CHAPTER—VI: Ibn al-‘Arabi—his life and poetry

1. Outstanding works of Ibn al-‘Arabi
2. Nature of Ibn al-‘Arabi’s poetry
3. Style and diction of Ibn al-‘Arabi’s poetry
4. Opinion of critics in regard to the works of Ibn al-‘Arabi
Muhy al-Din Mohammad Ibn ‘Ali Ibn Muhammad Ibn al-‘Arabi (1165-1240 A.D.) was a famous mystical philosopher, theosophist and poet. He was born at Murcia in Spain. His ancestor belongs to a respectable Arabian tribe of Hatim al-Tai'; whose generosity and liberality spread throughout the world. After the conquest of Spain by Arabs, the ancestor of Ibn al-‘Arabi migrated to Spain and settled there. His father, ‘Ali Ibn Mohammad served in the army of Ibn Mardanish. When Ibn Mardanish died in 1172, A.D., ‘Ali Ibn Mohammad swiftly shifted his allegiance to the Al-Mohad Sultan, Abu Ya’qub Yusuf I, and became one of his military advisers. His family then relocated from Murcia to Seville. It is narrated that ‘Ali Ibn Mohammad was childless for a long time. He came to Abd al-Qadir Jilani and requested him to pray to Allah for bestowing a child on him and accordingly the saint prayed for him a child.

Perhaps, the almighty showered blessings on him and Ibn ‘Arabi was born at Murcia, the beautiful city of parks and gardens, built by the falcon of Arab, Abd al-Rahman I in Spain on the night preceding Monday, the 17th of Ramadan and 29th July, 1165, A.D. His father ‘Ali was a good scholar; hence he had left no stone unturned to educate the boy in a reputed institution. At that time, the Seville was cultural and intellectual centre of Islamic education. Ibn al-‘Arabi received his early education at Lisbon, then at the age of eight years, his father took him to Seville in 1177, A.D. for his further education. Ibn al-‘Arabi studied Qur’an and Kafia under Abu Bakr Ibn Khalaf, Hadith under Ibn Mua’ilif Abu al-Hassan, and Shar’iah and Fiqh under Abu al-Qasim al-Sharrat of Cordova. Moreover, he attended the classes of Abu Bakr Mohammed Ibn Abu Jamra and to study Kitab al-Taisiri, he attended the classes of Ibn Zargun and Abu Mohammed ‘Abd al-Haqq al-Azdi. Thus, he ended his study at Seville within 30 years of his age.

During his stay at Seville in 1181 A.D., he was sent by his father to meet the great philosopher Averroes (Ibn Rushd). The meeting was very significant that Ibn al-‘Arabi answered his questions in tag form (‘yes’ or ‘no’). Averroes being astonished
declared: I myself was of the opinion that spiritual knowledge without learning is possible, but never met anyone who had experienced it.1

As a student, he was very brilliant and having a unique character for which a great body of scholars permitted him to narrate Hadith. Among them al-Hafiz al-Salafi, Ibn al-Asakir, Abu al-Faraj and Ibn al-Jawzi are notable. Recent information suggests that during his stay at Seville he underwent military training. He was also employed as a secretary by the governor of Seville and at the same time he married Maryam, the daughter of Mohammed bin Abdun.2 When he was 28 years, he left Spain for the first time, traveling to Tunis in 1193, A.D. to meet the disciples of Abu Maydan. 'Abd al-Aziz al-Mahdawi and Abu Mohammed Abd-Allah al-Kinani were notable disciples of Abu Maydan. He stayed at Tunis for approximate one year. Ibn al-'Arabi met the imaginary Prophet Khidr in his vision for the second time; while he was returning from Tunis. The real genius of Ibn al-'Arabi, was begun to emerge after returning to Andalusia from North-Africa in 1194, A.D. In this year, his father died and within a few months his mother also died. Now, the responsibility of the upbringing of his two sisters felt upon him. His cousin requested him saying that he should take up his worldly duties, and to give up the spiritual life. Even Sultan Abu Yusuf Yaqub al-Mansur offered him a job, but he refused the job and transferred to the Moroccan city of Fez, with his sisters. It was only a short period of time, his sisters got married and his duty towards them completed.

He was a visionary mystic of Islam. At the age of sixteen he received a message by way of vision, which motivated him to give up the worldly pleasure and devoted himself for search of Reality. He also states that he had met imaginary Prophet Khidr for three times in his vision. It is also stated that during his stay in Cordova, while visiting the dying saint al-Qabaili in Cordova, he had a vision in which he met all the Prophets from the time of Adam to Prophet Mohammad (PBUH) in their spiritual reality. In 1195, A.D., he started to experience the state of revelation. Thus, he continued his spiritual practices even in a vision he was instructed in 1200, A.D., while he was in Morocco to go to the East. In 1202 A.D., he went to Mecca and performed the first Hajj. The Meccan period was a brilliant victory of his earthly life. He wrote there several books, moreover he married there a girl namely, Fatima bint Yunus and their first son, Mohammad Imad al-Din was probably born in Mecca. In 1208 A.D., he again
returned to Mecca and continued to study and wrote with his friend Makin al-Din Abu Shuja’ Jahir bin Rustam and his family including lady Nizam. In 1214, A.D., he again visited Mecca, while his friend Makin al-Din Abu Shuja’ died. After performing Hajj he composed most famous lyrical poetry collection ‘Tarjuman al-Ashwaq’. In the year 1220 A.D., another friend Majd al-Din Ishaq died and Ibn al-‘Arabi took the responsibility of young Sadar al-Din and married the widow in pursuant to the urge of time and tradition. After extensive travel in Mosul, Turkey, Syria and Egypt for a period of 20 years, he decided to settle in Syria in 1223, A.D. and he spent the last 17 years of his life in Damascus. The first thing at Damascus he did was to collect and disseminate the works which had already been written, copies were made and reading session took place in his house. Finally, in 1240, A.D. at the age of 75, he left for heavenly abode. His son Imad al-Din performed his funeral rites. He was buried in the family tomb of the Banu Zaki, in the small beautiful district of al-Salihiyah at Jabal-Qasiyun.

1. Outstanding works of Ibn al-‘Arabi

Undoubtedly Ibn al-‘Arabi was a distinguished writer, theosophist, mystical philosopher and a Poet of great profundity. He is credited with innumerable works on the subject of mystical philosophy. He said, “I wrote nothing except what has been inspired in me. I am not a Prophet nor a Messenger, but simply an inheritor, and I labor for my future life”.3 He was a writer of ‘great reputation’ and may be considered one of the most voluminous writers of Islam. The author of Najhatul uns, Jami credits to him five hundred books. Osman Yahya counts 850 works attributed to him, of which 700 are extent and over 450 are genuine. But it is a matter of fact that Ibn al-‘Arabi himself drew up an inventory in 1234, A.D., about five years before his death enumerating 289 of his writings. So it is irrelevant to relay on the above noted statement, as because sheikh died in 1240, A.D. and within a five years perhaps, he could not have written many books as stated Jami and Yahya. However, his untold numbers of books on mystical philosophy, theology, Commentary on Qur’an, Sufi metaphysics as well as Arabic mystical poetry are highly worth appreciation and got special attention from the scholars of the west. Modern information suggests that out of total works only more than 100 books are survived in manuscript form and the remaining are lying in the different private and public libraries of the world. Some significant and outstanding
works are given below maintaining a possible chronological order as mention by Hirtenstein, the author of ‘Unlimited Mercifier’: 4

1.1 Prose Works:

1. **Mashahid al-Asrar al-Qudusiyya** (Contemplation of the Holy Mysteries) is written in 1194, A.D., dealing with visionary aspect of Divine realities, consisting 14 visions and dialogues with God. This book was written in request of his companion Mahdawi and perhaps, around the same time, in a gap of four days, he also composed the voluminous work-

2. **Tadhibrat al-Ilahiyya fi Islah al-Mamlakat al-Insaniyah** (Divine Governance in the Human Kingdom) was written in Mawrur for Sheikh Abu Mohammad al-Mawrur.

3. **Kitab al-Isra** (Book of Nocturnal Journey) was composed in 1198, A.D., dealing with the celestial pilgrimage of Prophet.

4. **Mawaqi al-Nujum wa Matafi’ Ahillat al-Asrar wal Ulum** (The Twilight of the Stars and the Rising of the Crescent Moon of Secrets and Sciences) was composed for his disciple Badr al-Habashi, a freed Ethiopian, during the month of Ramadan in 1199, A.D. at al-Maria within a period of eleven nights. This book is composed in poetical form, dealing with the cyclic motion of the heavenly bodies and which is compared with the knowledge of mystics. The moon passes through the several courses of its motion likewise, life of man is a journey and it progresses through light and shadow, happiness and sadness, success and failure, safety and danger and so on.

5. **Anqa al-Maghrib fi Sifat Khatm al-Awliya’ wa Shams al-Maghrib** (The Astounding Phoenix Regarding the Seal of Saints and the Sun of the West) was written in 1200, A.D. It deals with two persons through whom sanctity will be sealed and brought to complete at the end of time, the seal of saints and the Mahdi that must be appeared in the west, not only in their eschatological dimension but also in a microcosmic and inner dimension.

6. **Futuhat al-Makkiyya** (The Meccan Revelation) is a great encyclopedic work of sheikh on mystical philosophy. Its first chapter was written in Mecca in 1202, A.D. and completed the first draft of it in 1231, A.D. This book was completed over a period of 20 years and it contains 560 chapters
on the different subjects of religious principles of Islam. This work was first printed at Bulaq of Egypt in 1274, A.D. The author claims that every word of this book was inspired by supernatural sources and it contains nothing but truth and reality. He tries to rationalize the mystical philosophy interpreting the cosmological relation with the upper world. This vast compendium may be called a book of Sufi metaphysics, cosmology, spiritual anthropology, psychology, theology and jurisprudence. All the topics of the book included the inner meanings of the Islamic rituals, stations of mystics in the course of journey to God and in God, the nature of cosmic hierarchy, the spiritual and ontological meaning of the letters of the Arabic alphabets, attributes of 99 names reflected in human being, importance of various messages of Prophets communicated in course of time to the mankind and so on.

7. *Kitab al-Insha al-Jadawil wal-Dawai‘r* (The Composition of Columns and Circle) is devoted to the explanation of man’s place in creation and its cosmology was written at Tunis in 1202, A.D. for his friend *Sheikh Abd al-Aziz al-Mahdawi*.

8. *Taj al-Rasail wa Minhaj al-Wasa‘il* (The Crown of Epistles and the Path to Intercessions) was written in 1202, A.D, is a collection of letters in rhymed prose. In which *Ibn al-‘Arabi* addresses eight love-letters to the *Ka‘ba*, which contains all the variations that Arabic literature has to offer on the theme of love. This is an unusual love for a being made of stone, but oh so sacred! Situated in an intermediate world between the human and the Divine.

9. *Ruh al-Qudus fi Munasahat al-Nafs* (The Holy Spirit in the Counseling of the Soul) is a treatise on the soul, which includes a summary of his experience received from different spiritual masters of the west, was written in 1202-3, A.D.

10. *Hilayat al-Abdal* (Ornament of the Ascetics) is a short work on the essentials of the spiritual path and a guide to happiness, was written at *Taif* near Mecca in 1203, A.D.

11. *Mishkat al-Anwar* (Niche of Lights) is a collection of Divine sayings. It comprises 101 Hadith, was written in 1204, A.D.
12. *Kitab al-Fana fil Mushahadah* (Book of Annihilation in the Contemplation) is a Sufi manual dealing with visions, in which mystic realizes God and forgets phenomenal relations was probably written in Baghdad in 1204, A.D.

13. *Tanazzulat al-Mawsiliya* (Revelation of Mosul), *Kitab al-Jalal wal Jamal* (Book on Majesty and Beauty) and *Kunh ma la Budda lil Murid Minhu*, wrote in the year 1205, while he stayed at Mosul for 12 days in the month of Ramadan to meet his friend Ali Ibn Abd-Allah Ibn Ja’mi.

14. *Kitab al-Ba and Ishrat al-Qur’an* was written in 1206 A.D. in Jerusalem and in the same year

15. *Kitab al-Yaqin* (Book on Faith) was written at Masjid al-Yaqin near the tomb of Ibrahim and in Cairo he Wrote—

16. *Kitab al-Ayyam al-Shan* (The Book of God’s Days) is a work on the nature of time and different days experienced by the Gnostics.

17. *Istilahat al-Sufiyya*, a short epistle on the technical terms of Sufism was written during his stay at Malatya in 1218, A.D.


19. *Tahafat al-Safara* (Gift Bestowed on Travelers) is a detail account of the stages of the mystic’s journey towards the knowledge of God.

20. *Kimiya al-Sa’da* (Alchemy of Happiness) deals with the properties and virtues of the formula of the belief in one God.

21. *Ifada* (Information) speaks of the three fundamental branches of knowledge—God, the rational world and the world of senses.

22. *Faida* (Utility) deals with the value of the letters, giving the meaning of Divine subject.

23. *Uqalat al-Mustaufiz* (The Spell of the Obedient Servant), contains the description of the denizens of the upper world and of this lower one; the spirits, the Throne of God, the Stars, the Earth and so on.

24. *Al-Ittihad al-Kawni* (The Universal Tree and the four Birds) is a poetic book written on the perfect human and four principles of existence.
25. *Al-Dawi al-A'la* (Prayer for Spiritual Elevation) is a short prayer, widely recited by the followers of *Ibn al-'Arabi*.

26. *Awrad* (Devotional Prayer), a widely read collection of 14 prayers for each day and night of the week.


28. *Muhadarat al-Abrar* (Thinking of Pious Man), deals with literary and historical topics.

29. *Al-Jam'u wal Tafsir fi Haqaiq al-Tanzil*.

30. *Al-Jadhwat al-Muqtabisat*.


32. *Al-Asra'ila Maqail Asria*.

33. *Fadail 'Abdil Aziz al-Mahdawi*.

34. *Kitab al-Akhlaq*.

35. *Amr Al-Muhakkam*.


38. *Fusus al-Hikam* (Bezels of Wisdom) was written at Damascus in 1230, A.D. and was completed in three years. This book contains 27 chapters and each chapter bearing the logo of different Prophet to identify their wisdom separately.

39. *Nasab al-Khirqa* (Mantle of Initiation) was written towards the end of his life about in 1236, A.D. It deals with the dignity of robe for a spiritual guide.

