

# **The Mystical Interpretations of the Holy Quran**

**Researched by:**

**Dr. Saeed Ghazipour**

**- General Practitioner**

**- M. A. in Islamic Ethics**

**- Ph. D. Student of Koranic Cultures and Islamic Traditions (Hadiths)**

**In the Name of God, The  
Compassionate, The Merciful**

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## **Introduction**

Usually, the Sufi interpretation of the Holy Koran is considered by the Muslim interpreters of formal sciences as being an interpretation based on Muslim interpreters' personal point of views. In other words, the Sufi interpretation of the Holy Koran is Not at all based on any other approaches which are already accepted by the Muslim interpreters of Islamic formal sciences. Nevertheless, Islamic thinkers and scholars hold the view that the Sufi interpretation of the Holy Koran does, in deed, originate from a permissible and religious thoughts of the Sufi mystic interpreters.

Accordingly, we, in this survey, will first deal with the Sufi aspects of the Sufi interpretations of the Holy Koran and the relation of these Sufi aspects to the Koran's abstruse nature and dimension. Second, we will define and clarify the term "Sufism" (Islamic mysticism), "the superficial aspect of the Holy Koran", that is to say, the Koranic chapters and verses themselves, and "the Koran's abstruse nature and dimension." Third, we will concern with the different Sufi interpretations of the Holy Koran. Fourth, we will define and clarify the term "the Sufi interpretation of the Holy Koran, which enumerates the ways the Sufi interpretation differs from other interpretations of the Holy Koran.

And finally, we will introduce all kinds of the Sufi interpretations of the Holy Koran, some of the Sufi interpretations of the Holy Koran such as khadjeh Abdullah Ansari's Sufi interpretation of the Holy Koran.

It is deeply hoped that those who are really interested in the Sufi interpretations of the Holy Koran as well as the related issues will find this survey appropriate and useful.

Dr. Saeed Ghazipour

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## **Foreword**

Although the outer surface of the planet Earth is visible to the naked eye, it has for years been proved that beneath the surface of this planet there rest several inner layers, the inner layers which cannot be seen by naked eye, Thanks to modern technologies! In fact, these inner layers which rest beneath the surface of the Earth may be penetrated and examined by modern devices and equipments in order to extract oil, gas, and other natural resources which are, in reality, hidden beneath the surface of the Earth.

Similarly, the Koran, the holy book of Muslim people, just like the planet Earth, possesses two different dimensions: 1) an outer, superficial and shallow dimension which is exactly the very koranic chapters and verses being visible to the naked eye; and 2) an inner, profound, and abstruse dimension which is the very interpretations, clarifications and elucidations of the superficial meanings of koranic verses (suras) which one may find in the Holy Koran.

Unless a faithful Muslim interpreter can equip himself or herself with asceticism, mortification, austerity and purification of their selves, the aim of the interpretation, clarification, and elucidation of the superficial meanings of koranic verses (suras) will not be fulfilled.

The Sufi interpretation of the Holy Koran has, thus, been considered as being one way through which the above – mentioned aim may be fulfilled. According to a general methodological classification, different interpretations of the Holy Koran are classified into the following six classes:

Class one: The interpretation of the Holy Koran based on the Holy Koran itself (The Koran by the Koran Approach);

Class two: The interpretation of the Holy koran based on the Islamic traditions (hadiths) (The Traditional Approach);

Class three: The interpretation of the Holy Koran based on the reason and the perception [of religious issues from the Holy koran as well as the Islamic traditions (The Rational Approach);

Class four: The interpretation of the Holy Koran based on the experimental sciences (The Scientific Approach);

Class five: The interpretation of the Holy Koran based on the intuition and inspiration (The Sufi Approach);

Class Six: The interpretation of the Holy koran based on the combination of the five above – mentioned interpretations (The Eclectic Approach).

