



## THE CONCEPT OF WAHDAD UL WUJUD IN THE SPIRITUAL HERITAGE OF ALISHER NAVOI

Martaba Numovna Melikova

Samarkand State Institute of Foreign Languages  
Head of the Department of Humanitarian Sciences  
and Information Technology, Associate Professor

### Abstract

This article is devoted to the analysis of vahdad ul wujud concept in the spiritual heritage of the great medieval thinker Alisher Navoi. Within the framework of this concept the world is subdivided into two hypostases, the first of which implies necessary being or wajib ul wujud, by which Allah is meant, and the second one implies possible being, by which accidentia is meant. It should be noted that these two hypostases are in no way opposed to each other, but like yin and yang are interrelated.

**Keywords:** vahdad ul wujud conception, accidentia, ontology, gnoseology, universe, divine origin, being, divine essence

### Introduction

Alisher Navoi's works touch upon the issues of the universe, the meaning of life, and the perfection of personality. The thinker's model of the perfect man is closely intertwined with philosophical problems of attitudes and gnoseology. According to the medieval conception of the universe, being is a reflection of the divine beginning (tajallin), and man in this system is the embodiment of the divine essence. This doctrine was based on the so-called concept of vahdad ul wujud (unity of being), which relies on divine unity as the original source of the being of all things. Under this concept, the world is divided into two hypostases, in which in the first case the necessary being or wajib ul wujud, by which Allah is meant, and in the second case the possible being, by which the accidents are meant. It should be noted that these two hypostases are not in any way opposed to one another, but are, like yin and yang, interrelated. What is the existence around us, what are the regularities of its functioning and development, how does a drop (man) connect with the sea (God)? These are the questions that have always worried and worry the followers of Sufism. However, they do not give an unambiguous answer, so wahdat ul wujud has various currents. They reveal the influence of the ideas of the ancient Indian religion of Vedanta and Neoplatonism, the ancient beliefs of Shamanism and Zoroastrianism. According to a number of Oriental scholars, the Wahdat ul-Wujud doctrine of the Arabs, unlike its varieties among the Iranians and Turks, was formed on the traditions of Islam and is largely based on the provisions of the Koran. The idea of monotheism in Sufism receives its ontological justification in the concept of wahdat ul wujud. In the framework of the same doctrine, the idea of tawhid also receives its moral and aesthetic justification: as already noted, deity as absolute beauty (khusni mutlak) and absolute goodness (khairi mutlak), and its comprehension is seen in love. This beauty is constantly in a state of emerging from



latency (bathini) into manifestness (zahiri). Nature, the universe, is a mirror (mir'at, kuzgu), which reflects absolute beauty in all its visible qualities.

God is absolute good; the emergence of the material world with all its values is the consequence of the manifestation of absolute goodness, the Creator's beneficence to man; God is absolute, eternal existence, while all other existence is relative, changeable, transient. All three of these principles of thinking about God in the concept of wahdat ul wud-jud are expressed in the theme of love. It is necessary to underline that they are evident in the works of Alisher Navoi.

In Alisher Navoi's spiritual heritage one can clearly see his attempt to resolve one of the major philosophical issues - the correlation between the material and the spiritual. The ideas of the thinker are reflected in the questions about the creation of the world, judgments about the essence of God, the relationship between nature and man, the spiritual and material world, which are most vividly manifested in the concept of man, the purpose of his earthly existence and the meaning of life in the world.

According to Alisher Navoi's conception, by deity he understands the primary necessity, which is expressed by unity (ahadiyat), and by the world of diversity he represents the transition from the one to the many as a result of self-development, emanation. According to Navoi, God is the artist who, through his creative nature, creates all of nature as his creation in all its diversity and complexity. The creation of nature has an ultimate purpose and each of its manifestations is an expression of the Absolute. Man, who seeks the knowledge of nature by illuminating himself with the inner divine light, can eventually know the essence of the Creator's plan. The basis for such a judgment the thinker considers the concept of khairat, which means wonder, which includes the interrelation of the divine (spiritual) and the natural (material). These judgments of Navoi find vivid expression in the first conversation in the poem "Confusion of the Righteous", which describes the stages of "surprise of the soul", where he expresses his ideas about the primacy of the Divine - the Truth, which is an eternal substance. The properties of the divine are capable of manifesting themselves in possibilities, which he designates as mumkinat gulshani within nature itself, and the possibility of knowing the pearls of the universe through contemplation is necessary in the material world, manifesting itself in the manifest, which the poet defines as zuhur.