40. *Kitab al-Nasaih* (Book of Spiritual Advice), deals with a collection of valuable advice for the seeker of spiritual path.

41. *Naqsh al-Fusus* (The Imprint or Pattern of the *Fusus*) is a summery discussion of the *fusus*.

Besides these prose works, he composed a huge number of Arabic mystical poetry of sublime nature. A good deal of poetry is diffusing in his prose works, while discussing of his mystical philosophy he often quoted verses as a summery of his thinking, displaying fine poetic talent in order to variegate the writing style; which brings cadence and sweep to the creativity of the author. The poems spread throughout
his prose works, which fulfill a very specific didactic purpose as he recorded in the *Futuhat* (F.II-665) that the poetry is an integral part of the explanation of the subject matter of the chapter. The richness of artistic talent generally drives a reader to feel that he is roaming in a garden of colorful knowledge enjoying the same beauty as one enjoys in a garden of flowers. There are several manuscripts of his *Diwan*, which were collected and compiled in different times, may be discussed as below:

1.2 Diwan al-Kabir or Diwan al-Ma’rif al-Ilahiyyah (ديوان الكبير أو ديوان المعارف الإلهية)

This is a collection of Arabic mystical poetry, which *Ibn al-‘Arabi* compiled towards the end of his life with a view to including in it all of his poems; it contains tens of thousands of verses.\(^5\)

According to the Article of Stephen\(^6\) Hirtenstein on Diwan al-Kabir, it may easily be summarized that *Osman Yahya* lists 32 manuscripts entitled Diwan in his *Reper loire Generale*, noting that they are all incomplete: some are described internally, for example, as the first or second or third part (juz) of the *Diwan*. *Yahya* also mentions that there were originally six volumes to the whole work, three of which came from Turkish libraries, and one extremely important text in the David Khalili collection in London and remaining two volumes of the *Diwan* were stolen from the Yusuf Aga’s library (5501 and 5502) in Konya in about 1990 A.D. Now, the four volumes of the *Diwan* briefly discussed under:

1.2.1 Volume-I, University A1438, 200 folios, copied in 1505 A.D.

In the first volume of the *Diwan manuscript*, poems are arranged alphabetically from verses ending in *alif maqṣura* (folios, 16-8a), *hamza* (8b-19b), *ba* (19b-43b) and so on, up to eight poems containing *ghayn*. The remaining nine letters are not represented at all. But it is a matter of fact that in its first look of alphabetical arrangement, some alphabetical sections resemblance to the poems have found in the *Diwan of Bulaq* edition. There are some poems related to the Qur’anic *suras*. The date of copy is given at the end as 27 April 1506, but no indication is avail from where it was copied.
1.2.2 Volume-II, *Yusuf Aga*, 5463, folios 325-492, copied in 1540, A.D.

This copy of the *Diwan* is found in eight other works including chapter 560 of *Futuhat* and *Kitab al-Isra*. There is more close resemblance with the *Diwan* of *Bulaq* edition. Perhaps, *Bulaq* reproduces the contents of this volume.

1.2.3 Volume-III, *Veliyuddin* 1681, dated 1242, folios 238.

This is an early copy made on December 1242 A.D. within two years of the author’s death. The volume is beautifully written in *Naskhi* script and carefully bowelled and the poems are often prefaced by *qala aydan* (قال أيضا). As regards to this context, *Claude Addas* said that perhaps this formula was used by the copyist. Since the original would have had gaps between the poem, and thus gaps are filled with using the formula ‘*qala· aydan*’. There is autobiographical remarks, which informs the background of the poem and corresponding circumstances of the writing of the particular poem, which suggests that there existed gaps that filled by the copyist.

1.2.4 Volume-IV, *Nasser D.Khalil* collection, Islamic Art in London, 181folios

This copy is very important collection of sheikh’s poem. The copy is written in a highly distinctive hand, which combines features of *Maghribi* writing with those of the *Maghribi* style. Sometimes the letter ‘fa’ is written with a dot beneath (western style) and sometimes with the dot above (Eastern style) and sometimes without any dot at all. In comparison with other manuscript it may easily be confirmed that this is the copy made in the hand of author himself. There is no date of manuscript when it was written; but there is a marginal note which suggests that the manuscript was read in presence of the author for attestation. There was four lines certificate at the end of the copy by *Ahmad bin Abdullah bin Ahmad al-Alawi* recording the compilation of the reading of the manuscript in the presence of its author at various sessions, the last of which took place on Sunday 7 august 1237 A.D. in his house of Damascus.

1.3 Diwan-e-Ibn al-Arabi, Bulaq edition, 1855, A.D.

The article of *Roger Deladriere*, a scholar of *Ibn Al-‘Arabi*, informs that the substantial collection of poems printed in *Bulaq* in 1855, A.D. under the title of *Diwan-e- Ibn al-Arabi* is merely a part of the overall corpus. His total poetic output is quite a mystery. The *Diwan* of *Bulaq* edition contains 475 large format pages of more than 800 pieces of verses (it will be 852 pieces of verses if exactly counted the isolated verses in
the *Diwan*) and total number of verse is 9200. Some pieces of verses have been taken in the *Diwan* from his interesting prose works also, which may be enumerated as under:

1. *Futuhat al-Makkiyya* contains 1428 poetical pieces, totaling 7102 verses; of which 122 is one-line verses, can equally be considered as poetic pieces regarding to its wide content. Out of these total poems only 8 pieces of poems consisting 77 verses and one hemistich are included in the *Diwan* from *Futuhat*. These poems are deal with various subjects of Islamic rites and rituals. One poem of 31 verses, deals with the subject of *tahara* (cleanliness), one poem of 18 verses is about the *asrar al-salat* (secret of the prayer), one poem of 17 verses, describes the glory of *Ansars*; one poem of 6 verses, which is rhymed in *hamza* and is also found in *Mawaqi al-Nujum*. One isolated verse on passion, another isolated verse on the plurals of small numbers (between 3 and 10). The poem of three verses, in which the sheikh states that he participates in the two seals (*walaya* and *Nubuwa*) and lastly, one hemistich of the poem inspired by the *sura al-Rahman* which is found in the chapter 377 of *Futuhat* vol. III, 483

2. The *Rasa'il* (Hyderabad 2 vols.1984) produces a good deal of poetical fragments of which 14 pieces of poems are reproduced in the *Diwan*, out of which 11 poems include 107 verses have taken from *Kitab al-Isra'*, one piece of 10 verses which is found in both the *Kitab al-Ayyam al-Sha'n* and *Mawaqi al-Nujum* and 2 isolated verses are found in the *Tazalliyat*.

3. The *Muhadarat al-Abrar* (Cairo, 2 vols. 1906) contains 100 pieces of verses and only 4 of them containing 27 verses are reproduces in the *Diwan*. Among these, one poem of 11 verses deals with the sacred hill to the coast of Mecca, one poem of 7 verses deals with the black stone and the oriental corner of the *Ka'ba*, one poem of 6 verses is about the circumambulation of *Ka'ba* and the three verses deal with on the theme of hero.

4. *Mawaqi al-Nujum* (Cairo Edn.1965) contains 53 *Mawaqi* and out of which 50 pieces of *Mawaqi* are reproduced in the *Diwan*. These poems are totaling in number of 377 verses.
After all, it may be summed up that *Diwan of Bulaq* edition reproduces 73 pieces of verses including repetition which enumerates 584 verses; out of 9200 verses contained in the *Diwan*, have been taken from the prose works of Ibn al-'Arabi.

There are other poems diffused in the prose works, which are not reproduced in the *Diwan of Bulaq* edition, such as *Tanazzulat al-Mawsiliyya* contains 72 poems, enumerating 489 verses have not been reproduced in the *Diwan*. Roger Deladriere remarks that perhaps, there are many poems have not been identified as these may be found in the lost works, like the great *Tafsir* and other prose works yet to be published and discovered. There are 29 *Muwashahat* poems; but its source is unknown. From this end, it may be assumed that the exact number of poems of *Ibn al-'Arabi* is quite a mystery.

The arrangement of *Diwan of Bulaq* edition is not done on alphabetical order of ending rhyme except certain collection of poems. It is tried to arrange in accordance with the date of composition. Since, there is a confusion to know the exact date of composition of the works of *Ibn al-'Arabi*, so the chronological order of the *Diwan* may be called fragile.

1.4 *Tarjuman al-Ashwaq* (ترجمان الاشواق)

This is a collection of 61 poems in total 586 verses. It is a poetical and lyrical work was written in classical style. This collection is an example of extreme symbolic expression of Divine Love and passion was written in 1214, A.D. The background of composing this collection is that, while he was in Mecca after performing the second pilgrimage, he went to the house of his friend Makin al-Din, but he was no more alive. Makin al-Din had a young daughter called lady Nizam and her surname was 'Ayn al-Shams wal-Baha (eye of the sun and beauty); who was very beautiful, inquisitive, benevolence and was famous for her asceticism and eloquent preaching. *Ibn al-'Arabi* observed the nobility of her nature enhanced in association with the noble nature of her father and aunt. He celebrated her beauty of noble nature, her learning, her literary accomplishment and her spiritual gifts in his poems, using erotic style and love vocabulary in obscure symbolical language; but he could not express even a small part of the feelings roused in him by the recollection of his love for her in past time. When this poetry collection (*Tarjuman al-Ashwaq*) was brought before public, the readers; who were unaware of the true mystical nature of the odes, highly
shocked regarding the personality of the Sheikh. Therefore, he brought out a new edition of the odes, enshrined a new preface by adding lengthy commentaries thereof, which have formed an integral part of the volume. In a new preface, the poet explained the purpose of his commentaries in the following words:

"I wrote this commentary on the *Diwan* entitled ‘*Tarjuman al-Ashwaq*’, which I composed at Mecca, at the request of my friend al-Mas’ud Abu Muhammad Badr bin Abdullah al-Habashi al-Khadim and al-Walad al-Barr Shams al-Din Isma’il bin Sudakin al-Nuri in the city of Aleppo. Shams al-Din heard that some theologian remarked regarding the author’s declaration in the preface to the *Tarjuman* was not true. His declaration was that the love poem in his collection referred to mystical sciences and realities. Probably, said the critic, he adopted this device in order to protect himself from the imputation that he, a man famous for religion and piety, composed poetry in the erotic style. Shams al-Din was offended by his observations and repeated them to me. Accordingly, I begun to write the commentary at Aleppo, and a portion of it was read aloud in my longings in the presence of the above mention theologian and other Divines........... I finished it with difficulty and in an imperfect manner, for I was in haste to continue my journey........... When my critic heard it he said to Shams al-Din that he would never in future doubt the good faith of any Sufis who should assert that they attached mystical significance to the words used in ordinary speech; and he conceived an excellent opinion of me and profited (by my writings)”8.

*Tarjaman al-Ashwaq* is an amusing collection that can satisfy all categories of readers to enjoy its poetic taste. It is impossible to say the collection as Sufi poetry without reading its commentary. So, the commentary is the integral part of the *Diwan*, which provides element of Divine Love absorbed in the erotic poem. The poet celebrated the beauty of the lady *Nizam* in his poem, as if she was for the poet what Beatrice was for Dante. It is an embodiment of Divine Love and beauty, a symbol and a spiritual ideal. The symbols are so magical that even a full-grown Sufi could hardly be understood the true meaning of the poem without poet’s guidance. The poet himself admits that a certain number of verses of the *Diwan* were not clear even to him of its mystical meanings; he claimed to have written them in the state of ecstasy. However, the *Diwan* and its integral commentary could satisfy the readers as much as that as if he is roaming in the imaginary garden of Divine Love.
2. Nature of Ibn al-'Arabi's poetry

So far the nature of his poetry is concerned; it has been observed that poetry is the background of Ibn al-'Arabi’s mystical philosophy. He profusely used poetry in his prose works in support of his philosophy. Poetical tradition among the Arabs dominated the literary field and it continued from Pre-Islamic period. Since poetry is considered to be the highly sophisticated mode of expression, especially for Sufi poetry in order to guard the inner knowledge from improper eyes. The meaning of poetry is intuitional knowledge of poet, it requires metrical forms in order to make it awe-inspiring for the reader and on the other hand, poetry could confine the large orbit of thinking even in a single verse. These are the inducements caused to Ibn al-'Arabi to express his mystical philosophy in the form of poetry; even he used poetry in prose works. Whenever, he finished a certain point of search he quoted verse to confine the theme expressed in the prose works. Thus, his writings have occupied a unique position creating a new artistic witness in the literary genre of Arabic poetry and it became an integral part of his mystical philosophy.

The truths expressed in the philosophy of Ibn al-'Arabi are those of a seer and a mystic, not of a philosopher, though his mode of expression was based on the method of philosophy. His argument is based on the Qur'anic principles and Prophetic Tradition which is often irrefutable. The reason behind is that he was a more powerful seer than other mystic of Islam and at the same time he possessed the equipment of a philosopher. He was a strong visionary mystic and he enabled to express the vision conceived in his mind in obvious terms through proper language. The core of his doctrine and many of its details are of Ibn al-'Arabi's own, his vast reading and his imaginative faculty enabled him to utilize innumerable extraneous sources. Though, he was more or less influenced by the Spanish Sufis, pantheistic predecessors, Mu'tazilite, Ash'arites, Caramathians, Ikhwan al-Safa, Aristotelian school, Neo-platonic garb, Hellenistic schools of Plotinus, Zoroastrian and Manichaean influence; but he seldom failed to assimilate it so completely. Qur'an and Hadith form the chief basis upon which Ibn al-'Arabi builds his doctrine. This is particularly true of the use, he makes of the Qur’an which he interprets in any way that happens to suit his peculiarity uncompromising system. As if, he received his intuition into Divine order through his invisible guide Khidr, who is continually with him. It is the same guide who
accompanied Moses on his journey in search of higher truth. R. A. Nicholson addresses Ibn al-'Arabi as pantheistic philosopher; but recent scholars have begun to call him a monist. Perhaps, it is adequate term to attribute him as a skilled theosophist. He astonishingly enabled to rationalize the mysticism on the basis of theosophy. It is some time happens that his doctrine shows the dualistic conception; but internal fact is not so. His doctrine is combination of philosophy, mysticism, theosophy, and inner reality of Qur'anic principles and Prophetic Traditions as well as imaginary visions which he experienced in contemplation. He generally, applied the philosophical method while searching the inner reality and corroborated those by quoting verses from Qur'an and Hadith in order to find out the reality of the realities. So, his poetry is equally satisfying from an artistic, philosophical as well as religious point of view.

