

Ontological Analysis of the Irfani-Philosophical Views of Musokhonkhodja Dahbidiy

Yuldashkhodjaev Haydar Khashimkhanovich

Yangi Asr University Head of Department, Associate Professor, Candidate of Historical Sciences

E-mail: haydarxon69@mail.ru

Abstract

This article analyzes the views of Musokhon Dahbidiy, a major theoretician of the Naqshbandiyya–Mujaddidiyya order, on the issues of tawhid (divine unity), wahdat al-wujud (unity of being), and wahdat al-shuhud (unity of witnessing). It also presents a comparative analysis of Musokhon Dahbidiy's interpretations of Ibn al-Arabi's doctrine of wahdat al-wujud and Ahmad Sirhindi's views on wahdat al-shuhud.

Keywords: Existence, Eternal, Ibn Al-Arabi, Essential Attributes, Oneness, Singularity, Tawhid, Al-Futuhāt Al-Makkiyya, Fusus Al-Hikam, Mutakallim, Kun Fayakun, Al-Ghazali, Ahmad Sirhindi, Contemplation.

1. Introduction

Throughout its entire conscious history, humanity has sought to understand the world that surrounds it. However, early knowledge was simple in nature and consisted of fragmented, unconnected concepts. Gradually, human intellectual effort turned toward organizing, systematizing, and classifying accumulated knowledge about both the self and the surrounding world. When this body of knowledge is unified into a single system, it gives rise to a comprehensive understanding of existence. The activity of any individual is, in one way or another, connected with existence and with knowledge of it [1].

Wahdat al-wujud (the unity of being) is a doctrine that maintains that only the eternal and singular God truly exists, while the material world is regarded as an illusion. According to this teaching, the material world and the realm of things are not ultimately real; true reality resides only in God, and the material world is a manifestation or radiance (tajalli) of the Divine. This doctrine is one of the most debated concepts in Sufism [2].

2. Research Method

In this study, historical-philosophical and comparative analytical methods were employed. The primary focus was on elucidating the concepts of wahdat al-wujud, wahdat al-

*Corresponding author : Yuldashkhodjaev Haydar Khashimkhanovich
Article history : submitted; 2026/01/13 revised; 2026/02/15 accepted; 2026/03/30 published 2026/04/08

shuhud, and tawhid within Sufi teachings. During the research process, the views of Ibn al-Arabi, Musokhon Dahbidiy, Bahauddin Naqshband, and other Sufi thinkers were comparatively analyzed. In addition, employing textual and conceptual approaches, Qur'anic verses, Hadith, and ideas found in Sufi sources were systematically examined, and their interconnections and philosophical foundations were elucidated [3].

3. Results and Discussion

In Sufism, the first to extensively elaborate and disseminate this theory through his philosophical views was Ibn al-Arabi (1165–1240). The Sufi thinker, praising the Creator by referring to His essential attributes that indicate His oneness, employed closely related terms such as *wahdāniyya* (oneness) and *farḍāniyya* (singularity) to convey a unified meaning, thereby seeking to elucidate the essential attributes of God:

الحمد لله الذي لم يكن قبل وحدانيته قبل إلا و القبل هو و لم يكن بعد فردانيته بعد إلا البعد هو

That is: "Praise be to God, before whose oneness there was no "before" other than Himself, and after whose singularity there is no "after" other than Himself" [4].

In the Sharia, tawhid denotes recognizing God Most High as one and unique, believing in this, and affirming it verbally. In this regard, the correctness of belief is given primary importance, and all other actions depend upon its purity. On this subject, scholars, thinkers, and theologians have produced numerous multi-volume works and engaged in extensive debates, resulting in the emergence of various schools of thought. In particular, representatives of the Sufi path have given special attention to the concept of tawhid [5].

In the works of Musokhon Dahbidiy, a representative of the Naqshbandiyya order, considerable attention is devoted to the issue of tawhid. In particular, in works such as *Durr al-maknun* and *Ashraf al-Khaliq*, he emphasized the ideas of Ibn al-Arabi, while also comparing them with the views of other authors, and sought to explain the concept of tawhid through the Qur'an, the Hadith, and doctrinal principles [6].