Navoi presents Deity as the eternal being who is the engine of everything in the surrounding reality. Thus, the Creator is the potential for the realization in the universe of those goals, which are set by the divine from outside, and which manifest themselves through certain phenomena in nature. In Navoi's spiritual legacy it is possible to trace his denial of the existence of ideas of a god-creator original, a ruler god who has complete dominion over nature and is separated from it by original characteristics. Navoi believes that there is a certain relationship between God and the world of phenomena, since all phenomena and events have as their starting point God and ultimately everything returns to his bosom: "there is only you, there is nothing but you. All that is visible is you, not anything else. There were no other beginnings, you existed, and everything, nothingness, returns to you. In the definition of your essence lies the sign of eternity" [12, 885]. This means that the Absolute is characterized by primordality and eternity, while its existences are devoid of such attributes:



Everything is only God, and there has never been a stronger beginning,  
Everything there is perishable, God is eternal - the beginning of beginnings [2, 262].  
From this we can conclude that nature is an external expression, a reflection of the Creator, i.e. Tajalli, whose qualitative characteristics include unity (ahadiyat), primordially (avval), eternity (azzal), infinity (abad). To the external characteristics he refers the properties to the diversity of the phenomena of nature. Here it should be noted that Navoi's ideas about God in many respects differ from religious concepts, which of course indicates that the thinker had an extraordinary knowledge in the field of philosophical sciences, based on which he presents the Creator as a single substance, self-revealing in the universe:

The essence is one and the image is one with him,  
He has more than a thousand properties and guises.  
All of them, where nature is alive, are manifested,  
All in the unity of his being manifested [2, 261].

In the creations of Navoi, the Creator manifests himself as the Absolute of beauty, perfection, magnificence and superiority. Through the manifestation of aesthetic qualities, the highest existence of the Creator in nature is realized, which is revealed in emanation as a natural result of demonstration of his Beauty reflected in the mirror - nature: "The radiance of your beauty had no limit, it took countless mirrors (worlds) for its reflection. Numerous roses (phenomena, creations) were opened in them, each of which reflected your Beauty" [12, 14].

Navoi argues that the process of emanation is a quite natural and necessary condition of the Absolute's goal-setting. He argues that it is the semantic characteristic of goodness and justice, embodied through phenomena in nature and social actions:

He himself admired his own nature,  
And the people admired his reflection.  
And yet he made no such mirror,  
His beauty did not do the people any good.  
And now he has experienced beauty himself.  
And he could make people happy with his beauty [2, 102].

In Navoi's views the judgment of the Creator's supranatural supremacy is closer to pantheism, which is based on the idea of the essence of Absolute deity as an Absolute manifestation of beauty in nature. Thus, the Creator and his reflection in nature and the cosmos, are not opposed to each other, but interrelated. Navoi's creativity is not characterized by anthropomorphism; he sees in all natural phenomena, be it the sunset and sunrise, the eclipse of the moon, the movement of stars, a pattern in which he points to the mighty power and greatness of the Creator. Proceeding from the above, man's reflection of reality is one of the rational ways of attaining Truth, leading to knowledge of the Creator himself. Thus, we can point to Navoi's rather peculiar teleological conception, which is based on the concept of wahdat ul wujud.

According to Navoi's views, the Creator manifests Himself in various pictures of the universe, with goodness (khairi mutlak) and justice (adli mutlak) as external manifestations, and they are also



manifested through such aesthetic categories as beauty, love, perfection, greatness, coming from the principles of Sufi teaching.

In Navoi's opinion, cognition of the Creator is an active creative process rather than the rejection of the outside world and hermitage on which many followers of Sufism have embarked. In his works, the thinker proceeds from the position that the reflection of reality in human consciousness is essentially a proof of the existence of the Creator. And cognition of the Absolute occurs in different ways and ways, among which Navoi singles out active cognition through traveling around the world in search of the true essence of things and their structure. Another type of cognition Navoi defines through the pursuit of truth through reading books, through learning the wisdom of people and self-improvement. The third way is transformative, which involves active intervention in the phenomena of nature and social reality, the performance of good deeds and the struggle against evil: "People live in search of the true way, this way they go from discovery to discovery. If you, too, want to find joy and find your goal (happiness) in this world, then hurry to join the path of search, and everything submits to the seeker" [12, 140].