His doctrine and philosophy are absorbed in his poetry, in more particular Sufi terms and in which he played with rhetorical devices in order to make it more eloquent and more agreeable to the readers. His poetry largely deals with mystical phenomena incorporating his vision and imagery. He equally created poetry on the theme of various rites and rituals of the religion of Islam. At the same time he tried to express the inner reality of those rituals on the basis of his own mystical experiences and observations. He decorated the poetry with his imaginary visions caused to him on the particular ritual. Thus, his poetry is spontaneous manifestation of vision which he obtained from contemplation. His poems include the rituals of pilgrimage and its circumambulations, black stone and its secret of kissing, nocturnal journey and its mysterious stations, prayers and its importance, fasting and its purity, creation and cosmology, God and His attributes, unity and diversity, universe and its existence, Prophecy and revelation, human soul and its origin, love and beauty and so forth.

Perhaps, he left no stone unturned to compose Arabic mystical poetry on the subject of entire principles of the religion of Islam in order to rationalize the inner realities of those principles. His mode of expression is sometimes quite clear; sometimes it stands obscure and hardly penetrates in the mind of reader even for a full-grown Sufi. Nevertheless, his expression of mystical experiences and use of Sufi terminology is quiet pleasant and more appropriate than his predecessors. More than ten thousand verses of Ibn al-Arabi confine the entire theme of his mystical philosophy.
Some important mystical poetry and different thematic aspects of his Arabic mystical poetry have been discussed below:

2.1 Nature of God

A good deal of poetry of his Diwan contains on the subject of God and His relation to creature. Ibn al-‘Arabi depicted in his poem that, God is Essence of all creation and prime cause of universe. He is First Intelligence or he is the only Being and the existence of universe is non-being. This universe is phantom and illusion without essence. Since the God is the Essence of all existence, man needs Him so that he may exist. On the other hand, God needs man, so that He may manifest Himself to Himself.10

According to Ibn al-‘Arabi, “Divine essence is pure without attributes, when Divine Essence is manifested itself; it is endowed with attributes in man or in the universe; because all created things are His attributes. So the attributes are identical with God”. But materialists and rationalists are not agreeing with it. Their opinion is that attributes are separated from God, so there is no relation between the two. Ibn al-‘Arabi holds that God is absolute and His manifested attributes are the universe and everything exists within Him, and thus, manifested attributes and their existence are relative. By knowing itself, the Divine Essence knows all things within itself. As the nature of God is three fold: God is the Revealer, the Revelation and the Receiver of the Revelation; the creator, the creation and that which is created; the lover, love unfolded and the Beloved; Mercy, Mercifulness and the Recipient of Mercy.11 Thus, there exists complete unity of the subject, the object and the function that establishes a relationship between them, as the poet exclaimed in a beautiful poem:

وللؤا وجود الرّب لم تكون عيوننا وللؤا وجود العبد ما عرف الرّب
فوقنا يكون الجسم والقلب إتم ووقنا يكون الجسم والقلب القلب
فمجموعنا شخص لذاك اتي به وسماء شخصا مرسلا من له القرب
فلا صورة من صورة لم تقم بنا ولها قامة لادركتى العجب

If there would not have been the existence of God, would not have our essence,
If there would have not been the existence of servant, would not have known the God.
The body and soul would have been fixed and at the same time you would have been the master of your body and soul.
So, we are gathered individual, so that come with it, and called him individual transmitter, who has proximity for Him.

I am an image of image, no longer exists with us, if it exists (permanently) I would attain the wonder.

Here, the poet obviously indicates that the attributes are relational and the existence is collective individual and the relation is controlled by act of manifestation. The image of this universe is outward manifestation of 'Hidden Treasure'. Therefore, it is phantom and transitory. It exists as long as the manifestation exists. If the image of the universe would have been the permanent in nature there would not have been the relation between God and man. But the relation is very sublime, which only the mystic’s heart may comprehend by dint of secret vision. Vision of mystic exists no longer; it is sometimes clearer and sometimes obscurer in respect of Hidden Treasure. So, mystical vision is out of control while expresses in terms of language.

2.2 Pantheistic monism

Since the God is Being and Essence of all existence in the universe, but the universe and its existence is non-being. Without being, non-being is meaningless. Allah declares: ‘whither you turn there is God, to Him belonging East and West. He is all pervading, all knowing.’ In regard to the external look of the verse it is shown that the verse is pantheistic in nature but internal fact is not so. Ibn al-'Arabi’s Philosophy has close resemblance with the above quoted verse. One the other hand Qur’an contains regarding the Essence of God, “There is no God but Allah” (اللّلَّ‬ ﺑِarro ﺑِرو). Ibn al-'Arabi maintains as to the meaning of the above quoted verse that ‘there is nothing but God’. He splits up from the general conception of God as the creator; who is the cause of the universe in favor of a God who is everything. Such analogy suggests a step from monotheism to pantheism. Majority of Muslim philosophers maintain intermediaries between God and His creation, such intermediaries as the first cause or the universal spirit. Ibn al-'Arabi maintains no such intermediaries but he advocated for absolute unification. He again and again tries to reconcile his pantheistic God with Unitarian God of the Qur’an alleging that there is nothing but God, who is everything and who manifests Himself in infinity of forms. “Ibn al-'Arabi distinguishes between the finite God of religion and the infinite God of mysticism. The God of religion reveals Himself in various forms reflected in the different religion”. The capacity of reflection of God
depends upon the stations of the believer which form he accepts. The God of mystic contains all His forms, for the heart of mystic alone is all-receptive. While, the God of religion manifests Himself in man as both virtue and sin, the God of mystic reveals Himself in a manner that is beyond virtue and sin.15 Mystic’s God is neither Muslim nor Christian, Buddhist, Jewish, nor pagan which Ibn al-‘Arabi expressed in a beautiful lyric:

لقد صار قلبي قابلاً كل صورة فرعي لغزلان ودير لرهبان
وبيت لورتان وكمية طائف والراح تورات ومصحف قرآن
أدين بدين الحب اتى توجهت ركابيه فالدين ديني وايامني

My heart has become capable of every form: it is a pasture for gazelles and a convent for Christian monks,
And a temple for idols and the pilgrimage for ‘Ka’ba’ and the tables of the Torah and the book of the Qur’an
I follow the religion of love: whatever way love’s camels take, that is my religion and my faith.

Commentary of the above verses:
My heart has become capable of every form, as another has said, ‘the heart (قلب) is so called from its changing (قلبان), for it varies according to the various influences by which it is affected in consequence of the variety of its states of feeling (الاحوال) and the variety of its feeling is due to the variety of the Divine manifestations that appears to its inmost ground (سر) the religious law gives to the phenomenon, the name of transformation (التحول والتبدل في الصور).
A pasture for gazelle, i.e., for the object of his love.
A convent for Christian monks: inasmuch as he makes the loved ones to be monk, he calls the heart a convent.
A temple for idols i.e., for the Divine realities which men seek and for whose sake they worship God.
The pilgrim’s Ka’ba, i.e. because his heart is encompassed by exalted spirits.
The table of the Torah, i.e. his heart is a table on which are inscribed the Mosaic sciences that have accrued to him.
The book of the Qur’an i.e. because his heart has received an inheritance of the perfect Mohammedan knowledge.
I follow the religion of love, i.e. in reference to the verse ‘follow me then God will love you’ (Q: III, 29).

Whatever way love’s camels take, i.e. I accept willingly and gladly whatever burden he lays upon me. No religion is more sublime than a religion based on love and longing for Him; whom I worship and in whom I have faith. This is a particular prerogative of Muslims for the station of perfect love is appropriate to Mohammed beyond any other Prophet, since God took him as His beloved (حبیب).16

The above quoted verses show that the variety of states of feelings happens due to variety of Divine manifestation. But whatever may be the feelings and whatever form may take the heart; all are receptive in the heart of mystic due to excessive love to God. As the love may arose on religiously declared sacred inanimate object like kissing of Black stone, circumambulation of Ka’ba, slaughtering of animal and so on; and thus love knows no limit and it compels the heart to take various forms. The poet expresses the Divine manifestation which determines the relation of man and God in very symbolic terms. Since the religion of love is more sublime than any other religion for which man worships God. So the poet worships God for sake of love and faith.

In the external look of the above quoted verses, it happens that the poet is pantheistic mystic. But whenever we go through the commentary it shows that there is unity in diversity which termed as pantheistic monism. As the poet expressed the term ‘unity in diversity’ in the following beautiful lyric:

\[
\text{العلم بالأشياء علم واحد والكثير في المعول لا في ذاته}
\]
\[
\text{والإشعري يرى ويسمع أنفه متعدد في ذاته وصفاته}
\]
\[
\text{ان الحقيقة قد أبت ما قاله لو أنه من فكره وهبائه}
\]
\[
\text{الحق ابلغ ل خفاء باته موحد في عينه وسماته}
\]

God’s knowledge of thing is one.

Multiplicity is in the known and not in His Essence;
Whereas al-Ash‘ari opines and imagines that He’
Is diversified in respect of His Essence and attributes.
The reality refuses to accept what he says.
Although, it is a gift of His reflection.
The truth is evident ‘tis no secret that He is One,
In respect of His Essence and Attributes.17
According to Ibn al-'Arabi, God is both immanent and transcendent. God is immanent in His Essence and transcendent in His attributes. He is one in respect of His Essence and He is Multiplicity in respect of His attributes, through which He is known. In fact, multiplicity is the reflection of His Divine names on the universe.

2.3 Cosmology

This universe is outward manifestation of Hidden Treasure. It is a shadow of reality. Shadow exists as long as the object exists. A considerable number of verses, in which Ibn al-'Arabi describes about the creation of this universe and tries to unfold the mysteries lying behind this universe. It is a fundamental conception of the Sufis of Islam based on the Qur'anic truth that 'everything (in this world) is perishable and your Lord who is almighty and glorious is everlasting' (كل من عليها فإن وتيى وجه ربك ذو الجلال والإكرام). So, the Sufis of Islam always warn the mankind that this world is not permanent. It will be destroyed in course of time. It is not so as it is seen. This is Sufi theophany. According to Ibn al-'Arabi, "All creatures are indeed words of God, which are inexhaustible, stemming as they do from the command ‘Be’, and it is the word of God". He added more, "The cosmos is manifested in the Divine breath by which God received the Divine Names from the distress they experienced by the non-manifestation of their effect". Thus, the cosmos may be understood as the word of God or Divine Breath. On the other hand, cosmological relativity of Ibn al-'Arabi describes on the basis of theophany that the cosmos as a whole is outward manifestation of Hidden Treasure. Which symbolizes the eternal science, and in which all the existent things of the past and future in their archetype have been found. With the light of His love upon them, God reveals them (hidden treasure) to spread and reflect themselves through His Names and attributes. These reflections of Hidden Treasure take place as individual existent things, in the exterior whether they are spiritual or material. Thus, the cosmos may be defined as the reflection of the Divine attributes. In conformity with the Qur'an, Ibn al-'Arabi regards the world as undergoing an eternal process of creation and keeping the view of Ash'arites he states that the process of creation as one of the constant act of annihilation and creation and thus the universe is in a perpetual state of creation. According to Ibn al-'Arabi, God does not create anything. Creation means, simply the coming into concrete manifestation of something already existing (in God). But it is oppose to the opinion of al-Ghazzali, who regards that every spiritual
perception and even sensory experience as something entirely new, created a fresh by 
God from moment to moment, as though out of a vacuum.\textsuperscript{22} God is the Essence of 
everything and its essence is by the very nature of laws within the thing itself, for \textit{Ibn al-‘Arabi}, God is the name for those laws. The interesting point is that potential 
existence of things within God’s essence becomes actual existence in the phenomenal 
world.

He further divides the Divine essence that manifests itself in the tangible 
phenomena viz., Divine Names and Divine attributes. Divine names are the limited 
form of Divine Essence before its manifestation. Thus, it is the active element within the 
Divine essence and out of which a given phenomena will emerge. Divine attributes are 
the manifestation of Divine names in the eternal world. According to \textit{Ibn al-‘Arabi}'s 
document, “Human thought or intellect takes the form of Divine names to suit the 
situation happens before its external manifestation”. It may be better illustrated in the 
at of forgiveness that the Divine name \textit{gafur} (غفور) must be manifested in the heart of 
forgiver in order to perform the act of forgiveness. After the completion of the act of 
forgiveness, it is called Divine attributes. So, it is an exteriorization of Divine Names. 
Which must need to be transient and represent the passive element in the process, and 
Divine essence is unchangeable, indestructible and embracing both its phenomenal and 
non-phenomenal aspects. Thus, it denotes the spiritual reality behind phenomena. But as 
per Platonic idea such manifestation is mere a shadow but nothing else.

\textit{Ibn al-‘Arabi} divided first, the cosmos into two main realms: one unseen and 
the other is sensory. Secondly, he further divided the whole cosmos into five 
hierarchical planes and determinations as follows:

1. \textit{Hadrat ‘Alam al-Ghayb or al-Mutlaq} i.e. the Divine existence.
2. \textit{Hadrat ‘Alam al-‘Ay‘an al-Thabita} i.e. the presence of the archetype;
3. \textit{Hadrat ‘Alam al-Malakut} i.e. the presence of the purely spiritual and angelic 
existence.
4. \textit{Hadrat ‘Alam al-Muluk} i.e. the presence of material existence.
5. \textit{Hadrat ‘Alam al-Insan al-Kamil} i.e. the presence of the perfect man.\textsuperscript{23}

The whole cosmos if intact in the continuous evolutionary process of the 
Divine order ‘Be’, for \textit{Ibn al-‘Arabi}, the whole cosmos has 28 different kingdoms of 
existential gradation and everything is defined with separate gradation which is the
gradual expression of God's power. Thus, last kingdom is earthly existence in which creations are continuing such as man, animal, minerals vegetation etc.

