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METHODOLOGICAL NATURE OF SUFI CATEGORIES IN THE VIEWS OF AVICENA

Abstract: *The mythological views of Ibn Sina are revealed by the example of the spiritual experiences of a Sufi. Tasawwuf or Sufism, key metaphysical ideas and practices such as the soul and body relation, knowledge of God, and the suffering of the innocent, have a close similarity with the views of Ibn Sina. Tasawwuf is the Islamic teaching by which Muslims are urged to recognize the truth and serve it by the use of reason. The main focus of this paper will be Sina's metaphysical ideas, such as the soul and body relation. Besides this, the paper will also try to highlight the influence of Greek philosophers such as Plato and Aristotle on Ibn Sina's work.*

Key words: *Sufi, An-Najat, Al-Isharat wa-t-tanbihat, mysticism, philosophy, tasawwuf, irfan, fana, Ibn Sina, the mythological views.*

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Introduction

The text significantly played an instrumental role in the progress of Islamic philosophy and thought. Ibn Sina was the encyclopedist and the spirit of early philosophy. Thinker in his metaphysical views outlined in the previous section, Ibn Sino's interpretation of Tasawwuf takes on a more coherent and nuanced form. Ibn Sino's interpretation of Sufism as a healing process for the soul and its importance is seen in his definition of existence and the first cause - God - and how these two causes can affect human souls.

Main part

Ibn Sino, in his book "Divine Knowledge," describes the first existential cause that manifested the first intelligence that, in turn, through a soul, manifests the body. This has been interpreted as medical intervention for a successful soul healing progress in the different stages of Sufi practices. He explains his definition of existence through the concept of the first cause.

While the Aristotelian understanding suggests a world of separations and changes, Sino describes the metaphysical reality where everything comes from an immaterial and necessary being, a being that follows nothing else, a being that eternity is its attribute. Therefore, this definition of existence reinforces the Sufi concept of life being only an illusion and eternal life lies in "the true world." He also defines this world, the physical world where our souls are trapped, as a world which is not true existence and just a shadow of an existence, a world where depends on matters and life will cease once the matter are perished. These views have influenced the Sufi concepts of "fana," which means destroy ourselves in God and begin to live the real life. Moreover, both the soul and the body are bound by the matter in this world as Sino's interpretation of the relationship between soul and the body.

The essence of truth according to the teaching of Tasawwuf is as follows: It is necessary to know about God, His existence, and His unity, His essence and His attributes. It will result in love and certainty. However,

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it should be noted that there is an intellectual manipulation which is based on Greek philosopher Plato's idea of the soul. Throughout life, according to Plato, the soul can be polluted by the sufferings of the body and knowledge can be gained through purification. Such knowledge, when we have it, is the knowledge of an eternal and changeless state. Events or actions will be taken by concern and mind for the knowledge. This knowledge is called wisdom. By knowing at the same time, you will understand the underlying essences of that knowledge. For example, when you view a particular object, your mind will help you to have a perception of the object, that is the essence, which is not altering and that is what it is. Only the body or the visible surface of the e.g. the painting will change, not the principle of the knowledge. Such knowledge of reality is so called the knowledge of truth. And the soul, as a result, will enjoy an unalterable and eternal happiness. It has been suggested that the phrase "knowledge of truth" was translated wrongly from Arabic, in which it should mean the truth of knowledge, a close similarity to Ibn Sina's "knowledge by presence" as what we will discuss in this paper. In "knowledge by presence," such knowledge of a thing intrinsically, it fills the mind and that certainty does not require to put attention to the thing. As such, it is immediate. Only by reaching such a state, a further understanding of that intellectual and spiritual will take place.

Nevertheless, under Ibn Sino interpretation, humankind has a choice in which we do not have to listen to our body, the desire, which makes our soul go into corruption. In other words, people can choose to live life in the Sufi way, disconnect from the physical world, and begin to understand the truth of our own existence. Ibn Sino explains the importance of the second cause, human opinions or desire in our soul, and its medical intervention planning for our soul, which is the most important part in the Tasawwuf practices and Sufi scholars.

Ibn Sino's metaphysical views, it is clear that he has contributed much to the development of Islamic mysticism, particularly in the areas of spiritual purification and asceticism. One of the most significant ways in which his metaphysics impacted Tasawwuf lies in the sphere of "tazkiyah al-nafs" or the purgation of the soul. In his famous work, "The Canon of Medicine", Ibn Sino elaborated on the concept of "radical therapy", which was an approach to healing that not only addressed the body, but the soul of the patient as well. As previously mentioned, the practice of spiritual purification is central to Sufism. The term for spiritual purification is "tazkiya" or "tasfiya." The purpose of tasfiya is to eliminate the influence of the lower self or ego, allowing the spiritual heart, or "qalb," to awaken and become aware of the divine presence. According to the Sufi master and philosopher Ibn Juzayy, "purification of the lower

self is achieved by eliminating blameworthy traits and adorning it with praiseworthy traits."

