

# The Cloud or Objects Existed in Their Nothingness or Absolute Fiction in the theory of Ibn 'Arabī and its relevance to the Western and Eastern Theories

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## Abstract

*First, we say that the cloud is generated from the vapors have the elements of heat. Then the air that surrounds the body of cloud is denied. It is the divine breath, caused by a longing movement based on the love to be discovered and emerged. It's the soles of the divinity - as Ibn 'Arabī says - because it is the closest creature to God as being an object... By this way the cloud is the same divine-self, in which everything has created.*

*Second, we see that the relationship between the divine science and information to Ibn 'Arabī is a love affair confirms the uniformity between the objects fixed and cloud caused by the divine self to vent the longing to emerge. The fixed objects are found in this cloud as being the realities of the world and its foundation. If the cloud - as we shall see soon - is the absolute fiction, it is natural that Ibn 'Arabī unites - also - between the objects fixed and absolute imagination as being the assets in the ranking of the fantasy existence as being the existential mediator between the divine and the world or between Being and Nothingness. (1)*

**Keywords:** *The cloud, objects fixed, shadow of the existence, Non-Being of the nothingness, absolute fiction*

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## 1. Definition of the cloud or absolute fiction

The cloud represents a rank of the fantasy presence, which is called by Ibn 'Arabī "the absolute fiction". Its presence emerged as a result of the divine self to come out of the anguish of absolute unity, by a desire of the divine self to appear in the altruistic pictures. The one (divine self) loved to see itself in the altruistic picture by the reflection. With the love and adoration there is a narrow, which seeks to vent itself, so the breath comes out forming the cloud. If the cloud is formed because of the adoration, which is the intensity of love, it is a separate imagination because it is found from the imagination. The true love cannot be found - to Ibn 'Arabī - but with the imagination and perception. (2) When the one (God) breathed to relieve for the adoration, the breath came out in the form of the same image that was imagined. Therefore, the cloud is called the absolute fiction. "The fact of the absolute fiction

is labeled by the cloud, which is the first circumstance before the creation... God opened in the cloud Photos of everything, in the world except Himself. No doubt that the cloud is not but the fiction investigated. You can see that it accepts pictures of the objects as the whole and depicts what is not an object. This is because of its breadth. It is the same of the cloud, not anything else. All of the assets appeared inside this picture, which is expressed by the apparent meaning of Gods saying: {He is the first and the last, and outwardly and inwardly}. (3)

The cloud is only a holy manifestation of the divine self, appeared when it loved to be known. Here, Ibn 'Arabī depended on a (Ḥadīth Qudsī): (The words of God spoken by Muḥammad the prophet), which is very important to the Sufis. God said in these words: "I was a hidden treasure. I loved to be known, so I created the creatures". This desire produces a longing love. The love has a movement in the lover. The breath has a longing movement for those who love. They have a taste in the breathing. So the breathing occurred through this love and then there was the cloud by this breathing. It is denied that this cloud is controlled by the others, as it is the closest asset to God... This cloud is the divine self for the creation of every creature. It is called the divine, because it is the same divine self, and the self is soles in who breathes. Therefore, the soul has an inwardly status, if the outwardly status appears for it, apparently, It is the first in the subconscious and the last in the outwardly status, as It has knowledge of all things. As everything named appeared in it from the nothingness that can be possible to be found by its essence or the nothingness that has its own essence... Therefore, we said in the particular things that they are created by the existence, not by the nothingness. The origin of this fact was the cloud emerged from the divine self, which is the origin of the presence of every creature created by God Himself. "(4)

