

METHODOLOGICAL ANALYSIS OF SOURCES ON THE STUDY OF SUFISM

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Annotation

Sufism is considered to be the most important component of Muslim culture in Central Asia. In the process of the historical development of society, it is constantly under the strong influence of socio-economic, political relations, spiritual processes, internal and external changes. The study of the Sufism's development is very complex and requires to look through scientific researches not only by local, but also foreign scientists who have studied the origin and essence of Sufism. Acquaintance with these sources contributes to the study of the cultural and socio-political characteristics of Central Asian peoples, that are closely intertwined with Sufi philosophy.

Keywords: Sufism, Islam, culture, spiritual life, Yasaviya, Khozhagon, Naqshbandiya, pantheism,

Introduction

So many scientific and near-scientific works have been written about Sufism that they have long ago formed a separate branch of Islamic studies with their own special world of dominant ideas, own authorities, traditions and methodology. Although Sufism arose on the basis of Islam and substantiated its doctrines with the dogmas of the holy book - the Koran and the traditions of the Prophet Muhammad / hadiths /, at the same time it experienced a certain influence of the teachings of other religions and pre-Muslim beliefs.

“ Although Sufis were formally remaining on basis of the Koran and content with an allegorical interpretation of its words, they actually stood much closer to pre-Islamic teachings; Sufis' idea about the deity and the means of rapprochement with him, most of all resembles the teaching of the last representatives of philosophy, the Neoplatonists and Neopythagorians; there are also features of similarity with European bondage in the West and with Buddhism, and in general with Indian hermitage in the East.”¹

As academician M. Khairullaev notes: “In European and Muslim countries, an extensive literature on Sufism has appeared. In the local, mainly Oriental literature, there are literally a few serious works on Sufism, while our funds contain a large

¹ Avksentiev A.V. Islam im Nordkaukasus. - Stawropol, 1973. S.115.

number of new unique manuscripts on Sufism.”² In the studies of Said Nafisi, A. Zarrinkub, N.P. Khonlari, M. Sarrof, B. Furuzonfar, the main task is to search for the ideological origins of Sufism.

Many Western scholars, who studied Sufism, have almost the same opinion as Muslim theologians. For example, I. Goldzier, R. A. Nicholson, A. Metz and others consider the mutual influence of such religious and philosophical systems as Buddhism, Manichaeism, Zoroastrianism and Christian monasticism to be the cause of the emergence of Sufism. Undoubtedly, these movements have played a certain role in the emergence of Sufism. However, Sufism is an Islamic trend and it originated within Islam, although in some matters of the Muslim faith it contradicts it.

Literary, analysis of the poetic heritage of Sufi authors stands out as a separate branch, which is represented by truly countless private studies dedicated to one or more Sufi poets.

In turn, these main directions are subdivided into many narrow, private studies that consider the views of individual figures of Sufism, the activities of one or another tarikat, and one or another Sufi concept. Sufism ultimately turned out to be a whole era in the development of literature and philosophy in the countries of the Muslim East.

Here, should be mentioned the words of the orientalist E.E. Bertels, who has a great contribution to study Sufism in our Oriental literature: “It is impossible to get a clear idea of the cultural life of the medieval Muslim East without studying Sufi literature. Its classics continued to influence a number of Oriental literatures until the beginning of the 20th century. All this makes us pay considerable attention to it as well, especially since almost all the major authors of the Muslim East, with rare exceptions, are somehow connected with Sufism and cannot be fully understood without acquaintance with this literature”³

The most capacious and precise definition of Sufism belongs, probably, to Professor O.F. Akimushkin, who writes: «Sufism is a special mystical, religious and philosophical worldview within the framework of Islam, and its representatives consider direct spiritual communication possible through personal psychological experience (contemplation or union) of a person with a deity. It is achieved through ecstasy or inner illumination, sent down to a person walking along the Path to God with love for him in his heart.»⁴

In the study of individual Sufi tarikats, English scholar J.S. Trimingham's book called «Sufi Orders in Islam» is considered to have a fundamental importance. For the first time in Sufi studies, In this work, the author made an attempt to consider the

² Khairullaev M.M. To the study of the history of free-thinking ideas ... Tashkent, 1991. - p.7-10

³ Bertels E.E. Sufism and Sufi Literature. M.: 1965. P.54

⁴ Akimushkin O.F. Sufi brotherhoods: a complex knot of problems. - M.: Nauka, 1989. - p. 8.

organizational and structural features of the Sufi orders in the historical and chronological aspect. The author was able to trace the patterns and specifics of the formation and development of this institution, as well as to identify the historical and political prerequisites for the emergence of Sufi brotherhoods in Islam.