In sum up, Ibn al-'Arabi holds that cosmos is relative and it is dependent on the God's existence. Though, the cosmos has its material existence, in true sense it is not real or absolute. So, it may be said that cosmos is relative and outward manifestation of Divine attributes and its existence is illusion and shadow. He says, “All (relative) existence is an imagination within imagination, the only Real Being God, self and the Essence, not in respect of His Names”.24 As the poet says in respect of cosmological relativity in a beautiful poem:

قد يخلق المخلوق في الخالق ما يخلق الخالق في خلقه
وينسب الأمر إليه كما ينسب العبد إلى حقه

Whatever creature created the creator in His creation has created within the creator
Phenomena is related to Him
just like the slave related to his Real (God).25

Here, the poet expresses that creation is within the creator. It does not exist itself without reference to God. Since the creation is within the creator, the universe is exteriorization of the hidden treasure. Phenomena are relative to the creature as like as the servants are related to the Real. For Ibn al-'Arabi, God is not cosmos and cosmos is not God. Perhaps, it is possible to say that manifestation of God reflected in the cosmos. So, God is immanent in the cosmos only by His existence, but He is transcendent by His essence.

2.4 Unity of Being

Ibn al-'Arabi is exclusively famous for his doctrine ‘unity of being’ (وحدة, الوجود), and it is the fundamental search of his mystical philosophy. He describes the different aspects of existence; whose prime source is one Being which touches the almost every corner of his prose as well as poetical works. A good deal of poetry concerns with this theme. He tries to harmonize the unity of God and the multiplicity within the universe. For Ibn al-'Arabi, there is only one Essence, that Essence is state of being, that being is the One and the only infinite Being. It exists through its own existence. It is self-manifested and self-consciousness. So, there is no room for reference or relationship in respect of which it could be considered. Ibn al-'Arabi
accepts the existence of multiplicity in the world; but he does not admit the Reality of the many in terms of their substance as opposed to the Essence. In his search, he accepts the only one Reality. The Essence behind all phenomena, their Reality is only one and it may regard many when manifests the essence upon phenomena.

According to Plotinus, “Reality is the cause of everything”. But Ibn al-‘Arabi, holds that one is not the cause but the essence of everything and the manifestation of essence of the Divine attributes forms the multiplicity in the phenomenal world. Ibn al-‘Arabi symbolically uses some metaphor to show the relation between God, the world and man within the theory of ‘one in the many’.

The first metaphor is that of sun and its light. He says that things in being (موجودة) are all a light from the lights of the sun of power (قدرة). The light of the sun does not share with the sun, the status of concomitance (ما ضل), but the status of candle (شايئي).26

Secondly, he compares the creator and the creatures, to light and shadow respectively. Light, being is one and its shadow is multiple according to the number of the things it illuminates.27

Thirdly, he takes the symbol of mirror to clarify the nature of the relation between God and His creatures. Generally, mirror reflects the image of the person looking at it. Likewise, mirror may reflect the ideas; if it symbolically be taken that a poet is the mirror of his age. Likewise, mirror may reflect the ideas; if it symbolically be taken that a poet is the mirror of his age; because a poet preserves culture and civilization of a particular period. Thus, man is double mirror of Divine names and cosmic names.

Ibn al-‘Arabi is well-known for his radical monotheism. He did not present a blind eye to the world of ever-changing phenomena through his vision of mystical reality. He often uses technical terms as ‘Ahadiyyat al-Kathara’ (the oneness of the many), as opposed to the ‘Ahadiyyat al-Ahad (the oneness of the one). His theory of the ‘One in the many’ may better be explained by taking the symbol of ‘water’. Allah declares in the Qur’an: And in the earth are neighboring tracts, vine yards and ploughed lands, and date palms, like and unlike, which are watered with one water. And we have made some of them to excel others in
taste. Lo! Herein are signs for people who have understanding).\textsuperscript{28} Ibn al-‘Arabi takes the ‘water’ as a symbol of the unit of multiple productions in the following ways—

1. He uses this verse to express the Divine intention. There is a room for thinking in the phrase ‘watered with one water’ that the same water vivify the barren land and produced there fruit of sweet smell and having different taste and it is caused due to the seeds of different qualities.

2. The intention to use of this verse is that cosmos consists of the word of God ‘Be’, and water may be used as a symbol of breath of Merciful God.

3. Since the world is created by the single word ‘Be’, there should be no rank of excellence within the cosmos. But the matter is not so, as Allah says, those messengers, some we have ranked in excellence over others. Thus, diversity in taste of fruits emerged from ‘same water’ and diversity of excellence manifests from the same ‘Breath’. Thus Ibn al-‘Arabi applies harmonious rule to interpret his doctrine ‘one in the many’.

Doctrine of ‘unity of being’ may be understood in very simple terms—whereas, all the creatures including man, animal, beasts, reptile, trees, green vegetable etc. have their lives and the source of all these lives of the creatures is the word of God ‘Be’. Now it may mean that word of God ‘Be; is unity and the living creatures are diversity. As the poet expresses in a lyric—

\begin{quote}
I wonder at the existent who embraces all the forms—
Of the celestial beings as well as those of the jinn and the men,
Including, the lower and higher worlds, animals, plants and stones.
They are neither other than Him, nor His identity.
But He manifests Himself in everything He wills.
He is visible for the sight in respect of His Essence.
This is not seen by intellect and He is veiled from it.
For intelligence is ignorant due to the limits of thought,
\end{quote}
But the imagination discloses Him to the hearing and the sight.29

The above quoted verses indicate that the reality is the Essence of all existence and ‘one in the many’ are only names for two subjective aspects of one reality; it is a real unity but empirical diversity. It is also evident that manifestations of God depend upon His will; He may reveal His attributes upon him; whom He desires, and love is prime force for such revelation, which is more powerful than intelligence to comprehend the manifestation of God through Divine names and attributes.

2.5 The Soul

A good number of poetry of Ibn al-‘Arabi are about the theme on soul. Soul is the chief container of Sufi theophany. Early Sufis of Islam always tried to clean their soul for perfect invocation. Soul is command of God or universal spirit or universal intelligence. Sufis of Islam consider it as a part of God. Allah declares in the Qur’an that He made Adam with clay and breathes His spirit into Adam. From this end, soul is a part of universal intelligence and hence, it is immortal. It does not die with the dying of human body. For Ibn al-‘Arabi, soul is captive in human body like a bird in a cage. It is interesting to note that the devout Muslims wanted to unite in the unity of God by dying to self; but it was later developed into doctrine and was propounded by Jonayd of Baghdad. Whether union of human soul is possible in the unity of God? If so, then it will be destroyed the absolute unity of God. Ibn al-‘Arabi’s view is that meeting of God, union in the Essence of God etc. are meaningless. Such words suggest towards opposite analogy of separation from God. For Ibn al-‘Arabi, union with God is not eventual meeting or reaching to Him, but it is a consciousness of soul of a relationship that has always existed. So, individual soul may realize its union with God for a while but cannot united it with God. He says, man never becomes God and God never becomes man, although they are always one but seldom aware of this fact, only the soul of true mystic may aware of it. As the poet exclaimed in a lyrical verse--

جَعَلَهُ وَيْيَدًا وَحَقَّى ان اكُون عِبَادًا
إِن كَانَ لِي فِي المَشْهُود مَثَلًا كَنْتُ لَهُ فِي المَثَال قَلْبًا

My right is to become a slave and His right is to be God.
If He is visible for me as example
then I am for Him as an example of soul.
All Muslim philosophers agreed that Divine essence of universal being is conscious of itself and self manifested. Ibn al-'Arabi also admits the doctrine of universal soul with a little difference in this point that individual soul is not part of universal soul. He argues that spiritual entity may not be divided into parts; because part contains a certain quantity. Yet, within the realm of spirit everything is quality (essence). The universal soul is conscious both of itself as a whole and of each individual soul within it. Thus, the individual soul forms an individual aspect of the universal soul; though individual soul cannot be conscious of the whole but only of itself and thus God differs from man only in the sense that a thing differs from its individual aspect.

Ibn al-'Arabi holds that man consists of three elements: spirit, soul and body. Again he opines that three aspects of soul are—rational soul, vegetable soul, and animal soul. He considers that rational soul is to be identified with spirit or rational principles in men that applied to differentiate it from animal. On the other hand, vegetative soul requires food, rest, etc. for the body. The animal soul has its room in the physical heart and it is actively clung to provide enjoyment to body and such soul possessed by man and animal also. Thus, vegetable soul and animal soul are also parts of body.

Ibn al-'Arabi viewed that rational soul of man is an independent part of the body. It acts as a vehicle for remembering, retaining, and perception, penetration of ideas, comprehending and reflecting. Though this division of soul appears dualism, it drives to the same central reality, one is its inward, and the other is its outward aspect. Regarding the soul he exclaimed:

فَعِينُ اللهُ لِي مِن وُجُودِهِ كَرُمًا أَفَادْنِي مِنْهُ اسْرَارًا مُخْبِنَةً مَعْصُوَّةُ الْحَالِ مِنْ عَمَلِ الخُيَاَتِ فَعَنَّا حُصُّا فِي الْقُلْبِ عَشُّتْ بِهَا وُصْرَتْ حِيَا فَلَنْ بُنِّيَ اَمْوَاتَ

Allah has kindly specified for me a soul out of His Existence, It vibrates by knowledge of indication. It gives me benefit of hidden mystery, And infallible state of the science of secret. Whenever, I acquire it (hidden knowledge) in the heart, I live with it between life and death.
It is evident thinking of Ibn al-'Arabi from the above quoted verses that soul is a specified part of His existence. So, it has the capacity to comprehend the secret of God. Soul is the prime source to enjoy the hidden mystery of God through vision. Due to its Divine entity it motivates by hidden signs set in the universe to ponder on it. When vision of secret mystery reveals in the heart, the earthly existence disappears and everything considered being pure and sinless and thus the taste of vision is sweeter than any other thing of earthly existence. So there remains no difference of life and death.

2.6 Knowledge

Doctrine of IIm al-Marifa played an important role in Sufi theophany and it is the fundamental basis of Sufi community. Ibn al-'Arabi also composed a lot of poetry on the subject of knowledge. Almost all the poetry on the topic of knowledge is the same nature dealing with his innermost knowledge of mystical philosophy. Knowledge is instinct, existing in the soul from the very date of creation. Knowledge is as like as light for guidance of men in the dark night (العلم كالثور في البداية). Knowledge is power to comprehend the reality of things. The intellectual investigation of real knowledge was started on faith from the very date of Prophet Mohammed (PBUH). When the Muslim philosophers were started to investigate the real knowledge based on faith on the point of revelation, prophecy, nature of creation etc. and always tried to rationalize the true faith of the concern points applying philosophical method of search. In this respect, Ibn al-'Arabi is exception than other Muslim philosophers on the certain issues. For Ibn al-'Arabi, soul is born with innate knowledge, but is forgotten in the time of its association with the body. Thus, any newly acquired knowledge is in reality ‘old’ knowledge suddenly remembered by the soul. It is worthy to note that thinking process is intermediary relationship between new knowledge and old knowledge. Such relationship cannot change the idea of reality existing in soul. Aristotle's theory of the eternal nature of the edios and its subsequent inability to change has the close resemblance with Ibn al-'Arabi and other Muslim philosophers except al-Ghazzali.

Ibn al-'Arabi differs from other Islamic thinkers on the point of innermost knowledge. Majority of Muslim thinkers viewed that man’s power to apprehend ideas described as spirit which Ibn al-'Arabi defines as light (لور) and this light takes the form of rational soul and it turns in the mode of universal reason (عقل الكلي) in the world of phenomena. Now, the light operates in man by which man can think and feel, hear and...
see, form image and memorize by means of various faculties and senses. In other words, light is the quality through which apprehension takes place. Since God is the root of everything that, He is light par excellence. So, all His creatures, men and beasts, trees and microbes, ideas and feelings are manifestations of His light. So light reflects in perfect form upon the pure ideas and pure things. Thus according to Ibn al-‘Arabi, most perfect knowledge is accessible to man is that of a mystic. He also added that Divine Essence directly reveals in the heart of mystic as an immediate vision which requires no intellect and thus mystic’s heart sees all the Divine perfections. In fact, only the mystic’s heart can perceive Reality itself, which is beyond intellect. As the poet sang in a lyrical poem:


god sent down a light from which light is sought, upon the heart of a Prophet whom God made connected.
His spirit brought it from above seven heavens to his heart and the one who hears in God.
From Him, to Him and through Him was the descent to him: for there is nothing in the created world but the one God.
The substance and the accidents that are witnessed are both in Him and whatever is in the unseen, what you have never seen that is God.
There is no contradiction in what I have said, for I am the essence of the many, and my essence is the one God.

It may assume from the above poem that knowledge is light and it takes the form of rational soul in the world of phenomena. Knowledge is also relational to God. Every soul is initiated with perfect knowledge but forgets in the material world after it’s bringing forth on it. Thinking process plays an impotent role to recover the old knowledge from the realm of forgetfulness.
2.7 Dreams

Ibn al-'Arabi is called a visionary mystic. From his boyhood, he was overpowered by vision. He met visionary Prophet Khidr for three times and all the Prophets of the past in his vision. He states that all his works were written under the influence of Divine inspiration and presentation of his vision in the terms of language. Vision occupies a unique position in his mystical philosophy. He fabricated his vision in a large number of poems in general and in Mawaqi al-Nujum in particular. Ibn al-'Arabi states that when, rational soul turns to this world, it forgets its old knowledge, but thinking power represents the old knowledge through vision. He regards, dream as khayal or mental image which represent a symbol for either reality or for something hidden meaning. In this sense, this phenomenal world may be considered as dream, and phenomenal world and dreams are may be called symbols of hidden realities. Ibn al-'Arabi divides dream into following categories:

1. Ordinary dreams that produces experiences of daily life and become the symbol of earthly desire.

2. Second type of dream has great significance and devoid of daily experiences, but it is direct vision from the universal soul, or sometimes Ibn al-'Arabi called it Guarded Tablet. In such dream, man’s (rational) soul perceives the archetypal ideas contained in the universal soul. Such dream cannot act as a perfect mirror; but gives an archetypal ideas which merely be interpreted as a symbol of it.

3. Third type of dream is not symbolical but it is a direct revelation of Reality. Imagination does not enter into it and the inward eye reproduces the exact reflection of the impression received. In such a dream, the universal soul (with its archetypal ideas) reveals itself direct to man’s soul without any distortion. Such dream is beyond interpretation. These archetypal dreams are similar to the mystic’s revelation or inspiration (إلهام). They are direct vision of reality of universal Truth. As Ibn al-'Arabi recites—

When I saw (in vision) the universe is ascending and descending,
And between it the Divine command was revealing.
I knew that the Real is surrounding,
And it becomes a responsibility of the existent to ponder on it.
He manages the affairs from the heaven to its earth,
It is secret sign for the people of earth to take decision on it.

