

COMPARATIVE SUFI STUDIES AS A METHODOLOGY FOR STUDYING THE HISTORY AND PHILOSOPHY OF SUFISM

Kholmuminov Jafar Muhammadiyevich,

Doctor of Philosophical Sciences (DSc),

Tashkent State University of Oriental Studies, Associate Professor of Chair

"Source Studies and Hermeneutics of Sufism"

jafarmuhammad@mail.ru

ABSTRACT

In this article, the author discusses “Comparative Sufism”, which exists in the field of Sufi studies to this day, but has not yet received recognition as a methodology for studying this religious and philosophical teaching. According to the author, the first elements of “Comparative Sufi Studies” can be found in the scientific works of such theoreticians of Sufism as Hakim at-Termizi and Imam Mustamli Bukhari in the IX th -XI th centuries.

The author of the article comes to the conclusion that “Comparative Sufi Studies” as a methodology for studying the history and philosophy of Sufism serves to reveal the true meaning of this teaching.

Keywords: Islam, Islamic religion, Islamic studies, Sufism, Irfan, Sufism, history and philosophy of Sufism, comparative Sufism, methodology, religious beliefs, religious and philosophical teachings, approach.

INTRODUCTION

What are the origins of Sufism? What are its roots? This issue still remains one of the main problems in the field of Sufism and Sufi studies. Without solving this problem it is impossible to have a perfect understanding and knowledge of Sufi literature and philosophy. Therefore, one can enter into this issue only by a comparative historical method and study the teachings of Sufism in comparison with different religions, different religious and philosophical teachings in the East and in the West. This need, that is, the comparative study of Sufism, in turn requires the development of a methodology called “Comparative Sufism” or “Comparative Sufi Studies”.

This need, that is, the comparative study of Sufism, in turn requires the development of a methodology called Comparative Sufi Studies.

In "Comparative Sufi Studies" or "Comparative Mysticism", methods of general interdependence, historical, systemic principles, hypothetical deductivity, ascending from abstraction to accuracy, hermeneutics, deductive-nomological and intentional-teleological explanation, generalization are widely used.

MAIN CONTENT

"Comparative Sufi studies" also has its own history of formation. The first example of the method of studying mysticism in comparison with various religious beliefs, religious and philosophical teachings can be seen in the work of Abu Rayhan Beruni – "India". Beruni briefly comparing some issues of ancient Greek philosophy and ancient Indian religions with the teachings of the Sufis (Tasavvuf), became the founder of comparative religion.

For the first time among the theorists of Islamic mysticism – Tasavvuf, the great Sufi scholar Mustamli Bukhari in his 4-volume work "Sharh at-Taarruf li madhhab it-tasavvuf", which was written in the Persian-Tajik language, raised some issues with other religions, madhabams and religious and philosophical teachings, using the method of comparison. In particular, Mustamli Bukhari writes in the chapter "On the Soul" in "Sharh at-Taarruf li madhhab it-tasawwuf":

"There are differences of opinion among people about the spirit. One group called the soul a body, another group called it substance, a third group called it araz (accident), one group called it ancient, and another called it creator. Christians say he is a creator. Some philosophers of the Thanosukh faith (Reincarnation, according to which, after death, the soul moves from one body to another. In Arabic, reincarnation is referred to by the terms "Tanosukh", "tajassum" and "hulul". For the first time, this belief originated in Hinduism, and only then spread throughout the world. Belief in reincarnation is also present in Buddhism, Taoism, Manichaeism and other ancient Asian religions. The oldest sources that mention reincarnation are the Indian Upanishads) are of the same opinion. Ahl al-Sunnah wal-Jama'a says that one should speak of the soul (provided that it exists), and not of its essence and quality. Junaid says:

" (قال الجنيد): الروح شيء استأثر الله بعلمه و لم يطلع عليه احدا من خلقه ولا يجوز العبارة عنه باكثر من موجود لقول تعالى: قل الروح من امر ربي".

Madhhab is of the same opinion as Junaid, jurists and imams are of the same opinion, and such is our faith" [7: 835].

