

## THE ISSUES OF UNDERSTANDING THE TRUTH AND DISCOVERING THE SELF IN IBN ARABI'S TEACHINGS

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**Annotation:** *This article analyzes the central aspects of Ibn Arabiy's philosophy, particularly his concepts of inward (batiniy) sciences and metaphor (majaz). Ibn Arabiy defined the main method of Sufism through the concept of metaphor. In this, Ibn Arabiy emphasized the connection between the outward and inward aspects of the Qur'an, asserting that this requires understanding knowledge in two main directions – inward and outward. The article also illuminates the differences between ta'wil and tafsir, the hierarchical classification of knowledge, and the role of inward sciences in the true process of human understanding.*

**Key words:** *sufism, faith, wisdom, tafsir, truth, ta'wil, knowledge, spirituality, morality, humanity, conscience.*

The philosophy of Ibn Arabiy centered on the method of allusion in the esoteric knowledge of the Sufis. Metaphor, or allusion, occupies a central place in the expression, analysis, interpretation, and commentary of a Sufi. A metaphor is an allegorical literary technique or a form of imagery used to express an abstract concept or idea through a concrete image. In a metaphor, a new conditional expression is created based on the similarity between two concepts. Along with general concepts representing spiritual values (such as truth, love, conscience, and faith), certain typical events, characters, mythological figures, and even specific individuals can also serve as metaphors.

Ibn Arabiy, with the use of metaphor, alludes to the divine secrets hidden within the Qur'anic verses and the outward meanings and appearances of existence, aiming to transform people's thinking. It is at this point that the ideas of outward and inward knowledge emerge. The science of gnosis embodies divine ethics both outwardly and inwardly. This requires humans to purify their hearts, progressively attain spiritual stations (transforming from coal to diamond).

In terms of its essence, knowledge is divided into inward (spiritual) and outward (physical) knowledge. Through inward (sufistical) knowledge, both existing and non-existent beings are understood. Inward knowledge uncovers hidden meanings. Inward (divine) knowledge is endless and eternal, while outward knowledge is limited, meaning "the path that leads to God itself is nonexistent" [1].

Ibn Arabiy explained the outward appearance as an image that points to the existence of the inward [2]. The sufi explained the Quran as something that walks side by side with all of existence and humanity, with its outward manifestation appearing through letters and sounds, while its inward aspect is the reality that manifests in the heart of Prophet

Muhammad. Ibn Arabiy analyzed the issue of whether the Quran is eternal or newly revealed. According to the sufi's view, the verses of the Quran are eternal, but the meaning of the verse, which represents the Truth, is newly revealed.

Sufistical knowledge is a higher form of contemplation, meaning the understanding of the self. Through this foundational understanding, one comes to know the Creator, and to value all of creation (nature, animals, plants, and the human world), which is the product of intellect and wisdom. Abu Bakr Kolobodi presented this concept in his work "At-Ta'arruf", enriching it with the perspectives of the people of sufism.

The hierarchical classification of sufistical knowledge is as follows:

- a) Knowledge in Allah;
- b) Knowledge from Allah;
- c) Knowledge with Allah [3].

When it is said "Knowledge in Allah", it refers to understanding the attributes of Allah. When it is said "Knowledge from Allah", it refers to the knowledge of the outward and inward, understanding halal and haram, commanding goodness, and forbidding evil. When it is said "Knowledge with Allah", it refers to seeing knowledge as coming from Allah, purifying one's intention, and emphasizing love and yearning.

Ibn Arabiy stated that the interpretation of the Qur'an (tafsir) is different from its exegesis (ta'wil). Tafsir explained the meanings, history, reasons for revelation, and the contents of the Qur'anic verses, while ta'wil uncovers the inner meanings of the verses through divine revelation, based on the specific path of each tariqa (sufistical order). According to Ibn Arabiy, mastering the science of ta'wil is very difficult and is considered to be a knowledge suitable only for the sufis.

