

ACTS OF MAN ACCORDING TO IBN ARABI

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The *Sûfis* interested in the Acts of the People "*Af'al-i İhsan*" the *Kalam* scholars.¹ The nature of the things was constantly discussed in *Kalam* (Islamic Theology). Most commonly the problem was discussed in terms of human acts (*af'al*) or works (*a'mal*). Clearly, Allah created man. He also creates his acts. There is a big problem here. If we accept in every respect, that Allah creates man's acts then our perception of his choice is false and sending of prophets with books and sharia becomes meaningless. But, in another aspect, if we accept that man is free, who happens to Allah's omnipotence. In short, this problem brings up the question of free will and predestination.

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¹ The great disputants within the Islamic tradition, the *Mutakallimun*, laid down the basis for rational discussion of causality by affirming the right of reason to engage in independent research. This affirmation could not be absolute, it took the form of a division of the spheres of competence belonging, respectively, to reason and Law. Reason was declared to be the judge in ontological and epistemological questions, whereas the sphere of ethics and legislation were left subject to religious Law. Certainly, this division should not be understood too rigidly. The *Mutakallimun* often remained loyal to the Law and did not permit reason to execute its rights to full even when disputing ontological problems. On the other hand, in the sphere of legislation they asserted the rights of reason to define new norms, not established by Revelation, on the basis of rational analysis of revealed Law, thus defining the *Zahiriyya*, "people of the manifest," who denied the legitimacy of religious procedures for determining new norms of law.

To inquire about causality is to ask whether a phenomenon is subject to logical analysis that discriminates in its structure cause, effect, and a necessary relation between them. The rights of reason asserted by the *Mutakallimun* provided an opportunity for such analysis.

This does not mean, however, that the *Mutakallimun* carried out the analysis to the full. The term "cause" (*'illa*, *sabab*), as well as its derivatives ("causality" *'illiyya*, "to give reason" — *'talla*), are too scarcely met in their writings.

rather maintain that the *Mutakallimun* strove to define the spheres in which the search for causality is relevant. Their basic method is negative, and its nature is best clarified through a comparison with the Qur'anic idea of the absolute Divine will. Without denying the Divine will and creativity as the last foundation of existence, the *Mutakallimun* nonetheless introduced logical restrictions on it. They did so while disputing the "permissibility" (*jiwaz*) and "impossibility" (*ihala*) of certain acts, including acts of God, and establishing these on logical grounds. The rational arguments here sometimes outweighed even Qur'anic evidence.

According to the *Mutakallimun*, the subject matter of rational discourse falls into two parts: God and the world. There is no similarity between them, so the world may be referred to as "non-God" (*ghayr allah*) or "besides-God" (*ma siva allah*). Despite this ontological split, however, God and the world make up a field of uniform discourse, and the same logic applies to both of these ontologically different parts.

The Ash'arite school of late *Kalam* finally concluded that it is impossible to find a sufficient reason to account for the change of accidents, and thus gave up all attempts to find a rational explanation of the world's transformation. Instead of offering such an explanation, they spoke in terms of "origination" (*huduth*), the nearest analogue of theological "creation" (*khalq*): "If there is no latency-and-manifestation, but bodies really undergo alterations of their states, and accidents cannot travel from body to body, then an accident's existence in substance is its origination in it" (Abu Mansur Al-Baghdadi, *Usul al-din*, 56, 3rd edn, Dar al-kutub al-ilmia, Beirut, 1981).

Furthermore, the *Mutakallimun* distinguished causes of which the effects are "necessary" and "inevitable" (*'illat idtirar*, *'ijab*) — what in modern terminology would be called "natural causes" like fire causing pain or the push that makes a stone fall down — and causes that act according to a person's choice (*'illat ikhtiyar*), like religious prescriptions that are observed or not according to one's will and which later cause one's punishment or reward (Abu al-Hasan Al-Ash'ari, *Maqalat al-islamiyyin wa ikhtilaf al-musallin* [Sayings of Muslims and Differences of Those Who Pray] 389-391, 3rd edn, Wiesbaden: Franz Steiner, 1980).

The acts of People can be divided as "Istirâri" (compulsory) and "Ihtiyari" (voluntary). Although there is a consensus regarding the compulsory acts of people which are created by Allah among Islamic scholars, there is no agreement about the latter among religious sects, and various ideas on this issue have been pointed out by them.

There are three types of Theological opinions about the voluntary acts of people. These are:

1 According to the *Ahl as-Sunne* (People of Sunnah - Orthodox): the role of a person in his ihtiyari acts is only to perform them. Mankind cannot create his own acts, he is not obligated to do them.

2 As far as "Jabriya" (Predestinationism) is concerned, it is impossible to mention about the ihtiyar (willing power) of a human, as a person is obliged to perform his acts.

3 In terms of *Mu'tazilite*, a person creates his own ihtiyari acts with the God-blessed power he possesses.

As is well known, The *Ahl al-Sunnah* (Ash'arites and Maturidites) upheld the view that the acts belong to Allah, and thus they stress predestination. In contrast, the *Mu'tazilites* attributed the acts to the person (ibadi), thus upholding free choice.