Koranic interpreters of the Holy Koran, throughout history, had either been totally aware of the last approach, that is to say, the eclectic approach, or even if they had been aware of it, due to some reasons they had not been able to apply it. Furthermore, up to the present time, no Koranic interpreter has ever applied the "eclectic" approach in order to present a comprehensive and all – inclusive interpretation of the Holy koran. This failure, that is to say, the inability of koranic interpreters to interpret the Holy Koran based on the eclectic approach might have been arisen out of two possibilities which indeed existed in times past. One possibility might have been that Koranic interpreters in times past had not been enjoying a comprehensive and all – inclusive command of knowledge of that time in order to interpret the Holy Koran deeply and comprehensively. The second possibility might have been that if we presume that they did enjoy the command of contemporary sciences and body of knowledge of that time, they would not for some reasons have

the sufficient courage and confidence to interpret the Holy Koran at the time.

It should be mentioned that not only had such eclectic interpretations of the Holy Koran been uncommon and infrequent in the times past, but they would also be considered as being blasphemous and insulting to God Almighty and Islam on the part of other Koranic interpreters as well as common people.

In spite of such an strict way of thinking and attitude towards the interpretation of the Holy Koran in times past, it should be acknowledged that the Holy Koran did indeed enjoy such a tremendous, comprehensiveness and all – inclusiveness that it seemed the only true interpreters who indeed were legitimate to interpret it, were those holy persons who were divinely and directly related to it, that is to say, the Holy Prophet of Islam, His Holiness Muhammed (Peace be to him and his family) himself, and the Twelve Innocent Imams of the Shiite (Peace be upon them) themselves, whose knowledge of the sciences, cultures and ethical insights of the time had been so complete, sufficient, elevated and lofty enough to interpret the Holy Koran. Thus, it is not surprising that these holy legitimate persons have always been called "The Talking Koran".

Nevertheless, since the Grace and Benevolence of God Almighty is all – inclusive and embrace all the people who live on the planet Earth, it should be acknowledged that an individual's awareness, perception, and interpretation of the Holy Koran are heavily dependent on various contemporary sciences, cultures, and body of knowledge of the time they live at. In other words, as long as the interpreter does not know and is not aware of various contemporary sciences and the body of knowledge of their own time, they will not be able to understand, perceive and

interpret the true meanings hidden in the Holy Koran. Thus, for a comprehensive and all – inclusive interpretation of the Holy Koran, the interpreter has to enjoy and rely on the contemporary sciences and cultures of their own time. It is only through knowing the contemporary sciences and the body of knowledge of their own time that the interpreter will be able to present a broad – spectrum and far – ranging interpretation of the Holy Koran. In fact, a scientific command and the Sufi insight of the contemporary sciences as well as a mystical, accurate and faithful intuition based on the true intuitions of true Muslims and Sufi mystics, along with a great command of most updated sciences such as sociology, mathematics, astrology, and the like, will help the Koranic interpreter to increase their knowledge and insight in perceiving and, hence interpreting the Holy Koran comprehensively.

Finally, I should express my deepest gratitude towards Dr. Seyyede Fatima Hosseini Mir Safi, my highly respected professor in my Ph. D course at university, who instructed and guided me on this subject.

May God Almighty bestows a good health and long life upon her.

"We surely turn our affairs over to God Almighty."

God bless you all!

## **The Contents and Themes of the Holy Koran as Appeared in Islamic Traditions (Hadiths)**

It is an undeniable fact that the structure of the Holy Koran has two different dimensions: 1) the superficial or outer dimension, that is to say, the very Koranic chapters and verses (the content); and 2) the deep or inner dimension (the theme). The fact is that these two different dimensions, which really exist in the Holy Koran, have always been emphasized either by the ancient or the contemporary Islamic thinkers and scholars. For instance, the Islamic traditions (hadiths), which have repeatedly been quoted by Islamic thinkers and scholars throughout the time from the fourth Imam of the Shiite Muslims, His Holiness Imam Zein Al – Abedin (peace be upon him) and the sixth Imam of the Shiite Muslims, His Holiness Imam Ja'far-e Sadiq (peace be upon him), are considered as being the most authentic illustrations which show this binary dimension of the Holy Koran. Regarding the structure of the Holy Koran, these two holy imams have said:

«كتاب الله على اربعة اشياء على العباره و الاشاره و اللطائف و الحقايق فالعباره للعوام و الاشاره للخواص و اللطائف للاولياء و الحقايق للانبياء».