Mustamli Bukhari, analyzing the dispute about the "soul" on the basis of the Qur'an and the Sunnah, refutes the definitions given to him by various teachings, with the following logical arguments:

ثم قال: " (قال) ابو عبد الله النبأى الروح جسم تلتطف عن الحس و يكبر عن اللمس و لا يعبر باكثر من موجود"

He said: "The soul is a body thinner than it can feel, so big that nothing can touch it, and it is impossible to find any expression other than to say that it exists". But it is wrong to call the soul a body; for in the eyes of the people of Usula the soul itself is "araz" (accidentia), and araz is not a body; no more can be said than that it exists in the eyes of religious jurists and scholars; and body, substance, accident. Because God didn't tell us about it. If it were allowed to speak the body, it was mentioned in the Shari'ah.

According to all the answers we have given, we answer that there is a spirit, but we do not know what it is" [7: 838].

Imam Abu Hamid Muhammad al-Ghazali (1058-1111), on the other hand, refutes the issues raised by the philosophers in his *Tahafat ul-Falasifa* and *Maqasid ul-Falasifa* (written as a refutation of the philosophers) based on the theology and philosophy of Irfan. When studying the ancient Greek and Roman philosophical schools, these books by Muhammad Ghazali were considered primary sources. Ghazali's disagreement with the rules of philosophy is also known in this book. However, Europe recognizes him as a scientist-philosopher thanks to these books.

"Al-Munkiz min al-zalal" explores Ghazali's mental anguish, his zeal for truth, the limits of the human mind and observation, his attitude to philosophy, logic and theology, as well as the essence, achievements and shortcomings of various teachings and sects. It can be said that these works also make a great contribution to the development of comparative mysticism.

Imam Hasan Razi, a theologian who lived in the 12th century, in his book "*Tabsirat ul-'avam fi ma'rifat il-anam*" gives valuable information about the directions, madhhabs, sects and various teachings of Islam. In addition to providing information about each madhhab and teaching, the author tries to prove that they are on the right or wrong path with the help of scientific and logical evidence. Sometimes he compares the methods and practices of madhhabs and sects along the way, and sometimes he compares any madhhab and sect in Islam with other religions and teachings.[3]

The great theologian and mystic theorist of the 12 th-13 th centuries, the founder of the philosophy of "Wahdat ul-Vujud" Sheikh ul-Akbar Muhyiddin ibn al-Arabi in his famous "*Fusus ul-hikam*" and other works for the first time comparatively analyzes the calling of the prophets of different religions.

In the 15th century, one of the great theoreticians of Sufism, Mawlana Abdurahman Jami, wrote a treatise "*Ad-durrat ul-fakhireh*" (also known as "*Risala fi tahkiki madhhab as-sufiya wa-l-mutakallimiin wa-l hukama*" and "*Tahkik ul-mazahib*") . In his work, he compares a number of issues in the philosophy of Sufism with the views of mutakallims (learned theologians), philosophers and Sufis.

In this treatise, Jami raises 11 issues that have caused great controversy among theologians, mystics and philosophers for centuries, and tries to objectively judge them and express his opinion. These questions are analyzed in the book in the

following order:

- 1) The idea of the existence of God and His belonging to his own Zat. That is, is the existence of Truth his essence, or is it something supernatural for Him?
- 2) The unity of God and the need to prove it.
- 3) Are the attributes of God and their relation to His essence, are the attributes of God precisely His essence, or are they considered additional things to Him?
- 4) The essence of the science of God. Ownership of knowledge by God.
- 5) Details of the knowledge of God, disputes arising around the knowledge attributed to God.
- 6) The essence of the will of God. Is the qualitative will His knowledge?
- 7) The essence of the power of God. Is it absolutely sovereign?
- 8) Eternity of the Universe. Did the universe exist in antiquity, or was it created at a specific time? Did an ancient universe exist from an autonomous one?
- 9) The essence of the word of God. Disputes about antiquity and the creation of the Qur'an.
- 10) The voluntary actions of people (of their own free will) and the outcome of all actions depend on the power of God.
- 11) The origin of the universe from God. We are talking about different effects arising from one cause.

Abdurahman Jami quotes each question one by one, describing first the Mutakallims, then the philosophers, and finally the attitude of the Sufis to each problem. However, he presents the Sufi teaching not as an acceptable sect, rather than as a community of scientists and philosophers, but as the highest teaching.

He seeks to confuse the issue of unity, which has caused controversy among theologians and philosophers, without contradicting each other. For example, the Sufis consider the attributes of God to be outside of His essence, but imagined for Him. This opinion is an average opinion formed from the opinions of Mutakallims and philosophers.