One of these sects called *Jabris*, as we know, has appeared with the purpose of absolving Almighty Allah from incapability and positive belief. They have indeed exceeded the limit. Because while denying the power or ihtiyar of human beings, they have opened up a perspective of ideas about the oppression and absurdity of Almighty Allah which are not appropriate for the Glory of Allah just by accepting that they will be punished in return for their sins, and that they will be rewarded for their good acts.

¹ Sahristani, *Nihayet al-Akalam*, 74-77; Makrûrah al-Mawana, Buhârî Bakillani, al-Mugni, 144; Baycuri, *Tuhfat al-Murid Ala Cawshara at-Tawhid*, 101; Gelenbevi, *Sharh Calal ad-Din ad-dawwani*, 1/247-250, Cairo, 1316.

² Qadi Abd al-Cabbar, *Sharh Usul al-Hammi*, 324, Makrûrah al-Mawana al-Mugni, 8/3; Bagdadi, *al-Fark bayna al-Firak*, 211.

³ Kadi Abd al-Jabbar, *Sarh Usul al-Hamse*, 323-326, Cairo, 1965.

Allah Almighty declare in the holy Koran that He created us and our works. It is using the language of religion to declare God to be the only Lord and creator. The statement is innocuous and could be spiritually helpful if taken to mean no more than God was and is a beneficent maker and provider. But this is an fact a key verse used by determinists to declare that He alone is the only Creator and only initiator, asserting that He alone is the one who acts at any time.

Abu Marwan Ghaslan b. Marwan al-Dimashqi al-Qubti - was a contemporary of John of Damascus and fellow Damascene - is important in the history and particularly in that of the Qadariya movement as he was one of the earliest to teach free will that we know anything about. We learn from his statement that Ghaslan drew a distinction between primary and secondary knowledge. Faith is secondary knowledge of God. The first knowledge is innate and compulsory. It would be wrong to presume that Ghaslan was in any way the first to draw this distinction between primary and secondary knowledge. Montgomery Watt gives him perhaps too much importance when he attributes this distinction to him, he calls him a 'thinker of some ability'. According to the Qadariya good actions and good come from God, but evil deeds from themselves, so as not to attribute base actions and sin to God.

The *Mu'tazilite* sect - as Qadariya - which has been established under the leadership of *Faiz Ibn Ata* (d 131/748), has been inspired by the idea that people are responsible for their acts, and as an opposition to the *Jabriya* sect who denies the human will power, and refers to Allah as the one who is responsible for everything. They claim that they must create their own acts and they have introduced the idea that mankind is the Creator of his own acts. According to their opinion, Allah only creates the *istirari* acts of people, mankind creates his own *ihtiyari* acts with power given to him by Allah.

The *Ahl as-Sunnah* scholars representing the *Ash'ari* and *Maturidi* sects, have considered the *Jabriya* opinions about the acts of people as exceeding the limit, and have considered the *Mu'tazilite* opinions as too subjective and have followed a straight path between both opinions.

¹ Q 37/94

² Al-Shahrastani, *Al-Milal wa'n-Nihal*, 108, ed. Cureton, 1842

³ Montgomery Watt, *Free Will and Predestination in Early Islam*, 42; London, 1948.

⁴ Al-Malati, *Al-Tanbih Wa'l-Radd ala Ahl al-Ahwa wa'l-Bid'a*, 129, 1936

Ahl as-Sunne scholars who accept Allah as the Creator of all the acts have introduced the "*Kasb*" (The Theory of acquisition) theory about the ihtiyari acts of people. Even though they have different ideas about the description, according to their opinion, Allah creates the ihtiyari acts, but mankind only gains. In other words Allah is the creator; mankind is the *Kasib* (earner, provider) one who desires and gains. So mankind is responsible because of his desires which are the reason for the outcome of his acts.

In attributing the acts to one side or the other, each group took an extreme position, and Ibn Arabi praises them for this, since they thereby avoided associating (*shirka*) God with the creatures or creatures with God. Both upheld the declaration of unity (*tawhid*) though here we see Ibn Arabi employs this word in a sense not usually given to it.⁹

After summarising the opinions of Theological schools about the acts of people, let us examine the opinions of the Sufis that have an important place in Islamic philosophy on the same issue.

The Sufis agree in the idea that Allah created all of the acts of people, as well as in the opinion that mankind has a will power. Although there is a disagreement among Sufis concerning the explanation of this will power. As a result, they all agree that Allah has *Divine Power* and a *Divine Power* comprising everything.

THE ACTS OF PEOPLE ACCORDING TO KUSHAYRI

Kushayri who examines the Theological subject matters within the Sufi perspective, thinks that all of the acts of human beings whether they are good or evil are created by the Almighty. He is also the creator of their origins and destiny. If this was not true, then human beings would not have been the mortal creatures and the "*Merbuhs*" (the ones being disciplined) of Allah. Whereas, he says; Say that, Allah is the Creator of all things. Without doubt, We have created everything according to a Plan.¹⁰

According to *Kushayri*, due to the performances of human beings are objective things it is necessary that their Creator must be Allah. If the acts (of mankind) were not created, then Allah would have been only the creator of some (of the others) instead of all of them. In this case, the verse "Allah is the Creator of All things would have been false. And once again, it is known that, the acts are much more in number than the origin. If Allah

⁹ see Holly Koran, 6:25, 17:46, 18:57 'we lay covering their hearts lest they understand'; Ibn Arabi, *Futuh al-Makkiyya*, 2/629-33, Cairo, 1911

¹⁰ Qur'an, 13:16

¹¹ Qur'an, 54:49

created the origin, and if mankind created the acts, then his power would have been much more magnificent than Allah and the things he created would have been much more than the things Created by him.

