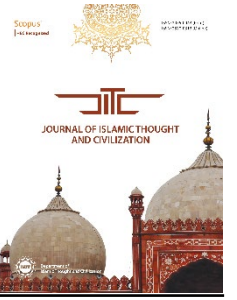
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The Essence of the Concept of Wahdat Al-Wujud in Muhyiddin Ibn Arabi's Sufism: An Analysis Based on the "Risalat Al-Wujudiyya"

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Abstract

This article provides a scholarly analysis of the concept of *Wahdat al-Wujud* (Oneness of Existence) in the Sufi philosophy of Muhyiddin Ibn Arabi, focusing on its theological, metaphysical, and epistemological dimensions. The study aims to explore the essence of Divine Oneness (*wahdaniyat*), Singularity (*fardaniyat*), and Self-Subsistence of the Truth (*Qayyumiyat al-Haq*), as well as the process of spiritual annihilation (*fana*). Using a qualitative research methodology based on textual analysis, the article examines primary source such *Risalat Al-Wujudiyya* **(***Existential Message,* رسالة الوجودية**)** alongside secondary academic interpretations. The research investigates Ibn Arabi's ontological framework, particularly his distinction between existence (*wujud*) and non-existence (*adam*), emphasizing that all creation is a manifestation of Divine reality. It argues that in his teachings, self-awareness is central to understanding existence, as human consciousness serves as a mirror reflecting Divine presence. Furthermore, the study explores how Ibn Arabi's concept of *Haq* (The Truth) oscillates between transcendence and immanence, sometimes described as entirely beyond creation and at other times manifesting through it. The findings highlight the paradoxical nature of Ibn Arabi's metaphysics, where the perception of unity depends on an individual's level of spiritual realization. The research contributes to the broader discourse on Islamic mysticism by clarifying the epistemological implications of *Wahdat al-Wujud* and its impact on Sufi thought.

***Keywords*:** *Fana* (Annihilation), *Fardaniyat*, "Qayyumiyyat al-Haq" (The Self-Subsistence of the Truth), *Rayni Hijab* (The Veil of Rust), *Tafrid* (Individualization), *Wahdaniyat (Divine Oneness)*, Wahdat al-Wujud (Unity of Existence)

Introduction

The thinker, known as the founder of the doctrine of the unity and singularity of existence – "*Wahdat al-Wujud*" (Oneness of Existence) was revered by his followers as the "Great Sheikh" and the "Son of Plato." Muhyiddin Muhammad Bin Ali Bin Muhammad Ibn Arabi (b.d. 1165-1240) was the first in Sufism to widely disseminate this theory through his philosophical views. He considers *Allah* to be the heart of all beings and of the faithful servant, and sees nothing in the world except truth and reality. He emphasizes that the *Arif* (knower) sees everything in Him, for He is the vessel that encompasses all things."[1] Ibn Arabi interprets the philosophical theory of "*Wahdat al-Wujud*" (Oneness of Existence) based on his own unique style. "One of the works that comprehensively and systematically studied the category of existence and most perfectly described its views on this issue is "*Risalat Al-Wujudiyya*" ("Existential Message").[2] The classification of Ibn Arabi's works shows that along with giving a general definition of existence, he also analyzes nature, man, society, and spiritual existence, which are its manifestations. This can be evident from: "Our words are intended

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[1]Abdulhakim Shariy Juzhoniy, *At-Tasawwuf wa-l-Insan (Sufism and Man)*. (Tashkent: Justice, 2001), 20.

[2]Ibn Arabi. *Risalat Al-Wujudiyya*. *(Existential Message,* رسالة الوجودية*)* (A. Boltayev's translation from the original manuscript.)

for those who have the determination and generosity in the demand for knowledge and the demand for self-awareness, for those who embody in their hearts the desire and demand to reach *Allah.*"[3] It follows that when a person first understands or knows oneself, only then does one comprehend the essence and recognize *Allah.*

In the study of *Existential Message*, it was determined that the ideas of Ibn Arabi regarding existence have been analyzed by both European and Asian scholars to varying extents. W.C.Chittick examines Ibn Arabi's concepts of ultimate reality (Allah), the realm of divine names, the spiritual and metaphysical worlds, and the material world.[4] H. Corbin substantiates the ideas of Sufi ontology, the imaginal world (ʿālam al-mithāl), and the understanding of existence through spiritual experience,[5] moreover, T. Izutsu compares Ibn Arabi's views on oneness, self-annihilation, and existence with those of Laozi.[6] Similarly M.A.Palacios philosophically analyzes Ibn Arabi's views on the one God, highlighting their similarities to Christian mysticism.[7] In his work, E. Winkel analyzes Ibn Arabi's concept of existence as a dynamic process of knowing, in which truth is unveiled to an individual through spiritual experience,[8] and Mohamed Haj Yousef interprets Ibn Arabi's concept of time as a creative notion that integrates philosophical, mystical, and Sufi ideas.[9]

Considering the aforementioned scholarly conclusions, the article examines the concept of *Wahdat al-Wujud* (Oneness of Existence,) in Ibn Arabi's teachings from an academic perspective, highlighting its significance within Sufi philosophy. The distinctions between *Wahdat al-Wujud* (Oneness of Existence,), *Wahdat al-Shuhūd (*the unity of witnessing, وحدة الشهود*)*, and other Sufi traditions are analyzed, along with a comparative study of the ideas of Tustari, Khojagi Ahmad Kosani, and other scholars, identifying both differences and similarities. Furthermore, the compatibility or divergence of Ibn Arabi's metaphysical views with Islamic creed is assessed based on the Qur'ān and Hadīth. Finally, the impact of his ontological perspectives on contemporary Sufi practices, spiritual development, and ethical transformation is critically evaluated.

