

ИСКУССТВОВЕДЧЕСКИЕ И ГУМАНИТАРНЫЕ НАУКИ

HISTORY OF TURKISH SUFISM

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Abstract

And relying on our love to Allah, we also have tried an amateur study around Sufism. We picked a flower from the great sufis' Mansur Hallaj, Bayazid Bestami, Junaid Baghdadi, Ahmad Yasawi, Mawlana Jalal ud-Din Rumi, Yunis Emre, Haji Bektashi, Nizamaddin Mir Alishir Navai, Farid ud-Din Attar, Maraghayi Avhadi, Sheikh Mahmud Shabustari, Seyyid Imadaddin Nasimi, Shah Ismayil Khatai, great Mawlana Muhammad Fizuli's garden of divine beauty, divine love.

We couldn't pass M.Fizuli further, got stuck on this divine zenith..

Keywords: Turkish sufism, Al-Ghazali, al-Arabi, Islamic culture, Turkish thinking

We should promptly state the most basic methodological outset: we are considering Sufism from the prism of belles-lettres. In the theoretical thought of the world this trend (for now) known as Sufism, tasawwuf, mysticism has very different theoretical and philosophical, historical and legal, poetic and esthetic strata, un-studied layers, personalities and treatises. Thousands of research works have been written on Sufism. From the IX century to the XXI century Sufism has been in the focus of attention of the Oriental, European as well as world scholars. Sufism resembles a pit dug in the sand, the more it is dug, the larger it becomes, and gradually turns into a mystery. From generation to generation there have been awliyas, sheikhs, murshids, murids and ulamas, who dedicated their lives to the understanding and interpretation of Sufism. Sufism remains incomprehensible even today. That is why we are going to make an effort to cast a brief glance at Sufism only from the prism of belleslettres, of literary thought, gratefully making use of the valuable ideas of those who wrote on Sufism and also the creative experience of the Azerbaijani literature, one of the ancient and rich literatures of the world. Thus, we have to start from such a question: Is Sufism a literary system, a literary trend, a literary direction or a literary style...?!

This theoretical designation can be criticized from different aspects. And in this regard, it is impossible to view Sufism as some literary system for the following reasons: 1. Unlike Renaissance (though the Eastern and European renaissances are based on the Greek philosophy, the Greek science which has gone through a historical approbation in the Arabic environment – G.A.K), Sufism is a pure Eastern phenomenon. Sufism has had an exceptional part in the formation of scientific (the antique Greek philosophy) bases of the Eastern (rather disputable so far!) renaissance (especially under the Abbasids who reigned for 500 years!). 2. Sufism is not only a phenomenon of literature, literary thought, but a religious-mystic philosophical trend. It is a trend that includes sects on the level of an independent trend. It is the system of systems not from the literary-artistic, but artistic-philosophical point of view. 3. From the prism of belles-letters, Sufism is an artistic-philosophical trend with its own perfect history, conceptual theoretical structure, ethical, poetic, esthetic

and methodological peculiarities. However, Sufism cannot be restricted to all this. If any science has a methodology, that means it has both its history and theory. Given that, let us formulate our first (primitive) primary (methodological) idea on Sufism before casting a brief glance at its history and theory. Sufism is a philosophical doctrine on the creature's (the human's) mystic (divine) love to (merging into, thawing out in) the Creator (Allah).

Two great personalities had an important part in the historical fate of Sufism as a literary-philosophical trend and historical-social doctrine. It is impossible to accomplish the view on this doctrine without mentioning them. One of them was Abu Hamid al-Ghazali (1058-1111), and the other was Muhammad Ibn al-Arabi (1165-1240).