On the contrary, he says; "Or, did they find partners against Allah who creates like Allah, and did the things they Created resemble the creations of Allah."¹² and prohibits the existence of another Creator.¹³

Therefore, Allah is the creator of everything. This Creation, comprises mankind and everything depending on him. *Kushayri* points out; if Allah wanted to motivate all human beings to the way of Islam, he would have done it. If Allah wanted to leave them in corruption (again) Allah would have done it.

There are no means for the work of Allah.¹⁴ If Allah wants human beings to be in maturity, there is nothing to prevent (this). If Allah wants them to remain in corruption, there will not be (anybody) to accuse them. As Allah is a God who does not receive any order from anyone, nobody can make judgement about Allah's works by forcing, and dominating.¹⁵

Kushayri accepts mankind's will power in his acts. However, this will power is only completed with the inspiration, information, favouring and guidance to the right path or self-possession given by Allah. The source of these terms are some Qur'anic verses. For example for the explanation of the verse¹⁶, *Kushayri* says "in other words (God) has made the evil and good paths easy for him and gave him inspiration about how he shall possess¹⁷ in the explanation of the another verse¹⁸ he says: Whether it's good or evil we have taught the path. If he disbelieves, it will be with "*Hizlan*" (disappointment), if he thanks God it will be with "*Tawfik*" conformation, (successfulness)¹⁹

Therefore, *Kushayri* clearly recognises mankind's will power as a principle. But, he does not accept the absoluteness of the will power. He

¹² Qur'an, 13:16

¹³ Kalābādhi, at-Ta'arruf, 60, (al-Maktaba al-Kulliyah al-Azhariyya) . First edition, 1389

¹⁴ *Kushayri*, Latāif al-Isārāt, 1:283; al-Matbaa dār al-Kitāb al-Arabi, Cairo

¹⁵ *Kushayri*, Latāif, 3:162

¹⁶ Qur'an, 80:20

¹⁷ *Kushayri*, Latāif, 6:257

¹⁸ Qur'an, 76:3

¹⁹ *Kushayri*, Latāif, 6:229

attributes it to the works of Allah, since *Kushayri* looks at this topic from a different aspect. Not only through the reward and punishment point of view. Because absolute will power means creating, and Creating is only possible by Allah Nobody other than Allah can create. He is the Creator of all things, it is impossible for a human being to possess this attribute. Because creating is not true for mankind

This is why he says: "*The Erbab- Tevhid* (Believers) know that Allah, is (their) Possessor and the will power is granted to them. They know that the human being does not have (any) possession (domination). The one who does not own a possession will not have domination, the one who does not have domination will not have a *ihtiyar* (true will power). So they (people) are unable to turn away the will power, and they cannot make opposition against (their Lord)".²⁰

THE ACTS OF PEOPLE ACCORDING TO IBN ARABI

We discussed the opinion of *Kushayri* as a sufi above. Now we want to examine another famous sufi *Ibn Arabi*.

According to *Ibn Arabi*, whether they are good or evil all of the acts of people appears from the humans in terms of the laws and original nature which dominates over them since the eternal beginning. Mankind, can desire and select a deed among the possible acts, desired by Allah at the eternal beginning. Because the favour of Allah makes it necessary that the deeds of people occur in accordance with the state of their "*al-ʿayān al-sābiʿa*" (Immutable Entities, Divine Archetypes, Established Potentialities: fixed Potentialities). In other words, if a person performs a good act, this arises from his original good nature of the eternal beginning. If he commits evil, this arises from his original evil nature of the eternal beginning. The human being, in both cases, collects the fruits of his deeds in other words his original nature of eternal beginning.²¹

²⁰ *Kushayri, Latâif*, 1:60

²¹ *Ibn Arabi, Fusûs al-Hikam*, 2:164, Beirut-Lebanon, 1946; According to *Ibn Arabi*, although the specific relation between the *ʿayān al-sābiʿa* and the Absolute is beyond the knowing even of the perfect mystic, one can arrive at knowledge of the *ʿayān thabita* themselves, particularly one's own *ʿayān thabita*. As he says in his *Fusûs ul Hikam* ("Wisdom of the Prophets"), it may be that God reveals to the mystic "his *ʿayān thabita* and its infinite succession of states, so that he knows himself in the same way as God knows him, having derived his knowledge from the same source." A. E. Affifi, *The Mystical Philosophy of Ibn Arabi*, 15.