2. Ibn Arabi's Portrayal of Those Who Grasp the Treatise's Essence

Ibn Arabi answer to those sho understand his treatise essence by saying, "This conversation of ours is with those who see nothing but *Allah*. To those who see other than *Allah*, we have neither question nor answer, because he sees nothing but what he sees."[10] Thus, the *Sufi* thinker states that the treatise was written for those who have delved into esoteric knowledge and grasped its essence. Ibn Arabi composed this treatise not for the general public, but for the select few, more specifically for the adherents and followers of his teachings. Nevertheless, the work serves as a valuable source

[3]Muhyiddin Muhammad bin Ali bin Muhammad Ibn Arabi, *Existential Message* (Beirut: Dar al-Kutub al-Ilmiyya, 2004), 43. (Original text: و خطابنا مع من له عزيمة و همة في طلب العرفان و في طلب معرفة النفس لمعرفة الله و تطرأ في قلبه صورة الطالب و الإشتياق الي الله تعالي

[4]William C. Chittick, *The Sufi Path of Knowledge: Ibn al-ʿArabi's Metaphysics of Imagination* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2010), 6–18.

[5]Hnery Corbin, *Creative Imagination in the Sufism of Ibn Arabi*. Vol. 185. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2014), 207.

[6]Toshiko Izutsu, *Sufism and Taoism: A Comparative Study of Key Philosophical Concepts* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2016), 218.

[7]M. A. Palacios, *El Islam Cristianizado: Estudio del "Sufismo" a Través de las Obras de Abernarabi de Murcia* (León: Editorial Maxtor, 2018), 53–55.

[8]E. Winkel, *Time Is Not Real* (Ibn Arabi Society, 2024), https://ibnarabisociety.org/time-is-not-real-eric-winkel/

[9]M. H. Yousef, *Ibn 'Arabi: Time and Cosmology* (2014).

[10]Ibn Arabi, *Existential Message*, 44. (Original text: " فالجواب هذه المقامات مع من لا **يرى سوى** الله شيئا و من **يرى** شيئا **سوى** الله فليس لنا معه جواب و لا سؤال فإنه لا **يرى** غير ما **سوى**")

for those interested in philosophy and Sufism. After traditionally praising Allah and the Prophet, Ibn Arabi explains that the purpose of writing the treatise is to elucidate the meaning and essence of the Prophet's hadīth: "Whoever knows himself knows his God."[11] The Sufi extols the creator with His essential attributes that indicate His uniqueness, and endeavors to reveal Allah's essential qualities by distinctly employing words with similar meanings, such as "*wahdaniyat*" *(Divine Oneness*), and "*fardaniyat*" *(Singular)*. This is to assert that "Praise be to Allah, before *wahdaniyat (Divine Oneness*) there was no precedence other than Himself, and after *fardaniyat* there is no posteriority other than Himself."[12]

2.1. Ibn Arabi's Interpretation of Allah as Existence

According to Ibn Arabi, Allah, is the One without *wahdaniyat (Divine Oneness)*, and he is the *fard (unique)* without *fardaniyat (Singular)*. He is composed of neither name nor that which is named. He is the First without beginning and the Last without end. "Manifest without externality and Hidden without internality. That is, He is the essence of the letters of Initial, He is the essence of the letters of the End, He is the essence of the letters of "*Batin" (Unseen*) He is the essence of the letters of "*Zahir"* (*Visible*). Even if these letters do not transform into His essence, or if His essence transforms into these letters, there is none other than Him who is the *Zahir* (*Visible*), the *Batin (Unseen*), the *Zahir* (*Visible,*) or the *Batin* (*Unseen*)."[13] Allah's absolute oneness is not dependent on the external (*Zahir*) or internal (*Batin*) world; rather, it signifies that He is the essence of all things from the beginning to the end.

Tafrīd means "isolation" or "setting apart" in Arabic and represents the highest degree of *Allah's* oneness (*tawhid*) in Sufism. This word is derived from the root "*fard*" *(unique)*. The basis of this concept is the following hadīth: Rasulullah (a.s) said:

The *Mufarrids* (Devout individual) have overtaken. They said, "Who are the *Mufarrids* (Devout individual), O Rasulillah!" He said: "Men and women who remember *Allah* much."[14] In other accounts, it is said: "They are those who have immersed themselves deeply in the remembrance of *Allah,* and this remembrance has lifted their burdens, and they will arrive lightly on the doomsday."[15] In books of Aqida, the terms "*wahdaniyat*" *(Divine Oneness)* and "*fardaniyat*" are used as synonyms. "*Wahdaniyat*" *(Divine Oneness,)* is used in reference to essence, while "*fardaniyat*" *(Singularity,)* is used in reference to attributes. *Allah* the almighty is "*muvahhad*" (Monotheis,توحيد) in His essence, meaning He is alone, and He is "*munfarid*" (singular, منفرد) in His attributes, meaning He is the only one.

