the same time, studying the views of thinkers who have gained significant recognition in Islamic philosophy and theology, sought to transform social consciousness and worldview through their scientific research and ideas, analyzing their conclusions, and incorporating their social significance into the process of national development is one of the priority tasks.

In this regard, it is essential to study the philosophical-anthropological aspects of the Sufi views of Ibn al-Arabi, a prominent representative of Sufi philosophy who elevated religious and sufistical thought to a new level. Based on this, it is necessary to examine the development trends of epistemological and theological perspectives in the Islamic world and explore his social views as a representative of a culture that has undergone mutual influence over centuries. From the perspective of the history of philosophy, it would be appropriate to study Ibn al-Arabi's views, examine the factors that influenced the formation of his Sufi ideas, and consider the impact of the social environment on his thoughts.

Abu Bakr Muhammad Ibn Arabi created a structured system of Sufi concepts, which is why he is still referred to as "Ash-Shaykh al-Akbar" (the Great Master).









There is no detailed information about Ibn al-Arabi's personal life. It is known that he received his primary education in Murcia and later studied under the great Sufi scholars of his time in cities such as Alexandria (North Africa), Cairo, Damascus, and Baghdad. His teachings were taught in medieval Europe, especially in higher and religious educational institutions during the modern period. Information on this can be found in the works of modern-era philosophers such as Spinoza and Toland. They attempted to evaluate Ibn al-Arabi's philosophical views and systematize his ideas.

It is well known that Muhyiddin Ibn al-Arabi is one of the greatest thinkers in Islamic history, having left behind a rich scientific and literary legacy. According to Abdulwahhab Sha'rani, the number of his works exceeds 400, while Abdurahman Jami states that he wrote more than 500 works. The author of "Hadiyat al-Arifin" lists 475 of his works. The German Orientalist Carl Brockelmann determined that his writings comprise 150 volumes. Meanwhile, the Iranian Sufism scholar Mohsen Jahangiri provides a list of 511 works attributed to Ibn al-Arabi.

All of Ibn al-Arabi's followers and admirers who lived and created until the 13th century belonged to various jurisprudential schools (figh madhhabs) and sufistical orders (Sufi tarigas). This very fact indicates that Ibn al-Arabi was not confined to any specific figh or theological school. Otherwise, scholars and sufis from different orders and schools would not have shown interest in his views. According to the information provided in "Jami' Karamat al-Awliya" by Yusuf bin Ismail al-Nabahani (1265–1350) and "Wafayat al-A'yan" by Ibn Khallikan, Ibn al-Arabi belonged to the Maliki school of thought. However, his jurisprudential and theological views, especially his profound claims regarding belief ("aqidah"), suggest otherwise. He may have shown an inclination toward the Maliki school (as in the 12th century and even today, a portion of North African Muslims follow the Maliki madhhab), but he did not adhere to any specific jurisprudential school or theological doctrine. On the contrary, as a scholar who attained a high level of knowledge, he exercised "ijtihad" and evaluated every issue related to figh, theology, and sufism from his own perspective. However, his understanding of "ijtihad" differs from the concept of "ijtihad" as defined by the scholars of "Ahl al-Sunnah wa'l-Jama'ah'', which involves deriving legal rulings through "qiyas" (analogical reasoning) based on the Qur'an, Sunnah, and "ijma" (scholarly consensus). Instead, he interprets "ijtihad" as "the process of receiving divine inspiration similar to that of the prophets by developing inner spiritual capabilities".

Ibn al-Arabi's teachings not only established him as a great figure in Islamic theology but also made a significant contribution to the development of the spiritual culture of the entire Islamic world. In his philosophical worldview, the concept of existence is interpreted in a pantheistic spirit. According to him, there is a sense of purposefulness in the essence of all things. Thus, existence and the universe have been created and structured based on a harmonious and predetermined system since eternity.

Ibn Arabi's works "Al-Futuhat al-Makkiyya" and "Fusus al-Hikam" are recognized as his most significant writings. Analyzing these works provides a proper understanding of Sufi philosophy.



Ibn al-Arabi's Sufi teachings are based on philosophical anthropology. According to this idea, the primary reason for the creation of the universe is the human being. This concept has been the source of thought and spirituality for all Sufis. The Great Shaykh, Ibn al-Arabi, remained committed to this idea and sought to prove that the human being and their ultimate purpose are the central axis of the universe's creation. In modern scientific terms, this means that God and the universe are understood in an anthropomorphic way – that is, God manifests in the form of a human. According to this Sufi teaching, the human being simultaneously resembles both God and the created universe. Therefore, through the process of self-awareness, a person can come to know both God and the universe.

In conclusion, Ibn al-Arabi's works reflect ideas about the relationship between divine essence and countless truths, the connection between spirit and matter, the primary foundation and its less significant attributes, the different levels of existence, and the role of creation in sustaining and moving the universe. The way Ibn al-Arabi depicts the creation and existence of the universe not as a myth but as a complete reality is astonishing. His thoughts suggest that not only subjective consciousness but also objective reality constantly manifests in his imagination. In this context, the Great Shaykh's ideas about imagination and perception become even more significant. For him, grand imagination is as real as sensory perception. Only those who have been granted a supreme soul, consciousness, and perception by God and the Prophet can renounce the material world and their surroundings. In the realm of imagination, spiritual and moral essence takes on the form of perception, while material things, on the contrary, acquire a divine nature. In other words, the universe is essentially God's self-perception, meaning it is deprived of independence and objective reality.

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