Scientists believe that the attributes of God are attributed to Him, while philosophers argue that the attributes are the essence of God Himself. Another Sufi belief is "the world is eternal, although God is a Creator with will" to soften disputes between mutakallims and philosophers.

According to the Mutakallims (representatives of the theological teaching of Ash'ariya (Ash`ari) were called "mutakallims"), from the fact that the Universe has a beginning, God is the Creator with will. However, the Sufis have a completely different view on the question of whether the existence of God is His essence or not. Instead of imagining that God consists of a Being, they consider Him to be an Absolute Being. They not only try to evade the question of the relation of the being of God to the substance of God, but they also try not to try to prove the unity of God. Mutakalim and philosophers are looking for proof of this issue.

In this treatise, Jami refers to the ancient Greek peripatetic philosophers – representatives of Eastern Aristotelianism (Al-Farabi, Ibn Rushd, Ibn Sina), analyzes and discusses their views on the above issues.

“Ad-durrat ul-fakhireh” by Jami is one of the most valuable philosophical sources, revealing the sciences of Sufism, theology and philosophy in a comparative and analytical manner. Of course, even centuries before Jami one can observe the state of mysticism and theology, sometimes mixed, and sometimes comparatively described or studied (for example, in Mustamli al-Bukhari in “Sharhi at-Taarruf li madhab it-tasavvuf”).

However, in the sources written at that time, the disputes of three directions - mutakallims, Sufis and philosophers - on separate topics do not have such a clear and distinct picture as in Jami's treatise “Ad-durrat ul-fakhireh”.

In addition, Jami's work is of great scientific and practical importance in terms of providing an opportunity to study Islamic philosophy in three main areas - theology, Sufism (irfan) and philosophy (Eastern Aristotelianism; Eastern Peripatetism).

As noted by Scottish theologian William Stoddart (b. 1925), author of *An Essay on Sufism: The Foundations of Islamic Spirituality* (World Wisdom, 2013) and *Sufism: The Mystical Foundations and Methods of Islam* (New York, 1985), Sufism is hidden in the nature and structure of religion” [11: 19-20]. That is, every religious or religious-philosophical teaching contains mystical principles, similar to Islamic Sufism and Irfan. Therefore, a comparative study and analysis of these mystical principles, aspects of their commonality and specificity with Islamic Sufism allows a deeper study of the content and essence of these teachings.

As can be seen, the first samples of “Comparative Sufism” existed in Eastern philosophical thought and theology for thousands of years. However, neither Abu Rayhan al-Biruni and Imam Mustamli al-Bukhari, nor al-Hasan al-Razi and al-Ghazali, nor Ibn al-Arabi and Mawlana Jami called the study of Sufism with other religions and teachings “Comparative Sufi studies”. All of them used this method to study more deeply the truth and essence of Sufism. Indeed, truth and falsehood, truth and myth are always reflected in the mirror of comparison.

Sufism is Ihsan – the third part of Islam (Islam, Iman, Ihsan). Therefore, Sufism belongs to the field of Islamic studies as a phenomenon within Islam. However, as a representative of Islamic education, “Comparative Sufi Studies” has common goals and objectives with the science “Comparative Religious Studies”, as it directly interacts with various religious and religious-philosophical teachings.

Disputes about the religious and philosophical teachings that served, participated or to some extent influenced the emergence and formation of Sufism have been going on since the time of Abu Rayhan Beruni. Therefore, there is a need to develop methodologies of comparative Sufism to study and clarify this issue by a comparative historical method.

Thus, "Comparative Sufi Studies" as an integral part of both the methodology and the science of Sufism includes various issues related to the history, philosophy and literature of Sufism. Questions of interconnection and relationship of the Sufi order also constitute the main goal of a comparative study of the order and the Sufi-philosophical schools within the teachings of Sufism. Therefore, "Comparative Sufi Studies" is carried out in two directions:

1. External "Comparative Sufi Studies".

In this direction, Sufism is studied in comparison with such world religions as Christianity and Buddhism, various national religions and religious and philosophical teachings. For example, the degree of connection between the teachings of Sufism and the teachings of Mani (216–274/276) – Manichaeism is analyzed as follows: Manism, like Zoroastrianism, could have had some influence in the early stages of the development of Sufism as early as the 9th century, during the formation of the khanaka, Sufi rituals and Sufi ethics. The famous Iranian scholar Said Nafisi was one of those who first spoke about the connection of Sufism with the teachings of Zoroastrianism and Manichaeism.

