
PHILOSOPHICAL FEATURES OF SA'DEDDIN HAMAWI'S SUFI ANTHROPOLOGY

Rajabov Alisher Shavkatovich

Associate Professor of the Department of Social Sciences, Bukhara
State Pedagogical Institute, Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) in
Philosophical Sciences

Abstract

This article examines the philosophical and metaphysical aspects of the Sufi anthropology of Sheikh Sa'deddin Abal-Mu'ayyad Muhammad ibn al-Mu'ayyad al-Hamawi (1190–1252), a prominent representative of the Kubrawiyya order. The research analyzes Hamawi's ontological and gnoseological perspectives regarding human nature, the structural relationship between the microcosm ('alam al-saghir) and macrocosm ('alam al-kabir), and the numerical-symbolic matrix of human existence based on 'ilm al-huruf wa al-a'dad (the science of letters and numbers). Special attention is paid to the conceptualization of the "Perfect Man" (Insan al-Kamil) and Sainthood (Walayah), as well as the transition of classical Sufism from an ascetic-practical paradigm to a complex cosmological-esoteric model. The article also highlights the transmission and systematization of Hamawi's ideas through the works of his disciple, Azizuddin Nasafi.

Keywords: Sa'deddin Hamawi, Sufi anthropology, Perfect Man (Insan al-Kamil), Sainthood (Walayah), microcosm and macrocosm, 'ilm al-huruf, Kubrawiyya, Azizuddin Nasafi, Islamic philosophy.

Introduction

In the history of Islamic thought and Eastern philosophy, Sufi anthropology is considered one of the most complete conceptual systems revealing human essence, man's place in existence, stages of perfection, and relationship with the Divine Origin [1, P. 85; 3]. In classical Sufi theory, a human being is interpreted not merely as a biological-social entity, but as the spiritual axis of the entire Universe and the most perfect manifestation (mazhar) of Divine attributes and names [2, P. 42; 10, P. 112; 3]. The theoretical and

methodological foundation of Sufi anthropology is based on the principle of organic and metaphysical correspondence between the "microcosm" ('alam al-saghir) and the "macrocosm" ('alam al-kabir) [3, P. 18]. In this anthropological model, human perfection and self-realization are recognized as the highest level of understanding existence [4, P. 25; 3].

Research Methodology and Approaches (Methods)

The ontological basis of Sufi anthropology consists of Ibn Arabi's Wahdat al-Wujud (Unity of Being) and the doctrines of the "Perfect Man" (Insan al-Kamil) developed by thinkers such as Mansur Hallaj, Abu Yazid Bastami, Najmuddin Kubra, and Azizuddin Nasafi [2, P. 105; 3, P. 44; 8, P. 132]. According to these teachings, Absolute Existence (Truth) created the World to view and manifest Its attributes, choosing Man as the detailed and ultimate mirror of the world [4, P. 31; 7, P. 210; 3]. Therefore, in Sufism, man is spiritually viewed as the kernel (maghz) of the world, while all other creatures hold the status of a shell (pust) subordinated to him [3, P. 52]. Human nature consists of a synthesis of two main poles—material (physical, egoistic) and spiritual (soul, intellect)—and man's mission in existence is to maintain balance between these two poles and return to his original luminous state through self-purification (tazkiyah) [1, P. 92; 3, P. 60].

The internal structure of man (psycho-spiritual form) in Sufi anthropology is analyzed through four main stages or elements: body (jism), ego/self (nafs), intellect ('aql), and spirit (ruh) [3, P. 73; 9, P. 154]. The body is a part of the material world and serves as the core of human physical actions. The ego (nafs) manifests as the center of biological needs, desires, and animal instincts [1, P. 104; 3]. In Sufi studies, the evolutionary stages of the ego—nafs al-ammara (inciting self), nafs al-lawwama (self-accusing self), and nafs al-mutma'inna (tranquil self)—are examined, constituting the primary content of sayr-u suluk (spiritual journey) [1, P. 110; 3, P. 81]. While the intellect ('aql) in this context is a tool for perceiving exoteric knowledge, the Spirit (ruh)—and its inner subtle levels such as Heart (qalb), Secret (sirr), Hidden (khafi), and Most Hidden (akhfa)—serves as the channel for Divine Light [7, P. 315; 9, P. 182; 3].