Navoi's concept of man is closely related to his pantheistic ideas. According to this concept man is the purpose and the ultimate meaning of the universe, the only being that encapsulates the divine mind, which contains individuality of being (fardiyat) and divine essence (mohiyat) and is honored to be an interlocutor of the Creator (musakhib): "You created so many curiosities, making them all a mirror of your beauty. Among your treasures were many possessions, but of all of them your goal was man" [12, 15].

Navoi believed that man is a reflection of the divine rationality, his soul holds the seal of the divine being. And therefore man is the crown of the universe, possessing the capacity for self-knowledge and comprehension of Truth. All this is comprehended by man in the process of reflecting reality, cognition of the beauty and harmony of nature. Beauty contains the mysteries of the universe and life, which is possible to comprehend through love. To comprehend this mystery is the purpose of human existence, the manifestation of his spiritual essence: "Man is perfection, worthy of your wonderful word, he is also the exponent of your innermost mysteries. His soul you have brought close to a particle of the innermost, and his body you have made a talisman for that innermost" [12, 15]. Man is the crown of creation, capable of self-knowledge of the mysteries of his being and the mysteries of creation:

Know the wisdom of the creator of the four powers:

On earth he decided to create man.

He has made man the pinnacle of creation,

"He has made man the pinnacle of his creation.

He hid the power of knowledge in his heart,

And in that cache of his being he has enclosed [12, 15].

The human soul is the receptacle of the creative potential of the universe, through the awareness of which man finds his essence. In the work of the thinker this is expressed through artistic images: he expresses them through such allegories as soul - nightingale, lantern: "The heart is the nightingale in



the garden of innocence, it adorns with its radiance the purity of the sanctuary. The fragrance of paradise is in it, the radiance of the ray of the lamp of truth is also in it" [12, 53].

Through such representations of the Creator, man, Navoi formulates his concept of humanism: he elevates Man, demanding respect for his individuality, in which he sees the divine beginning, often softening religious moral principles, calling man to self-improvement.

Navoi in his views stands on the principles of moral perfection of the individual, which he sees in close correlation with the pantheistic ideas of the interaction of the Creator with man (tawhid). She is fundamentally different from Navoi A. Five Poems. - Moscow: Khudozhestva lit. 1972. P. 15.15. differs from the concept of cognition of God existing at that historical period, which originated in Islamic theology (kalam). On the contrary, in this issue, Navoy inclined to the principles of Sufi doctrine tasavvuf, which puts moral and ethical principles above the aspect of ritualism, giving the religious aspect of Muslim life an individual (personal) nature. Nawai sees in the idea of tawhid a peculiar path of human moral self-improvement. His vision of the road of purification is clearly manifested in the poem "The Language of Birds", where he proceeds from the principle of combining the divine in the essential and the natural in the possible. And that is why man during his life must strive to unite with the Creator and through spiritual practices to move from external forms to achieve the inner essence, from quantity (external, mundane) to quality (essence). But this process is very difficult; it requires from a person firmness of spirit, great efforts on cultivating willpower, overcoming worldly temptations and sinful behavior. Love is one of the principal conditions for the attainment of tawheed. In a poem in the Prayer for the Way of Unity, Navoi writes that union with God is the main task of man, the manifestation of his essence. And the one who is destined to this connection can save himself in this world from egoism, and the one who is not destined to this connection with the Creator, he will be in a state of ignorance and spiritual poverty. A man on the path of union with God is not subject to the influence of evil, for his heart is filled with love for the Almighty.

The ethical foundations of Sufi doctrine, which Navoi embraced, enabled him to penetrate deeply into the meaning of life, trying to avoid ritualistic principles. Nawai often uses Sufi terminology in his works, associating God with lover and idol, and identifying aspiration to God with passion, while wine and intoxication mean the achievement of ecstasy. Thus, in the poem "The Language of Birds" the poet describing the valley of love implies one of the stages of ascent in Sufism - perfection on the spiritual path to God:

I drink the cup - and once my life is forgotten,  
I will forget my faith in God, my reason and my intellect.  
The house of unbelief is the best of all places,  
I'll tie a zunar, even a cross I'll accept.  
I'll forget my honor when I'm drunk at the tavern  
I'll burn the Koran, and I'll honor the idols.  
Where is the refuge of passion, there is the road for me,  
And I will rid my soul of honor and God [2, 105].