Or the study of the teachings of Sufism by another external factor, including the comparative study of Buddhism, is "External Comparative Sufi Studies". For example: In Buddhism, the Sufi concept of "Fana" exists in the form of "Nirvana", but they differ in essence. Indeed, a Buddhist reaches Nirvana at the end of the path, but in Sufism the traveler passes through the stage of "Fana" (annihilation) to the highest stage, "Baka" (survive), and thus the life of nasut (human life) ends and the life of lahut (divine life) begins.

The essence of Nirvana is not to forever connect a Man with the Universe, but to find peace of mind and get away from the suffering of the world. According to Buddhist philosophy, life is a misfortune, a person lives with mental anguish and anxiety from birth to the last breath, because he is looking for happiness. And he sees this happiness in three things: the first is life, the second is health, the third is wealth. However, life can be replaced by death, health by old age, and wealth by poverty. And when a person cannot find a way to reverse these disasters, he suffers and falls into depression.

Then he looks for a way to get rid of these anxieties that torment him. And he finds a way to do it by giving up dreams and desire. The heart of a person who has given up dreams and desires will become free from all suffering. Only a person who has cleansed his body of love for people, wealth, lust and all material desires and has reached the level of Nirvana can live peacefully in this world.

2. Internal "Comparative Sufi studies".

In this regard, Sufism is studied in comparison with the foundations of Islam, the legal and doctrinal madhhabs in the structure of Islam, the orders of Sufism and Sufi-philosophical schools.

The main goal of this course is to show that the teachings of Sufism are connected with

the foundations of Islam - the Quran and Hadith. For example, in the teachings of Sufism, which is an integral part of Islam, human-cosmic relations can be viewed as follows: In mysticism, a person is considered a “copy of the truth”. The universe is called the “big world”, and the human world is called the “small world”. There is an organic and permanent connection between man and the Cosmos. While the larger universe contains the smaller universe, the smaller universe is the soul of the larger universe. Man is like the universe, both physically and spiritually.

According to the cosmological teachings of the mystical thinkers (“Afak and Anfus”), human bones are like mountains, their veins are like rivers, their skin and flesh are like the Earth, their head and brain are like the sky, and their soul is like the Absolute Spirit. The appearance of the universe is likened to the appearance of a person, the infinity of the universe – to his imagination, the dream of absence, the awakening of being, the four seasons – these are the four periods of human life – childhood, youth and old age. The four elements of the universe – earth, fire, air and water – are also present in the human body: ear – earth, eye – fire, nose – air, mouth – water. This means that man, like a small universe, embodies all the features of a large universe.

The great mystic Khoja Yusuf Hamadani (born in 1048) in the village of Buzanjird (or Buzinajird) in Hamadan (Iran), died in 1141) in Bamiyan) referring to the criteria of Sufism and says:

“The sacred verse says:

وَسَخَّرَ لَكُم مَّا فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ جَمِيعًا مِنْهُ إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لَآيَاتٍ لِّقَوْمٍ يَتَفَكَّرُونَ

“He has subjected to you everything that is in heaven and everything that is on earth” (Sura al-Jasiya, 13). I created you just like you and other beings besides you. You are the ruler and lord of the universe. Because the Universe is under your control, it is ready to serve you. But, on the other hand, you are the slaves of the Universe. Because the universe needs you. But I am higher than you and everything that I have created for you, because I do not need anything” [12: 113-114].

According to Khoja Yusuf Hamadoni, the connection between Man and the Universe is two-sided. That is, the existence of Man depends on the Universe, and the existence of the Universe depends on Man. They cannot have any meaning and essence without each other, because they cannot exist without each other.

CONCLUSION

Sufism is a very complex doctrine. A deep understanding of its essence and truths requires many years of reading and research. Whether we like it or not, setting ourselves the goal of studying the history, culture, literature and philosophy of the Muslim East, we are faced with a complex and meaningful religious and philosophical doctrine called Sufism, which has ruled Islamic philosophical thought for centuries, almost 1300 years.

Revealing its essence and understanding its truths requires new methods and

methodologies. Comparative Sufi studies, due to this necessity, not only demonstrate the breadth of this teaching as one of the disciplines in the category of Sufism, but also reveal the relationship of Sufism with other religious and philosophical teachings, Islamic jurisprudence (fiqh), various madhhabs and orders of Sufism. Comparison and determination of the relationship between them in the process of these comparisons serves as the most effective method and methodology in revealing the essence of the history of tasawwuf and Sufi philosophy.

