

The Stages of Annihilation (Fana) in Attar of Nishapur's *Musibatnameh*

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Abstract

This research provides a structural and content analysis of selected narratives from Attar of Nishapur's *Musibatnameh* (The Book of Affliction), focusing on the manifestation of the spiritual station (*maqam*) of "annihilation" (*fana*) within the forty-stage mystical journey. Employing a descriptive-analytical method and drawing upon the critical edition by Dr. Mohammad-Reza Shafiei-Kadkani, it demonstrates that Attar portrays the concept of *fana* not as an abstract notion, but through symbolic narratives and as a phased process of the "voluntary death" of the ego. The findings indicate that the journey of annihilation in the *Musibatnameh* begins with annihilation in nature, deepens through annihilation in intellect and annihilation in will, and culminates, under the light of divine love and with the guidance of the spiritual master (*pir*), in annihilation in the Divine Essence (*fana fi al-Dhat*). This pinnacle is manifested in verses such as "Having become utterly annihilated and effaced" and "Having exited both the world and from the world itself." Through detailed interpretation of key verses from each narrative, the article elucidates Attar's theory of the spiritual path as a transition from the multiplicity of the ego to the unity of existence.

Keywords: Attar of Nishapur, *Musibatnameh* (The Book of Affliction), Station of Annihilation (*Fana*), Mystical Love, Spiritual Guide (*Pir-e Tariqat*).