Hence, *Ibn Arabi* believes that although all of the deeds arise from humans and related to them they are created by Almighty Allah, and the difference between relating them to Allah and relating them to humans is nothing else but the difference between the Divine Names "*Zâhir*" (The Manifest, The name apparent) and "*Bâtin*" (The Anterior, Hidden, The name Interior).²²

However, Allah associated (those deeds) with humans to test them. In other words, Allah wants to see whether humans attribute those deeds to themselves or to Allah by feeling ashamed.²³

While, the deeds arise from the soul which Allah desired as a necessary within the Divine Nature at the eternal beginning, mankind is obliged in His own will power. In addition, all of the deeds arising from mankind, must be created by Allah not by people. But, this has not occurred in this world. Deeds only occur in the hands of people. As deeds are occurrences, and they can appear only in objects.²⁴

Thus, it is understood that in the deeds performed by people, mankind has no effect in the creation aspect. There is only a domination within their deeds. When Allah desired a true work or an action within their material origin so that they shall exist, it was impossible for them to remain in existence by themselves, so it is necessary to have a space in which creation shall take place. In the creation of this possible existence, there is only a domination for that space. The space does not have any effect over it.²⁵ *Ibn Arabi*, shows the following *Hadis al-kudsi* (Muslim tradition in which God Himself speaks) "I will be his ear, eye, hand and feet"²⁶ as an evidence of mankind's deeds being created by Almighty Allah.²⁷

Ibn Arabi, recognises that mankind possesses a power created by Allah, by considering the fact that relates some deeds to mankind and that Allah makes mankind the means for the appearance of those deeds so that Divine orders being offered, in return receiving reward and punishment has

Henry Corbin, *Creative Imagination in the Sufism of Ibn Arabi*, 210, Princeton University Press

²² *Ibn Arabi, Fusûs*, 2/208

²³ *Ibn Arabi, Fusûs*, 2/208; *Futûhât*, 4:34, Cairo, 1269-1274

²⁴ *Ibn Arabi, Futûhât*, 3:300

²⁵ *Ibn Arabi, Futûhât*, 3:85

²⁶ *Sahih-i Buhari ve Tercümesi* (*Sahih al-Buhari and its Translation*), Ötüken Yayınları, 14:6424

²⁷ *Ibn Arabi, Futûhât*, 4:20

some kind of a meaning. Mankind gains one of the deeds desired by Allah among possible deeds at the eternal beginning, by using the power created by Allah. Allah keeps people responsible after giving this power.

When mankind loses this power, his responsibility is also cancelled. Allah makes the manifestation of this power in mankind through the "Nefha" (breeze, breath) by the means of an angel. If this power did not exist, the responsibility of people would not have existed, and they would not have been ordered to say: "We can only ask for your Help."²⁸

The asking for help shows the acceptance of mankind's ability to perform the deeds. Therefore, *Ibn Arabi* expresses that the idea of the *Mu'tezilite* sect about attributing mankind's deeds to themselves is true in one aspect, and that they are mistaken in another aspect. He confirms the *Ash'aris* for attributing the creation of acts to Allah, and for attributing the gaining to mankind as a strong evidence of Shariah and Logic.²⁹ Therefore, he clearly states his opinions concerning the gaining, and he supports the *Ash'ari* ideas on this issue. *Ibn Arabi*, explains the responsibility given to mankind by Almighty Allah for some of his acts as wisdom and knowledge. Thus, he argues that it is not right for Allah to order somebody to perform something while it is known that he has not got the power to do it.³⁰

Ibn Arabi with these expressions is trying to explain the following: The acts are planned for us. While there are acts which we must do, which we can select or some acts which are prohibited, forbidden, there are laws of Sharia (the revealed, or canonical law of Islam) permitting or prohibiting them. We are responsible for this. Moreover, the rewards or punishments for obeying to perform them or refrain to keep away from them are arranged, and Allah makes his judgement in regard to people on the basis of their performances.

Ibn Arabi supports his argument with the Qur'anic verses, and he states that mankind can reject the orders of the Satan, since he is powerful enough to do so. He finally reaches a conclusion that "it is not necessary to attend to every invitation."³¹

MANKIND'S LIMITS OF FREEDOM

Before we examine the determination of mankind's limits of freedom in the opinion of *Ibn Arabi*, we must discover what he understands

²⁸ Qur'an, 1:5

²⁹ *Ibn Arabi*, *Futūhāt*, 1/273

³⁰ *Ibn Arabi*, *Futūhāt*, 2/281

³¹ *Ibn Arabi*, *Futūhāt*, 3:112

not jabe (forcing). According to *Ibn Arabi*, this can only be true among people who are prevented to do something by God.

It seems that force is a fundamental according to the Sufis. Even so, when describing Sufism it has been described as the falling of the will power, as being similar to a new born baby, and beyond this is described as being like a corpse in the hands of a corpse washer surrendering to Allah.³²

"Tawhid" means much more than declaring "La ilahe illa'l-lah" in Sufism. For example, *Herawi* explains *tawhid* as the falling down of means and he says every thing happening arises from the Divine Will.³³ *Tawhid*, which expresses that by creating acts, Allah is Unique in the Sufi term it also means besides rejecting many false gods, it means rejecting the means. Because, all means have submitted to the orders of Allah and begging for help from the means is a degree from polytheism. "Tawakkul" (trust in God) which is a sign of performing the force theory, is one of the important spiritual degrees according to the Sufis.