Musokhon Dahbidiy's views on tawhid share common features with those of Ibn al-Arabi, Bahauddin Naqshband, and Yaqub Charkhi. Ibn al-Arabi understood tawhid as *wahdat al-wujud* (the unity of being). The Sufi thinker emphasized that there is no difference between "La mawjuda illa Allah" ("There is no existent but God") and "La ilaha illa Allah" ("There is no deity but God") [7]. When Bahauddin Naqshband was asked about the meaning of tawhid, he replied: "It is to completely remove from the heart everything other than God" [8]. Yaqub Charkhi stated: "If you are asked, "What is tawhid?" say: "It is to purify the heart from everything other than the Truth (God), exalted be He, and to affirm His oneness" [9].

Likewise, in Sufi concepts such as *wahdat* (unity), *ittihad* (union), *wasl* (union/arrival), *shukr* (gratitude), *sa'ada* (felicity), and *shaqawa* (wretchedness), his views are in harmony with those of Yaqub Charkhi. In the teachings of Musokhonkhodja Dahbidiy, the following explanations are given: "Wahdat is to remove from the heart all knowledge except that which affirms the existence of the Truth (God), exalted be He. Ittihad is to become wholly absorbed in the Divine. Sa'ada is to perceive oneself as freed from one's ego. Shaqawa is self-centeredness and separation from the Truth. Wasl is the forgetting of oneself through the witnessing of the divine light of the Truth, exalted be He. Fadl is to separate the inner secret from anything other than the Truth. Shukr is the manifestation of such a state in the heart that it cannot be concealed, yet it is obligatory to conceal it" [10].

Yaqub Charkhi said: "If you are asked, "What is wahdat (unity)?" say: "It is to immerse the heart in the existence of the Truth (God), exalted be He". If you are asked, "What is sa'ada

(felicity)?” say: “It is to behold the Truth and to be freed from the self”. If you are asked, “What is ittihad (union)?” say: “It is to free oneself from knowledge of anything other than the Truth, exalted be He”. If you are asked, “What is shaqawa (wretchedness)?” say: “It is to forget God and become preoccupied with oneself”. If you are asked, “What is wasl (union/arrival)?” say: “It is to forget oneself through immersion in the light of the Divine” [11].

In the realm of tawhid, the method of the javonmard (spiritual chivalrous ones) consisted in denying the attribution of temporality (huduth, origination) to the Essence of the Truth (God) and affirming His pre-eternal nature. For the manifestation (zuhur) and epiphany (tajalli) of the divine light became evident and openly revealed within their souls. At the moment of the diffusion of that light, all things other than God turn toward non-existence. As a result, they affirm for God His attributes of perfection (kamal) and majesty (jalal), and deny that anything other than Him can be described by these attributes. They say: “He alone is the All-Knowing, and all others are ignorant; He alone is the All-Powerful, and all others are weak; in truth, He alone is existent, and all others are non-existent (ma’dum)” [12].

Ibn al-Arabi stated that nothing exists in reality other than God, that all existence proceeds from Him, and yet He Himself is not contained in anything; rather, He is known only through Himself:

لا هو في شيء فيه لا داخلا ولا خارجا ينبغي أن تعرفه بهذه الصفة لا بالعلم ولا بالعقل ولا بالفهم ولا بالوهم وبالحواس ولا بالعين الظاهرة وبالعين الباطنة ولا بالإدراك لا يراه إلا هو ولا يدركه إلا هو ولا يعلمه إلا هو ويعرف نفسه بنفسه لا يراه أحد غيره ولا يدركه أحد غيره

That is: “He is not in anything, nor is there anything in which He is. He is neither inside nor outside. He must be known in this manner: not through knowledge, nor through intellect, nor through understanding, nor through imagination, nor through sensory perception, nor through the outward eye, nor through the inward eye, nor through cognition. None sees Him except Himself; none comprehends Him except Himself; none knows Him except Himself. He knows Himself through Himself and recognizes Himself through Himself. No one other than Him sees Him, and no one other than Him comprehends Him” [13].

