

Muhyiddin Ibn 'Arabi Society

MIAS Education Online Course



Heaven Journey 1

**“The voyage *by Him in Him*”:
exploring the nocturnal journey of the Prophet Muhammad in
*The Secrets of Voyaging***

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Course title

“The voyage *by Him in Him*”: exploring the nocturnal journey of the Prophet Muhammad in *The Secrets of Voyaging*

Course length

10 weeks – 90min

Contact details

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Who is the course for?

This course is suitable for anyone who has an interest in Sufism in general, and in Ibn Arabi in particular. *No previous knowledge* of Ibn Arabi's writings is needed, though it is helpful.

Course overview

Sufis in general, and Ibn Arabi in particular, have been inspired by the Prophet’s journey which is also known as the night journey. For Sufis and Ibn Arabi alike, the Prophet’s ascent symbolises a spiritual journey towards God. Seyyed Hossein Nasr (1971: 133) indicates that the “nocturnal journey” of the Prophet encapsulates the “prototype of the spiritual journey of the Sufi”. The Prophet’s journey is formed of two parts: the *Isra* and the *Mi’raj*. The *Isra* is when the Prophet journeyed from the *Masjid al Haram* in Mecca to *Masjid al-Aqsa* in Jerusalem. The *Mi’raj* is when the Prophet ascended to the heavens. As expressed in surat *Al-Isra*: “Glory be to Him Who transported His servant by night from Masjid al-Haram to Masjid al-Aqsa, the environs of which We had blessed, so that We might show him some of Our signs. Surely He is All-Hearing, All Seeing” (Quran 17: 1).

In this course we will explore the multi-layered meanings of the Prophet’s journey in *The Secrets of Voyaging* and the ways in which the Prophet was shown these ‘signs’. In addition to reading excerpts from *The Secrets of Voyaging*, the voyagers will be invited to read an excerpt from Ibn Arabi’s *Kitab Al Isra* (**especially translated for this course**).

Methodology

Creativity is integral to the human being. Undeniably, our imagination is a force that impacts our daily life. The notion of imagination occupies a significant position in Ibn Arabi’s teachings since the Divine Imagination constitutes the very force that inspired the Great Master’s works. As Henry Corbin succinctly

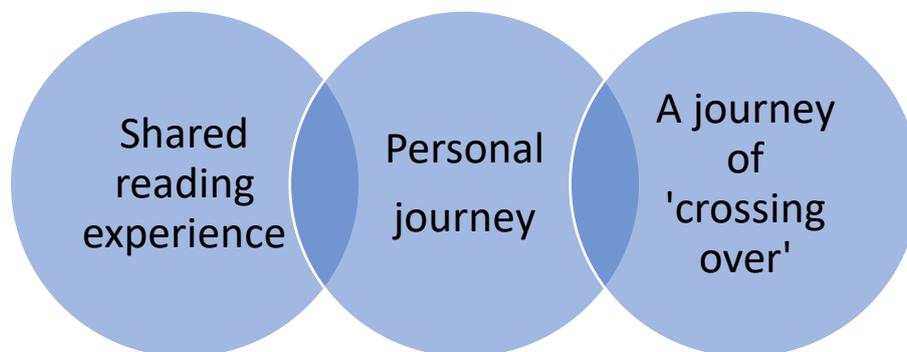
puts it: “To the initial act of the Creator imagining the world corresponds the creature imagining his world, imagining the worlds, his God, his symbols.” Such a correlation between the Divine act of creation and His creatures is an open invitation to those who wish to explore the realm of imagination. Thus, in this course, we invite you to dive into Ibn Arabi’s world of imagination. You will have the opportunity to connect your appreciation of Ibn Arabi’s text with your own creative expression such as poetry, writing, storytelling, drawing, painting and music etc. Such an interaction echoes James Morris’ observation on “the remarkably active approach which Ibn Arabi expects and constantly demands of his truly qualified and spiritually 'ambitious' readers, those who begin to interact with his work with the appropriate intentions and preparation.” (source: <https://ibnarabisociety.org/how-to-study-the-futuhat>)

Course learning aims

1. Identify the key aspects of the Prophet’s journey.
2. Develop a familiarity with Ibn Arabi’s central concepts such as the journey and crossing (*ma’bar*).
3. Explore the meanings of servanthood.

Course outcomes

Upon completion of this course, you can achieve any of the possible outcomes below:



Programme overview

Our online courses are composed of four journeys (see below). Each journey in turn comprises four courses. The current course “The voyage *by Him in Him*” is part of the Journey to Heaven. For more details on the available courses, refer to MIAS website <https://ibnarabisociety.org/> or contact the MIAS team: education.uk@ibnarabisociety.org



Instructional strategies

Instructional strategies include mini-lectures, shared reading, creative forms of expression and group discussions.

Course outline

Week 1 - embarking aboard “the ship of the knowers”

Week 2 - the voyage of the vision in the (outer) signs and inner signification

Week 3 - the voyage of the vision in the (outer) signs and inner signification

Week 4 - the voyage of the vision in the (outer) signs and inner signification

Week 5 - the voyage of the vision in the (outer) signs and inner signification

Week 6 – Creative encounters with Ibn Arabi

Week 7 - the voyage of the vision in the (outer) signs and inner signification

Week 8 - servanthood

Week 9 - servanthood

Week 10 - Landing with the ‘star of servanthood’

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