3. The Sufi and Gnostic Analysis of the Question of Existence and Non-Existence by the Sufi Thinker

Since ancient times, people have contemplated nature and society, humanity and individuals, observing the phenomena and events occurring around them and their changes. Some things exist but later disappear, while others that were absent earlier emerge later. Yesterday, we might have been

[11] *Ḥilyat al-Awliyā'* 10/208.

[12] Ibn Arabi, *Existential Message*, 35. (Original text: "الحمد لله الذي لم يكن قبل وحدانيته و إلا قبل هو القبل و إلاالبعد بعد فردانيته بعد يكن لم و هو")

[13] Ibn Arabi, *Existential Message*, 45. (Original text: هو الواحد بلا وحدانية، وهو الفرد بلا فردانية، ليس مركباً من الاسم والمسمى، هو الأول بلا أولية، وهو الآخر بلا آخرية، وهو الظاهر بلا ظاهرية، وهو الباطن بلا باطنية. أعني: أنه هو وجود حروف الأول، وهو وجود حروف الآخر، وهو وجود حروف الظاهر، وهو وجود حروف الباطن، فلا أول ولا آخر، ولا ظاهر ولا باطن إلا هو)

[14] Muslim ibn al-Hajjaj. *Sahih Muslim*, Hadith 2676.

[15] Muhammad ibn Isa al-Tirmidhi, *Sunan at-Tirmidhi*, Hadith 3596.

unaware of the existence of something, but today we discover that it truly exists. Based on these observations, people have developed concepts and views about existence, being, and non-being.

3.1. *Definition of the Hijab*

According to the Sufi thinker, "His *hijab (Barrier)* is His *wahdaniyat (Divine Oneness)*. No *hijab (Barrier),* other than His own can conceal Him. His existence is also His *wahdaniyat (Divine Oneness)*, by which He remains "*satr*" (hidden) without being confined to any "mood" ("how" or "what kind"). Neither a prophet, nor a perfect saint, nor a close angel (*mursal*) can see Him except for Himself. His own prophet is He, His *rasul* is Himself, His own treatise, and His own *kalam (Speech)*. He sent Himself to Himself through Himself, without any intermediary and without any cause. There is no difference between the sender, the sent, and the recipient. The existence of the letters "*sana*" (Praise,) is nothing other than His existence. He has neither "*sana"* (Praise), nor name, nor anything named"[16].

In *Hujwiri's* teachings, there are two types of *"hijab" (Barrier)*: The first is called the *"rayniy hijab*" (The Veil of Rust, الرَّيْنُ الحِجَابُ), (We seek refuge in Allah Himself from its appearance). The second is called "*ghayni hijab"* (*Veil of heedlessness)* The sooner this occurs, the better.

Rayniy ul Hijab – The Veil of Rust This barrier signifies the spiritual corruption and moral decay of the heart, which result in estrangement from God. Such sins permeate a person's heart to the extent that they become incapable of perceiving the truth. For this reason, Hujwiri draws a parallel between the concept of *hijab* and sin, emphasizing that one must seek refuge in God to be protected from this veil.

Ghayniy Hijab – The Veil of Heedlessness This veil arises from negligence or inattentiveness in the remembrance of God. In Sufism, such heedlessness is referred to as *ghaflah (spiritual inattentiveness, غفلة)*. Unlike *rayniy hijab*, this state is often temporary. According to Hujwiri, the sooner one becomes aware of it, the better, as it allows the individual to recognize their lapse and return swiftly to the divine presence.

"The explanation of the first is that in this case, the servant's essence becomes the *hijab (Barrier),* of the *Haq)*, in other words, *Haq* and *batil* become indistinguishable to him. The explanation of the second is that here the servant's qualities become a *hijab (Barrier),* to the Haq, and the servant, immersing themselves wholly with their entire being, seeks the Haq), and flees from *botil (Falsehood).*"[17]

The *hijab* is not a physical entity, but a connection. Therefore, Makhdumi Azam, a theorist of the Naqshbandi order, says, "You yourself are the *hijab*. You stand between the *Haq* and yourself; that is, if you become mortal (or transient), you will reach the *Haq*)."[18]

Taalluq hijabastu behosili,
Chuzi bandha bigselivosili[19]

Meaning: If you break the bands, you will be a *vosil* (you follow the truth)

[16] Ibn Arabi, *Existential Message*, 35.

[17] Ali ibn Usman Hujwiri, *The Kashf al-Mahjūb (The Unveiling of the Hidden): The Oldest Persian Treatise on Sufism*, Translated by Reynold A. Nicholson (Lahore: Sang-e-Meel Publications, 2007), 5.

[18] Ibid., 5.

[19] Ibid., 55.

Therefore, the Prophet Muhammad said, "I know my *God* [20] through my *God*." Ibn Arabi writes: When the Prophet Muhammad said, "I understood my *God* through my *God*," he was alluding to the meaning: "You are not you, but you are He who exists without you. They point to the meaning: You are not you, but you are He who was without you. He is not within you, nor outside you. You are neither inside Him nor outside Him. At the same time, your existence and qualities cannot be independent of Him (*Allah*), meaning they cannot be self-sufficient. Certainly, you did not exist, and you will not exist. You are neither a sound nor an existence. You are He, and He is you, without any imperfections. If you have understood your own existence, you have also understood *Allah*. If this is not the case, then you have not comprehended anything."[21] From this, it can be understood that a human being does not exist independently but rather exists solely by the will of Allah. Allah is the Absolute Being, neither within creation nor outside of it, and He transcends the limitations of space and time. This perspective aligns with Ibn Arabi's concept of *Wahdatul Wujud*, in which both human existence and the entire cosmos are perceived as manifestations of the Divine.