The word "ta'wil" in the dictionary means "return" or "reversion". In its technical sense, it refers to turning the meaning of a word from its immediate, apparent interpretation to a different meaning, or from a stronger meaning to a weaker one. If that turn or reversion is supported by evidence or proof, it is a correct ta'wil; otherwise, it is considered a distorted or incorrect ta'wil.

The concept of "ta'wil" mentioned in the Qur'an and Hadith can be expressed as follows: The truth to which the speech returns is called ta'wil (that is, the truth intended by the words is ta'wil). The ta'wil of a statement is the very essence of the statement itself. The ta'wil of a command is the act of performing the command. This resembles the narration from Aisha (may Allah be pleased with her), in which she reported: "The Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) would say in his bowing: "Subhanak Allahumma wa bihamdika, Allahumma ighfir li" (Glory is to You, O Allah, and praise be to You, O Allah, forgive me). He would interpret the Qur'an in this way", meaning that he would carry out the command found in the Qur'an.

"They are waiting for its (this Book's) ta'wil and consequence (that is, the proof that the verses in it are true). When its ta'wil comes, those who had previously forgotten it will say, "The messengers of our Lord have come with the truth..." (Surah Al-A'raf, 7:53). This means: when the truth and affirmation of Allah's words come.

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Ibn Arabiy evaluated the science of tafsir as something suitable for everyone, and an understanding that is accessible to all. The sufi introduced the concepts of “had” (limit or boundary) and “matla” (the place of appearance or the point of emergence) in addition to the sciences of “zahir” (outer) and “batin” (inner). The meaning of “had” is understood as the distinguishing characteristic of one thing from another, while the meaning of “matla” refers to the essence of that thing.

In “Risolai volidiya”, the following idea is presented: “The difference between saying “The whole heart is occupied by the friend” and “The heart is occupied by the memory of the friend” is that if the entire heart is occupied by the friend, the result of love becomes excessive, and this is what is called passion (ishq)”.

In any situation or event, reflection allows us to discern the external, perceptible aspects and the hidden internal (batin) meaning, which can be perceived both by the senses and by reason. This hidden meaning is the primary foundation of existence, the essence of the divine nature’s presence in the world, and at the same time, the object of contemplation. Understanding the hidden meaning means directly seeing God in things and in the world.

Ibn Arabiy criticized the interpretation based on reason and emphasized that this goes beyond any theoretical measures. It cannot be explained with any scientific worldview or reduced to scientific frameworks. Although it is close to appearance, it is inherently a science in itself [2].

Ibn Arabiy presented the idea that attaining interpretation (ta’wil), which means removing the veil and understanding the Truth, can only be achieved through self-realization. If a person can understand themselves, the material and spiritual barriers that separate them from the Truth will disappear, and the Reality will be revealed to them. One of the methods he demonstrated for achieving understanding of the Truth through self-awareness is the concept of ta’wil.

In conclusion, in Ibn Arabiy’s philosophy, the method of allusion in the esoteric sciences of the sufis holds significant importance. Through metaphor and allegory, that is, by elucidating the relationship between the external (zahir) and internal (batin), human contemplation is directed towards deep reflection. According to Ibn Arabiy, it is through esoteric knowledge that one can understand the Truth, and pursuing this path leads to the improvement of a person’s spiritual and moral state. He emphasized the division between outward and inward knowledge and the necessity of mastering this knowledge, particularly through interpretation and exegesis (ta’wil and tafsir).

Ibn Arabiy analyzed the exegesis (tafsir) and interpretations (ta’wil) of the Qur’an from a different perspective, emphasizing the uniqueness of these sciences. Tafsir is the process of uncovering the outward meanings, while ta’wil is the understanding of the inward meanings through divine revelation. Ibn Arabiy’s approach to ta’wil emphasized the limitation of intellect and the importance of understanding the Truth through inner spiritual experience. In his ideas, self-awareness, overcoming internal barriers, and achieving a correct understanding of the Truth hold significant importance.



Thus, Ibn Arabiy's philosophy not only offers a new classification of religious and divine teachings but also establishes the methodological foundations for the elevation of the human soul, spiritual development, and the path to understanding the Truth. His knowledge, based on reflection and spiritual aspects, plays a crucial role in understanding the inner world of humans.

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