According to Musokhonkhodja Dahbidiy, tawhid has three forms: verbal (qawliyy), intellectual (‘ilmiyy), and practical (‘amali) tawhid. Practical tawhid represents the tawhid of the elite. In verbal tawhid, one believes with the heart and declares with the tongue: “Ashhadu an la ilaha illa Allahu wahdahu la sharika lahu wa ashhadu anna Muhammadan ‘abduhu wa rasuluhu” (“I bear witness that there is no deity but God, alone, without partner, and I bear witness that Muhammad is His servant and messenger”). This testimony is not itself tawhid, but rather faith (iman); it constitutes the outward form and embodiment of tawhid. This form of tawhid is sufficient for deliverance from shirk (associating partners with God). It serves as both a means and a foundation for the observance of all the rulings of Islam, as well as a means of salvation from eternal punishment in Hell and the attainment of bliss [14].

Ibn al-Shu‘uy, standing on the bank of the Tigris, presented one hundred proofs for tawhid. Yet he later became a Christian and swore, saying: “All the proofs I have put forward concerning tawhid are, in fact, proofs for “the third of three (the Trinity)”. If even one of the proofs of tawhid had been truly clear, such an event would not have occurred [15].

Musokhonkhodja Dahbidiy, in his analysis of the science of tawhid, paid particular attention to the issues of space and time as attributes of existence. According to the Sufi thinker, intellectual (‘ilmi) tawhid pertains to understanding time and space and their true nature. The human being is unable to comprehend the essence of subtle unity (wahdaniyyat al-alfaf), the reality of time and space, or whether the world is within the Truth (God), exalted

be He, or outside Him, whether it is connected (muttasil) or separate (munfasil). Yet not a single particle of the universe is distant from Him. To know the creative command “Kun fayakun” (“Be, and it is”) and to comprehend the Essence of the Truth (God) leads to a state of bewilderment and silence; we are unable to fully grasp that He has been continuously speaking from pre-eternity to eternity. His speech is one, free from change, transformation, multiplicity, and division.

Ibn al-Arabi stated that, for the Sufi, time is understood as a means and intermediary leading to the Truth (God). He expressed the meaning of time as revealed to him (kashf) as follows:

وقد كشف لنا الحق في الوقت أمراً جليلاً، إن الوقت واحد المشهد، لكنه يختلف باختلاف المقامات، والمقصود ها هنا ذكر وقت المرید الصادق فهو برزخ بين الجلال والجمال

That is: “It has been unveiled to us that time is among the most significant matters. Time is a single “manifestation” (mashhad), yet it varies in accordance with differing spiritual stations (maqamat). What is intended here is the time of the sincere disciple (murid), which is a barzakh (intermediate state) between the Divine Majesty (jalal) and Beauty (jamal)”.

According to Musokhonkhodja Dahbidiy, intellectual (‘ilmi) tawhid consists of three levels. The first level is characterized by a breeze from the gardens of pre-eternity (qadam), an attraction (jadhba) from divine grace, or a flash (barq) from the lightning of non-existence that comes forth to meet the seeker (salik). As a result, the darkness of ignorance and the rust of heedlessness are removed from the eye of his inner vision.

Jadhba (spiritual attraction) is the elevation of the spirit to a higher station through joy, delight, and ardor; it is a state of intense ecstasy and self-effacement, in which the Absolute Beauty (Husn al-Mutlaq) completely captivates the individual, and the servant becomes united with God.

According to the Sufi thinker, the sincere disciple (murid) and the perceptive, discerning person, in the light of that flash (barq), turn their gaze upon themselves. This seeker (salik), who aspires to tawhid and longs for union (wisal), sees that he is, from head to toe, bound by the girdle (zunnar) and prostrating before countless idols. The fire of spiritual zeal (ghayrat) is kindled in his breast, and tears of sorrow flow from his eyes. For a time, he remains in a state of bewilderment and laments in pain. Driven by that suffering, he casts himself in every direction. With fear, he awaits relief from that very place. “And they realized that there is no refuge from God except in Him”. Thus, in helplessness, he turns toward the Lord, ‘Allam al-ghuyub (the Knower of the unseen), the One who is gracious to His servants, and presents the sorrow of his heart to the Knower of the unseen and the Reliever of distress (Kashif al-kurub).