3.2. *Fana (Annihilation of the Self) and Faniyyah (Impermanence)*

In Sufism, the concepts of *fana (annihilation of the self)* and *faniyyah (impermanence)* refer to annihilation and transience, signifying the temporary nature of existence and the dissolution of the self. In fano, negative traits or qualities are transcended and cease to exist. In the state of fano, the seeker recognizes the source of their actions as being in *Allah*. In this state, the seeker attains the closest proximity to *Allah*.

Ibn Arabi, in his explanation of existence, asserts that only his own teachings are correct, rejecting the methods and approaches used by earlier Sufi orders in understanding the self, which compel us to reflect critically. The Sufi thinker emphasizes that expressions and terms such as "*fana*" (the annihilation of the self) and "*fana al-fana*" used in Sufi orders are incorrect and believes that interpreting them as valid may lead to one of the greatest sins in Islam.That is, many mystics believe that there are two paths to understanding *Allah*: the *fana* of existence and the fana of *fana*. This is an obvious mistake. Indeed, understanding Allah does not require the *fana* of existence, nor the fano of *fana*. Since it does not possess existence, it cannot possess *fana* either. Indeed, fano occurs after the stability of existence. Only if you understand yourself as being without existence and *fana*, will you truly understand *Allah*. If this is not the case, then everything else is void.[22]

The term 'fana' essentially signifies the liberation of the sufi from the transient concerns of worldly life, spiritual and moral purification, and the complete and wholehearted fulfillment of the divine command. In Ibn Arabi's philosophy of understanding existence, the central idea is the realization of the self, where every manifestation of being attains unity with the human being. Every plurality expresses unity. To claim the existence of another entity apart from this is a sin, namely, *shirk* (*Idolatry)*.

"Understanding *Allah* by linking Him to existence or to the *fana* of *fana* directly establishes *shirk* (*Idolatry),* because when you link the understanding of *Allah* to existence and the *fana* of *fana*, it becomes something other than *Allah* and separate from His essence. This is indeed clear *shirk* (*Idolatry)*. The Prophet Muhammad said, "Whoever knows himself, knows his God." He did not say, whoever knows *fana*, knows their *God*. The permanence of something other than the self (i.e., another entity) nullifies *fana*. Whatever is not suitable for permanence, is also unsuitable for *fana.*"[23]

[20]Ibid., 5.
[21]Ibn Arabi, *Existential Message (Risalat Al-Wujudiyya),* 36.
[22]Ibid.
[23] Ibid.

4. *Wajib al-Wujud* (Necessary Existence) and *Mumkin al-Wujud* (Possible Existence) in the Interpretation of Ibn Arabi

"Existence is a non-existent thing. A non-existent thing cannot be an existent thing. He (Allah) is neither ephemeral (temporary) nor eternal, it is neither existent nor non-existent. You are the primordial moment, the eternal moment, and the non-existence before existing in the ancient moment. Allah is the existence of the primordial, the existence of the eternal, and the existence of the ancient. And indeed, He exists without the existence of eternity past, without the existence of eternity future, and without the existence of the ancient. If this were not the case, "*Wahdahu la shariyka lahu*" ("He is One, without any partner") It could not have been. His *'Wahdahu la sharika lahu'* is obligatory (wājib). If He were to have a "partner," that partner would have to exist by its own essence, not by the existence of Allah. And it would no longer be in need of Him, and it would become a second *God*. Such a thing is impossible (i.e., absolutely inconceivable)."[24] In his treatise, Ibn Arabi establishes the absolute existence and oneness of Allah, presenting both Sufi and philosophical arguments that affirm divine unity as a logical necessity. According to him, existence is a relative concept, and true existence belongs solely to Allah. Human existence is temporary and is only realized through divine manifestation. From the perspective of *Tawhīd* (the oneness of God), Allah cannot have any partners. For this reason, the phrase *"Wahdahu la sharika lahu"* (He is One, without a partner) is interpreted in the text as a fundamental principle of existence.

The existence of the *Wojib al-Wujud* (Necessary Existence), whose existence is intrinsic, is *Allah*. The existence of the *Mumkin al-Wujud* (Possible Existence) is dependent on the *Wojib al-Wujud* (Necessary Existence); that is, it does not exist by itself, but exists at a certain time and ceases to exist at another time. This existence, nature, and the beings, objects, and substances within it are considered as such. Existence consists of substance (*jahwar*) and accident (*araz*). An accident (*araz*) is dependent on substance (*jahwar*) for its existence. The essence of His being consists of five parts: prime matter, form, body, intellect, and soul. Prime matter is considered the substance into which form (image) moves or transfers. Ibn Arabi rejects the concept of "*Illat al-wujud*" ("the cause of existence") in philosophy and replaces it with his own teaching of "*Qayyumiyyat al-Haqq*" ("the indivisible eternity of Allah"). According to his belief, every being is itself the "*Qayyumiyyat al-Illat*" ("the eternal cause"). "All of these are eternal and are related to the essence of Allah's eternity, specifically the *"Qayyumiyyat al-Illat*" (the eternal cause)."[25] From this, it can be understood that according to Ibn Arabi's teachings, existence is the self-existent power of the *Haq*. The eternity of Allah necessitates the eternity of existence. In turn, this rejects the philosophers view that existence emanates from the *"aql al-awwal*" (first intellect).