Here, the poet portrayed the mystical reality of vision. The third category of vision may be similar to the miracle or revelation. It denotes real picture of hidden mystery. Every mystic depends on the pure vision for their spiritual perfection, as it is a direct revelation beyond intellect. Whenever mystic receives vision of hidden reality, it becomes an obligatory duty to ponder on it for instruction to the mankind in order to discharge the liability after Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). Thus, mystic of perfect entity of his age is called pole (قطب) of universe, under whose instruction the universe revolves.

2.8 Annihilation and subsistence (الانهاء والبقاء)

_Fana wa baqa_ is more appropriate term in Sufi literature. Jonayd of Baghdad developed the term in Sufi poem. Since its development, all the renowned poets of Arabic mystical poetry composed poems on the theme. Ibn al-'Arabi also composed a lot of poetry on this theme. Ibn al-'Arabi is more particular in the interpretation of the Sufi term fana. The predecessors of Ibn al-'Arabi interpret fana as passing away, dying to self, loss of self consciousness etc. and they agreed that fana leads towards gradual unification with God.

_Ibn al-'Arabi_ was a strong theosophist, whose second is none in the world of Muslim thought. He is not agreeing with the Islamic mystic even with the western mystic regarding the interpretation of the state of fana. He refutes the explanations of his predecessors, saying that if fana means dying to self or passing away from self, it does not mean anything except sleep. Such ‘states’ alleges neither with his self nor with his Lord. Thus, he is as if, in asleep, he is unaware to self or to God.

_Ibn al-'Arabi_ denotes the explanation of fana both in mystical and metaphysical sense. In mystical sense, fana is passing away of ignorance and becoming aware of the essential oneness of the whole. It is an intuitional process and a state of realization of one’s non-existent of form (phenomena). In metaphysical sense, fana is passing away of the forms of the phenomenal world and continuation of the universal
Thus, *fana* is disappearance of form at the moment of the manifestation of Divine attributes in another form. He prescribes that *fana* is a gradual process to realize the universal essence through following seven stages respectively:

1. Passing away from sin
2. Passing away from all actions in the realization that God is the agent of all actions.
3. Passing away from all attributes of the form in the realization that they are all belong to God.
4. Passing away from one’s own responsibility in the realization of non-existent of the phenomenal self and the endurance (*baqa*) of the eternal substance which is its essence.
5. Passing away from the whole world in the realization of the real aspect which is the bottom of the phenomena.
6. Passing away from all that is other than God, even from the act of passing away (*fana al-fana*); the mystic ceases to be conscious of himself as contemplator, God being both the contemplator and the object of the contemplation.
7. Passing away from all Divine attributes. The universe ceases to be the effect of a ‘cause of a cause’ and becomes a reality in ‘appearance’ (*haq fi zuhur*). These seven stages of *fana* represents the fullest realization of the oneness of all things and must be the final aim of all mystical endeavourer.

The final goal of Ibn al-‘Arabi’s interpretation of *fana* is to acquire true knowledge by passing away of everything phenomenal other than God. Such knowledge may be equated with awareness of God. It does not mean to unite with the essence of God. Rather, it is God’s recognizing Himself through, and within the medium of man.

He embellished the mystical state of *fana* in a lyrical poem:

When secret reveals in my heart,
Annihilates my existence and disappears my stars (hope).
And state of my heart exists with the secret of my God,
And I disappear from conceive of sense of my body.
And I come back from it (sense) towards Him with it (secret knowledge),
In compound with my strong firmness.
I unfold there my sail of thought,
In the depth of sea from my hidden knowledge.

Here, the poet expresses the state of \textit{fana} caused to him due to Divine inspiration. When the poet enjoys secret knowledge of God through vision, his earthly existence disappears and he continues in the realization of God. He forgets every earthly existence and his heart colors with the colour of Divine secret as like as the iron takes the colour of fire, while set it on the fireplace. Due to his passionate love to God, the poet continues in his state of \textit{fana} in order to swim in the shore less ocean of knowledge and to remember ‘old knowledge’ and to connect a link it with ‘new knowledge’ through the process of thinking.

\section*{2.9 Love and beauty}

Theory of Love and Beauty is the core concern of Sufi philosophy. \textit{Rabi'a al-Basri} introduces the theme of love in Sufi poem. Since love is Divine gift, it manifests in man through the Names of Divine attributes. The word ‘love’ denotes its Arabic word ‘خُبْت’ likewise; ‘خُبْت’ means ‘seed’. Both the words derive from the same root. Since the seed is essence of green herbage which cultivates the universe and love is essence of biological production. So, there is analogously relationship between the two and those are acting independently in their own sphere and love acts as an instinct of human essence. Whereas, love requires reciprocal relationship between love and object of love and so, Sufi doctrine of love implies love relationship between God and man and \textit{Ibn al-'Arabi} is not exception of it; but his mode of interpretation of Divine Love between man and God is differ from his predecessors. A considerable number of poems contain in his \textit{Diwan} on the theme of love relationship between man and God. \textit{Ibn al-Arabi} states that the fundamental point of all religion is worship of God, whatever may be the form of prayer, it is not the matter of concern. In order to perform worship, there must produce love for the object of worship and that object is God. As the poet says—

\begin{quote}
\textit{وحق الهوى ان الهوى سبب الهوى ولولا الهوى في القلب ما عبد الهوى} \footnote{44}
\end{quote}
Truth of love is that love is the cause of all love,
If there would not have been love in the heart,
would not have worshiped the love i.e. God.

According to Sufis, “performing of a single worship in love of God is better than thousand fold of prayer performing in fear of punishment. There is a well known Hadith-e-Qudsi: those who seek nearness to Me seek nearness through nothing, I love more than the performance of what I have made incumbent upon them. My servants never cease to seek nearness to Me through supererogatory works until I love him. Then when I love him I am his hearing through which he hears, his sight through which he sees, his hands through which he grasps, and his feet through which he walks. For Ibn al-‘Arabi, love pervades all beings and holds together. However, much love may differ in its form and expression; it is fundamentally one, for it represents the Divine essence. Since the highest object of man’s love is God, that object too is in love. Thus, his formation of love may be defined as ‘love loves love’.

Real worship means contemplation of God lovingly in all His aspects including the contemplator himself. He often uses the word hawa to expresses his passionate love. He defines hawa as total annihilation of the will in the beloved. He expresses that flaming of love is burning in the core of his heart, in a love lyric:

I am the slave of passion and the slave of the Beloved.
The fire of passion burns my heart
And the one I love is in my mind.
Passion has seized hold of the reins of my heart
So wherever I turn my gaze
Passion is facing me.45

Qur’anic verse has witnessed the love relationship between man and God:
‘O, Prophet! Say to the people, if you want to love Allah then follow me, Allah will love you’ (قل ان كنتم تحبون الله فاقبعوني يحبكم الله). The content of the verse provides conditional love. The condition is to follow the Prophet in every step of life, his noble deeds, his sayings, etc. in order to obtain love of God. For Ibn al-‘Arabi, fundamental factor underlying all Divine manifestations is love and it may easily be assumed that love is the supreme purpose of existence. There is something behind the love, which is beauty. Man loves beauty, because God is beautiful and God’s beauty is the source of
all creation. The poet forgets his existence in the time of enjoying taste of Divine Love, as he exclaims in a beautiful melody:

لا يلفت معاش إلى ولاد
لا أرى حبي
ما أرى محب
ما أرى حبي
ما أرى حبي
ما أرى حبي

He is not in existence, who says 'my Lord',
Whenever I say 'my Lord', nothing exists except He.
I do not see affection like passionate lover,
Certainly his passion is my love.
In His love he exists and whenever calls He responses,
I do not see any beloved more loving than my Beloved.

Here, the poet expresses his anguish of reciprocal love in term of fine lyrical art. The poet induces to invoke that love is intermediary link between man and God; till love exists relation also exists. Due to love, lover forgets his existence; whenever and wherever he says 'my Lord'. State of passionate love is the supreme state of love phenomena, which the poet tries to rationalize through earthly love of Majnun and Layla. Since the poet is lover of God, he forgets even his own existence, while he remembers his beloved and remains constant in the stat of remembrance, which state is infallible state; in which he receives the response of his love and enjoys every refreshment in his soul, as if lover, love and beloved are one entity. Thus, love bridges between man and God.

2.10 Symbolic expression of Divine Love

Ibn al-'Arabi's most unique poetical composition is 'Tarjuman al-Ashwaq' (interpreter of desire). His masterly analyses of Divine Love through symbols are ever remembering. He celebrated the beauty of lady Nizam as an image of love, beauty and knowledge. It may be said that man is created in the image of God and woman is created in the image of inner being of man. It may assess in various ways in Sufi theophany. Whereas, the essence of Adam, the father of mankind, is the word 'Be' or breath of God and Eve was created from the right part of the chest (قلب لطف) of Adam.
So, it may analogously be said that woman is outward manifestation of Adam’s inner being. Since the Adam’s inner being is the breath of God. So there is reasonable room for saying that woman is outward manifestation of the breath of God. Perhaps, for this reason beauty attracts every one. Since Allah says, “It is He who created you out of one living soul; and made of his spouse that he might find comfort in her” (QSSk). In this regard, Ibn al-’Arabi has composed a fine lyrical verse—

To my own soul (nafs)
I was wed;
And I was husband
While I was my wife.

For Ibn al-’Arabi, mythical and archetypal power of the female image may either threaten to madness and to death or reveal to his innermost depths, the vision of sublime truth. Ibn al-’Arabi’s meeting with and experienced of the lady Nizam invoked him to realize that female image is as a revealer of Divine mysteries. Ibn al-’Arabi informs that lady Nizam’s surname was عين الشمس والبهاء (Eye of the sun and of beauty). She was learned and pious with an experience of spiritual and mystic life. Ibn al-’Arabi took a model for the inspiration of the poems apart from her grace conversation, beauties of her body as well as her soul. Such inspirations endowed an image of both Divine Love and human love

She is a rose that springs up from tears, a narcissus that shed a marvelous shower.
And when thou wouldst fain gather her, she lets down, to conceal herself, a scorpion-like tress on each side of her temples.
The sun rises when she smiles. Lord, how bright are these bubbles on her teeth!
Night appears when she lets fall her black, luxuriant, and tangled hair.
Commentary of the above verses

A narcissus i.e. a vision that imparts incomprehensible knowledge

The sun rises i.e. sciences appear which are connected with the Qutb and upon which the universe depends.

She is a rose etc. i.e. she reveals to the hearts of Gnostics mysterious love.

It is evident from the above quoted verses that, Ibn al-‘Arabi uses female image as a revealer of love and knowledge. He compares the beauty of her smile with the light of sun, which means that when mystical knowledge overtakes the summit and the mystic attains supreme mystical state of fana, in that state he enjoys the knowledge of God and becomes the pole of universe and no human being is more perfect than this state. The poet also takes symbol of rose to express her beauty. Rose is sign of love and the poet uses it to rationalize Divine Love reveals in the heart of mystic.

As a whole, the ‘Tarjuman’ is combination of several thematic aspects. It consist remembrance of beloved, journey of heart, Sufi state of fana and baqa, yearning of soul for union with beloved and so on.

As regards to the remembrance of beloved, which is a central characteristics of classical Arabic tradition of ‘nasib’ (description of feminine beauty) and ‘atlat’ (description of the ruins of beloved’s tent) are used as a source of remembrance. Ibn al-‘Arabi also started his poem like Imrul Qais to remember his beloved from whom he separated. While, the former is yearned for Divine Beloved and the latter is yearned for earthly beloved; but the mode of expression is same. Ibn al-‘Arabi describes about the ruin tent, meadow, hillock, camels, desert, garden of mirage, water fountain, Lute tree, sand of desert, beam of sun and so on. Since the natural things also possessed individual live from the word of God ‘Be’ and as per his philosophy, there is something mystery behind the phenomena. So he tried to express mystical feelings through symbols in order to rationalize mystical philosophy, as he expressed in the following poem:

قوف بالمُنارِةِ وَانْدِبِ الاَطلااَلا
وُلِ الْرَيْبُوِ الدَّارَمِاتُ سَوَالا
يَنِ الْاَحْبَيْ ابِنِ سَرَتُ عِيْسِم
مَِّ تَقْطُعُ فِي الْبَيْبِ الاَلا
مَِّ لِلْحَدَابِيْ لِيْ الْشَّرْبُ تَرَابُهُ
الْئَيْضُمُ فِي الْجُزْوِ الاَلا
سَارْوَا بِرْيَدوِنَ الاَحْيَبُ لِيْشَرِبْوا
ماَءُ بِهِ مَِّلِ الْحَبْيَةُ زَلالا

Halt at the abodes and weep over the ruins and ask the decayed habitations a question.
Where are the loved ones? Where are their camels gone? (They answer),
‘Behold them traversing the vapor in the desert.
Thou seeest them in the mirage like garden: the vapor makes large in eyes the
figure (of one who works on it).
They went, desiring al-Udhayb, that they might drink there a cool life-giving
fountain.

Commentary of the above verses
He says to the voice of God (دعاء الحق) calling from his heart, ‘halt at the abode’, i.e. the
stations where Gnostics alight in the course of their journey to infinite knowledge of
their object of worship.
‘And weep over the ruins, i.e. the traces left by those Gnostics, since I cannot
accompany them.
The decayed habitations, i.e. because there is no joy in the abodes which have been
deserted, and there is very existence depends on those who dwell on them.
Their camels, i.e. their aspirations.
The vapor, i.e. the evidences (دلائل) of that which they seek, for its evidences are
attached to its beings found in themselves.
The desert, i.e. the station of abstraction (تجريد)
Makes large, i.e. they are grand because they give evidence of the grandeur of that
which they seek. Hence it is said, in order that he who was not (namely, thou) may pass
away, and he who never was not (namely, God) may subsist forever. And God said, like
a vapor in the plain (i.e. the station of humility).....when he comes to it, he finds it to be
nothing, but he finds God with him (Q: xxiv, 39), in as much as the secondary causes
have been cut off from him. Accordingly the author says that the vapor makes large,
etc., meaning that man’s superiority over all other contingent beings consists in his
giving stronger evidence of God, since he is the most perfect organism, as the Prophet
said, verily he was created in the image of the Merciful.
Desiring al-Udhayb, i.e. seeking the mystery of life in the station of purity from the
fountain of liberality. ‘That they might drink’: shurb in the second degree of Divine
manifestation (التحلي، dhawq being the first.51

The artistic performance of the above quoted verses is highly appreciable. It
is a magical diction as equal to the art of Pre-Islamic antique ode. He fabricated the
mystical ideas through symbols, as if it is an ornament decorated with diamond depending on its meaning of the commentary. If the poem is read without going through the commentary, the taste of lyricism of the poem can be fully enjoyed. Since, poetry is outward manifestation of intuitional knowledge of poet and feelings of every poet are as pure as beauty. So, all poets may be called mystic, because phenomenal world is outward manifestation of hidden treasure and every poet takes the knowledge from external reality and tries to represent the internal reality lying behind the phenomena. However, Ibn al-’Arabi is exclusive poet; who enabled to create extraordinary poetic talent and literary witness giving mystical meanings of the phenomena.