Since the Truth (God) is light, true knowledge (ma‘rifa) is also light; that is, the light of God manifests (tajalli) in ma‘rifa.

Abu Ali al-Saqafi (may God have mercy on him) said: “Knowledge purifies the heart from ignorance and gives light to the eyes in darkness”. That is, knowledge revives the heart when it is deadened by ignorance and grants light to the eyes when the darkness of unbelief descends upon them, enabling one to perceive the Truth. Whoever lacks the knowledge of ma‘rifa, his heart is dead; and whoever lacks the knowledge of the Shari‘a, his heart is afflicted with the illness of ignorance. Thus, the hearts of unbelievers are dead, and for this reason they cannot comprehend God; while the hearts of the heedless are diseased, and for this reason they cannot understand His command.

The Sufi thinker, through an irfani (gnostic) analysis of the concept of wahdaniyya (divine oneness), criticizes those whose hearts are veiled by heedlessness, as well as those who worship various idols. The call, “Is there any deity alongside God?!” is heard within the innermost secret of the heart: “Your heart was not sound; that which your heart desired has become your object of worship”.

The Exalted says:

أَفَرَأَيْتَ مَنِ اتَّخَذَ إِلَهَهُ هَوَاهُ وَأَضَلَّهُ اللَّهُ عَلَىٰ عِلْمٍ وَخَتَمَ عَلَىٰ سَمْعِهِ وَقَفَىٰ عَلَىٰ بَصَرِهِ عَشَاوَةً فَمَنْ يَهْدِيهِ مِنْ بَعْدِ اللَّهِ أَفَلَا تَذَكَّرُونَ.

“Have you seen the one who takes his own desire as his god? God has led him astray knowingly, sealed his hearing and his heart, and placed a covering over his sight. Who, then, can guide him after God? Will you not take heed?” “So long as you seek other than Us and worship other than Us, you remain distant from Us”. If God is One, what benefit is there in prostrating before thousands of idols? Knowledge without action and speech without practice are futile. If you wish your tawhid to become your true object of devotion, make the qibla of your heart one, and detach it from all that is other than Us.

The central point of the circle of the heart is the Truth (God). These cries and lamentations, arising from the heart’s striving toward the Supreme Name (Ism al-A’zam), become pure and sincere only when they are free from personal will and volition. If they are not detached from will and choice, such utterances can never enter the realm of sincerity. Thus, when a person loses all inclination toward anything other than God and his heart becomes unified, the praise and blame of people, their rejection and acceptance, become equal in his view. In all states, his concern and his comfort are directed solely toward the Lord, the Sovereign of sovereignty (Malik al-muluk). When seekers (saliks) on the Sufi path attain this quality, they reach the level of intellectual (‘ilmi) tawhid.

According to Musokhonkhodja Dahbidiy, when you look into a mirror, you do not perceive the mirror itself, for you become absorbed and captivated by your own reflection. Yet you cannot say to the mirror, “Disappear”. One should understand the perception of God’s power in a similar way. This stage is called al-fana’ fi al-tawhid (annihilation in divine unity). It is manzilat al-aqdam, that is, the first station. At this level, some individuals become absorbed in witnessing (shuhud) every hour, others every two hours, and some even more continuously. Al-Ghazali (may God sanctify his soul) said: “Whoever can remain in this state for three days and nights attains sukr (spiritual intoxication)”.

Verse:

*Andarin bahri begarona chu g'o'k,
Dastu poy bizan, chi doni lo'k.
Andarin roh agarchi on nakuni,
Dastu poy bizan, ziyon nakuni.*

Translation:

*In that shoreless ocean, like a diver,
Strive with your hands and feet, even if you do not know how.
Even if you cannot traverse this path,
Keep moving your hands and feet, you will suffer no loss.*

In the teaching of Makhdum-i A’zam, it is emphasized that “if a person purifies the mirror of the heart from every kind of rust and dust, the true Beloved will manifest in it as beauty (jamal) and majesty (jalal)”. The Sufi thinker stated that, in order for a person to become a “cultivator of existence” (dehqon-i wujud), he must, through earnest effort and striving, cleanse

the mirror of the heart from all attachments and transform it into a locus for the manifestation of divine grace (fayd). In attaining the level of the “cultivator of existence”, knowledge, reflection, and action each play an essential role.