The cloud is the soles of the divinity, which turned into a phenomenon that includes all forms of the assets from the top to down. It is also the divine created by God - and this is one of the names that were used by Ibn 'Arabī for the fact of the facts -. Thus the cloud unites the fact of the facts, as a first apparent designation of the subconscious knowledge of the divine. This designation of the cloud is reasonable and imperceptible. This is a designation of a rank denies any frequent or time-scale, as it is said: "There was God only and nothing with him". Then it was inserted: "He is now as He was before". After creation of the world the status of the creator was not added to Him as a creator, but He had described Himself by those names that were and are still used for His creation. When He wanted the presence of the world, began to create it according to what was in His knowledge about it and because of that divine Will, a Holy manifestation of the transcendence appeared and turned to the total fact became agitated by the fact called aerosols. It was such as the plaster of construction to open the wills of shapes and images. This was the first existent in the world. Then God Almighty manifested His light to the aerosol, which is called by the owners of ideas the total sarcoplasmic, in which the whole world is found by the power and authority, as God Almighty accepted everything in that aerosol according to its strength and capability, as the corners of the house accept the light of the lamp."(5)

## 2. Difference between the cloud and divinity, and the cloud and fact of the facts

Despite the unification, which is visible between the cloud and divinity on the one hand, and the cloud and the fact of the fact on the other hand, there is a difference between each of them functionally. Ibn 'Arabī depends in determining this function on its content mentioned in the (Ḥadīth) that Muḥammad the prophet was asked: Where was God before He created the creatures? The prophet said: God was in the cloud, which was conditioning beneath and above the air. The function of the cloud is determined on the basis of level of the divine name: "the Lord" that took place around the question. The name of "the Lord" requires a physical presence of the world. If the name of "Allah" is a full comprehensive name, which expresses "the divinity", but it with its comprehensiveness does not require the presence of the world and does not have any relation to the universe. So there is a level for the name of the Lord, which is called "the cloud" such as there is a level for the name of "Allah", which is called "the throne". The cloud is the first in the circumstantial positions, so the circumstantial places and levels appeared in those who never accept the place, but it was accepted by them there, where the places that accept the physical meaning by the sense and imagination, appeared. It is the sense in which the essences of the possibilities were set and stabilized. It is the sense that accepts the circumstantial fact: the place, rank status and the name of the places. Between the cloud and world of the earth, there is no name of Allah except the names of His particular acts. There is no effect for the other divine names in this universe: the reasonable and sensible world. "(6)

The cloud - in the light of this perception - is the name of the Lord. It is a mental, not a sensory existent that represents the first specification of the divinity - and the fact of the facts - in circumstantial condition. It represents an open space in which the divine acts appeared to create the designable objects of the possibilities that have a mental existence in this cloud. It is a condition, which is called by Ibn 'Arabī a permanence status or "objects fixed". Therefore, the cloud "is the first heavy light appeared. When it distinguished from which appeared, it cannot be differentiated, because it is not another thing, as God Almighty made it to be a circumstance to Him - because nothing can be a circumstance for Him except His own personality -. Therefore, the rule of space appeared for the emergence of the divine self. Otherwise, we cannot call the space an empty place." (7)

-Hence- the cloud is the divine breath, caused by a longing movement based on the love to be discovered and emerged. It's the soles of the divinity or the first in the bellies. On the other hand it is the last in the emergence as Ibn 'Arabī says. If the breath of God is not, but the same divine self, the cloud is God. It is a longing manifestation of the emergence from the case of hidden bellies, based on the love and adoration. The names used by Ibn 'Arabī for this cloud confirm that it is a level of the mediator that we're talking about, which is called the absolute fiction or isthmus isthmuses. This mediator cloud has a different name because of its different role played by.

If each of the divinity and fact of the facts represents a mental reasonable mediator between "Being and Nothingness", and "Absolute and Bounded", and "Old and New" and all the separating diodes between the divine and the world, the cloud - in its turn - represents a existential mediator between the cases of "Being and Nothingness" or absolute presence and

bounded and added presence. If the cloud -as noted- unites the concept of the space or the space is seen with it, this space is not a devoid emptiness, but it is a shadow of the divine existence, which includes all the assets of the world from the top to down. It is a mental presence purely, which called by Ibn 'Arabī "the fixed objects". The sensuous existence of such objects is ranked the third that can be called: "Shadow of the shadow of the existence".