Gnoseological and ethical issues are intrinsically linked in Sufi anthropology [1, P. 130; 3]. In Sufi epistemology, human cognitive capabilities are not



limited to theoretical-rational or sensory phenomena. Although the intellect is essential for understanding the physical world and cause-and-effect relationships, it remains powerless in perceiving the Divine Essence and metaphysical truths [4, P. 48; 10, P. 205; 3]. Hence, Sufi anthropology recognizes gnosis ('irfan) based on unveiling (kashf), inspiration (ilham), witnessing (shuhud), and direct experience (dhawq) as the highest form of knowledge [7, P. 420; 3]. Achieving such elevated knowledge is impossible without purifying the heart from spiritual and ethical vices (envy, pride, anger, greed, hypocrisy) [1, P. 142; 3, P. 95]. Thus, in Sufism, the cognitive process of man is directly bound to ethical purification and spiritual responsibility [1, P. 145; 3].

The central and highest point of Sufi anthropology is the concept of the "Perfect Man" (Insan al-Kamil) [2, P. 150; 3, P. 102]. The Perfect Man is an exemplary individual who has fully subdued his ego, transformed all negative traits into righteous actions, and reflected the splendor of Divine names and attributes in his character [3, P. 115; 8, P. 201]. He embodies criteria of justice, honesty, sincerity, and selflessness in society [1, P. 180; 3]. Thinkers such as Azizuddin Nasafi also refer to the Perfect Man as Kamil-i Azad (Liberated Perfect Man), as such an individual is free from the captivity of the material world, greed, ambition, and the slavery of the ego [3, P. 120]. This idea demonstrates that Sufi anthropology possesses not only esoteric-metaphysical depth, but also profound socio-humanistic and deontological significance [1, P. 195; 3].

Results and Analysis (Results)

The legacy of Sheikh Sa'deddin Abal-Mu'ayyad Muhammad ibn al-Mu'ayyad al-Hamawi (1190–1252)—a prominent figure of the Kubrawiya order, a famous disciple of Sheikh Najmuddin Kubra, and the spiritual master (murshid) of Azizuddin Nasafi—represents one of the most profound, complex, and systematic metaphysical assessments of the human phenomenon in Islamic thought and Eastern philosophy [1, P. 112; 3]. Hamawi's anthropology served as a decisive bridge in transitioning classical Sufism from an ethical-practical (ascetic) stage to an explicit ontological, gnoseological, and cosmological-esoteric stage [8, P. 145; 3]. The anthropological views presented in the scholar's works, such as Kitab al-

E- Global Congress

Hosted online from Dubai, U. A. E., E - Conference.

Date: 30th December 2025

Website: <https://eglobalcongress.com/index.php/egc>

ISSN (E): 2836-3612

Mahbub, Amthal at-Tawhid, and various poetic and prose treatises, encompass human nature, man's central place in the universe, his psycho-spiritual structure, his numerical and symbolic matrix, as well as the stages of attaining the stations of the "Perfect Man" and "Sainthood" (Walayah) [5, P. 22; 6, P. 15; 3].