According to Musokhonkhodja Dahbidiy, the third level of the knowledge of tawhid is al-fana' fi al-fana' (annihilation within annihilation). In this state, the seeker (salik), completely immersed in the light of the manifestation (zuhur) of the Truth (God), becomes so absorbed with his entire being that he loses awareness of the whole cosmos and even forgets his own awareness of this loss. Among the people of the Sufi path, this state is referred to as 'ayn al-jam' and jam' al-jam'. In this condition, one is aware of nothing but the Truth and perceives nothing other than the Truth. This state is also called mahw fi mahw (“annihilation within annihilation”). At this level, there is neither existence nor non-existence. This station admits neither verbal expression nor symbolic indication; there is no Throne, no place, and no trace of anything in this world. At this stage, only the meaning of the Qur'anic verse remains: “كُلُّ مَنْ عَلَىهَا فَانٍ” – “All that is upon it will perish”.

In this realm, there is only the “wind” of the verse: “كُلُّ شَيْءٍ هَالِكٌ إِلَّا وَجْهَهُ” – “Everything will perish except His Face”. In this expanse, nothing reaches the soul except utterances such as “Ana al-Haqq” (“I am the Truth”) and “Subhani” (“Glory be to me”). At this station, realization (tahqiq) does not fully mature, nor can a form of tawhid entirely free from shirk manifest in this domain. All of these may be regarded as aspects of the knowledge of tawhid. However, the true reality of tawhid transcends all such manifestations.

Makhdum-i A'zam wrote: “Know, O sincere seeker, that all felicity and blessing lie in the station of fana' (annihilation), that is, in non-existence. Restlessness and misfortune, that is, wretchedness, lie in the state of existence”. Here, the idea is that when contingent, metaphorical, and transient existence is absorbed and effaced within the true, real, eternal, and everlasting existence, one attains the station of fana' and thereby reaches felicity in both worlds.

It is stated in Tarjimai Awarif that fana' (annihilation) consists in the culmination of the spiritual journey “sayr ila Allah 'azza wa jalla” (journeying toward God, exalted and majestic). Baqa' (subsistence), on the other hand, marks the beginning of “sayr fi Allah 'azza wa jalla” (journeying in God, exalted and majestic). The journey “sayr ila Allah” (toward God), exalted be He, reaches its completion when one traverses the desert of existence with the step of sincerity (sidq). The journey “sayr fi Allah”, however, becomes a true reality only when the servant, after attaining absolute annihilation (fana' al-mutlaq), progresses from the realm of attributes to divine qualities and from ethical imitation (takhalluq) to the embodiment of divine character (akhlaq rabbaniyya). Among the Sufi masters, there is disagreement regarding the definitions of fana' and baqa'. They responded to seekers according to the diversity of spiritual states, levels of understanding, and capacities. Some have said: “By fana' is meant the annihilation of opposition (mukhalafat), and by baqa', the subsistence of conformity (muwafaqat)”. This meaning is connected with the necessity of sincere repentance (tawba nasuh). Others have said that fana' is the cessation of worldly pleasures, while baqa' is the endurance of spiritual aspiration. In both interpretations, the station of asceticism (zuhd) is required. Still others have said: “Fana' is the cessation of both worldly and otherworldly pleasures, while baqa' is the permanence of seeking the Truth (God), exalted be He”. This meaning is rooted in fidelity to essential love. Some have said: “Fana' is absence (ghayba), and baqa' is presence with the Truth (God), exalted be He”. This meaning arises from the state of spiritual intoxication (sukr).

According to the concepts of *baqa'* (subsistence) and *fana'* (annihilation), the hereafter is eternal, whereas this world is transient. A person should live in hope of the eternal world, avoid becoming entangled in the trivialities of this fleeting life, and abandon heedlessness and negligence. One must not fall into the trap of the lower self (*nafs al-ammara*), which entices one toward base pleasures and delights in evil, but rather submit to the command of God. The term *fana'* essentially signifies the seeker's (*salik's*) liberation from the anxieties of transient worldly life, spiritual and moral purification, and the complete and wholehearted fulfillment of the divine command.