([I The structure of] this book (the Holy Koran) which, indeed, belongs to Allah and has been sent by him is built upon four columns: 1) "Ibarat" (, i. e, a group of simple words that have a particular meaning when used together (phrases)); 2) "Isharat" (, i. e, the abbreviated, implicit, coded words and letters); 3) "Latayef" (, i. e, the short rhetorical phrases and sentences containing weighed, appealing points; and 4) "Haqayeq" (, i. e, words and sentences implying an ideal, true postulates, showing the rules and principles of the relations ruling over the Nature and the Existence). And, immediately afterwards, they add: "Ibarat" are

intended for the common men; "Isharat" are intended for the special men; "Latayef" are intended for God's favorite and faithful men, and "Haqayeq" are intended for God's holy prophets. Furthermore, the first imam of the Shiite Muslims, His Holiness imam Ali (Peace be upon him) has stated:

« وان القرآن ظاهره انيق و باطنه عميق لاتفنى عجائبه و لاتنقضى غرائبه ولاتكشف  
الظلمات الا به».

(Indeed, the Holy Koran enjoys a nice and beautiful outer part or appearance (, i. e, its well – said chapters and verses) as well as a deep and profound inner part or essence (, i. e, its real meanings), and that its mysterious and miraculous points as well as its covert, hidden secrets and meanings will survive forever, without which the darkness [of ignorance and unawareness] will not disappear).

Furthermore, there are other Islamic traditions (hadiths) which have been quoted from the Prophet of Islam, His Holiness Muhammed (peace be to him and his family) himself as well as the Twelve Innocent Shiite Imams (peace be upon them) stressing that the Holy Koran is so mysterious, enigmatic and puzzling that only a few people may perceive and understand its covert, mysterious meanings. For this reason, Sufi mystics interpreters do tend to regard themselves as belonging to the second and third classes just defined above, i. e, as belonging to "special men" and "God's favorite and faithful men". This attitude, taken by Sufi mystic interpreters of the Holy Koran, arises from the fact that these Sufi mystic interpreters have always tended to regard themselves as being special persons who think they have much greater ability than the common men in perceiving, understanding and interpreting the Holy Koran. In other words, the Sufi mystic interpreters strongly believe that, after the holy prophets, they are the only persons to perceive, understand,

and interpret the mysterious, enigmatic, and puzzling points of the Holy Koran. Thus, their excellence in perceiving, understanding, and interpreting Koranic points may have, somehow, arisen from their superior feelings that they may have towards the common men's simple understandings and knowledge.

Similarly, Davoud Ibn-e Mahmoud Qaisari (751 A.H.), a Turkish Sufi mystic and the author of the book "Sharhi bar Fosous – ol Hikam – e Ibn – e Arabi (A Description of Ibn-e Arabi's The Gems of [Islamic] philosophies), usually known as "Sharh – e Qaisari" (Qaisari's Description), believes that the structure of the Holy Koran is built upon four different positions. In the introduction of the above – mentioned book, Qaisari writes: "This book of Allah [the Holy Koran] possesses four positions: 1) the Appearance; 2) the Essence; 3) the Extreme; and 4) the Rank". By "Appearance", he means those simple Koranic words and phrases which are only perceived and understood by common men. By "Essence", he means those abbreviated, implicit, and coded Koranic words and phrases which common men have not the ability to perceive and understand, those words and phrases which are only intended for the chosen. By "Extreme", he means those rhetorical phrases and sentences which contain weighed, and appealing Koranic points which are intended only for the most perfect men among the chosen. And by "Rank", he means those idealistic and prime Koranic concepts which may be comprehended only by the most outstanding persons of the most perfect men among the chosen such as holy prophets and Shiite Imams.