5. Different Approaches to Ibn Arabi's Teachings on Existence

Ibn Arabi elucidates a theory within Islamic metaphysics concerning the two fundamental types of existence—real existence and metaphorical existence—delineating their nature and distinction.

1. The true, eternal, and imperishable existence.

Imperishable *(Sarmadiy*) signifies constant and eternal. The true, eternal, and perpetual existence is the existence of Allah, the Glorious and Exalted.

2. Accidental, metaphorical, and transient existence.

[24]Ibid.

[25]Ibn Arabi, *Existential Message*, 36.

"*Al-araz*" is an Arabic term that signifies appearance or manifestation. In philosophy, it refers to the concept of "accidents."[26]

This forms part of his doctrine, which explains the absolute nature of Allah and the limited nature of created existence. He defines real existence as eternal and independent, while describing metaphorical existence as transient and contingent.

5.1. Metaphorical – The Reflection of Reality

"*Fony* (transitory) means temporary. Occasional, metaphorical, and transient existence refers to something that is perceptible, present on the surface, but not fundamentally real – a temporary form of being. Such an existence pertains to created entities. Every creation, every being, has its own inherent reality".

According to Ibn Arabi, "*Allah* has no partner, no equal, and nothing can compare to Him. Anyone who perceives anything alongside, apart from, or within Allah sees that thing as dependent on *Allah*'s lordship (*Rububiyyah*). In doing so, they associate that thing with *Allah'*s sovereignty. Anyone who claims that something exists independently of *Allah*, or that it stands by itself, or is transient in its own essence or *fana*, has not experienced the true understanding of self-awareness. If someone says that there is existence apart from *Allah*, exists without cause, or that *fana* is linked to *fana*, they commit *shirk* (*Idolatry)* upon *shirk* (*Idolatry)*. They do not understand their own essence; in fact, they are a polytheist. They neither understand *Allah* nor their own self."[27] These statements by the scholar point to a severe form of shirk. Whoever perceives existence as independent of Allah or understands fana (annihilation) in relation to another fana commits shirk upon shirk.

"In his *Risala-ye Faniyya* (Treatise on *Fana* (Annihilation)), *Makhdoom-e-Azam* calls attention to the transience of the world and all that it contains, emphasizing that human life is also finite and measured. Therefore, he advises not to place excessive love on this world, but rather to focus on performing good deeds for the eternal abode, the Hereafter."[28] The central idea of the work encompasses a Sufi worldview, an attitude toward the material world, and preparation for the Hereafter. *Makhdoom-i Azam* contrasts material life with spiritual life, reminding that human existence is finite and measured. He emphasizes the transient nature of worldly life, warns against excessive attachment to the material world, and asserts that the ultimate purpose of life is not merely the pursuit of worldly pleasures and material wealth.

5.2. "Fana" (Annihilation) is Death

According to Islamic belief, *Allah* created existence from the realm of non-existence, or in other words, brought it into being from nothingness. Therefore, everything we know, see, touch, or think about exists in reality, meaning that heaven and hell, spirits and angels, *jin*[29] *(genie),* and Satan, the material world, the spiritual realm, the world of *malakut (Spiritual Realm)*, and the world of *lahūt* (*Divine Realm*) all exist in reality. Adam, or the realm of non-existence, is something that no being other than the Divine can fully comprehend. Ibn Arabi explains that this duality, the distinction between *Adam* (non-existence) and *Wujud* (existence), is inseparable. If they are considered separate, it would contradict *wahdat (Oneness)*, the concept that the essence of *Allah* is unified. In religious terminology, this would constitute *shirk* (*Idolatry)*, which is regarded as one of the gravest sins in the

[26] Yegane Shayegan, "The Accidentality of Existence in Avicenna and Its Critique by Averroes," *Journal of Persianate Studies* 10, no. 2 (December 1, 2017): 218–39. https://doi.org/10.1163/18747167-12341315.

[27]Ibn Arabi, *Existential Message*, 37.

[28]Khojagi Ahmad Kosani, *Al-Risala fi Ephanoia* (*The Treatise is Ephanoia*), Manuscript, 7 - sheets.

[29]Al-Qur'ān: Jin 72: 2.

Qur'ān and stands in opposition to *tawhid* (monotheism). Rejecting *tawhīd* (monotheism) would be a denial of the *shahada*, the declaration of faith in Islam: "*La ilaha illallah*" ("There is no god but *Allah*"). According to Ibn Arabi's doctrine, since there is no existence apart from Allah, "every multiplicity is rooted in *wahdat*," meaning all apparent plurality is ultimately based on the singularity of Allah's essence. Ibn Arabi states that the esoteric meanings of the Hadīths point to the correctness of the teaching he is presenting.

"Abu Huraira reported Allah's Messenger as saying: **"**Allah, the Exalted and Glorious, said: The son of Adam displeases Me by abusing Dahr (time), whereas I am Dahr - I alternate the night and the day.**"**[30]

Ibn Arabi analyzes *fana* as follows:

> Whoever thinks of themselves as other than *Allah*, know that they are not other than *Allah*. However, you cannot comprehend this. You do not realize that you are seeing Him. When this secret is unveiled to you, you will know that you are not outside of *Allah*. And know that you are the purpose itself. You do not need *fana*. You have always been and will continue to be, even without it. As we mentioned earlier, you will see that all of His attributes are your attributes, unquestionably, His outward is your outward, His inward is your inward, His beginning is your beginning, and His end is your end. And you will further see that the many are without becoming Him, and He is without becoming you, yet His attributes and His essence are you.[31]

Ibn Arabi quotes from his own poem, which aligns with these conclusions, saying: "I said..."[32].