However, this does not mean that Alisher Navoi forgot about piety and does not recognize Islam.



Navoi in his works makes a special emphasis on human spirituality and intellect as the main condition of his socialization. Man without spiritual values is base and likened to the animal world. Navoi writes that morality is the main criterion for the development of a person: "Only he is worthy of the title of man, who is pure and looks at the world with a clear eye" [3, 155].

Moral values for the thinker act not as an abstraction of good or evil, justice and honor, some theory of them, but, on the contrary, they are a practical guide, which combines morality and virtue. And hence we can conclude that morality is the daily, time-consuming work of bringing man to virtue, the ability to abstain from sins and vices. The essence of morality is the unceasing struggle of good and evil, of virtue with sins, the striving for personal self-improvement through overcoming detrimental passions and tendencies. This perception of moral values can be traced in all the creative heritage of Alisher Navoi.

One of the high moral ideals of the thinker was Farhad from the poem "Farhad and Shirin", which clearly shows the idea that man is born to achieve great goals, to implement great deeds. The constant pursuit of knowledge, discovery, movement to the goal, courage of spirit - these qualities are inherent in Farhad:

If thou thyself be small, then life is small to thee,  
If thou art great, then life is the rock for thee.  
If thou art small, thy life is small; if thou art great, thy life is rocky,  
But flour and a hundred years - not an elephant [4, 70].

This poem by Navoi is in many ways similar to the concept of Renaissance humanism in Europe, the main idea of which is the principle of self-sacrifice for the good of humanity. The image of Farhad in Navoi is presented as a man striving to achieve his happiness, which is closely connected with the achievement of the public good - the struggle against tyranny, evil, social vices, injustice and oppression, overcoming the negative qualities within himself, altruistic feelings and compassion for the fate of others. These aspirations of Farhad lead to the fact that his love reaches the highest values of ethics, the image of Shirin becomes a goal to the self-improvement of personality.

This form of love for Navoi was the key to the achievement of human moral perfection, virtue. The purpose of such love is to achieve harmony of soul and body, to cultivate soul qualities: "the soul is the lord of the realm of the body. The health of the soul is the health of the body. Spoiling the soul leads to sickness of the body. The man who has become ruler of his soul is king of kings... The king is the soul in the body of the state, and the soul is a sultan in the kingdom of the flesh" [3, 120].

Navoi advocates love, which is far from asceticism, detachment from the world: "the soul carries in itself the whiff of friendship from the flower bed of spirituality and perceives the beauty of the universe... people's souls, hearts should not be separated from the flame of love and from the joy that the light of that flame brings (to people). They should not be together with hypocritical ascetics" [3, 125].

Navoi binds the ties of love between the Creator and man, pointing out that the soul's desire for beauty, in which God is embodied, is also in man himself. He sees beauty as a truth of the divine nature, it is divinely inspired in a way accessible to human reflection. The sublime love described by Navoi is the impetus for the actions of his characters, although the poet does not exclude earthly love between



people. He divides love into several kinds: the love of the common people, the love of the chosen, and the love of the truthful. Love in Navoi's spiritual heritage is a special social and ethical category of ethics that closely intertwines the earthly and divine. It is an incentive for creative human activity and an ideological foundation of humanism. Humanistic ideas are expressed in Navoi's works through the following ideas: the thinker glorifies man as the crown of nature, exalts his moral and creative virtues, talent and creative mind. Navoi's humanistic ideas were directed into the future and imbued with profound optimism, unrestrained faith in the high predestination of man, the victory of good over evil, and the affirmation of the ideal of a just state.

Navoi sees the value of man not in high birth, position and rank but in moral qualities and practical activity for the good of people. In the poem "Confusion of the Righteous" Navoi writes: "It is not high position and rank that bring honor to people, but their nobility and honor are determined by their goodness and shame (morality). When the source of the rain (morality) is bashfulness, the drops of that rain will be an elixir for waterless soil. Immoral people cannot be honored, they are lowly and before the sky" [12, 116]. Navoi's work praises the power of the human mind, encourages the human desire to acquire knowledge. However, the way to knowledge is inconceivable without the moral perfection of the individual. Therefore, the acquisition of knowledge requires not only diligence, but also certain moral qualities - modesty, patience, good upbringing, which should be inherent in those who learn the truth.

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