The theoretical and methodological foundation of Sa'deddin Hamawi's Sufi anthropology rests on the correspondence and fundamental unity of the "microcosm" ('alam al-saghir) and "macrocosm" ('alam al-kabir) [1, P. 118; 11, P. 120; 3]. In his ontological system, man is not merely a biological entity living on Earth or a member of a single society, but the spiritual and philosophical kernel (maghz) of the entire Universe, and the most complete mirror (mazhar-i atom) of Divine names and attributes [5, P. 45; 7, P. 310; 3]. Hamawi emphasizes that when Absolute Being (Truth) willed to contemplate Its beauty, attributes, and perfection, It created all the worlds, but created Man as the comprehensive and condensed copy of these worlds [3, P. 54; 10, P. 135]. Every movement, planet, element, and sphere in the cosmos directly corresponds to specific organs, faculties, and subtle spiritual centers (lata'if) in the human body and spirit [4, P. 28; 8, P. 150; 3].

One of the most important and distinct features of the thinker's anthropology is the numerical and symbolic analysis of human nature from the perspective of 'ilm al-huruf wa al-a'dad (the science of letters and numbers) [5, P. 88; 8, P. 158; 3]. In Hamawi's view, the 28 letters of the Arabic alphabet and their numerical values are not merely linguistic symbols, but the metaphysical matrix of the creation of man and the cosmos [6, P. 42; 3]. Human organs and inner faculties represent a micro-manifestation of the letters of the Arabic alphabet and the Divine Word [5, P. 95; 3]. According to Hamawi's teaching, the lines and geometric proportions on the human face and limbs are codological expressions of the Bismillah and Divine Names [6, P. 50; 3]. Only by comprehending these mysterious symbols within his inner and outer structure can man realize his divine origin and true station in the hierarchy of existence [5, P. 102; 10, P. 142; 3].

In Hamawi's Sufi anthropology, man's inner and psycho-spiritual structure is studied as a natural harmony of four main metaphysical elements: body (jism—material mold), ego (nafs—psycho-biological force), intellect ('aql—perceiving instrument), and spirit (ruh—source of divine light) [4, P.



35; 11, P. 140; 3]. The body is part of the physical world, providing man's material form [1, P. 125; 3]. The ego (nafs) is the center of natural desires, greed, and biological instincts, which must undergo tazkiyah (purification) [1, P. 128; 4, P. 40; 3]. Analyzing the three main states of the ego (ammara, lawwama, and mutma'inna), Hamawi asserts that the goal is not to destroy the ego, but to subject it to the spirit and intellect, thereby transforming animalistic forces into pure ethical virtues [4, P. 48; 12, P. 160; 3]. The intellect is a vital tool in this process; however, theoretical intellect is only capable of understanding physical and causal relationships [5, P. 115; 3]. To perceive metaphysical and divine truths, the intellect must be nourished by the light of the Spirit, elevating from "partial intellect" ('aql-i juz'i) to "universal intellect" ('aql-i kulli) [7, P. 450; 10, P. 155; 3].

Discussion

The concepts of "Sainthood" (Walayah) and the "Perfect Man" (Insan al-Kamil) occupy the central and highest position in Sa'deddin Hamawi's anthropology [1, P. 135; 3, P. 82]. In the scholar's theory, Walayah is the inner, spiritual, and esoteric (batin) essence of Prophethood (Nubuwwah) [8, P. 175; 12, P. 172; 3]. Although exoteric prophethood and legal codes (Sharia) conclude with specific historical periods and prophets, the stream of Walayah and divine gnosis continues uninterrupted until the end of time through Saints (Awliya / Perfect Men) [5, P. 130; 12, P. 175; 3]. The Perfect Man is the most flawless earthly manifestation of Divine names and attributes, serving as the spiritual and metaphysical axis (Qutb) of the World [7, P. 520; 8, P. 180; 3]. Such a person is Kamil-i Azad, having fully conquered his ego and freed himself from the captivity of the material world and greed [4, P. 65; 3]. This metaphysical individual not only attains his own spiritual perfection but also becomes an agent who radiates spiritual-ethical light and justice to the whole society [1, P. 140; 3].