قلت:

ظننت ظنونا بأنك أنت و ما أن تكون و لا قط كنت
فإن أنت أنت فإنك رب وثاني اثنين دع ما ظننت
فلا فرق بين وجوديكما فما بان عنك و لا عنه بنت
فإن قلت جهلا بأنك غيره خشنت وإن زال جهلك لنت
فوصلك هجروهجرك وصل و بعدك قرب بهذا حسنت
دع العقل وافهم بنورانكشاف لئلا يفوتك ما عنه صنت
ولا تشرك مع الله شيئا لئلا تهون وبالشرك هنت

The meaning is:

> You think of yourself as You,
> "Thinking of yourself as "You" is a mistake.
> You are not "You," You are the Allah,
> Do not think of "duality," even.
> In your essence, there is no difference,
> You are not separate from Him, nor is He from you.
> If you are ignorant and say, "I am different,"
> "Your ignorance will not depart, as you continue with such words.
> Union is separation, and separation is union,
> If you knew, your distance is, in truth, closeness.
> Leave aside intellect, understand with the light of unveiling,
> Illuminate the night with its description.
> Do not associate anything with Allah,
> Shirk is a great sin, if you knew it clearly."[33]

[30]Muslim. *Sahih Muslim*. Book 40, Hadīth 2246. Accessed February 12, 2025. https://sunnah.com/muslim: 2246.

[31]Ibn Arabi, *Existential Message,* 40.

[32]Ibid., 42

[33]AA Boltayev, *Social and Philosophical Views of Muhyiddin ibn Arabi: Doctor of Philosophy (DSc) Dissertation Abstract*. Bukhara: "Sadriddin Salim Bukhari" (LLC Publishing House, 2023).

6. Ibn Arabi's Commentary on the Qur'anic Verses

The Qur'ān states: "And do not invoke with Allah another deity. There is no deity except Him. Everything will be destroyed except His Face. His is the judgement, and to Him you will be returned."[34] "There is no existence other than Him. There is no being besides Him. If there were another, it would be doomed to destruction. Only all creatures on the face of the earth are perishable"[35], "The Owner of Glory and Honor, the Lord, is the Only One who is eternal,"[36] There is nothing other than Him.

Ibn Arabi asserts, "And if you ask, *Allah* Almighty says in His words: "Vision cannot grasp Him, but He grasps all vision. He is the Subtle, the All-Aware" (*Allah* created the eyes to perceive the objects of this world. They perform their function, nothing more. They are incapable of doing anything beyond their capacity.)"[37] You are contradicting this verse, where is the truth in what you are saying? The answer is: "What we have said so far is the meaning of Vision cannot grasp Him, but He grasps all vision, meaning that there is no one in existence and no eye that can perceive Him. If there were something other than Him, it would be able to perceive Him. *Allah*, the Blessed and Exalted, with His verse Vision cannot grasp Him reminds us that there is nothing but Him. This means that He cannot be perceived by anything other than Himself. On the contrary, He perceives Himself, and only He, His essence, perceives, no one else. There is no eye except His essence. Whoever says, "They (the eyes) cannot perceive Him because they are created (new), and the created cannot perceive the eternal, does not understand his own reality. There is nothing and no eyes other than Him. He perceives His own essence without any perception or essence other than Himself."[38]

Ibn Arabi analyzes the concept of unity (*wahdaniyat*) not only through the science of Hadith but also through Qur'anic verses. "The verse of the As-Saaffat[39] إِنَّ إِلَٰهَكُمْ لَوَاحِدٌ (لا إله إلا الله "There is no deity but *Allah*.") لا إله إلا هو("There is no deity other than Him."), لا وجود لغيره ("There is no existence other than Him") and لا إله إلا إياه ("There is no deity other than Him Himself.") He brings forth the meanings."[40] He explains the concept of *Wahdaniyyah* (Divine Oneness) by referring to Qur'ānic verses, particularly the phrase *"La ilaha illallah"* in Surah As-Saffat and similar expressions. He emphasizes the absolute oneness of Allah and asserts that no eternal existence exists apart from Him. Najmuddin al-Kubra states: "The beginning of the Greatest Name is from *Allah*, for the Name of *Allah* is the essence that embodies all attributes of beauty (*jamal*) and majesty (*jalal*)."[41]

Furthermore, every existing thing, every form of existence, comes from Allah; without Him, nothing can exist or be perceived. The "*Wahdat al-Wujud*" theory presented in this treatise differs from the official theological views or the concepts of the Mashsha'iyyun regarding existence, and it resonates with the existentialist philosophy of life in modern times, where the reflection and manifestation of the divine existence can be found in life, especially in the perfection of the individual human being, and in the divine presence (tajalli) manifesting in the heart of the seeker.

[34]Al-Qasas 28:88.
[35]Al- Rahman 55:26.
[36]Ibid., 55:27.
[37]Al-An'ām 6:23.
[38]Ibn Arabi, *Existential Message*, 44.
[39]As-Saaffat: 37:4.
[40]Ibn Arabi, *Existential Message* 39.
[41]Toby Mayer, "Some Salient Alchemical Features of the Mysticism of Kubrā's *Fawāʾiḥ al-Jamāl*," *The Maghreb Review* 45, no. 4 (2020): 744-762, https://dx.doi.org/10.1353/tmr.2020.0010.

