

Sufi Perspectives on the Philosophical Insights of Abu Ali Ibn Sino, Also Known as Avicenna, with Emphasis on the Concept of Al-Wujud al-Mutlaq

Nigina Karimovna Shamsutdinova*

Associate Professor, Navoi State Pedagogical Institute, Navoi, Uzbekistan.
Corresponding Author Email: nigina11@mail.ru*



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ABSTRACT

Ibn Sino views on the development of nature as an unified interconnected process. Man acts as a connected microcosm of this evolution, from both spiritual and materialistic point of view. This article analyzes the irrational views of Avicenna in the context of Sufism, as well as the problem of the man's origin, which is inextricably linked with the concept of the creator and the supreme intelligence. The issue under consideration, the greatest attention of researchers is attracted by his doctrine of emanation, presented in the style of Neoplatonic philosophy. It focuses not on the lower but on the higher stages of evolutionary advancement associated with the transcendental, cosmic intellect and the higher principles inherent in man in the context. It should be noted that Avicenna considers the concept of emotion in the Sufi context as the idea of the soul's desire for reunification with the Creator. Avicenna connects his theory of the creation of man with the thoughts of the Koran that ruled medieval Islamic culture and with the ideas set forward in his mystical doctrines.

Keywords: Sufism; Philosophy; Substance; Space; Evolution; Ontology; Tasawwuf; Irfan; Method.

1. Introduction

In the teachings of Avicenna, we encounter attempts not only to explain the origin of the world but also to establish a logical chain of development and cause-and-effect relationships between the natural and cosmic worlds. From the previous, higher consciousness, successive "outflows" of minds, spirits, and celestial spheres continue in descending order until the ninth consciousness, the period usually called "active consciousness." The general picture of emanation is presented in a strictly hierarchical order: according to the first act of creation, a necessary-existing means, like the Creator, is the only and necessary, although possible for itself. Belonging to the primary consciousness and considering itself a necessary existence, the primary consciousness creates three cosmic substances: the second consciousness, the soul, and the celestial sphere. From the second consciousness emanates the third consciousness, the soul and body of the motionless star sphere.

1.1. Study Objectives

Accordingly, its sphere of influence encompasses the ninth sublunary world, where primary matter and its accompanying states meet—the world of creation and destruction. Interpreting Avicenna, Sagadeev comes to the following conclusion on this issue: "Cosmic consciousness and spirits... constitute a single soul of the universe and therefore act with a single mind and the ultimate force of the universe, communicating order to the universe. The unique purpose of the mind that rules the sublunary sphere is to assist Nature in becoming aware of itself; specifically, all changes in the "world of appearances and disappearances" are determined by "universal human consciousness," which is also the "giver of forms" [1:172].

A certain force proceeds from the active mind and passes on to the objects of subsequent imagination. These objects are also considered objects of conscious imagination in their place, and thus they become actual, making the

potential conscious the actual consciousness. For all substances on earth, active consciousness manifests itself as the cosmic sun. The ideal forms of underground wealth flowing from its depths connect with the world of matter and together form concrete bodies in the sublunary sphere. The light that illuminates it also reaches the human mind and transfers it from a potential state to an actual one. Avicenna explains: “This active consciousness is related to our own conscious soul, our conscious perception of reality, as the sun is related to our eyes, as the eye is related to color [2:260].

2. Research Methodology

Avicenna’s theory of emanation, “active mind,” closes the line of cosmic minds from below and controls not only the sphere of the Moon, but also the earthly sphere. The German scientist E. Bloch said that like those nine intellects flowing from the Almighty Creator to the souls of earthly beings, “the moving intellect flows directly into our mind, illuminates it, and creates in it a reflection of cosmic existence” [3:14]. Avicenna believed that the intellect at work in this astrological system is the conduit that maintains communication between the human world and the divine cosmic realm.

It is known that one of the central issues of medieval Eastern and Western European philosophy was the relationship between God and nature. Within the framework of this philosophical alternative, all philosophical problems ultimately lie within the framework of the question of whether the world was created by God or whether it is eternal and primordial in its existence. According to the theory of emanation (the end) of Avicenna “the world is formed from the divine essence as a result of a certain process and takes on a real form, passing through a number of stages in its development” [4: 116]. But this act of creation is not accidental but has a legal and necessary connection, established as its main cause and effect. In fact, from this deterministic premise, Avicenna concludes that the world arose not by the will of God but by necessity, for “the efficient (modern) cause (i.e., God) is not an efficient will but necessity (bil edjob).”

The link between God and nature was widely recognized as a major subject in medieval Eastern and Western European philosophy. Within the scope of this philosophical alternative, all philosophical difficulties eventually revolve around the question of whether the universe was created by God or if it is everlasting and primordial in its existence. Avicenna’s doctrine of emanation (the end) states that “the world is formed from the divine essence as a result of a certain process and takes on a real form, passing through a number of stages in its development” [4:116]. However, this act of creation is not accidental; rather, it has a legal and required link, which has been established as the primary cause and consequence. In reality, from this deterministic premise, Avicenna concludes that the world arose not by the will of God but by necessity, for “the efficient (modern) cause (i.e., God) is not an efficient will but necessity (bil edjob).”