Nevertheless, the mere claim of being in the "Essence" position, made by the Sufi mystic interpreter, does not at all prove his or her Sufi interpretation of the Holy Koran as being justifiable and adequate. In fact, the Sufi mystic interpreter's interpretation of the Holy Koran has to

be considered and evaluated on the basis of some special methodologies which have been devised to evaluate the Sufi interpretation in order to make sure that the Sufi interpreter has not put wrong and, hence misleading interpretations on the Koranic verses, wrong, misleading interpretations from which non – religious and forbidden orders may be inferred on the part of the readers.

### **The Islamic Decipherment**

The Islamic decipherment of the Holy Koran is generally applied to the surveys which are particularly related to the explicit and unchangeable Koranic Verses of the Holy Koran. The Islamic decipherment of the Holy Koran is considered as being the perception made by the Muslim interpreter, which, in one way, is totally different from the formal structure of Koranic verses. In other words, the words and phrases used in the Islamic decipherment of the Holy Koran are not the same as the words and phrases as exactly appeared in the text of the Holy Koran itself. The Islamic decipherment really changes Koranic verses, written in codes, into an ordinary and simple language so that the common reader can read and comprehend it.

The most distinguishing characteristic of the Sufi interpretation of the Holy Koran is that it is usually considered by Islamic thinkers and scholars as being a decipherment (Ta'vil). It is even sometimes implied by Islamic thinkers and scholars that the terms "interpretation" and "decipherment" of the Holy Koran are two completely different things. These Islamic thinkers and scholars state that what have been mentioned by Sufi interpreters in their Sufi interpretations of the Holy Koran is merely related to the domain of "decipherment", and not related to the domain of "interpretation". Here, a question may naturally spring to

mind: Do both the decipherment and the interpretation of the Holy Koran really serve the same purpose intended by Allah? If this be the case, and considering that the terms "interpretation" and "decipherment" of the Holy Koran are both considered by Islamic thinkers and scholars as being the two terms having two completely different meanings, how, therefore, is it possible that two completely different concepts, that is to say, the interpretation and the decipherment, serve the same purpose intended by Allah in the Holy Koran? Or, how is it possible that what is considered as being the "decipherment" in the tradition of Sufism does not serve the purpose intended by Allah, while the "interpretation" does? In other words, is there a probability that the Sufi interpreter of the Holy Koran may have stated his or her own personal perceptions and understandings of the related Koranic verses?

These seemingly puzzling issues may be clarified only when it is understood that, in Islamic philosophy, the term "decipherment, is traditionally used as a way to decode the inner, profound, and abstruse dimensions of the Holy Koran, while the term "interpretation" is generally used by the Islamic thinkers and scholars to explain the outer, superficial, and shallow dimension of the Holy Koran.

It is generally believed by Sufi mystic interpreters that the only way through which one may obtain the "decipherment" of the Holy Koran is not through "wisdom" (rational thinking), but rather through "intuition" (using the sixth sense). And since Sufi mystic interpreters really consider their knowledge of Allah as being a product of "Mavajid and Ahaval" (=the spiritual states through which the Sufi mystic interpreter reaches the stage of intuition), and because their spiritual states differ from one another in different times of the day, thus, there may be differing perceptions and understandings of the Holy Koran among them. In other

words, due to different spiritual states which the Sufi mystic interpreter reaches in different times of the day as well as different degrees of spiritual states through which they are busy purifying their carnal soul, it may be that their perceptions and understandings of the Holy Koran differ from one Sufi mystic interpreter to another.