The spiritual student cannot enter into the Sufis path without forsaking his will power and the precautions and without submitting to the judgement comprised by the Plan of Allah. Because, he is incapable of distinguishing between good and evil, and between obligation and blessing. After he submits himself to mortality and obedience he is under the domination of Allah's Divinity. Hence, *Sahl Ibn Abdullah* says; the first degree in *tawakkul* (trust in God) is the mortal becoming like a corpse in the hands of the corpse washer by surrendering to Allah. The human mortal accepts everything that Allah desires.³⁴ There is no activates and precautions for that mortal. When describing the spiritual degrees of the Sufis, *Harawi* says that; the person spiritually guided within the degree of *tawakkul* does not accept any partner in the possessions and domination of Allah, since mankind will not observe anything other than the works of Allah.³⁵

³² *Kushayri*, *al-Risālah*, 2:552, *al-Ghazālī*, *Kitāb al-Arbain fī Usūl al-Dīn*, 249, *Maktabat al-Jundī*, Cairo

³³ *Harawī*, *al-Manāzil al-Sāirīn*, 24, *Matbaat Muhammed as-Sahib*, Cairo

³⁴ *al-Ghazālī*, *Ihyā al-Ulūm al-Dīn*, 1:466-468, *Matbbat Isa al-Halabi*, Cairo

1358/1939

³⁵ *Harawī*, *al-Manāzil al-Sāirīn*, 24

According to the Sufis, *tawakkul* is not only an idea. It is a spiritual path. Imam Ghazālī points out to some realities of the signs of spiritual guidance concerning *tawakkul* experienced by the Sufis. He states that the daily bread of Sufis are given to them although they do not expect it. A person submitting will not become worried even if his possessions are stolen, even if he suffered a loss in trade. According to Ghazālī who gives the example of birds wandering in hunger and returning satiated, the Sufi cannot rely on anyone else but Allah for daily bread.³⁶

However, besides this, our Holy Prophet (pbuh) stated that the challenge made against the ego is "*Cihad-ı Akbar*". There is no doubt among Islamic Communities and Sects who make Cihad against their egos like the Sufis. They have understood the challenge against the ego as well as challenging physically as the meaning of Cihad. Because, as long as the physical strength is unable to dominate over their egos, it is impossible for the ego to make peace.³⁷

With many events expressing the domination over the desires of the body and flesh and which are written in Sufism books, they tried to express keeping away from natural sensation and mortal attributions.³⁸

They have prevented hunger because it causes the weakness of sensation and the abasement of the ego.³⁹

³⁶ al-Ghazālī, *Ihyā al-Ulūm al-Dīn*, 4:260

³⁷ al-Ghazālī, *Kitāb al-Arbāin*, 1:113

³⁸ Kushayrī, *al-Risālah*, 1:329

³⁹ al-Ghazālī, *Kitāb al-Arbāin*, 1:104-105

We should not think that there is something contrary between these two opinions of the Sufis, because the thing which the Sufis understand about freedom is different from the Kalamist's understanding. According to the Sufis, freedom is the ego being free from absurdness, and from the world and worldly pleasures. This can only be achieved by truly submitting oneself to Allah. In other words, when mankind gives up his own freedom for the sake of requesting the desires of Allah he will become a true obedient mortal. Thus, a true obedient mortal, requests only the requirements of the Sharia. With the complete and true mortality, a person will become free against everything other than Allah, since complete and true mortality means that a person gains moral with the morality of Allah, and becomes free from his personal attributions. When mankind achieves this, he will truly become free. In this point of view, according to the Sufis, freedom means that mankind is not under the captivity of created things, and is not dominated by no one existing in the universe.⁴⁰

After expressing the meaning of freedom according to the Sufis: "Know that, the true freedom is complete mortal obedience, *Kushayrī* says "if a person becomes faithful and sincere in his mortality towards Allah he will save his freedom from the captivity of strangers."⁴¹ Even so for him, for the true freedom of the mortal, he must not be under the captivity of any of the created things for any purpose of the world or the hereafter.⁴²

As we see, freedom has two aspects which seem to be contrary to each other in a way Sufis understand it. In other words, in one aspect there is a strong will power trying to gain freedom from everything and separating from everything. The second aspect is submitting to Allah with an absolute force. Thus, the meaning of freedom understood by the Sufis is not an attribution of the human will power, it is a degree which the Sufis want to reach. This explains why it motivates mankind towards hard working and challenging. Mankind's acts happens with his own will power and strength. Allah concealed everything from mankind, although everything is planned by Divine Destiny, so that mankind feels free and becomes responsible.