As regards to the journey of soul; this started from heaven to the world of phenomena to fulfill a course of journey. Soul has the power to realize its original state as it was in earlier, by denying phenomenal existence. For Ibn al-’Arabi, soul cannot reunited with God. However, he did not leave the hope of it. The poet emotionally exclaimed that attribute of love may attain him in his goal through the process of annihilation. The poet symbolically describes the event of the fall of Adam from upper world to lower one in order to fulfill a course of journey and possibility of reunion with God through love and longing, annihilation and substitution and so on. He has projected the above themes in the terms of subtle and magical art, using natural scenery as symbols of his innermost feelings as if he is talking to an earthly beloved. As the poet says—

فلا ما بين نجد و تهامة
وهما ضنان لن يجتمعا
ما صنيعي ما احتيالي دلتني يا عذولي لا ترعني بالملام
زفرات قد تعلت صعدا
حتى العيس الى اوطانها من وجي السير حنين المستهام
ما حياتي بعدم الا الفنا
فعليها و علي الصبر السلام

My longing sought the upland and my affliction the lowland, so that I was between Najd and Tihama.

They are two contraries which cannot meet: hence my disunion never be repaired.

What I to do? What shall I devise? Guide me my censor; do not affright me with blame!
Sighs have risen aloft and tears are pouring over my cheeks.
The camels, foot store from the journey. Long for their homes and utter the plaintive cry of the frenzied lover.
After they have gone, my life is not but annihilation. Farewell to it and to patience!

Commentary of the above verses:

'The upland' referring to God on His Throne.
'They are two contraries, etc.: he says, inasmuch as the spiritual element in man is always governing the body, it can never contemplate that which is encompassed apart from his body and independently, and some Sufis and philosophers and ignorant person declare. Hence the writer says, my disunion will never be repaired, i.e. I cannot become united with Him who is pure and simple, and who resembles my essence and reality. Therefore longing is folly, for this station is unattainable, but longing is a necessary attribute of love, and accordingly I cease not from longing.
'My censor, i.e. the blaming soul (النفس الجوامة).
'The camels, i.e. the actions or the lofty thoughts (الهم). Since in my opinion, such thoughts belong to the class of actions on which the good words (الكلم الطيب) mount to the throne of God. They 'longing for their homes' i.e. for the Divine names from which they proceeded and by which they are controlled.
'My life is not but annihilation': he says, when the lofty thoughts ascend to their goal I remain in the state of passing away from fana (النهاة عن الفناء), for I have gained the life imperishable which is not followed by any opposite. Accordingly he bids farewell to patience and to the mortal life, because he has quitted the sensible world.52

Symbolic expression regarding knowledge of Sufi elaborately discussed in the 'Tarjuman'. Sufis derive knowledge from the manifestation of Divine attributes revealed to them through the process of contemplation. Ibn al-'Arabi artistically celebrated the beauty of damsels taking as a symbol for expressing the Divine manifestations of all names and attributes in the heart of mystics. He uses symbols of nature as arak tree, full moon garden of rose, smiling flowers and so on. As he exclaimed beauty as a revealer of Divine knowledge—

الاهل الى الزهر الحسن سبيل و هل لي على اثاره دليل
وهل لي بخيمات اللوى من معرس و هل لي في ظل الآراك مقبل
Oh, is there any way to the damsels bright and fair? And is there anyone who will show me their traces?

And can I halt at night besides the tents of the curving sand? And can I rest at noon in the shade of the arak trees?

The tongue of inward feeling spoke, informing me that she says, 'wish for that which is attainable'.

My love for thee is whole, o thou end of my hopes, and because of that love my heart is sick,

Thou art exalted, a full moon rising over the heart, a moon that never sets after it hath risen.

Commentary of the above verses:

'The damsels bright and fair', i.e. the knowledge derived from manifestations of His beautiful name.

'The tents of the curving sand', i.e. the station of Divine favor. 'The shade of the arak trees', i.e. contemplation of the pure and holy presence.

This station is gained only by striving sincere application, not by wishing. Travel, that thou mayst attain'.

'A moon that never sets', etc.: he points out that God never manifests Himself to anything and then becomes veiled from if afterwards.  

After going through the above quoted verses, it is observed that human knowledge comes from the Divine manifestations of beautiful names of the God; through pure vision. The quality of vision depends upon the station of Gnostics and such station may acquire through sincere devotion and traveling in search of reality. The poet points out that manifestation of God is like moon which never sets. It is always manifested and self manifested. But those, whom darkness overpowered, can not realize the light of such moon. It is interesting to note that Prophet declares that Allah is veiled by seventy thousand veils of darkness and light, on the other hand, Allah declares that He is nearer than the jugular vein of His servant. Then where are the veils? Now, the veils may be called the mental stages. In order to surpass the veils of darkness one
should perform religious duties sincerely, to purify his soul and to perform devotional prayer by himself or under the instruction of Sufi master. Thus, he may remove the veil of darkness and then he may search the real path of knowledge for realizing the veils of light. Veils of light may be called the ocean of knowledge without shore. Love, dedication, contemplation, poverty, will of God and other likely elements help to swim in that ocean.

Besides these themes, the poet composed poetry on almost every principle of Islam expressing the inner reality absorbed in those principles in symbolic terms. He composed poetry on the secret of prayer, object of ablution, benefit of supererogatory prayer, mystery of nocturnal journey, secret of the kissing of Black stone, and so on. He tries to rationalize the mystical reality for common understanding through symbols, stating its great significance for moral as well as social life.

In sum up, Ibn al-'Arabi's variety of poetic theme contained in his Diwan and 'Tarjuman' may be confined in a Qur'anic verse: "We are for God and we are returning to Him" (إِنَّنَا لِلَّهِ وَإِنَّنَا إِلَيْهِ رَاجِعُونَ). The journey of heart and its return to its original abode covers the entire theme of mystical philosophy. His Diwan al Ma‘rif (collection of Divine knowledge) provides ample knowledge of the kingdom of heaven. In short, fundamental key to the Divine knowledge is love which is the desire of creation and this is the highest goal of Sufis in the course of voyage till to reach the Ultimate reality. Love to God enables a Sufi to make possible everything under his control; as because when man loves God, He too loves man. The reciprocal love perfects the relationship through which man becomes instrument of Divine manifestation (وَمَا رَمِيتْ إلَى رَمِيْتْ وَلَكَنْ (اللَّهِ رَمِيْتْ).

3. Style and diction of Ibn al-'Arabi's poetry

After a thorough study of the mystical poetry of Ibn al-'Arabi, here an attempt has been made to discuss the style of his writings. It has already been discussed that Ibn al-'Arabi was a better theosophist rather that a pantheistic monist. His Arabic poetry is mostly mystico-philosophical in nature. His poetry is very concise form of his entire philosophy. It is an amusing fact that being a prose writer of mystical philosophy he also composed more than ten thousand of verses of highest poetical diction. His mode of expression is clear and so sweet and awe-inspiring that easily touches the heart of reader and instigates emotional love and passion to God. Sometimes he uses obscure
and technical Sufi terms of highest order, which hardly be comprehended to the reader even to a full-grown Sufi. He admits that during his supreme state of annihilation he spontaneously recited some verses; whose meaning is often incomprehensible even to him in a normal state. His magical interpretation of Divine Reality through symbol of nature and interpretation of Divine Love through the image of Persian lady Nizam seated him in unique position among the Sufi poets.

His poetry collection ‘Tarjuman al-Ashwaq’ was written in the style of Nasib (Pre-Islamic Qasida). Like Imrul Qais, he also celebrated the beauty of damsels, yearning of departed beloved, breathes anguish of love to the ruin campsite of beloved and so on. External appearance of the poems of ‘Tarjuman’ and its external meaning has the close relationship with the Qasida of Imrul Qais. But, Ibn al-‘Arabi magically interpreted the mystical meanings of the symbols; adding commentary of every verse. His commentary of ‘Tarjuman’ is longer than his poem. His poem also contains the style of love lyric of Umayyad poet like, Majmun Layla, ‘Umar bin Abi Rabia, Jhu-Rumna etc.

His erotic poem on Black stone, House of Allah, love letters to Ka’ba and other sacred places of the religion of Islam provides a series of homosexuality. His poems contain variety of forms. Some of his poem contains hundreds of verses, some short poems, some quatrain having four lines and even he sets one line verse in his prose works in order to decorate his thinking in concise form. Such ‘one line’ verse sometimes contains a large orbit of thinking. His intention for doing so was to guard the mystical knowledge from improper eyes. His poetry contains the major feature of classical poetry, such as same ending rhyme, monorhyme, suitable metaphor, simile, and other poetical devices of prosody. Majority of his poem contains the same ending rhyme which bears a witness of his mastery over Arabic language and literature. His style and diction of Arabic mystical poetry may be discussed under the following way:

3.1 Nasib (Amatory prelude)

Although, Ibn al-‘Arabi was mystical poet; but he equally clung to imitate the traditional style of antique ode. His famous collection of Arabic mystical poetry ‘Tarjuman al-Ashwaq’ was written in the style of Nasib poem (amatory prelude) probably invented by Pre-Islamic Mua’llaqa poet, Imrul Qais. Amatory prelude generally denotes the meaning of an important introductory event leading to something
of major importance relating to the feminine love and beauty. *Ibn al-‘Arabi* also adopted the style of *Mua’llaqa* poem of *Imrul Qais* by using the word ‘*qif*’ (stay, stop), *atlal* (ruin campsite) and so on. Such kind of words are traditionally interpreted as the words of frustrated lover (poet) which was used to remember of his departed beloved, addressing to his companion, while they cross by the abandoned campsite of his beloved. As the beginning verse of famous ‘hanging ode’ of *Imrul Qais* shows—

*فَقَنِّيَكَ مِنْ ذَكْرِيَ حَبِيبٍ وَ منْزِرَ بَيْنَ الْلَّوْئٍ بَيْنَ الدُّخُولِ فَحُوَّمَ*

Here, the poet requested to his companions to stop near the house of his beloved, so that he may express the emotion of love weeping in remembrance of his beloved and her abode. The poet also gives the description of the house of his beloved which is situated between the hillock of *Dakhul* and *Hawmal*.

Michael S. Sells, a scholar of *Ibn al-‘Arabi* states that *Ibn al-‘Arabi* not only begins his poems with the Pre-Islamic Arabian motifs of the *Nasib*, he constructs the entire poem around them. He constructs two parallel worlds of station: the station of classical Arabic poetic tradition and the station of Islamic Hajj, although his motifs of profane love don’t extent to the feminine beauty, but he limited it to his personal hajj and breathes an anguish of homosexual love to inanimate object. In a poem named ‘At the way station, stay!’ a command is given to ask the ruins of the beloved’s campsite for the location of the beloved and her companions. After getting no answer from the ruins of campsite, the poet asked the more communicative East wind (*al-saba*) seeking his answer. Thus, the entire poem denotes a description of natural beauty, riding camel of the desert, garden of mirage, water stream and so on. After all, the poet adopted the entire style of *Qasida* poem. His collection of poetry may be read as love poem within the Arabic tradition of *Nasib* poem and it may be read as mystical poem going through the commentary. Thus, ‘*Tajuman*’ provides two fold amusements for the reader.

Specimen of *Nasib* style adopted in his poem:

*فَقَنِّيَكَ مِنْ ذَكْرِيَ حَبِيبٍ وَ منْزِرَ بَيْنَ الْلَّوْئٍ بَيْنَ الدُّخُولِ فَحُوَّمَ*

Halt at the abodes and weep over the ruins,
Ask the decayed habitants a question,
Where are the beloved ones? Where are their camels gone?
(They answered) “Beheld them traversing the vapor in the desert”.
Here, the poet Ibn al-'Arabi expresses the anguish of his heart for union with Divine Beloved and he requested his companion to halt at the place where the Gnostics alight in the course of their journey.

3.2 Erotic style

Erotic poem is an interesting and common style among the Arabic poet of Umayyad period. The word ‘erotic’ may be used as noun ‘an amorous composition’, or ‘poem’. It is also a theory or doctrine of love. Since erotic poem partakes personal experience and intuitional knowledge, so a poet confidently expresses the feelings of sensual love produced in his heart.

In Sufi poetry, erotic style is used as a mode of expressing Divine Love. Such love produces apart from personal experiences, devotional practices, ritual observance and supererogatory prayers. Erotic style was started in Sufi poetry from Rabi’a al Basri; who worshiped God only for sake of His Love. Hallaj’s passion for union with Beloved, Ghazzali reconciles the mystical love with orthodoxy, Ibn al-Farid is considered to be the exclusive poet of love theme and Ibn al-'Arabi, as the supreme philosopher of the erotic poem in the Sufi tradition. Ibn al-'Arabi equally followed the style of Udhrite poets of Umayyad period. As they have personified love which would survive death and create hope of meeting their beloveds in the eternal life after death. This personification of love by Udhrite poets was also due to the factors of the real existence of spiritual and moral belief. They admitted the everlastingness of soul. Thus, the personification of love was a literary device used by the Udhrite poets in their love poems. The aspects of Udhrite love namely, chastity, faithfulness, personification of love and eternal passion are equally acceptable in Sufi poem. Udhrite poet yearned for earthly beloved, while Sufi poet yearned for Divine Beloved. Ibn al-'Arabi also followed the erotic style in his love poem. Majority of poem of Diwan al-Marif are composed in erotic style. The poet says expressing his indomitable passion of Divine Love—

شمس النهرى في النفس لا تحت
فانشقت عندها القلب

الحب اشتى الى مما
يقول الارف الليبيب

يا حبيب مولاي لا تول
على فالعيش لا يطيب

إذا تجلى له الاحبيب

لا آنس يصغى للقلب إلا

55
Here, the poet expresses that when light of love appears in the heart then his soul becomes enlighten. So, love is more desirable for the wise Gnostic. The poet requested his Beloved Lord not to withdraw hardship from him; because life is not comfortable. The poet is ever ready to suffer hardship for sack of his beloved. At the same time, the poet breathes anguish of his heart that none can satisfy his heart except the manifestation of Beloved.