Apart from the concept of "decipherment", which is used in the tradition of decoding the Holy Koran as well as in Islamic traditions (hadiths), one is faced with two other widely – used concepts in the domain of the interpretation of the Holy Koran. First, there is a concept which is widely used by Islamic orators and canonists. Through this first concept, a Koranic word or phrase is denoted by Islamic orators and canonists on the basis of its "connotative" meaning – not by its denotative (literal) meaning. This connotative meaning is justified and confirmed only by rational reasoning. The second concept is related to the "inner" meaning or the "denotative" meaning of a Koranic word or phrase. In the Sufi interpretations of the Holy Koran, Islamic thinkers and scholars have strongly objected to applying the "connotative" meaning, legalizing and stressing lightly on using the "denotative" meaning (s) of Koranic words or phrases. Islamic rational orators – specially in Shiite and Mo'tazele's (=a cult of Muslims who lived around the year 581 A. D., who emphasized on the values of "wisdom", "reasoning", and Man's "free will", believing that the world of existence has been created by Allah) interpretational schools do not usually consider the "connotative" meaning of Koranic verses – which enumerate Allah's characteristics – as being compatible with rational thinking and theology. Hence, in order to avoid likening and embodying Allah, these Islamic schools of thought have, for instance, considered the Sufi concept of "Morad" (= one who has reached the highest stage in Sufism,

and the one who guides other Sufi followers) as being a concept which is completely different from its connotative meaning, that is to say, Allah Himself. On the other hand, the Sufi mystic interpreters of the Holy Koran have again and again emphasized on the "connotative" meaning of the concept.

According to "Abou Bakr Mohyoddin Muhammed (560-638 A.H.), Known as Ibn – e Arabi, a disfavored, reprehensible decipherment is one in which the interpreter intends to present their own viewpoints and perceptions of Koranic verses as well as Islamic traditions (hadiths), which are derived from their own rational thinking as well as their own carnal purposes, viewpoints and perceptions which are wholly and really different from the "denotative" meaning(s) of Koranic words or phrases. Ibn-e Arabi holds the view that the theory which says that "wisdom" (rational thinking) alone would be considered as being the only criterion to assess every phenomenon in this world, including the divine message, is a completely rejectable theory. He argues that "wisdom" (rational thinking) alone does not deserve or merit entering the holy domain of Allah, let alone evaluating Allah's message.

Ibn-e Arabi believes that Man is naturally ill – advised and would not be in a position to intervene in the holy domain of the "Divine Revelation"; therefore, he has to humbly let the "Divine Revelation" itself judge about everything in this world. In other words, Man is not in a position in this world to evaluate and report on the worth of the "Divine Revelation" at all.

Therefore, the Sufi interpretation of the Holy Koran would be considered by Islamic thinkers and scholars as being a kind of interpretation which is wholly based on the personal intuition and insight of the Sufi mystic interpreter. Accordingly, the Sufi interpretation of the

Holy Koran would be considered by Islamic thinkers and scholars as being an interpretation which is contrary to the "rational decipherment" which itself is built upon the Muslim decipherer's "rational" intervention in order to decipher the verses of the Holy Koran. In other words, a Muslim decipherer's job is based on a process of thinking carefully about the meaning(s) of Koranic words and phrases in order to make a good judgment, that is to say, "reasoning". In spite of the facts which we have just mentioned, it does seem that not all Sufi interpretations of the Holy Koran have their origin in the mere intuitive insights of the Sufi mystic interpreter. As we shall see later throughout the present survey, Sufism or Islamic mysticism, followed by the Sufi interpretations of the Holy Koran made by Sufi mystic interpreters, have over the course of history been closely interwoven with philosophical and theoretical debating issues which have repeatedly been made by different Islamic thinkers and scholars. The above – mentioned interweave has been so inextricable that it may be definitely said that not all Sufi interpretations of the Holy Koran have been on the basis of the "intuitive insights" of the Sufi mystic interpreters, but rather many of these Sufi interpretations of the Holy Koran have been interpreted on the basis of "theoretical presuppositions" on the part of Sufi mystic interpreters.

### **Mysticism in the Religion of Islam**

In Islamic cultures, the term "mysticism" (Sufism) has been defined as follows: "mysticism would be a kind of understanding or knowledge which is acquired by inward perceptions or "Seir – o – Solouk" (= passing through different specific stages in order to approach Allah) as well as "Mujahidat" (= struggling hard with carnal desires as well as

suffering severe physical hardships in order to reach highly spiritual positions) on the part of the Sufi mystic.