When looking through this aspect, mankind is completely free within the area he remains which *Ibn Arabī* calls "*Hazāin al-Cūd al-Ilāhī*" somewhat Divine Knowledge. This area contains the "*A'yān as-Sābiṭe*" (Established Potentialities) as some kind of a non-existence (*adēm*) which is the possibility within Divine Knowledge. These are named *a'yān as-sābiṭe*

⁴⁰ Kushayrī, *al-Risālah*, 2:460

⁴¹ Kushayrī, *al-Risālah*, 2:461

⁴² Kushayrī, *al-Risālah*, 2:461

or constant beings within non-existence, since there is a possibility that they appear in the world of existence or remain unchanged. They await the "Cûd-i Ilâhî" (manifestation) that will take them out of the related or attributed darkness of non-existence to the illumination of existence. Ibn Arabi explains this as being which has not already appeared in the stage of existence is completely free. But, when it appears in the stage of existence and exists its freedom is not absolute, because it will obey its original nature. However, according to Ibn Arabi this submission is not by force. We call this "Zâîr" (self) within the possible beings. All of the acts of mankind arise from himself, they are self-motivated.

Ibn Arabi describes absolute freedom as which possible beings benefit from within the "Hazâinu'l-Cûdi'l-Ilâhî". All beings beg Allah so that they are taken to the world of existence. Allah decides on their appearance according to the requirement of the *Divine Wisdom*. When it is the time for possible beings to depart from the world of non-existence and to appear in the "Âlem an-Nur" (World of existence), they hear the announcement of Allah inviting them to existence with the word "Kün" (Be!). At that stage, Allah, instead of non-existence, prefers the existence of possible beings. When explaining this, Ibn Arabi, says; "At the eternal beginning, possible beings were a constant origin within the *Divine Knowledge* of Allah. There was an absolute freedom for it. It was desiring from the blessing of existence which it never experienced. Allah accepted its desire. (thus) Its freedom was limited with its special original nature which will slowly appear."⁴³

In this circumstance, for Ibn Arabi, mankind is free since the time he remained within *Divine knowledge*. At the eternal beginning, Allah knows that, he will appear in the world of existence with a limited freedom and that he will select the way to good or evil in the requirement of his self origin and original nature. The fact that, Allah knows this, will not affect the possible beings, because this knowledge of Allah depends on the already known (Ma'lum, in other words their origin and capabilities). Thus, Ibn Arabi argues that the knowledge of Allah depends on the already known and there will not be any change in the *Divine knowledge*. On the basis of this view, knowledge follows the already known, as it depends on the already known (Ma'lum). This is why knowledge has no effect over the already known.⁴⁴

⁴³ Ibn Arabi, Futûhât, 2:248-249

⁴⁴ Ibn Arabi, Futûhât, 4:223

Ibn Arabi states that the reason for the existence of all things is not knowledge, but is the Power of Allah. This is the *Divine Command* ordering all things to exist, and everything suddenly comes to existence. The knowledge of Allah does not determine whether all things will exist or not.⁴⁵ To the state already of the known things puts a limit to the nature of knowledge, depends on the already known, so what ever is the already known, knowledge is the same.

In other words, what ever is the already known within the soul and self origin, that's how it will be related to it.⁴⁶

Therefore, mankind will not know about the acts he will perform in detail, because everything is possible. When something happens in the future, the reason for this is not *Divine Knowledge*. Because, for Ibn Arabi, Allah knows about the already known, according to the state it exists in. Mankind, decides on and selects the acts. But, he only prefers and selects the thing, which Allah knew and which the *Divine knowledge* relates to the eternal beginning.

THE SOURCE OF THE HUMAN INTELLECTUAL WILL POWER AND ITS RESPONSIBILITY

Ibn Arabi accepts the self nature of every person as the source of the human intellectual will power. This (the human self nature) is one of the possible beings which Ibn Arabi describes, as is a waiting to enjoy the blessing of existence. When, Allah turned it into existence with *Divine Power*, this was not because its creation was necessary, needed, but, the purpose was to bless it with God send existence. At that moment, (God) shows its circumstance and origin piece by piece.⁴⁷

⁴⁵ Ibn Arabi, Futûhât, 4:223

⁴⁶ Ibn Arabi, Futûhât, 4:46

⁴⁷ Ibn Arabi, Futûhât, 1:162

As, Allah Almighty knows every possible thing within its original soul; as knowledge depends on the already known, as the Divine Power opens up all of the Divine Power opens up all of the possible beings that appear in the world of existing things (Mawjudat) within their unknown nature in a special way, no being has the right to try an evidence about its destiny of life. Because Allah makes judgement according to its self nature and personal limit. That's why, every person is responsible for himself according to his own nature and the limits of his tolerance. The person determines the goodness or evilness of his nature and his limits of tolerance by himself. While his nature is like this he has the individual capability of falling or rising up. The thing which will arise relating to his ascension and descent will be good or evil.⁴⁸

EVERYTHING HAPPENS WITH THE DIVINE JUDGMENT AND DESTINY

The meaning of the reality that everything in the Universe happens with the Divine Judgement and Destiny of Allah means that Allah arranges the existence of everything with Divine Wisdom and puts limits in the relations.