Ibn Arabi states, “If you ask again, If I say, I am Allah, “would this be what Allah has said?” The answer is: “No, for you have not yet reached Him. Only when you reach Him will you understand what He has said, say what He has said, and see what He has seen.”[42]

From this phrase, one may assert that the existence of all things is not with their own existence, but with your existence. “Through these hints, do not doubt that Allah is a created being, and let others not fall into this misconception either. Some of the knowers say, The Sufi is not created.” This happens after the unveiling of the ultimate meaning, when all doubts and suspicions vanish. These words apply to those whose insight extends beyond the common understanding. If someone’s insight is limited, these words will not apply to them, for such insights cannot be confined to ordinary perceptions.[43]

A human being, by virtue of existence, is always striving to understand their own nature. They constantly ponder questions like “Who am I?”, “Where did I come from and where am I going?,” “What is my purpose in life?,” contemplating issues related to the world and themselves, or reflecting on the nature of existence and its essence, seeking answers to these questions. Each individual follows a unique path in this regard, as Ibn Arabi said: “إن الطرق إلي الله على عدد أنفاس الخلائق” “The paths to *Allah* are as numerous as human beings.”[44]

7. Examples from the Qudsi Hadīth regarding the non-existence of anything besides Allah

Ibn Arabi states that, unlike the Ash’aris, philosophers, and Mu’tazilites, the Sufis beliefs about “*ru’ya-tul-Lah*” (“seeing Allah,” spiritual and esoteric perception of Allah in Sufism) are in agreement. Additionally, Ibn Arabi includes “*Tajdidul A’raz*” (“the changing of accidents”) as part of the views of the Sufis, which are essentially very similar to those of the Ash'aris.[45] He compares the views of the Ash’aris on this matter with his own thoughts within the Sufi framework, highlighting the similarities between them: “The Ash’aris say that the entire existence is a single substance (*Jawhar*). We say that the essence is one. They also say: “It differentiates in accidents (A’raz).” We say: “It multiplies in form and size.” They say: “Anything that does not exist, either goes to something else, or exists in another's accidents (*A’raz*), or in another's attributes. “You can say it however you wish.”[46]

“Accident (from Latin accidentis – incidental, partial) is a philosophical term that reflects the temporary characteristics of things that do not affect the essential nature of the changing entity. This concept first appears in Aristotle's works “Metaphysics” and “Physics.”[47]

The concept of “dhat” in Sufism corresponds to “substance” in modern dialectics, and the concept of “tajalli” aligns with “accident” in the philosophical traditions of Greece, India, and China, where they represent the fundamental principle of all existence. The concept of substance means substrate – the underlying concrete foundation. According to Aristotle's doctrine, substance is the essence, the real foundation of all things, and existence cannot be explained without the term

[42]Muhyiddin Muhammad bin Ali bin Muhammad Ibn Arabi, *Existential Message (Risola-ye Wujudiya)* (Beirut: Dar al-Kutub al-Ilmiyya, 2004), 44.

[43]Iftikhar Shafi, “Romancing the Sufi: Persian Sufi Poetry under the Western Gaze," *Journal of Islamic Thought and Civilization* 8, no. 1 (Spring 2018): 40-44. https://doi.org/10.32350/jitc.81.03

[44]Ibn Arabi, *Al-Futuḥāt al-Makkiyya (The Meccan Openings*), vol.1, chapter 66, (Beirut: Dar al-Kutub al-Ilmiyya, 1999).

[45]Ibn Arabi, *Fusus al-Hukm* (*Fusus al-Hukum*. (*The Bezels of Wisdom*, فصوص الحكم,) (Beirut: Dar al-Kitab al-Arabi, 1946), 268.

[46]Ibid., 354.

[47]*Philosophy Encyclopedic Dictionary* (Tashkent: Publishing House of the National Society of Philosophers of Uzbekistan, 2004), 18.

"substance." Aristotle writes in "Categories": "Without primary substance, nothing else could exist." Primary substance is unchanging."[48]

"The famous Sufi Sahl al-Tustari (d. 896) introduced three types of *tajalli*: the manifestation of the divine essence (*tajalli az-zat*), divine revelation (*mukashafa*), the manifestation of divine attributes in their own qualities (*tajalli sifat az-zat*), or the radiance of light (*maudi an-nur*), and the manifestation of divine judgment (*tajalli hukm az-zat*), or the future life."[49]

The method of understanding the relationship between the Divine and existence proposed by Ibn Arabi later became widely known as "*Wahdat al-Wujud*" (Unity of Existence). This doctrine caused a great deal of controversy among philosophers and mystics, and continues to generate debates even today. Its prominence has led to various interpretations, as each Sufi order or philosophical school has studied it and understood it in its own way, leading to further disputes and controversies.