REFERENCES:

- 1 - بستان العارفين و تحفة المريدین. / وبراسته احمد على رجاءى. - تهران، ۱۳۵۴.
- 2 - ديوان حافظ. / تصحيح و تعليق سيد محمد راستگو. - تهران: نشر خرم، ۱۳۷۵.
- 3 رازى، سيد مرتضى بن داعى حسينى. تبصيرة العوام فى معرفة مقالات الأنام. / تصحيح عباس اقبال. - تهران: انتشارات اساطير، ۱۳۶۴.
- 4 - رازى، نجم الدين. مرصاد العباد. - تهران: بنگاه ترجمه و نشر كتاب، ۱۳۵۲.
- 5 - جامى، نورالدين عبدالرحمن. الدرّة الفاخرة فى تحقيق مذاهب الصوفية المتكلمين والحكام المتقدمين. / مؤلف و شرح عبدالغفور لارى و حكمت عماديه. باهتمام نيكولا هير و على موسوى بهبانى. - تهران: انتشارات موسسه مطالعات اسلامى دانشگاه مك گيل، شعبه تهران با همكارى دانشگاه تهران - ۱۳۵۸.
- 6 - مدارج السالكين. - قاهره: مطبعة السنة المحمدية، ۱۹۵۵.
- مستملى بخارى، امام ابوابراهيم اسماعيل بن محمد. شرح التعرف لمذهب التصوف. ربع دوم. / با مقدمه و تصحيح و 7- تحشيه محمد روشن.
- 8 - مكى، ابوطالب. قوت القلوب. جلد ۱. - مصر، ۱۹۶۱.
- 9 - نفيسى، سعيد. سرچشمه هاى تصوف در ايران. - تهران، ۱۳۴۳.
- عبادى، قطب الدين. التصفيه فى احوال المتصوفه. / به تصحيح غلامحسين يو سفى. - تهران: بنياد فرهنگ ايران، ۱۳۴۷. - 10
11. Stoddart , William. Sufism: the Mystical Doctrinas and Mettods of islam. India. Delhi, 1983.
12. Хожа Юсуф Ҳамадоний. Ҳаёт мезони. (Рутбат ул-ҳаёт). Одобӣ тариқат. Коинот ва Инсон ҳақида. / Таржимон ва сўзбоши муаллифлари: С.Сайфуллоҳ, Н.Ҳасан. – Тошкент: “Movarounnahr”, 2018.
13. Қуръони карим маъноларининг таржимаси. / Таржима ва изоҳлар муаллифи: Абдулазиз Мансур. – Тошкент: “Тошкент ислом университети”, 2001.
14. Kholmuminov, J. M. (2022). THE POSITION OF TASAVVUF AND IRFAN IN MAVERUNNAHR AND KHORASAN: IBN AL-ARABI AND ABDURAHMAN JAMI (A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS). *Oriental renaissance: Innovative, educational, natural and social sciences*, 2(9), 76-92.
15. Холмуминов, Д. (2021). ИЗУЧЕНИЯ ИСТОРИИ СУФИЗМА–ОДНА ИЗ ОСНОВ РАЗВИТИЯ ОБЩЕСТВЕННОГО СОЗНАНИЯ. *Academic research in educational sciences*, 2(11), 1145-1150.

-
16. Kholmuminov, J., & Narzulla, J. (2020). INFLUENCE OF VAHDAT UL-WOOJUDE PHILOSOPHY (UNITY OF BEING) ON NAKSHBANDIYA DOCTRINES. *Solid State Technology*, 63(6), 26-34.
 - 17 . Qaxxarova, M., & Absattarov, B. M. (2020). Evolution of views on ethics, ethical criteria and ethical standards. *The Light of Islam*, 2020(1), 110-115.
 - 18 . Абсаттаров, Б. М., & Юсупова, Н. А. (2020). Эволюция взглядов об этике, этических критериях и этических нормах. *Учёный XXI века*, (12-1 (71)), 75-81.
 - 19 . Absattarov, B. M. (2019). EVOLUTION OF VIEWS ON ETHICS, ETHICAL CRITERIA AND ETHICAL STANDARDS. In *НОВАЯ НАУКА: СОВРЕМЕННОЕ СОСТОЯНИЕ И ПЕРСПЕКТИВЫ РАЗВИТИЯ* (pp. 135-141).