Al-Ghazali, who was promoted till having an honour of bearing the title Imam, was born in the city of Tus near Khorasan. He took Sufi classes from al-Juwaini who belonged to the sect of ash'ari and was called "the Imam of two holy cities". While al-Ghazali was still young, he became famous in Khorasan, and was advanced to the professoriate (ulamas) of the Saljuq vizier Nizam al-Mulk, and a little later taught law in the famous Nizamiyya madrasa established in Baghdad. He was inflicted to the disease of nervous system, experienced stresses while learning to meditate, criticized the Islamiyya sect which murdered Nizam al-Mulk and soon afterwards deserted the ulamas "за их алчность и отсутствие моральных принципов" (А.Кныш) – "for their avarice and lack of moral principles" (A.Knysh). Living a poor life, al-Ghazali got secluded and practiced reasoning and wrote his famous work – the treatise "Ihya'u Ulumiddin" (The Revival of Religious Sciences). First of all, in his works "Maqasid al-falasifa" (Aims of Philosophers) and "Tahafut al-Falasifa" (The Incoherence of the Philosophers) Imam Ghazali criticized the scholastic Islam philosophy prior to him and neoplatonism. Further Imam Ghazali realized a great reform in Sufism in his work "Thya'u Ulumiddin" consisting of four sections with ten books in each section and in the work "Mishkat al-Anwar" (The Niche of Lights) in which he interpreted his views clearly: he combined Sufism with Is-

lam theology! His work "Mishkat al-Anwar", especially his ezocentric theory later opened a wide perspective for the evolution of Sufism and was developed by Yahya Suhrawardi and Ibn al-Arabi (bax: Аль-Газали Абу Хамид. Воскрешение наук о вере (Ихъя улум ид-дин). Избранные главы. М., 1980; Кныш А. Мусульманский мистицизм. С. 158– 168; Каримов Г. Газали и суфизм. Баку, 1969). – (see: Al-Ghazali Abu Hamid. The Revival of Science on Belief (Ihya'u Ulumiddin). The Selected Chapters. M., 1980; Knysh A. The Islamic Mysticism. p.p.158-168, Karimov G.Ghazali and Sufism. Baku, 1969). Imam Ghazali lived with his disciples till the end of his life in the khanagah he had built in his native city Tus. The researcher confirmed that "Ghazali had brought a mystic love to the world of believers and removed two extreme elements of Sufism: indifference towards the religious rituals and pantheist ideals. He was unable to completely eliminate the second element, but restricted it considerably... He made Sufism wiser and the devoutness more lively.

Having generalized the traditional elements, rationalism and tasawwuf elements, Ghazali virtually recornated Islam" (H.Masse).

Ghazali was a great reformer and reconciliatory, it was his works that defamed the Greek science – the Aristotelism. He managed to remove the contradiction between the Greek science and religion in the Islamic world. The outstanding Hungarian scholar on Islam I.Goldziher wrote that if someone might ever be a prophet after Mohammad, that certainly would be al-Ghazali. Ghazali said that Sufism consisted of sense but not reasoning. In general, the clearest definition of Sufism was given by the XII century Arabic philosopher Ibn Sabina. He said that while the antique philosophers wouldn't identify themselves with Allah, the Sufis wanted to be united with Allah (H.Masse. Islam, p.184). H.Masse wrote that the Sufism that had evolved from asceticism reached monism in the middle of the XIII century. This monism was later defined by Ibn Arabi, the outstanding theoretician of Sufism.

Imam Ghazali solved the main contradiction of Sufism. He combined the tasawwuf with the Islamic theology. Beginning from 1091 he studied at Nizamiyya madrasa in Baghdad which was then at the level of university, academy in the East. This madrasa had long been the hearth of intrigues where terror-level crimes were committed against the clever men. In his youth Ghazali had suffered a psychological crisis and experienced depression. Figuratively expressed, his wits turned out to be too heavy to fit his mind. Within a short period of time Imam Ghazali wrote 40 books, his noblest work being "The Revival of Religious Sciences" consisting of 4 volumes in the present sense. The following was told about that book, "In the developmental history of Islamic religious doctrine Imam Ghazali received the title Hujjat al-Islam (the proof of Islam). The Moslems say even now that if the Koran and all the writings disappeared, and only "The Revival of Religious Sciences" were left, Islam could be restored wonderfully through it" (Şukurov A. Şərq fəlsəfəsi və filosofları. Bakı, 2005, s. 381) – (Shukurov A. The Oriental Philosophy and Philosophers. Baku,

2005, p.381). His failure to try his knowledge in practice drove Ghazali to despair, he became out of mood and lost his appetite and speech. His very (extremely) strong intellect led him to doubtfulness and scepticism. He actually built his theory on the criticism of mystics, theologians and philosophers (A.Shukurov). On the one hand he would say: "The exposure of the secret of the divine reign is atheism". On the other, he came to a conclusion that "relying only on the wits in search of the truth leads to the destruction of morals and religion" (A.Shukurov).

