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A Critical Study of the Morality as asceticism in Ibn al-Arabi's Thought

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Introduction
What is the place of asceticism (Zuhd) in Islamic Morality? A study of the history of thought shows that among the perceived relationships between asceticism and morality is the similarity of asceticism with morality or the similarity of asceticism with virtue. It seems that in the ascetic literature of some periods, including the third century AH, asceticism was considered synonymous with "morality", and therefore some thinkers of this period, while concerned with writing ethical books, wrote books titled "asceticism". Ibn al-Arabi, as one of the ascetic writers of the third century AH, considered this version of asceticism. This article has attempted to explain his position in the literature of asceticism of the third century AH, and to answer the question of what his intended interpretation of asceticism and its relationship to morality is, and what criticisms does this interpretation face?

Research findings
A study of the book of asceticism shows that Ibn al-Arabi considers the criterion of the rightness or wrongness of actions in terms of morality to be divine satisfaction and sincerity in action, and states that when the moral virtue of contentment becomes the queen of the ascetic's soul, at that time poverty and wealth, suffering and comfort, survival and extinction, honor and humiliation, health and illness, death and life are all the same to him, and none of them is preferable to the other, because he considers all of these things to be from God and prefers God's will to his own desires and wishes. In his book "Asceticism," Ibn al-Arabi attempts to explain the eight components of certainty, sincerity, self-balance, reliance, patience, contentment, humility, and gratitude, the realization of which leads to the realization of asceticism, and introduces sincerity as a central component for determining a moral act.

According to the mentioned criteria, and also considering the fundamental components and requirements that Ibn al-Arabi stated for asceticism, it seems that he considered asceticism as the whole of morality and by writing the Book of Asceticism, he attempted to write a book on morality in the third century AH and present his ethical theory in it.

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Conclusion

Based on the studies conducted, it can be concluded that:

۱. In his book "Asceticism", Ibn al-Arabi considers asceticism as the whole of morality, and by writing the book "Asceticism", he was actually seeking to write a book on morality in a way that could cover moral virtues in a complete way. Therefore, it emphasizes disregard for the world as the foundation of all moral qualities, and a significant amount of the quotes in this book refer to severing ties with other than God and eliminating attention to worldly matters.

۲. Ibn al-Arabi considered the criteria of "divine pleasure" and sincerity as the criteria for morality and distinguishing morally right from wrong actions. However, he did not provide any clear and specific criteria or components regarding the mechanism for distinguishing divine pleasure and sincerity.

۳. A review of the quotations in Ibn al-Arabi's book Al-Zuhd shows that he considered certainty, self-balance, patience, gratitude, sincerity, contentment, humility, and trust as fundamental moral virtues, the sum of which together can introduce the ascetic as a virtuous agent.

٤. A review of the quotations in Ibn al-Arabi's book Al-Zuhd shows that he considers purification of the soul, devotion and submission, being active and avoiding comfort, not being attached to the world, abandoning forbidden things and paying attention to divine reckoning, limiting hopes and desires, restraining one's nature, and annihilation to be among the requirements and signs of asceticism.

٥. It seems that, considering the interpretation of asceticism as the whole of morality on the one hand, and considering the introduction of asceticism as a virtue-oriented model, it has also taken steps towards presenting an interpretation of the theory of virtue ethics. However, due to the lack of attention to Shiite traditions and the majority of traditions transmitted from the Prophet of Islam (PBUH), it has remained far from the central model in the theory of virtue ethics. In a way, it can be said that this is probably due to his distance from the family of revelation and the heirs of prophetic wisdom, and because his mental background was a reflection of the views of the companions and followers in defining "asceticism" and its examples. For this reason, he presented an incomplete reading of asceticism and its relationship with morality, in which some of the fundamental moral virtues are not found.

٦. Ibn al-Arabi's method in writing his works, as well as the method he used in his book Al-Zuhd, is a narrative method. In this book, he did not follow a specific arrangement or logic for presenting narrations. At the same time, according to the title that Majdi Fathi al-Sayyid, a researcher of the book "Asceticism and the Lineage of the Ascetics," has given to the book's contents, the narrations in the book can be divided into three parts. In the first part of the book, Ibn al-Arabi tries to narrate everything that has been said about asceticism. In the second part of the book, he narrates some narrations about the degrees of asceticism. And finally, he discusses the narrations that relate to what asceticism is as contentment with the minimum amount of worldly sustenance.

Keywords: asceticism (Zuhd), morality, virtue, Kitab al-Zuhd, Ibn al-Arabi.