It's possible to find many observations and facts that can be interesting to modern Sufi scholars. This is especially true for the works of N. Lykoshin, N. Mallitsky and K. Kazansky. Kazansky's book "Sufism from the modern psychopathological point of view" /1905/ should be especially noted, since it represents one of the rarest attempts in Sufi studies to consider mystical experience from the position of psychiatry.

The most significant study of Sufism, which was written in Russian language, is considered to be the one by Peter Pozdnev, that is called "Dervishes in the Muslim World." It was written in the 19th century. The author relied on a good knowledge of Western European literature on this issue. First of all, the works of the representatives of Sufism themselves have a great value in the study of the history of Sufism, its philosophical and religious concept, ideology and morality. One of the most valuable sources on the history of Sufism is the work of Sheikh Farididdin Attar /d. In 1229 / "Tazkirat-ul-avliyo" / "Biography of the Saints" /, which represents a biography of more than 70 prominent sheikhs of Sufism.

In this book, the Author, along with biographical information about representatives of Sufism of various periods, also cites the statements and theoretical positions of the sheikhs regarding the philosophical and ethical concepts of this teaching. Tazkirah /life/ is one of the fundamental sources on the history of Sufism.

Abdurrahman Jami's work /1414-1492/ "Nafahot-ul-uns" / "breeze of friendship" / has a great importance for studying the worldview of prominent sheikhs of Sufism. This book contains information about famous Sufi thinkers, especially representatives of Sufism in Central Asia. Jami's work is valuable as far as it not only provides biographical information about the Sufis, gives their statements and briefly outlines the essence of their teachings, but also it is an important source for understanding the theoretical issues of Sufism. In this book, Jami gives interesting information, starting from the representative of early Sufism Abdukhoshim Kufi /VIII century/, ending with the poet Khoja Hafiz Sherozi /XIV century/. In general, about 588 sheikhs, as well as 38 representatives of Sufism, that are female Sufis. The outstanding poet, philosopher Alisher Navoi /1441-1501/, being a follower of the Sufi tariqa Naqshbandiya, also created a special work on the history of Sufism. His work "Nasoyim - ul - muhabbat min shamoyum-ul-futuvvat" is an original source for studying the history of the way Sufism was spread in Central Asia. One of the most important sources for studying the history of Sufism in Central Asia is the treatise of Fakhriddin Ali binni Hussein al-Vois al-Koshifi, known as Safi /"Rashakhot ain-al-hayot" / "Drops of the source of life »/. This work contains biographies and teachings of Sufi sheikhs, at the same time, a special attention is paid to the biographies of the sheikhs of Khojagon-Naqshbandiya.

The author gives the names of 94 sheikhs, their biographies and characteristics, brings the "silsila /or shazhara/" to Khoja Akhror and further.

The testament of one of the prominent sheikhs of Sufism, Abdukhalik Gijduvoni, plays an important role in the study of the ideology of the Sufi tarikats of Khojagon-Naqshbandiya. This testament sets out the basic rules, moral standards, principles for the followers of the above-named tariqa. The worldview of the Sufi tariqat of Yassawi is set out in its founder Ahmad Yassawi's work called "Hikmat" / "Wisdom" /. In this book, Ahmad Yasawi expounds in detail the foundations of Sufism - a mystical philosophical doctrine. He writes about the ten degrees of Sharia, describes the principles of Sufism, about the ways and qualities of poverty, and called the last one a beacon.⁵

Conclusion

Taking all the facts above into the consideration, it is clear that in numerous manuscripts, studies, there is a very large amount of material on Sufism, and its various tarikats and the features of this teaching. Undoubtedly these sources provide extremely important information on the history of the socio-political and spiritual life of Central Asian peoples'.

The List of Used Sources

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