Hamawi's anthropological and gnostic views were systematized into a foundational and didactic framework in the works of his direct disciple and successor, Azizuddin Nasafi [3, P. 90; 4, P. 12]. In his works *Insan al-Kamil*, *Zubdat al-Haqa'iq*, and *Maqсад al-Aqsa*, Nasafi expounded the complex, symbolic, and numerological anthropological ideas of his master, Sa'deddin Hamawi, in a fluent and philosophically consistent language [3, P. 95; 4, P.



18]. Hamawi's teachings on the correspondence between man and the cosmos, the struggle between ego and spirit, the re-understanding of "primordial gnosis," honesty, contentment, and spiritual freedom subsequently served as a decisive source for shaping humanistic and ethical-deontological ideas in the cultural and philosophical environment of Mawarannahr and Khorasan [1, P. 150; 4, P. 88; 3].

Conclusion

In conclusion, Sheikh Sa'deddin Hamawi's perspectives on Sufi anthropology represent one of the deepest and most holistic philosophical-metaphysical analyses of human essence in 13th-century Eastern philosophy and mysticism. By interpreting man as the center and ultimate goal of the universe, he grounded human perfection through ethical purification, the understanding of numerological and divine secrets, and the striving toward the station of the "Perfect Man". Hamawi's anthropological doctrine continues to hold significant academic and methodological value today in enriching the inner spiritual world of the individual, understanding human dignity and freedom, and cultivating spiritual immunity against egoistic and social vices.

References

1. Комилов, Н. Тасаввуф. – Тошкент: Мовароуннахр – Ўзбекистон, 2009. – 448 б.
2. Ибн Арабий, Мухйиддин. Фусус ал-ҳикам / Форс тилидан таржима ва шарҳ муаллифи М. Муҳаммадий. – Техрон: Интишороти Мавло, 1385 (2006). – 512 б.
3. Насафий, Азизиддин. Инсони комил / Таржимон ва сўзбоши муаллифи Н. Комилов. – Тошкент: Маънавият, 1997. – 208 б.
4. Насафий, Азизиддин. Зубдатул-ҳақойиқ / Форс тилидан таржима, муқаддима ва изоҳлар муаллифи А. Давлатов. – Тошкент: Ғафур Ғулом номидаги нашриёт-матбаа творческий уйи, 2018. – 128 б.
5. Ҳамавий, Саъдиддин. Китаб ал-Маҳбуб / Таҳқиқ ва тасҳих: Саид Муҳаммад Ризо Жалолий Наинӣ. – Техрон: Чопхонаи СИНО, 1362 (1983). – 245 б.

-
6. Ҳамавий, Саъдиддин. Мектоби Саъдиддин Ҳамавий / Бо кӯшиши Нажмиддин Разиё. – Техрон: Интишороти Таҳурий, 1381 (2002). – 180 б.
 7. Ҳаким, Суод. Ал-Муъжам ал-суфий: Ал-ҳикма фи ҳудуд ал-калима. – Бейрут: Дан ан-Надҳар, 1981. – 1280 б.
 8. Corbin, H. En Islam iranien: Aspects spirituels et philosophiques. Vol. 3: Les Fidèles d'amour, Shî'isme et Soufisme. – Paris: Gallimard, 1972. – 358 p.
 9. Chittick, W.C. The Sufi Path of Knowledge: Ibn al-Arabi's Metaphysics of Imagination. – Albany: State University of New York Press, 1989. – 478 p.
 10. Шиммель, А. Мир исламского мистицизма / Пер. с англ. Н.И. Пригариной. – Москва: Алетейа – Энигма, 2000. – 416 с.
 11. Meier, F. Die Fawa'ih al-gamal wa-fawatih al-galal des Nagm ad-Din al-Kubra. – Wiesbaden: Franz Steiner Verlag, 1957. – 312 S.
 12. Тримингэм, Дж.С. Суфийские ордены в исламе / Пер. с англ. А.А. Ставиской. – Москва: Гелиос, 2002. – 480 с.