A logical continuation of this question was Avicenna’s idea of the eternity of the world. God, as an efficient cause, is eternal, and the world, as a necessary product of his activity, has the property of eternity, for the causal connection of objects and events is their mutual dependence and coexistence in time. Although the world is the creation of a divine being, it did not arise from emptiness. Before creation, according to divine wisdom, there was eternal matter, which is the basis of potential existence, evolving from past to present. Consequently, the world has the possibility

of being in the form of material substance before birth, and does not arise from emptiness. But the world is eternal, as is the absolute beginning—the Creator.

According to Avicenna, God is inextricably linked with it, identical to nature and possessing internal compatibility. The philosopher arrives at the following results, accepting the rule put forth by Aristotle's supporters that cause and effect always coexist: "Since God is the cause of the universality and laws of nature, neither the material world nor the world God" [6:143–144]. Avicenna challenges the theological doctrine that the world was created out of nothing by logically explaining the universe's origin and reasoning in a logical order. "If it were possible to create out of nothing," said theologians, "then God, as the efficient cause of the universe, would not be an efficient cause before creation, and the property of being an efficient cause would not be a necessary property of God, would not necessarily arise from him, and would contradict the absolute necessity of all the attributes of God; in addition, it had to be changeable, and this is not consistent with its perfection." [5:94]. In a broader sense, Avicenna's theory of emanation incorporates not only the problems of determinism and the principle of the eternity of the world, but also such major philosophical Avicenna's theory of emanation encompasses not only the problems of determinism and the principle of the world's eternity, but also important philosophical issues such as the unity, interdependence, and integrity of the spiritual and material worlds, objectivity, and natural phenomenon.

3. Results and Discussion

Avicenna's theory of emanation actually indicates two directions of development: one downward and the other upward. It finishes in the underworld in the lowering direction and in man in the ascending direction. Since the Prophet is recognized as the most perfect of men, the ascending line of emanation ends with him. The movement of the spheres is explained by the incessant striving of the heavenly spirits toward their source, the corresponding consciousness. The human soul also strives for active consciousness and ultimately for the Divine Absolute, which has absolute existence (al-Wujud al-Mutlaq) and perfect goodness (al-Khair al-Mahz) [7:29].

In the idea of emanation, Avicenna adhered not only to Neoplatonic beliefs but also to the latest adapted norms of Islamic doctrine. For example, justifying the desire of the human heart to unite with God, For example, supporting the desire of the human heart to unite with God, he corresponds to one of the passages of the Koran: "Allah creates people, then kills them, and then they all (people) return to his bosom" [8:193]. Furthermore, Avicenna describes the spiritual ascent of the Prophet Muhammad to the Prime Creator in his works "Me'rajnoma" or "Murshid-ul-kifaya" ("Ascension") and gives allegorical names of cosmic substances in the astrological dimension. Of course, in this regard, he uses bright emotional colors and symbolic comparisons. Nevertheless, many of the Sufis adopted Avicenna's philosophical method and his idea of the evolutionary nature of the stages of emanation along the line of ascension.

For example, cosmic intelligences are depicted as archangels, and heavenly spirits as ordinary angels. At the first stage of the Prophet's ascent to the Absolute, together with Archangel Gabriel, representing active consciousness, as well as the Holy Spirit, it is necessary to conquer the Earth—in other words, to get rid of emotional, natural forces and vices. In addition to the Archangel Gabriel, the legendary horse Burak (representing active consciousness) accompanies the Prophet on his cosmic journey.

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The Moon was the first celestial sphere on the path of the Great Good, which those who embarked on the path reached. According to the celestial cosmic hierarchy, the second refuge for travelers was the sphere of Mercury (Atorud). One after another, the spheres of Venus, the Sun, Mars, Jupiter, and Saturn were conquered and reached the highest divine sphere, where the original state of consciousness is located. It should be especially emphasized that in “Merozhnoma” or “Murshid-ul-kifaya” (“Ascension”), which reveals the spiritual ascent of the Prophet Muhammad a.s. to the Prime Creator, the Prophet is recognized as the most perfect of people, the ascending line of emanation ends with him, and the movement of the spheres is explained by the incessant striving of the heavenly spirits for their Divine Absolute, which has absolute existence (al-wujud al-mutlaq) and pure goodness (al-khair al-mahz).

4. Conclusion

We could potentially therefore draw the conclusion that, in Avicenna's ontology, the issue of how the world originated and the question of how man came to be are intimately interwoven. It is believed that the evolution of nature is a single, interrelated process, in which man is one of the links. However, a lot of Sufis embraced Avicenna's school of philosophy and his theory that the stages of emanation along the ascension line are evolutionary. Nasir ad-Din Tusi then defended Avicenna's point of view. Treatise on the Essence and Quality of the Existence of Things by Avicenna addresses important theological and philosophical topics concerning the irfon. It is structured as a debate consisting of questions and responses, issues pertaining to cosmic, natural, and spiritual entities, such as the genesis of humanity. Avicenna uses this Sufi way of presentation in his other works, discussing the problem and, as it were, involving him in a joint search for truth.

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