Having systematized the writings about Ghazali in his book "Al-Ghazali and Sufism" (Baku, <>Elm>, 1968) written in Russian certainly under the pressure of the Soviet ideology and through the Marxist principles G.M.Karimov, the author of the valuable research on Ghazali came to such a conclusion that he subordinated the wits to belief (religion), and went against Aristotel's materialistic doctrine. According to the author, the reactionary character of Imam Ghazali's philosophical system was in his being also the follower of the Aristotel's materialism in the East and opposing Ibn Sina and al-Farabi (p.5). The author who provided a summary and assessment of the existing researches on Imam Ghazali in the section "Brief Summary of Literature" of his book (see: p. 5-71) actually turned out to fulfill a scientific-enlightenment work. The author pointed out the dual approach of the great, extremely controversial philosophers – mystic philosophers whose names are associated with the entire scientific historical epoch in the Islamic East, "A group of scholars consider him a relentless enemy of science, especially materialism meanwhile referring to Ibn Rusha who wrote the work "The Negation of the Negative" versus al-Ghazali's "Takhafum al falsafa" (the Negation of Philosophers). A second group of scholars consider al-Ghazali as a Moslem theologian, the protector of the Islamic religious orthodoxy" (p.71).

Imam Ghazali considered the mystic sciences as real sciences. In one of his remarks he wrote, "According to one of my fair friends, some scholars negate that mystic Sufi who was believed by the selected sufis who are sure of the manifold strength and depth of the divine knowledge – the knowledge inherent to the human being over the ones acquired through studies, and by the followers of the sufi educational course," ("Khazar" journal, 2005, № 3, p.10). Accordingly, Ghazali came to some conclusions and formulated them, "Knowledgeable is the one who reaches what he is aware of and represents them. Known is that which is revealed as a result of imaginations and finds its imagination in spirit". Ghazali came to such a conclusion that a human being can realize Allah only through Allah's own help.

Ibn Teymiyya formulated Ibn Arabi's doctrine as follows, "The existence of the created things is nothing but the Creator's existence: everything is created from the divine existence to return finally to this existence". This doctrine by Ibn Arabi gave impetus later to the dissemination of the tasawwuf literature, and virtually turned into a literary-philosophical trend. To be more precise, Ibn Arabi, who was famous under the pseudonym "Ash-Sheikh al-Akbar" in the Medieval scientific-

theoretical thought, founded wahdati-wujud [the unity of existence].

As a philosophical doctrine the essence of wahdati-wujud is known: "It presupposes understanding the whole [kyull] in the particle [jyuz]". And in Sufism "wahdati-wujud is seeing in everything the Deity's might, grace and manifestation of His images and accepting that everything is nothing but a shadow, mirage in comparison with His existence" (S.Khavari).

Ibn Arabi was born in Spain, in the city of Murcia dwelt by Moslems, as a child moved to Sevilla where he got his education and made a pilgrimage to Mecca at the age of 37. «К этому времени он уже написал около шестидесяти сочинений по различным аспектам эзотерической науки, по суфийской практике и методам наставничества» (А.Кныш). – "By that time he had written some 60 works on different aspects of esoteric science, Sufi practice and methods of tutoship" (A.Knysh). However, these works did not earn him great fame, he became famous only after he had come to the East. Ibn Arabi's most famous works are "the Statue of Wisdom" (*Fusus al-hikam*) written in Damascus and the multi-volumed "Meccan Illuminations" (*Al-Futuhat al-Makkiya*). A.Knysh confirmed that both now and then these works have been evaluated as the genuine masterpieces of "Sufi science" (p. 188). Ibn Arabi was the author of some 300 works. His works, especially "the Statue of Wisdom" was written in a very complicated style, in a clandestine and inexplicable language, thoughts were conveyed through ambiguous symbols.

The great philosopher consigned the human in the second place after Allah, and asserted an idea that man joins Allah in a mystic way and becomes divine. In his famous tractate "The Interpreter of Desires" he motivated the idea of the Absolute Reality.