### **3. Dilemma of separation and full differentiation between “Being and Nothingness”**

Ibn 'Arabī posed in many places of his writings the dilemma of a complete separation and full differentiation between “Being and Nothingness” trying - as many others also tried - to answer this question: How it became possible for the sheer nothingness to accept the existence? As the sheer nothingness is named the impossible by Ibn 'Arabī, it was necessary for him to exceed the framework of this duality by creating a mediator between the nothingness and existence. This mediator - like all the mediators - has two sides: a side to the nothingness and a side to the existence, and corresponds to the both sides alone, separating and uniting them at the same time. This mediator is called the objects fixed in the cloud. It is - in itself - non-existent in the side that it corresponds to the nothingness, but - on the other side - it has a presence as it corresponds to the absolute existence.” (8)

### **4. Concept of "the shadow of the existence" to Ibn 'Arabī**

If the expression of Ibn 'Arabī for these objects is - sometimes - described by a degree of embodiment, as he mentions them with an independent existence that exceeds what he wants (9). We must understand that the independent existence of these objects – as being objects – is a mental reasonable existence or a fantastical existence between the “Being and Nothingness” or it is a shadow of the existence and its presence is a sensory appearance, which is a shadow of the shadow of the existence.

### **5. Concept of Nothingness to Ibn 'Arabī**

Ibn 'Arabī expresses for this perception and says: "All the praises are for God who created the things from the nothingness and nothingness of Non-Bing”, then explains this phrase saying: "The lack of nothingness is called an existence. It is the proportion of the fact that these things are reserved in their treasures found to God, these things are fixed for their essence, but non-existed for themselves (means the treasures of divine generosity referenced in the words of God Almighty - In the opinion of Ibn 'Arabī -: {there is nothing, but in our treasures, and we do not bring down, but with a quantity unknown}. (10)

Hence the fixed objects are an intermediate stage between the real existent and existent added. When the fixed object move from the sheer nothingness to the existence in the divine knowledge as a result of the manifestation of the Holy divine they lose their nothingness, as they are found as their essences. In this scientific presence they gain some sort of self-independence, which is shown in their capabilities of the apparent existence, it means that they gain at this stage status of being, which was not before because of their absolute nothingness imagined. This means that the ubiquity (God) given them His shadow, and then they could be ready to get the real existence in the world of phenomena. This is their negative side, but their positive side represents that the divine knowledge attached to their status of being ready to be proved, it is based on the perception of Ibn 'Arabī that the science

is the facts of knowledge itself, as it was known that it was present or absent. The fixed objects - in their status of nothingness - were a source that gave the divine science the knowledge of their realities, as He knew them with their realities that they had. Thus it is clear that there is the congruence and uniformity between the objects fixed and fact of the facts, as it is seen between them and the divinity clearly before. "The objects of the world are saved in the divine treasures. The divine treasures are the divine knowledge and we are the things stored in the treasure. We proved for it a rule of saving; because He did not know about us, but by us. It was a middle way between being an object and being existed. So if the nothingness was in the middle between being the objects fixed and being existed, He wanted to create us passing by the nothingness and getting from Him status of Non-Being object that could not be existed as being object fixed and not as an object existed, therefore we did not find any way, except the divine existence to take advantage to exist". (11)

We must not understand from being the absolute existence in the middle between being the objects fixed and being existed in the previous text, any precedence for the objects fixed on the absolute existence; as the existence of the objects fixed, meant by Ibn 'Arabī is a scientific existence at the stage of the Holy Manifestation, which is a mediator existence between being the objects fixed and objects existed. The transition from being the objects fixed or scientific presence - to sensory appearance - needs another manifestation, which is the Holy Transfiguration. These transitions - from the other side - must be understood that these are in any development or transition not bounded to the sense of the time. These are not the stages of the divine evolution, which is similar to the absolute evolution to Hegel as it is believed by Abu al-'Elā 'Afīfī (12), but these are manifestations in different orders that can - mentally - be distinguished, but these stages as their realities do not be distinguished and not diversified.