8. "*Anal Haq*" and "*Subhaniy*" are Gnostic Concepts

A person does not merely exist in this world but also understands himself, knows the world in which he lives, and affects it; he assimilates and changes both the world and himself, participating in spiritual creativity. In this, a person primarily seeks to know his own existence and cares for his being. It is important for him to realize his contradictory role in the total system of existence and to sense and feel his responsibility and accountability before both his own being and the being of the world. The light of the Absolute existence is highly perceptive. The objects are like different glass vessels. These vessels have different colors. It is these colors that create a veil between them and the *Haq*. In other words, the light of the *Haq* does not manifest in its own color but in the color of the vessel. The light of the *Haq* is free from the qualities of the color we perceive and feel. Therefore, if the vessel is white, it appears white; if red, it appears red. Allah, the Exalted and the Most Sacred, is the Unique Being who is free from form, qualities, color, and shape. Ibn Arabi analyzes the issue of wujud and hijab as follows: "Previously, we mentioned that His hijab is His *wahdaniyat* and *fardaniyat*. Therefore, when the seeker reaches the truth, it is appropriate for him to say "*Anal Haqq*" ("I am the *Allah*") or for some to say "*Subhani*" ("Glory be to me"). The one who reaches the presence of the Truth sees that Allah's attributes are His attributes, and Allah's essence is His essence, and his own essence and attributes are neither inwardly nor outwardly separate from *Allah*. He understands that he is neither annihilated in *Allah* nor eternal in *Allah*. He also sees that he has not found his own existence, because his existence is not permanent, and he realizes that his own self is the Self of the Truth, and his existence is the existence of the Allah."[50]

If someone were to ask: "We have understood union without union, but what is closeness without closeness, and distance without distance?" You would answer: "Indeed, you are in the moments of closeness and distance. Apart from that, you are nothing. You will not be a knower (*arif*) until you realize that you are He. When you reach Allah, that is, when you understand the essence of "knowledge" (*irfan*) and realize that you are He, you will know that you did not know this before, whether you are He or someone else. When knowledge (*irfan*) is acquired, you will know that you have understood *Allah*, not with yourself, but with *Allah*."[51]

Ibn Arabi explains this as follows: "You do not know whether your name is Mahmood or if you are named Mahmood. In reality, the name and the named are one and the same. So, you thought your name was Muhammad, and only later did you come to realize you are Mahmood. Yet, your essence remained eternal. When you recognized your Mahmoodness, both the name Muhammad and the

[48]Aristotle, *Categories*, trans. E.M. Edghill (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1928), 5.
[49]*Encyclopedia of Islam*, (Tashkent: State Scientific Publishing House, 2004), 276.
[50]Ibn Arabi, *Existential Message,* 38.
[51]Ibid., 41.

designation of Mahmood were lifted. (The name Muhammad only applies when you are in the state of passing away. Passing away (fana) occurs only when any existence other than His is established. Whoever affirms an existence other than Him has committed shirk against *Allah*, the Blessed and Exalted).[52] In this, nothing is deficient in Mahmood, and Muhammad did not perish in Mahmood. It neither entered him nor exited him. Mahmood did not become Muhammad. When Mahmood realized his Mahmoodness, he understood himself, not with Muhammad, but with himself, because Muhammad did not exist. How can something that does not exist be understood as if it exists?[53] From this, it follows that the knower (*arif*) and the known (*ma'roof*) are the same, the means (waseel) and the attained (mawsul) are the same, the seer (*ra'i*) and the seen (*mar'iy*) are the same. The knower is His attribute, the known is His essence. The means is His attribute, the attained is His essence. The seer is His attribute, the seen is His essence. Likewise, the attribute and the attributed are one and the same." These conclusions from the writings of Ibn Arabi have become famous expressions. In other words, the mystic's expression "فص به نه است کار نص با مارا" ("We need '*nass,*' not '*fass*") (i.e., "We do not need Ibn Arabi's *Fusūs* (the unity of '*fass*'), but we need the *nass*, i.e., the *Qur'ān*") or the idea that "if I were in Ibn Arabi's time, I would have taken him beyond the level of *wahdat al-wujud*" gives a great evaluation of Ibn Arabi's works and personality.[54]

9. Conclusion

Ibn Arabi analyzes existence and non-existence, explaining that nothing other than *Allah* is capable of knowing the reality of the non-being (*adam*), and that existence and non-existence are inseparable. From a philosophical standpoint, the Sufi's view on existence and non-existence asserts that in existence, nothing exists apart from *Allah*, and all that exists emanates from Him. At the same time, He Himself does not reside in any thing, and only He can truly comprehend Himself.

Ibn Arabi rejects the philosophical concept of *illat al-wujud* (the cause of existence) and replaces it with his concept of *Qayyumiyyat al-Haq* (the indestructible eternity of the Divine).

According to Ibn Arabi, in fana (annihilation), one should not consider oneself separate from Allah, for in reality, one is nothing other than Allah. However, this realization can only occur through a spiritual unveiling. Furthermore, Ibn Arabi includes the Ash'ari doctrine of *Tajdid al-A'raz* (the transformation of accidents) in his system, demonstrating the close alignment of Sufi thought with Ash'ari theology.

In conclusion, Ibn Arabi's theory remained a highly influential and contentious doctrine in the Islamic world for nearly five centuries, up until the time of Imam *Rabbani (divine)*. Despite various religious and Sufi schools offering responses and alternative ideas, the Naqshbandi order, with its theory of *Wahdat al-Shuhud* (the unity of witnessing), responded appropriately, highlighting the place of Ibn Arabi's teachings in the development of Sufi thought.

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[52]Ibid.

[53]Ibid.

[54]Ahmad Sirhindi, *Maktubat (The Letters, المكتوبات.)* Vol. 1, Maktub 100, (Kabul: Afghanistan Centre at Kabul University ACKU, n.d.), 121-122...

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