Ibn Arabi said, "The Absolute Reality is above names and absolute categories, at the same time is imminent to His own manifestation with their help. The Absolute Reality cannot be realized dualistically the way the object is realized by the subject. The human consciousness is both the prism and mirror. In them the undifferentiated Absolute Reality is manifested and they separate Him into His attributes. Ibn Arabi also noted that the Absolute Reality can be realized until the level of the loss of human "ego". At the point of the loss of human "ego" the Absolute Reality is above the poles of master and servant, and divine and non-divine in His transcendent essence. The manifestation of the Absolute Reality, whose name and attribute are materialized in the things of the Universe, is a constantly dynamic and controversial process. Ibn Arabi also pointed out that the numerous and endless apostasies of the Absolute Reality is understood exactly only by those people who themselves are in the state of constant simultaneous change of the state of the realized Himself" (Şukurov A. Şərq fəlsəfəsi və filosofları, s.455) - (Shukurov A. The Oriental Philosophy and Philosophers, p.455).

Ibn Arabi's father was a close friend with the outstanding scholars, philosophers and state leaders of his time. He had learnt law and Islamic theology perfectly well.

Comparing al-Arabi and al-Ghazali, Idries Shah wrote that both of them were born in the Sufi families. However, Ghazali first studied scholastic sciences, did not suffice himself with them and came to Sufism. But al-Arabi created the poetry of Sufism, of mystic love, caroled the ideas of Sufism in a language understandable by all, and further studied its theory (bax: Sufizm, Moskva, 1994, s.166 – See: Sufism, Moscow, 1994, p.166).

In the work "The Bezels of Wisdom" Muhyiddin Ibn Arabi said that seeing Allah in woman is the greatest perfection. In Spain Arabi got education from a Sufi woman Fatima bint Ibn al-Muthanna and was exposed to a serious psychic impact: "Some of his works were written in the state of trance and their meaning became clear to ibn al-Arabi himself only following some time after writing them" (Идрис Шах. Суфизм. С. 169) - (Idries Shah. Sufism, p.169). He was writing at the expense of tense inner trepidation, and hence it was hard to interpret his works. He said man should be able to control his thinking and his *nafs* [temptation]. Such alertness will allow man to be (to think) in different parameters (in the transfer of dream and alertness!). Everybody (a scholar) should work hard to be able to have such an extraordinarily valuable ability.

Al-Arabi was esoteric. He lived the life of inner world. On the other hand, he was intellectual. Because of these features, the surroundings and orthodox Moslems persecuted him. At last, he wrote commentaries to the work "The Interpreter of Desires" and explained the possibility of combining its system with the orthodox Islam. In 1202 he made a pilgrimage to Mecca actually to escape the persecutions and reprimands (in Syria he was called a liar and trickster!) and here got acquainted with Mukinuddin, the head of Iranian sufis, who overestimated him, and his beautiful daughter Nizam by the name. From then on all the poems by al-Arabi were devoted to this extremely beautiful girl (bax: İdris Şah. Sufizm. S.171- 173 - See: Idries Shah. Sufism. P.P. 171-173).

Al-Arabi was always in the quest of truth. His role in the Islamic civilization was very great. He was seeking links between intellectual and spiritual contacts. An individual evolution (retrieval inside) was basis for him. And today al-Arabi's doctrine confirms and expands the potentials of the Islamic civilization to live in different environments.

Ibn Arabi wanted to see the world in a wholistic way, i.e. as a complete unity. The modern man (the youth of the globalization period), who is willing to know the religious philosophy, needs Ibn Arabi's doctrine.

Arabi's doctrine enables to realize, to elucidate the general roots and contrasts of existence. He gave priority to apprehension, self-expression and self realization as basic principles. Like other sufis, he also made such an inference, "We should know what we cannot cover (apprehend) with our mind". According to Arabi, Sufism is worshipping before the truth (probably the absolute truth!). Arabi explained the Prophet's impact on people, and actually considered Mohammad Aleyhisselam ideal as a human being and saint as a prophet. Ibn al-Arabi's philosophy of Sufism teaches

“essences going beyond the logics” (Лежа де Бистиза. Испания). (Leja de Bistiza. Spain). In reference to Bertels we can say that the Sufism, which was never unique, had made a complicated way within three centuries (IX-XII) “from the secret social protest ... to scholastic philosophy”. This course consisted of three stages of mystic self improvement: Shariat, tariqat, haqqiqat!