God is the first cause according to Ibn Sino, and he creates the eternal constant first energy that gives the human soul its life and the ability of the functions, and in turn, this energy is used to maintain the soul which connects the body and the soul as well as the spirit within the body. For Sino, God has the knowledge, the will, the power, and the life itself - the four attributes of the first cause, so as to heal our soul to connect us back to the live of the true world. Ibn Sino author 'Philosophical Theology' all discuss in some detail about how metaphysical views based on God and the above-mentioned opinions are interrelated to the soul's healing progress, which has become evidence that passions and life are eternal life in the first cause in his definition of existence. Such a period of time, when souls are reconnected to the first cause by leaving the body and going to the true world, is interpreted by Sufis as the crown of the Sufi practices - the speed of the soul's perfection after receiving the divine knowledge in the stage of 'fana'. These kinds of objective explanations on Sufi practices and the intimate connection between the practices and the soul's medical progress, from the first cause to the second cause in 'Divine Knowledge', strengthen the historical Sufi claims over centuries that Sufism is both knowledge and practices for a soul's healing and knowledge over God's work.

But classical scholars' point of view was different from that. In response to that kind of criticism, particularly in his other work, "An-Najat", he tried to have expressed his thoughts in an indirect way than the "Al-Isharat". However, another debate between him and the traditional scholars has been on free will. Because his understanding of the issue led to the determinism, which classical scholars did not hesitate to show their disapprovals and rejections. Also, some leading figures of the first type of Sufism like 'Ibn Arabi' criticized Ibn Sino's approach to metaphysics. He argued that Ibn Sino tried to explain practice of Sufism as a kind of intellectual matter. On the other hand, he firmly stated that the essence of Sufism is to find the knowledge of God in a way depending on spiritual experiences and practicing. But it is clear that recent studies on Ibn Sino defended him by saying that as much as he respects to the classical elements and methods of Sufism, he also presented a new kind of Sufism that adopts to rigor of the mental practices. On this point, it is clear that his combination of metaphysics and Sufism had a profound impact on both fields for the centuries. Notably, he was revered not only by the eastern philosophical society but also by medieval western scholars, as of which his name turned into Latinized form, "Avicenna".

This clearly indicates that metaphysics and spiritual practices have indeed indulged in an unbreakable bond over the years, and understanding the metaphysical ground of the practices in mysticism

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is what brings then closeness between the two and it is what that brings about the relevant criticism and harmony. His idea of different levels of existence, which influences the Sufis to emphasize the divine love rather than the divine knowledge, greatly impacts the teachings of the Sufis and the ways in which they relate to God. His thoughts of rationality and belief, possibility and necessity as well as the human perfection provide the theoretical framework of the ways in which the teachings, recitations, hymns, and the group rituals are instructed and performed in the Sufi practices.

In conclusion, it is evident that the metaphysical views of Ibn Sina as discussed in this essay have far-reaching implications in the field of Tasawwuf. His ontological and cosmological ideas are evident in the contemporaneous philosophy and mysticism, and have continued to shape the spiritual practices and theoretical discussions in these fields for centuries. It is notable that despite being a scientist and a physician, Ibn Sina seems to embrace mysticism in a wider perspective. However, as reflected in this article he maintained a critical approach in understanding the ways in which theoretical claims in metaphysics friends with the practices found in the mysticism of his days. As a result, nowadays Tasawwuf is understood within the wider landscape of the

philosophy, and it depends solely on the metaphysical aspects of scholars like Ibn Sina who have greatly shaped the nature of mysticism. Also, based on his findings, it would be inaccurate to conclude that metaphysics and mysticism are two friendless entities in the field. But rather, he opined that once the inner meaning of the metaphysical claims has been discovered, then the methods that are found in metaphysics, logic and in the mysticism practices become wholly different.

Conclusion

Ibn Sina was a Muslim polymath who is largely known for his philosophy and medicine. Also, he is a well-known figure in Tasawwuf literature. On the other hand, traditional Islamic scholars mostly criticized his approach to metaphysics and Sufism. One of the main criticisms against him has been his claim to prophecy. Because, according to Islam, the final of the prophets is Muhammad the Quran testify. So, for any Muslim thinker or spiritual guide cannot recognize himself as a prophet. However, in his famous work in metaphysics, "Al-Isharat", Ibn Sina argued that there is a hierarchical order for human beings as well as their intellects. And he stated that his special kind of intellectual capacity allowed him to reach the nature of the God even to its ultimate level.

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