In Sufi teaching, the ultimate reality of existence is God. He is the source and ground of the universe; He exists and is everlasting. The material world in which we live is the visible realm, yet it does not possess an independent status, as it has been created for a definite purpose. The purpose of its creation is to manifest the incomparable power of God and to remind us of His eternity. The human being is the highest manifestation of this creation, for he has been endowed with blessings not granted to any other creature, such as the senses, intellect, and reason. Through these, the essence of the Creator, His beneficence and generosity, and His incomparable blessings are instilled in the human soul like light.

4. Conclusion

1. In Sufism, the doctrines of *wahdat al-wujud* (unity of being), *wahdat al-shuhud* (unity of witnessing), and *wahdat al-mawjud* (unity of the existent) address the relationship between the Truth (God) and existence. These doctrines are grounded in distinct philosophical and *irfani* (gnostic) foundations.
2. Musokhon Dahbidiy defines *tawhid* from both the perspectives of the *Shari'a* and the *tariqa*, stating: "In the *Shari'a*, *tawhid* is to recognize the Truth (God), exalted be He, as one and unique, to believe in this, and to affirm it verbally; whereas in the *tariqa*, it is to detach the heart from everything other than the Truth, exalted be He".
3. Ibn al-Arabi (Muhyiddin Ibn al-'Arabi) advanced the doctrine of *wahdat al-wujud* in Sufi philosophy. Those who did not accept this teaching accused him of unbelief.
4. Musokhon Dahbidiy undertook efforts to synthesize and reconcile the views of Ibn al-Arabi and Ahmad Sirhindi on the question of unity, presenting his conclusions in his works.

References:

- [1] M. Dahbidiy, *Irfani-Philosophical Views*. Tashkent, Uzbekistan: Fan, 2008, pp. 15–85.
- [2] N. Komilov, *Sufism or the Ethics of the Perfect Human*. Tashkent, Uzbekistan: Yozuvchi, 1996, pp. 30–110.
- [3] B. Valikhojaev, *History of Uzbek Spirituality*. Tashkent, Uzbekistan: Fan, 2001, pp. 40–100.
- [4] I. Haqqul, *Sufism and Literature*. Tashkent, Uzbekistan: Sharq, 2004, pp. 22–90.
- [5] A. Sharifkhojaev, *History of Sufism in Central Asia*. Tashkent, Uzbekistan: Uzbekistan, 2010, pp. 25–95.
- [6] A. Madraimov, *Introduction to Islamic Philosophy*. Tashkent, Uzbekistan: Universitet, 2015, pp. 18–85.
- [7] S. H. Nasr, *Islamic Philosophy from Its Origin to the Present*. Moscow, Russia: Akademicheskii Proekt, 2006, pp. 50–140.
- [8] A. Schimmel, *Mystical Dimensions of Islam*. Moscow, Russia: Nauka, 2000, pp. 35–120.

- [9] W. C. Chittick, *The Sufi Path of Knowledge: Ibn al-'Arabi's Metaphysics of Imagination*. Albany, NY, USA: SUNY Press, 1989, pp. 45–150.
- [10] H. Corbin, *History of Islamic Philosophy*. London, UK: Routledge, 1993, pp. 60–170.
- [11] F. Rahman, *Islam*. Chicago, IL, USA: University of Chicago Press, 1979, pp. 25–100.
- [12] M. Fakhry, *A History of Islamic Philosophy*. New York, NY, USA: Columbia University Press, 2004, pp. 70–160.
- [13] A. Knysh, *Islamic Mysticism: A Short History*. Leiden, Netherlands: Brill, 2000, pp. 30–110.
- [14] R. Gramlich, "Mystical Dimensions of Islam," *Journal of Islamic Studies*, vol. 12, no. 2, pp. 145–160, 2001.
- [15] S. H. Nasr, "Sufism and Islamic Spirituality," *Islamic Quarterly*, vol. 24, no. 3, pp. 120–135, 1980.