If the cloud is an absolute imagination, it is natural to be united by Ibn 'Arabī - as well as- between the objects fixed and the absolute fiction as being the assets in the ranking of fiction because of their existential mediation between the divine and the world or "Being and Nothingness", says: "It is so because they have an existence imagined by the fiction. Therefore, God ordered it saying: "To be" in the real presence, so the listener to this divine command has a real presence realized by the sense visually, as it is attached to the sensory presence perceived, as well as it is attached to the imagination in the presence of fantasy."(13)

The fixed objects - or the clouds - with their fictional and existential function also have a cognitive function. This is shown as the human fantasy attached to the Sufi derives most of his knowledge and sciences from this absolute fiction, as he realizes the things as they are in their real status. Even he can see - as well as - these objects proved with their realities. This connection between the Sufi and the absolute fiction means drawing the knowledge from the Sea of the divine science, because the fixed objects are not only images of truths of the divine science - as noted above -.

It means that the clouds and the objects fixed as being the mediator have the task of separation and unification, not on the existential level only, but also on the cognitive level.

He says: "You should know that the information has three kinds, not four: The first is the ubiquity that never can be bounded, which is the presence of God. The second is the absolute nothingness, which is lack of the existence, which is not limited at all, which is called impossible. It is apposite to the ubiquity. Each of these two known has the same order, so there must be third one to differentiate between the features of these two opposites defining each of them without the lack or addition in this separation. This is the highest isthmus or the isthmus of the isthmuses, which has a face to the presence and a face to the nothingness, as it corresponds to every one of the two kinds of the knowledge. This is the third kind of the knowledge, in which all the possibilities are found, that are endless, as well as each of the two kinds of knowledge is also endless. It has in this isthmus the objects fixed by a face that it looks to the ubiquity and by this face it is dubbed a thing that if the divine wanted to find it, ordered it: "To be".

"To be" is an existential word, if it is an object was not ordered to "be". These possibilities in this isthmus with their statuses and names that are characterized by the symptoms of conditions and attributes belong to the universes... The existence of the possibilities comes from this isthmus, which has a relation to the divine, as the things are seen by the divine before their being the objects in this isthmus. Every man with his imagination if imagines anything his view extends to the isthmus and he does not know that he sees that thing in this isthmus". (14)

#### **6. Doctrine of Ibn 'Arabī and its impact on 'Umar al-'Aṭṭār**

'Umar al-'Aṭṭār also expressed the theory of Ibn 'Arabī in the shadow of the shadow as being one of his commentators and defenders, saying: "The facts of the ingredients and their essences are the scientific pictures named "the objects fixed"; because of they are proved in the divine science and not separated from it, as they did not smell the scent of external presence, but they have their existence. If these objects smelled the scent from the smell of external existence, were appeared necessarily. These facts are the manifestations appeared by them the divine existence or the divine existence is the mirror featured them... We said that the shadow of the shadow of existence is apparently not the same divine presence; because the divine existence in the stage of the eternal oneness is not attached to the appearance at all. The appearance of God only can be as His manifestations depending on His affairs, not as the same divine self. In the stage of the eternal oneness the apparent was His shadow, not the same divine self. Here he mentioned this saying: {have you not seen the Lord how He extended the shadow} meaning the shadow of the presence on the being objects {even if He wanted, He made it static}. By this extension, these objects obtained a scientific existence, so they became the images of the names of God Almighty and His attributes. They are as being inside the divine presence and as their appearance with the creation, are called the divine created by the divine. These facts, that were under the shadow of the scientific existence asked God Almighty how to be the emergence of their effects and their external abilities when they get readiness and acceptance for it? So God transfigured with what they asked Him about their presence from His closet, as they given by the divine the presence of external effects. This sensuous and real existence was a shadow of these objects that are the realities of the ingredients. He pointed to the saying of God Almighty: {if we want to create a thing

we order it, saying: "To be" then it has to be}. The addressees ordered by saying: "To be" are such objects and these sensory manifestations are their shadows... If it is decided and has been known that the realities of things and their essences are images stored in the knowledge of God, they did not smell the scent of external existence, and this component is their existing shadow and their impact. Thus being this component a sheer nothingness means that it belongs to the nothingness for lack of its realities outside and which belongs to the nothingness is called nothing. Therefore, possibilities are existed as they appear in their existence, (although) they are not found by themselves, as they have a pseudonym existence." (15)