In other words, Allah puts limits in the amounts of everything and determines the time and moment.⁴⁹ From this point of view, *Ibn Arabi* thinks that everything guides itself to its own way due to *al-a'yan as-sabite*. Allah knows this completely at the eternal beginning and even Allah does not change this, since the *Divine Will* does not concern this. All the believers, nonbelievers, obedient and the rebellious show the thing which they *al-a'yan as-sabite* exist on, comprised by their existence, constant being. In other words the knowledge and self Divine Being of Allah That's why Allah says: "They did not make oppression against us, but they made oppression to themselves."⁵⁰ and "I do not make oppression to my mortals."⁵¹

Ibn Arabi similar to the other Sufis accepts that all acts are created by Almighty Allah. However, he also suggests that they are associated with us, because we are the centre of the rewards and sins. Acts are related to us. If Allah had opened our eye of conscience, we would have seen that all acts belong to Allah. He is the maker of our acts, but we should remain in modesty. Because, relating the acts to the creation of Allah and relating ourselves as the centre of acts, is the beauty of the Sharia.

⁴⁸ Mahmut Kasim, Muhyiddin Ibn Arabi, 164-165; Cairo, 1967

⁴⁹ Mahmut Kasim, Muhyiddin Ibn Arabi, 161

⁵⁰ Qur'an, 2:57

⁵¹ Qur'an, 50:29

revealed, or canonical, law of Islam). When Allah shows the wisdom of what is attributed as evil, we will see it beautiful.

Thus, Allah changes our sins into rewards as legally, not as a whole.⁵² This is why, *Ibn Arabi* thinks that, the one who absolves his lord Allah from polytheism belief, is in the high position of "*Kamâl*" (perfection, completeness) instead of the position of "*Ihsân*" (beneficence).

In this state Allah is being observed within the circumstance of mortals. In this observation, the mortal can see that the creator of the deed is Allah not himself, because the mortal is nothing else but the centre of the rising deed.⁵³

The Sufis believe that everything arises from Allah. He is the Creator of all things and their means. Allah is with the means and the results which are made up of means. The wisdom of Allah is beyond our intellectual capacity. *Ibn Arabi*, after saying that creatures have no power, he then says: "Because there is no Creator of Acts other than Allah."⁵⁴ Therefore, *Ibn Arabi* does not agree with the Mu'tezilite claiming that mankind creates his own acts. Because he thinks that mankind is just a specie, and is not capable of creating his deed. When he gains the strength he needs from the creator of all acts the one and only Allah. We relate the acts to the origins of what we call the means of possible beings, whereas, their real creator is Allah.⁵⁵

If we take into consideration, it will be seen that *Ibn Arabi* and the Sufis perform the theories of the Ash'ari sect concerning the subject matter of Divine Judgement and Destiny and the related subject of rewards and sins in a wide spanned. But they are following a more constraining way in this subject than the Ash'ari, and when they do it, they do not do the same mistake done by the *Jabriya* sect. Therefore, they remain somewhere between the *Jabri* theory and the Ash'ari theory within this topic. Perhaps its because of this relation that, *Ibn Taymiyya*⁵⁶ and his student *Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyye*⁵⁷ think that the Sufis are affected by the *Jabriya* sect.

⁵² *Ibn Arabi*, Futûhât, 4:34

⁵³ *Ibn Arabi*, Futûhât, 2:397, 4:117

⁵⁴ *Ibn Arabi*, Kitâb al-Mesâil, 21, Dâirât al-Ma'arif al-Islâmiyye, 1948

⁵⁵ *Ibn Arabi*, Fuvûs, 2:314

⁵⁶ *Ibn Taymiyya*, Menâhîc al-Sunne, 2:227, Makasib al-Hayrât, Beirut

⁵⁷ *Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyye*, Tâlib al-Ibbis, 184, Da'ir al-Vu'y al-Arabi, Beirut

As, Allah Almighty knows every possible thing within its own original soul; as knowledge depends on the already known; as the Divine Power opens up all of the Divine Power opens up all of the features of possible beings that appear in the world of existing things (Mawjudat) within their unknown nature in a special way, no being has the right to have an evidence about its destiny of life. Because Allah makes judgement according to its self nature and personal limit. That's why, every person is responsible for himself according to his own nature and the limits of his tolerance. The person determines the goodness or evilness of his nature and his limits of tolerance by himself. While his nature is like this he has the individual capability of falling or rising up. The thing which will arise relating to his ascension and descent will be good or evil.⁴⁸

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⁴⁸ *Ibn Arabi*, *Futûhât*, 4: 34

⁴⁹ *Ibn Arabi*, *Futûhât*, 2: 147, 4: 117

⁵⁰ *Ibn Arabi*, *Kitâb al-Mesâil*, 21, *Diwân al-Madîf al-Isâmîyye*, 1943

⁵¹ *Ibn Arabi*, *Futûhât*, 2: 314

⁵² *Ibn Taymiyya*, *Menâhîl as-Sunne*, 2: 227, *Maknâh al-Idârîyye*, Beirut

⁵³ *Ibn Taymiyya*, *Menâhîl as-Sunne*, 2: 227, *Diwân al-Madîf al-Isâmîyye*, Beirut

⁵⁴ *Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyye*, *Talhis al-Idrisi*, 184, *Diwân al-Madîf al-Isâmîyye*, Beirut