3.3 Lyrical style

Lyrical poem (شعر الغنائى) is generally short poem suitable for singing. It is the expression of poet’s own emotional feelings composed in sweet melody, in order to make it more awe-inspiring and resonance. The poet sought relief from the pain of heart by singing his sensual love. Not only poet but also singers and listeners feel pleasure and peace by singing Sufi lyrical poem in the assembly of Dhikr. Love lyric of Majmun Layla is still sung by the frustrated lovers to feel peace in heart and to express the flaming of love for union with beloved.

As for concerning the Sufi poems, these are specially sung in the assembly of dhikr for spiritual solace and for keeping away the mind from thinking other than God. Ibn al-'Arabi composed poem on lyrical style. Its sweet melody is very attractive and more suitable for singing in the assembly of dhikr. His lyrical poem inspires the murid (desirer of the path) so excessively that the singer forgets himself even makes to be forgotten the audiences everything other that God and thus concentrated towards God. Some of his lyrical poem found in his Diwan al-Marif. The specimen of his lyrical poem:

لا إله إلا الله قول عرف أراه
أظهرت شهادته حكم كل من ناداه
أن دعاه موجوده فآنى دعاه لياه
من وجودنا فانى قلت إنى إياه

The main theme of the above quoted verses is that Gnostics moan saying “there is no God except Allah”. It is the duty of every one to give witness the unity of God; and he who call Him by pure heart He will present there. Here, the poet states the reciprocal love relationship between God and Gnostic.
3.4 Symbolic style

Symbolic style is unique production of Sufi poets in Arabic poetry literature. Predecessors of Ibn al-ʿArabi like Hallaj and Shibli expressed Divine Love through symbol of wine, while Shahruzuri and Ibn al-Farid adopted symbol of natural beauty to express mystical reality lying behind the phenomena in order to represent mystical vision into reality. Ibn al-ʿArabi's symbolic expression is more awe-inspiring. He enables to represent more appropriate archetype of his visionary search through symbols; even Ibn al-Farid did not need to add commentary to his symbolic poem due to inclusion of commentary by Ibn al-ʿArabi in his collection 'Tarjuman'.

Thus, the purpose of symbol is to rationalize the sensual love into reality. It is an amusing fact that symbolic poetry provides two fold interests: one is earthly interest for common readers and other is spiritual interest for Sufi readers. Since the world is outward manifestation of hidden treasure, there is room for realizing the inner reality of the universe through symbol of nature. Ibn al-ʿArabi adopted the symbols as an image to represent Divine reality, as he quotes—

\[
\text{يا سرحة الوادي ويا بان الفضاء اهدوا لنا من نشركم مع الصبا}
\]
\[
\text{ممسكا يفوح رياه لنا من زهر اهضامك أو زهر الربى}
\]
\[
\text{يا بائله الوادي ارينا فتنا} \\
\text{في لين اعطاف لها أو قضبها} \tag{57}
\]

Here, the poet takes the symbol of sark tree of the valley and ban tree of the thicket, as revealers of Divine manifestation to man through the light of knowledge. Flower of the lowland means, station of Divine revelation and the flowers of the hill means most inaccessible veil of the Divine Glory.

3.5 Divine metaphor

Ibn al-ʿArabi was not only a mystic but also a philosopher. His thinking is generally related to the kingdom of heaven, secret of creation, origin of man, nature of God and so on. He decorated his poem more sincerely on the basis of mystico-philosophical point of view. He often takes metaphor of the heavenly bodies, like sun, moon stars to understand the nature of knowledge. Sometimes he takes the metaphor of saying of Prophet and Qur’anic verse in order to harmonize his philosophy with Qur’anic truth, as he quotes—

\[
\text{سرح علم اسراجت في الهواء لمرار بليلة الإسراء}
\]
\[
\text{اسراجتها عند المساء لديه كم الجوائز طالعتات كواه} \tag{58}
\]
Here, the poet takes the metaphor of ‘Nocturnal journey’ of Prophet to denote the meaning of the light of knowledge. He expresses the anguish of Divine Love taking the metaphor of love-mad Qays and his lost Layla, Maya and her lover Ghaylan, as he quotes—

لذا أسوة في البشر هند واختها وقيس وليلى ثم يه وفيلان

Simile and metaphor are the two prominent figures of speech based on similarity or resemblance. Simile is a definite expression of a likeness between two persons, subjects or events that differ in kind, while in metaphor word is transferred from the object to which it properly belongs to another in such a way that a comparison is implied but not expressed clearly. The difference between the two is that in a simile the point of resemblance is clearly stated, while in metaphor it is implied. Example of metaphor as follows:

إذا طلع النور المنير عشاء رايت له في المحدثين ضياء
وليس له نور إلا الشمس أشرقت وقد كان ذلك النور منه عشاء

Here, light of sun takes as a metaphor of knowledge of God and light of moon is used to signify the knowledge of man. Example of simile as follows:

إذا اجنب الإنسان عم طهوره كما عمه الانتظام قدصدا على السوء

Here, the poet takes the word ‘impurity’ as a simile of evil deed.

3.6 Vocabulary of love

Since the Divine Love is ultimate goal of Sufi poets, so Ibn al-'Arabi systematically analyzed the doctrine of love, to show it as a fundamental factor of creation. The term Hubb is used by Ibn al-'Arabi to signify that love has a generic meaning and it may be applied to the different contexts which love takes on. Chapter 178 of the futuhat clearly shows that the station of love has four names—

1. **Hubb**, (هْب) germinal, seminal or original love, whose purity penetrates the heart and whose limpidity is not subject to accidental change.

2. **Wadd**, (وة) affection or the faithful attachment of love. It is related to the Divine name wadud (وَدُود), the constantly lovable and loving.

3. **Ishq**, (عْشَقَ) the spiraling of love or distraught love, extreme love or overwhelming love.

4. **Hawa**, ( هوى) the sudden inclination of love or unexpected passion of love.
The above categories of love, he often uses in his poem to suit the situation of love as he exclaimed:

\[
\text{الهوى راشقى بغیر سهام الهوى قاتلى بغیر سنان}
\]

Passion shoots me without arrows; passion slays me without a spear.

I follow the religion of love: whatever way love's camels take,
That is my religion and my faith.

Here, the poet expresses his pain of love which made his heart ulcerous. Yet, he felt comfort to live in love. Therefore, the poet followed the religion of love; because to worship God in His love is more dedicative than to perform worship in fear of hell or for hope of paradise. So the poet wanted to follow the prophet to reach in his goal.

3.7 Meter

Since, meter is musical flow of language; it is specific harmonic dispensation of syllables. It consists in the succession of regularly accented groups of syllables, arranged according to certain recognized standards, in lines of a detrimental length. What the accent, therefore it is rhythm, the measure is to meter. Arabic poetry is regulated by a system of meter, known as ‘Arud’ (عوض). Origin of meter in Arabic poetry was accidental. It is spontaneous manifestation of the supernatural power of the Arabian mind. Rajaz (ربج) was the first form applied by the Pre-Islamic Arabian bards. After the Rajaz other meter of poetry came into existence with the creation of new themes in Arabic poetry. For example, the meter tawil (طول) was introduced to suit the composition of hamasi (حماسة) poetry, the wafer (وفر) that of fakhr (فخر), and ramal (رمال) and sari (سرع) for lyrical poem.

Ibn al-'Arabi's major portion of verse is scattering in his prose works. These verses are 100 lines to one line in descending order are evident in his Diwan. So, His use of meter in his Diwan al-Ma’rif obviously shows verities and he copiously uses simple and light meter. His collection ‘Tarjuman’ in which; he more artistically uses meter of tawil (طول) and basit (بسيط). As for example—

In the above verse, Ibn al-'Arabi has used meter of tawil; whose measure is- ضرب عوض عوض، معاعيل، معاعيل عوض (last word of first hemistich) and its
is 'فاطن' (last word of second hemistich). As for concerning his Diwan, he mostly uses the meter of tawil (طويل), basit (بسيط), ramal (رمل), and sari (سرع) in order to polish and to decorate the poetic art; but the real merits of poetical composition doesn’t depend upon its metrical beauties. Poetry, which consists chiefly in vivid and imaginative expression and, this is lavishly found in the poetry of Ibn al-‘Arabi.

3.8 Rhyme

Like classical poets of Pre-Islamic Arab, Ibn al-‘Arabi also followed the rule of rhyme. He maintains the ending rhyme with same letter. As regards to his collection ‘Tarjuman’, which contains 61 poems, each poem embellished with same ending rhyme of different letters. The Poems contain in his Diwan of Beirut edition also decorated with same ending rhyme of different letters. Sufi poems are generally sung in the assemblies of dhikr for spiritual solace. It requires rhythmic for sweet melody and resonance. Ibn al-‘Arabi enables to supply pleasant musical sound in his poem. Generally, rhyme denotes the recurrent of similar sound in the syllables of different verse. Rhyme itself is pleasant musical sound, which serves to mark the endings. Rhymes are different kinds, which are shown below quoting his poem:

1. single or male rhyme, where only the last syllables of the verses have a resemblance in sound e.g.,
   
   العلم بالاحكام لا يظهر إلا على السنة الرسل
   والعلم بالابيات لا ينجلي الا لم يمشي على السيل

2. double or feminine; where the last two syllables of the verses rhyme with each other, e.g.
   
   اني افتقد من استنفت طلما منه لم ولم لك بالامور عليما
   فعلمت ان العلم عين تتعلق ان التتعلق لا يكون قديما

3. Triple, where the last three syllables of the verses are rhymed, e.g.
   
   إن الذي قتله الخنزرين جوده لم بيد للإصرار غير وجوده
   والحكم للاعيان ليس لذاته إلا القبول له بحكم شهوده

Now, it is evident that his poem is perfect embellishment of rhythmic sound and appeals to the heart of the traveler of mystical path.

3.9 Monorhyme

Though, Ibn al-‘Arabi is better known as prose writer, his mode of expression is intricately connected with the poem’s literary techniques. His Diwan of
Bulaq edition and Diwan al-Kabir or Diwan al-Marif al-Ilahiyya recently has only begun to receive attention. His Diwan is not mostly lyrical like 'Tarjuman'. His Diwan prefers to tackle sublime and Sufi metaphysical topics. However, his poem "Tigris song" and "Baghdad song" are originally written in monorhyme. This form is common to use for lyrical verse written in Arabic, Persia and Latin. The monorhyme simply means the end word of each line has the same rhyme. In both the poem Ibn al-'Arabi doves mourn their mates as the poet yearns to be reunited with his distant lover. The following verses clearly show the use of monorhyme:

لا القصر ذو الشرفات من سنداد القصر ذو الشرفات من بغداد
والناتج من فوق الرياض كانه عثراء قد جالت باعطر ناد

3. 10 Ultra-monorhyme

His Diwan is not mostly lyrical. It is however, a collection of sophisticated philosophical thought embellished with his highly individual style. The Diwan is well worth exploring not only as a guide to its author’s thought, but also a model of ultra diction of poetry. His Diwan contains a few poems in which the same rhyme word is used not only twice in a raw, but also throughout the entire poems. Such artistic devices are may be termed as ultra-monorhyme. Thus, Ibn al-'Arabi broke the conventional rules of poetry. It is perhaps so happen it, his poem as it is known that most of his poems are concise form of his philosophy which he used in his prose works in support of his thought. So the most often, the problem needs to be solved on its own term. In the following poem, Ibn al-'Arabi deals with the universe’s ultimate ontological dependence on God (الله). The first part of the poem introduces the theme of the piece, the idea that all being belong to God. From the beginning, the tone is both paradoxical and utterly self assured:

هِلَّل الله انزل نورا يستضاء به
علي فؤاد نبي سره الله
أتي به روحه من فوق ارقعة
سعب إلى قلبه والمسمع الله
فلبس في الكون إلا واحد الله
مهما أى به كان النزول
والجسم والعرض المشهود فيه وما في الغيب ما ان ترا ذلك الله
ولا تناقض فيما قلته فانا
عين الكبير وعين الواحد الله

Here, the poet depicts that the theme running through the above quoted poem is that everything comes back to God. Ultra-monorhyme is a useful device to drive this point home: every verse similarly comes back to الله (God). At each turn Ibn al-'Arabi
seems to embark on a new line of thought, only for the second hemistich to pull him back to God.

3.11 Muwashahat style

*Ibn al-‘Arabi* wrote 29 poems in *Muwashahat* and *Zajal* forms. This was a popular form of folk song of Spain culture. Being a mystic poet, he exchanges his feelings with the poetic culture of Spanish folk song. Thus Arabic mystical poetry developed in to a new metrical form and acquired an almost modern sensibility to the beautiful in nature. Through its ballad, love songs manifested tenderly romantic feelings which anticipated the attitude of mediaeval chivalry. Both the *Muwashahat* and *zajal* forms were based on a refrain for the chorus and were undoubtedly sung in the religious ceremonies. Their structure is very similar, consisting of several stanzas in which the rhymes are so arranged that the master rhyme ending each stanza and running through the whole poem like a refrain in continually interrupted by a various succession of subordinate rhymes. The difference is that *Muwashhat* is more sophisticated and ornate than that the *zajal*. The specimen of poem written in *Muwashahat* style by *Ibn al-Arabi*:

```
*مطلع*
السر من ملئٍ كالْدَغَمِّ من ملِئٍ
*دور*
رَآئِيَةً رُبّي بالبَيْنِ الْأَحْلَمِي
دَعْوَةً صَحِيحَةً للْمُورَدِ الْإِحْلَمِي
رَايُّ قَيْلٍ فِي الصَّوْرَةِ المِثْلِي
فَمَا ثَنِى الاْذَا ثَنِى
```

Here, the poet expresses that self-satisfaction gives him sufficient pleasure. The poet saw his Lord with his spiritual eyes and he invited his companions to remind the place of their origin. The poet also describes that his soul is visible in Him in the similar form and there is no praise except His praise. The rhythmic sound of the verses provides tenderly romantic sensibility of Spanish folk song.