### **7. Similarities between the doctrine of Ibn ‘Arabī and Hindu mythology**

We see that the fact of the single self multiplies in the whole cosmic symptoms that were objects fixed in the divine science before being in their real presence. The idea of the objects fixed in the theory of Ibn ‘Arabī is a shadow for the presence of the cosmic symptoms reported in the hymn (Narain) to Hindus. We can say that this similarity between the theory of Ibn ‘Arabī in (the objects fixed in their nothingness) then (the cosmic symptoms) in one side, and the theory of Hindu pantheism in the other side, leads us to say that the basis of these Indian intellectual elements and theory of Ibn ‘Arabī in (the objects fixed) and (the shadow of the existence) is one, as the cloud in the theory of Ibn ‘Arabī is not only a metaphorical mug inverted in Indian mythology, but credit is due to the previously. (16)

### **8. Search Findings**

- Now we can - with Ibn ‘Arabī - discriminate between the two stages of the evolution of these objects: the first stage is the stage of their transition from their eternal nothingness to their substantial presence, as being the objects fixed. The second stage is the stage of their transition from a state of permanence to the case of the apparent sensory presence percept. This distinction between the two phases is not, but only in their two sides: Outwardly and inwardly. The inwardly presence of sub-names of the divine self or the divinity has a scientific existence, not a substantial existence. It is the presence of the divine self in the phase of absolute monist, where it does not abound in any case. Their appearance in the images of assets or the appearance of their provision represents the second phase distinct from the first phase cognitively not existentially. We see the same discrimination in the fact of the facts, as they are the content of the divine science and its tool, and as their appearance and impartiality in the sensual matters. The same thing is found in the fixed objects, as they "existed since immemorial time in the divine mind, as being the divine self, not anything else, as their appearance on the stage of presence means the emergence of the divine presence in the external areas, as required by the nature of these objects." (17)
- Hence, the cloud can be equated with "the cause and effect" to the philosophers, as the first appearance in the unlimited images, in the sense of spiritual image, which is the origin of all the pictures in the world. (It is also the essence of all things to Plato). Here, it seems that Ibn ‘Arabī has been influenced by Plato in his philosophy of

idealism by the argument: “that everything is created on the image of its essence. It means that the essences of the things are found before their external existence in the world of ideals to Plato and the world of nothingness to Ibn ‘Arabī”, but Ibn ‘Arabī considers the time - as well as the eternity - only the legal things do not have any reality.

- The theory of Emanation was presented originally by Neo-Platonism, which amended later, known as the theory of Emanation. The owners of this theory have tried to look beyond the difficulties that may arise from the release of abundance from one directly. No doubt, these intellectual elements in the theory of Plato and Plotinus have an echo in the Phrases of Ibn ‘Arabī. (18)
- We also must not ignore what was discussed between the scholastic theologians: Mu'tazilas and Asha'iras on the unification, especially in the theory of latency and zero: (Non-Being) in the field of impact or influence of Ibn ‘Arabī by other theories. (19)
- As Mu'tazilas differentiate between the essences of things and their presence, saying: "The things were things before being an object" because when God gives the things their existential description, he does not add to them a new recipe, except the verification or particular description (20), because God has already their knowledge. It made Abu al- Ḥusayn al-Khayyāṭ to avoid the difficulties that may arise to say that God did not create the things. He presented the theory of “zero”. As it is noted by Abu al-‘Elā ‘Afifī, says: "When Mu'tazila called to say “zero”, which means: “Being of the things in their nothingness” they were keen to distinguish between the essences of possible things and essence of God. (21) Ibn ‘Arabī has benefited in his idea of the objects fixed by the theory of “zero” to Mu'tazila (22), but there is a fundamental difference between these two concepts: concept of the objects fixed to Ibn ‘Arabī and "possible" to the philosophers. The sensory presence of the objects fixed to Ibn ‘Arabī stems from the self-willingness for the existence. It has not only negative capabilities, but is has also a positive aspect, which is the willingness to listen to the divine command and answer to appear. (23)

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