Shariat was not Sufism yet, it was the onset of the course, its starting point. Every orthodox Moslem is obliged to know the Islamic dogmas. Here starts the course-tariqat (syuluk). Salik – the wayfarer should pass the stages of this course to be united with Allah, to attain the divine love. In Sufism these stages are called maqams [points]. Their number is seven: tovba [penitence], vara [caution], zuhd [abstinence], farq [poverty], sabr [patience], tawakkul [maqam of tawakkul; reverential trust] and rida [obedience] (ətraflı bax: Бертельс Е.Э. Суфизм и суфийская ли- тература. С. 36-37) – (See for more information: Bertels E.E. Sufism and Sufi Literature, p.p. 36-37). Only after having passed these maqams with love, honour, belief and faith, salik (a human being) can attain the third and the last stage – the truth. “Having attained the truth, salik realizes the true nature of intuitive divineness and uniting with it” (Y.E.Bertels). It is a complicated issue to study the history of numerous sects of Sufism, their theoretical-philosophical essence, the correlations of these sects. This wouldn't be managed, even if a university conducted an investigation for a century, let alone a man who did it all his life long. If after very simple and short notes we cast a brief-exclusive glance at these two issues accomplishing each other, we might present Sufism as a literary-philosophical trend on the level of an ordinary reader. First, what is the role of fiction in the evolution of Sufism; second, on what level did Sufism (tasawwuf) improve the poetics of literature? Naturally, in Sufi literature, basically in poetry the religious (mystic) philosophical content required a poetic perfection for its expression. For, in Sufism (for a Sufi) poetry was one of the main devices of getting delighted, attaining ecstasy to merge with Allah. It is very difficult to approach the Sufi literature universally. However, there is a literary-historical necessity stimulating, compelling us to such an approach. The establishment and formation of the religious-philosophical Sufism, mysticism enjoy the same context with the common Islamic culture in the East. To be more precise, the common Islamic culture, which was established owing to the cultural-historical unity of the mindset of the Arab, the language of the Persian and the spirit of the Turk, also covers the VIII-XIII centuries. And from the historical point of view, it coincides with the period of the dynasty of the Abbassids (758-1275) who reigned in the East for 500 years. No doubt, we would like also to express as a thesis one more idea the grounding of which requires serious causes and evidences. The devastation of the context of the common Islamic culture in the East started from the time of the collapse of the Abbassids –

the end of the XIII century. It was after this event that the inclination to the native-language poetry became stronger in the literature of each nation, and the factor of nationalism began to prevail the common Oriental factor (the literary universalism) in literature. The Oghuz-Saljug culture was founded – reached its zenith in the XVI century. “In the establishment of the XI-XII century-Islamic culture the Azerbaijani thinking was also taking part as a Turkish thinking in general, however, it was not able to be realized in the Islamic culture altogether; *khamsas* were created and disseminated on the one hand, and *oghuznames* on the other. Naturally, no matter what a differential phenomenon the Azerbaijani thinking was, it appeared in the Islamic culture in its common Turkic context... ” The author of these lines, Corresponding Member of the Azerbaijan National Academy of Sciences N.Jafarov correctly stated that the Islamic culture developed in the cities, while the provinces maintained historical-ethnic values, and there was mutual enrichment between them alongside with the confrontation. It was “this process that consequently formulated the XIII-XVI-century Azerbaijani Oghuz- Saljug culture” (Cəfərov N. Fuzulidən Vaqifə qədər. Bakı, 1991, s. 5-6) - (Jafarov N. From Fizuli to Vagif. Baku, 1991, p.p. 5-6).

SUFISM which has occupied the attention of all the thinkers of the world – philosophers, writers, poets, historians, theoreticians of law and literary studies since the IX century up to now is such a literary- philosophical trend that it won't yield to explanation. Sufism is endlessness among the numbers, and three dots in the sentence. It is the problem of “Mankind and Literature”. Sufism will not end until the creature sees the Creator. It won't be solved. No one, neither prophet, nor Sufi, nor thinker has seen Allah since the day the Earth was created. That is why, Sufism – the creature's path of divine love to the Creator - continues.

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