3.12 Lack of fanciful imagery

Since the poetry of *Ibn al-‘Arabi* is a concise form of his philosophy and without reading his prose work, his poetry is hardly comprehensible of its inner meaning. There is no room for saying it as unusual and fanciful imagery. His poetry is
representation of inner vision and Divine inspiration. He was not only a poet but also a mystical philosopher whose second is none in the world of Muslim thought. He composed poetry focusing the exact point of his own philosophy. He confidently represents the visions or dreams in more technical terms than other Sufis of Islam under the shadow of Qur’anic principles and Prophetic Traditions. As he quotes—

فَالأَولُ الحقَّ بِالْبَيْنِ وَالآخِرُ الحقَّ بِالشَّهُوَدَاءْلا
اللهُ عَدَّةٌ أَمْرٌ كُونُوا الْرَّبُّ الْبَلَدِّ

Here, the poet expresses the nature of God as the self-manifestation and self-sufficient. Due to the existence of God, the universe is in existence. So, the phenomenal existence is related to Him and will return to Him; as if God remains with His slave. From the above quoted verses, it has been observed that there is no any exaggeration and fanciful elaboration in his poem.

3.13 Systematic and appropriate expression

As a mystic, Ibn al-‘Arabi did not rely on emotional blind faith in respect of religious principles. He systematically analyzed the inner reality of every principle and tried to harmonize his search with Qur’an and Hadith. The doctrine of tawhid, fana wa baqa, Ilm al-Marifat, Divine Love, existence of being and other related doctrines of Sufi literature, whose interpretation he explicitly has given with more accurate terms than his predecessors. He composed poetry almost on the entire principles of Islam using ultra-literary devices and in more appropriate words in order to represent the whole content of the topic. Perhaps, his mental power was stronger than his predecessors in representing of mystical experiences and visions as well. Though he was a renowned prose writer, his poetic art was very lively and attractive. It is because of his prose writings, in which he scientifically analyzed the mystical issues and gave solution on philosophical method. As regards to the fana wa baqa, whose interpretation is given by earlier Sufis as dying to self and losing in the consciousness of God etc. But Ibn al-‘Arabi rebutted their explanations saying that how can a dying person realize the nearness of God or of himself. He states that fana is gradual process to realize the nearness of God and to forget material thing like good and bad, pleasure and pain, hope and frustration, and so on. Blind faith and emotional faith has no place in his philosophy. His theosophical observation induces us to understand and to accept the real truth; which he confines in his poetry. His expression is very clear and comprehensible; but sometimes it stands
obscure which he composed in the supreme mystical state. He tries to rationalize the Divine Love by taking examples of passion of infatuated lovers of the past, like Majnun Layla, Maya and Ghaylan.

4. Opinion of Critics in regard to the works of Ibn al-‘Arabi

Ibn al-‘Arabi was not only a mystic but also a philosopher, theosophist and a poet of great fecundity. He gave a new spirit to the history of Sufism. He systematically and scientifically analyzed the doctrine of former Sufis and finds out shortcomings of their interpretations. He tried to harmonize mystical reality with Qur’anic reality. The basic foundation of his search was Tahqiq (to find out the reality) based on the Qur’an and Hadith. The method of investigation was derived from Muslim philosophers as well as Aristotelian school and school of Plotinus. Though he was influenced by former philosophers, however he was unique in his own opinion. He never compromised with any thought which cannot be harmonized with Islamic principles. Thus, he founded a unique mystico-philosophical school of thought for which Muslim world—would ever indebted to him.

He was a visionary mystic. From his youth, he began to enjoy vision. He met imaginary Prophet Khidr in his vision for three times, and all the Prophets of the past whom he met in vision. He also realized the nocturnal journey of Prophet in his vision. He claims that all of his works are outcome of his visions and Divine inspirations. As regards to his Diwan al Ma’rif (collection of Divine knowledge), which is a unique production of his artistic talent. The collection is a background of his entire philosophy. He variegated the prose works by quoting poetry and thus sets mystical feelings in mysterious form. As regards to the cause of composition of poetry he says, “The reason I was called to utter poetry is that I saw an angel in dream; who brought to me a piece of white light; it looked like it came from the sun. ‘What is this’? I asked. The answer was ‘it is the Sura al-Shu’ara’ (the poets). I swallowed it and felt a hair (Sha’ra) growing up from my chest into my throat, then into my mouth. It was an animal with a head, tongue, eyes, and lips. It stretched out so far that its head reached the two horizons, that of the East and that of the West. Then it contracted and came back into my chest. I then, understood that my words would reach the East and the West. When I came back to myself, I spouted out verses that were preceded by neither reflection nor intellection. From that moment, this inspiration has never ceased”.

72
It is interesting to note that the ‘sha’ra’ (hair) which he saw in vision and ‘shu’ara’ (poets) both the words derive from the same root. Ibn al-'Arabi used the image of the hair to illustrate the subtle and imperceptible nature of function of the Mohammedan seal, analogously in this regard to the strictly initiatory function that Ibn al-'Arabi ascribes to ‘sacred’ poetry. So, Ibn al-'Arabi began to compose poetry as a mode of expressing his mystical philosophy in order to protect the secret message from the improper eyes. Fundamentally, ambivalent, poetic language, more than any other form of expression, offers indispensable guarantees of inviolability; only pure souls can successfully decipher the enigmas and symbols which make up its substance. Concerning the mystical philosophy, theosophical observations and the thematic aspect of poetic outputs of Ibn al-'Arabi, the views of the critics both from Eastern and Western have been presented in the following pages:

4.1 Opinion of the Eastern scholars

Ibn al-'Arabi is always associated with the doctrine of Wahadat al-Wujud (unity of being), and this doctrine played a metaphysic role in his life. He openly discussed the sublime philosophy, like nature of God, His attributes, creation, manifestation, existence and so on. But it is a matter of surprise that the term Wahadat al-Wujud is not found in his works. According to William Chittack—this term was first introduced by his step son Sadr al-Din al-Qonawi and mostly repeated by Ibn Sa’bin and Afif al-Din al-Tilimsani (d. 1291). His doctrine (Wahadat al-Wujud) and his book Fusus al-Hikam (bezels of philosophy) faced severe criticism. Among the scholar condoning Ibn al-’Arabi as an innovator or even an outright heretic and disbeliever are—Abd al-Salam, al-Jazari, Sharaf al-Din Ibn al-Muqri, Abu Hayyan al-Andalusi, Sa’D al-Din al-Taftazani, Jamal al-Din Muhammad Ibn Nur al-Din, Siraj al-Din al-Bulqini, Burhan al-Din al-Biqai, Ibn Taymiya and his student al-Dhabi who supposedly ordered his books be burnt. Ibn Taymiya (d. 1328, A.D.) was a doctor of law and was almost as prolific as Ibn al-‘Arabi; he shrewdly composed numerous legal opinions (fatwas) against Ibn al-‘Arabi which was published in Saudi Arabia edition into thirty seven volumes.

The Hanafi sheikh like ‘Ala al-Din al-Bukhari, Ibn al-Muqri, Majd al-Din, Suyuti and Abd al-Razzaq al-Kashani- made a strong defense in favor of Ibn al-‘Arabi. Even they said that who condemns Ibn al-‘Arabi as disbeliever, he himself is
disbeliever. Ala al-Din al-Bukhari said that, anyone who gives Ibn Taymiya the 'title of sheikh al-Islam' is a disbeliever. Ibn Taymiya’s point of argument may be summarized as under:

_Ibn Taymiya_ attacks the idea of emanation not only in its philosophical context but also in its mystical context, as adopted by the Sufis. He felt that the beliefs and practice of the Sufis were far more dangerous than the ideas of the philosophers. According to Taymiya, ideas of Sufis directly affect the common masses than that of the philosophers. As regards to the oneness of existence, through this belief, the Sufis think that they are able to merge with God’s essence. That is when God reveals His truth to an individual, then that person realizes that there is no difference between Sufi belief of Wahadat al-Wujud and philosophical concept of emanation. Although the philosopher would deny that a human soul could flow into, and thus be, the first cause, the mystical experience of the Sufis took them beyond the realm of intellectual discourse. According to the mystic, a merging occurred but could not be expressed in relational terms. For Ibn Taymiya, both philosopher and mystic were deluded, the former by reliance on a limited human intellect and the latter by excessive emotions.75

Further, unreliability of Ibn Taymiya’s observation about Ibn al-’Arabi occurs that he could neither establish any strong clue against Ibn al-’Arabi’s writing nor understand the broad concept of his philosophy. Finally, he admires the Futuhat al-Makkiya and reserved his criticism only for Fusus al-Hikam.


Now, it is evident that argument of opposite party headed by Ibn Taymiya could not establish any substantial point of heretic in the writing of Ibn al-’Arabi. It is a fact that Ibn al-’Arabi was not only a mystic but also a famous philosopher. His intermingling of philosophical method in the theosophical observation, based on Qur’an and Hadith invented a unique system of thought for which mankind would ever remember him.

4.2 Opinion of the Western scholars

R. A. Nicholson views that Ibn al-’Arabi advocated for pantheism. As for concerning the Dictionarical meaning of the word ‘pantheism’, it denotes that pantheism is a doctrine that there is no God apart from the nature or universe, everything being
considered as part of God or a manifestation of God. But modern researchers deny it saying that pantheistic philosophy is not fit with the philosophy of Ibn al-'Arabi. Because, he clearly indicates that God is His Ultimate Being; who is transcendent and unknown. As he states in his poem -‘man is man and God is God’ حقيقى ان اکون عبدا وحقه (ان يكون ربا) So, it is evident that the distinction between the Being of God and the ‘existing being’ is that He is himself and things are things or the Real is the Real, the creature is the creature.76

Baldwin, in his dictionary of ‘philosophy and psychology’ states, “If we call Ibn al-'Arabi a pantheist we might equally be called so Plato and his theory of the one Being, Averroes in his interpretation of Aristotle, Echhart and Boehme and the circuit from where we come and return, Giordano, Bruno and his poetic personification of nature, Spinoza, Herder, Lessing and Goethe, who identified mind and matter, and Hegel, Schopenhauer, Hartman and Spencer”.77

Louis Massignon says, “Ibn al-'Arabi, through decisive and irremediable concession hands, Muslim mystical theology over to the syncretic monism of the Qaramamita, it is not only souls, but full of creation that he presents as emanating from God, following a cosmogony evolution in five stages…..and, as for mystical union, it is through an inverse movement, of ideal involution in five stages, that summing up all of creation in our thought, ‘we re-become God. This syncretic eclecticism keeps (Ibn al-'Arabi and certain pseudo-mystics) from perceiving the irreparable transforming differentiation that, along the way, gradually takes place between those who prostrate themselves along the way of the cross, and those who lay down under juggernaut’s cart’.78

D. B. Macdonald describes the sheikh’s works as a strange jumble of theosophy and metaphysical paradoxes, all much like the theosophy of our day.79

Henri Corbin, the author of creative imagination in the Sufism of Ibn al-'Arabi, says, “……….a spiritual genius who was not only one of the greatest masters of Sufism in Islam, but also one of the greatest mystics of all time……….Genius of the complexity of Ibn al-'Arabi as radically foreign to religion of the letters and of dogma as it is to the acmes that such religion facilitates, has sometimes been branded with the word ‘syncretism’. This is the insidious, lazy explanation of the dogmatic mind that is alarmed it encounters operations of thought that failed to obey the imperatives of its
interior norm and which personally, is no less rigorous. To be content with such an explanation is to admit one’s own failure, one’s own powerlessness to even get a sense of this norm which cannot be reduced to any school of thought or any collective conformism”.

He was overpowered by vision from his youth; even the Spanish philosopher Averroes (Ibn Rushd) highly praised him for his visionary power. His art of visionary power may be better illustrated in reference to a poet of nature. When a reader sincerely penetrates into the feelings of a poet through his poetry; then the reader becomes able to represent the scene absorbed in the poem in his mind even sitting in a room. But perfect representation depends upon invocation and attention of a reader. Likewise, Ibn al-‘Arabi being a perfect reader of Qur’anic principles and Prophetic Traditions conceived some visions of inner reality of those principles and thus he expressed those visions including vision of imaginal world under the shadow of Islamic principles. There is a famous tradition—“prayer is nocturnal journey for believers” (الصلاة معرضا للمؤمنين). According to Sufis, the nocturnal journey of Prophet was a journey of heart in which the Prophet visited Seven Skies, Heavens and Hells, Prophets of the past, stations of the kingdom of Heaven and met the Almighty God and so on. Thus, the Mi’raj may be mean to visit the Hidden Treasure. The content of the above quoted Hadith is that prayer is Mi’raj for believers. Therefore, a believer may realize God and his Hidden Treasure through vision while in prayer.

It has been understood from the poetry of Ibn al-‘Arabi that his use of subtleties of linguistic expression of Divine Love is so appropriate and awe-inspiring that as if, it is itself a guide for the readers towards mystical reality. His symbolic poems contain the most esoteric knowledge of his Sufi theophany. The knowledge of some ultimate visions, the beautiful vision and the end of the celestial ascent can better be expressed through symbols than ordinary language. Thus, his symbolic poetry has protected his mystical philosophy in such a way that, which is not comprehensible for ordinary man.

Undoubtedly, vision of mystical philosophy contains in his poetry is highly sophisticated. His teachings have received more attention among the western scholars than Eastern scholars. Among his vast literary output, only a few translated in European
language and the remaining are lying in the public or private libraries of the West and East.

Arabic mystical poetry may be regarded as a vehicle for transmitting the sense of integrity, fraternity, secularism and universalization of love and understanding throughout the world. In this respect, Ibn al-'Arabi is more perfect visionary artist; who was capable to represent the vision of Hidden Treasure, vision of mystical reality of the universe and vision of Divine Love more clearly than other Sufis in order to provide common awareness and self consciousness to the mankind. Ibn al-'Arabi believes in the uniformity of inner spirit and Divine thought of all religions. Further he believes that Islam is not only the religion of Mohammed (PBUH), but the embodiment of all religions and beliefs and the Sufis follow this school of thought without professing any particular caste, creed and religion.

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