⁴⁸ Mahmut Kasim, *Muhyiddin Ibn Arabi*, 164-165, Cairo, 1967

⁴⁹ Mahmut Kasim, *Muhyiddin Ibn Arabi*, 161

⁵⁰ *Qur'an*, 2: 57

⁵¹ *Qur'an*, 50: 29

"Everything in the Universe, takes place within the Laws of force planned at the eternal beginning. Every person, according to Ibn Arabi, is born as a rebellious or obedient; good or evil individual according to his *a'yan as-sābīte* nature comprised by the eternal knowledge of Almighty Allah and he is independent.⁵⁸

The force (Jabr) he understands does not mean something turning a deed maker other than the nature of things considered by the *Jabriya* sect. Because, he argues that the source of this force is the personal nature of things.⁵⁹

This is why we can see that within the force theory accepted by Ibn Arabi, a responsibility is given to mankind according to his acts. Because, he accepts that obedience as well as rebellion arises from the nature of mankind. That's why, sometimes he obeys Allah and sometimes he shows rebellion against Allah. Ibn Arabi accepts that mankind is responsible for committing good and evil because of his submission to his own personal nature.⁶⁰

The Ash'arite position is strong in the view of unveiling because in the final analysis, everything returns to God, and this is seen most clearly through visionary experience.⁶¹ 'To God belongs the conclusive argument'. The Ash'arites avoided the contradiction involved in declaring that God creates the acts and then punishes His servants for evil deeds by their doctrine of 'acquisition (kasb) or more accurately performance. Man performs the acts but does not create them, while God creates the acts but does not perform them. The Mu'tazilite argument, like the Ash'arite position, is based upon certain select Koranic verses which clearly support what they want to say. The Koran is full of verses which indicate God's total control over His creation, yet it frequently attributes choice and responsibility to man. In effect each group interpreted the verses cited by their opponents, but read the verses supporting their own position literally.

⁵⁸ Ibn Arabi, *Fusus*, 2:158-159

⁵⁹ Ibn Arabi, *Fusus*, 2:228

⁶⁰ Ibn Arabi, *Fusus*, 2:228-229

⁶¹ Ibn Arabi, *Futuhāt*, 2/204, Bulak, Cairo, 1911

⁶² Q. 6/149

Ibn Arabi is not pleased with these ideas and often criticizes them.⁶³ Since all acts are ultimately God's, all of them are praiseworthy in themselves. But inasmuch as the acts become attached to the servant who is addressed by the law, some of them are blameworthy. In the next world, once a person has left the arena of law, he will see at all his evil acts were in fact—in relation to God though not in relation to himself—good acts. This, in Ibn Arabi's view is one of the meanings of the Koranic statement 'God will change their evil deeds into good deeds'.⁶⁴ One of the types of annihilation (*fana*) which the spiritual traveller may experience is the annihilation of acts.

He says about this matter: 'Those of the theologians (*mutakallimun*) who affirm that the acts of the servants (*af'al ibad*) are a creation of God are aware, but they do not witness, because of the veil of performance through which God has blinded their sight. In the same way, He has blinded the insight of him who saw that the acts belong to creatures when He placed him with that which he witnesses with his eyes. So this one is unaware, and he is the Mu'tazilite. The other one does not witness, and he is the Ash'arite. Both have blinders over their eyes.'⁶⁵

By Ibn Arabi's own admission, his position on the acts wavers. Or rather, it depends on the point of view he has in mind. That which allows him to ascribe acts to man is the fact of man's being made upon the divine form and his ability to assume the traits of all God's names and attributes (*takhalluq*). Since God's attributes within him, he manifests God's desire and power. Inasmuch as he is the form of God and not God Himself, his decisions and acts belong to himself. Ibn Arabi points out that the disagreement in this question goes back to an argument over the manner in which God discloses Himself. Some say He discloses Himself in the acts of the creatures, and some disagree. Those who are aware of His self-disclosure attribute the acts to God. Those who are not aware attribute them to the creatures. Hence the difference among the theologians goes back to the fact that one group says the acts are 'He', the other says they are not He.⁶⁷

⁶³ Ibn Arabi, *Futuhāt*, 2/604, Bulak, Cairo, 1911

⁶⁴ Q. 25/70

⁶⁵ Ibn Arabi, *Futuhāt*, 3/403, Bulak, Cairo, 1911

⁶⁶ Ibn Arabi, *Futuhāt*, 2/513, Bulak, Cairo, 1911. Also see William

⁶⁷ Ibn Arabi, *Futuhāt*, 2/606, 681, Bulak, Cairo, 1911. State University of New York,

CONCLUSION

The theological problem of the ascription of the acts to God or the man/servant can never have a simple solution. Because there are more than one versions of the problem. The rational thinkers are tied and bound by their own means of knowledge, while the people of heart fluctuate with the actual situation. Some people (Ash'arite) say that the acts are God's and the others (Mu'tazilites) say are man's. Ibn Arabi alludes to many of these points in discussing those whom the Koran calls the strugglers (al-Mucahidun) that is, those who carry out the jihad, the struggle against their own limitations. 'There only remains which of the two correct views better for the servant/man, though both are good. And this is a place of bewilderment (hayra).⁶⁸

⁶⁸ Ibn Arabi, *Futuhāt*, 2/145, 147, Bulak, Cairo, 1911