As a matter of fact, Man, from the very first moment he started to know himself, has indefatigably started a never – ending struggle to know and understand the world around him, seeking to uncover the mysteries of life and the Creation. This hard struggle of uncovering the mysteries of life and the Creation is still proceeding and will untiringly be continued. Man, over the course of history, has been seeking to unveil the mysteries of life, determining its real nature, ascertaining what has been its origin, discovering towards where it is proceeding and knowing what its ultimate purpose has been. In fact, because of these questions and more which were flowing in the minds of Muslim thinkers and scholars, different Islamic schools of thought and philosophies have been emerged over time in the world of Islam.

For instance, the two Islamic philosophical schools of "Mashaa' " (= a philosophical way of thinking related to rational sciences, which considers that the Truth may be discovered through applying wisdom and reason only) and "Ishraq" (= a philosophical way of thinking which claims that the Truth may be discovered through applying intuition only) were emerged in the World of Islam in relation to finding out the "Truth" in Islamic Philosophy. The Islamic mysticism or Sufism which still exists in Islamic cultures is indeed a way of thinking which has remained of the "Ishraq" philosophical school.

In addition to the definition of "Islamic mysticism" mentioned above, there is another definition of "Islamic mysticism" presented by Islamic thinkers and scholars, which is as follows: "Islamic mysticism (Sufism) is a specific way of gaining insight, which, unlike those who stress the application of wisdom and reason in uncovering the Truth, places

emphasis on the "intuition" in discovering the Truth". In Islamic cultures, Mysticism is divided into two kinds: 1) Theoretical Mysticism, and 2) Practical Mysticism. In "theoretical mysticism", the Sufi mystic only teaches and states the rules and principles gained by the "intuition", through which the follower may obtain the Truth. On the other hand, "Practical mysticism" includes gaining the Truth in practice, that is to say, through the real application of three different mystical stages practically. These three different Sufi stages are as follows: 1) "Seir – o Solouk" (=a stage at which the Sufi follower attempts to approach Allah, passing through several specific Sufi stages in order to approach Him); 2) "Vosul" (=a stage at which the Sufi follower is about to join Allah); and 3) "Fana" (=a stage at which the Sufi follower is completely dispossessed of all his or her human characteristics and finally joins Allah). It should be noted that the kind of accepted and permissible Sufism which has always been fostered and popularized in the Islamic society, has always been in conformity with the Holy koran and Islamic traditions, attempting to conform its Sufi cultures to Koramic ones.

### **Approaches to the Interpretation of the Holy Koran**

There are several approaches to the interpretation of the Holy Koran such as the interpretation of the Holy Koran based on the Holy Koran itself (The Koran by the Koran Interpretation), the interpretation of the Holy Koran by the Islamic traditions or hadiths (Traditional Interpretation), the interpretation of the Holy Koran by wisdom (The Rational Interpretation) and ... . One of the approaches which is applied to the interpretation of the Holy Koran is the "Sufi" approach or generally known as "the Sufi interpretation of the Holy Koran".

The Sufi approach to the interpretation of the Holy Koran has its origins in an attitude towards the Holy Koran which says that there are hidden or inner concepts beyond the formal or apparent words and phrases in the Holy Koran, and that only the Sufi intuition may uncover their mysteries. The Sufi approach to the interpretation of the Holy Koran does differ from the concept of "interpretation" itself, which is commonly used in Islamic cultures and principles.

### **The Approach Applied in the Interpretation of the Holy Koran**

The approach which is applied the Islamic interpreter to clarify the meanings of Koranic verses as well as to perceive and infer these meanings from the Koranic words or phrases and to determine their relations with one another is called the "interpretational approach". In other words, what is meant by the word "approach" in the interpretation of the Holy Koran on the part of Koranic interpreters would be as applying special standards or criteria which not only do they clarify the meanings or purposes of Koranic verses, but they provide the reader with definite and crystal clear statements. To put it another way, the way the Koranic interpreter discovers and extracts meanings from Koranic verses for the reader is called the "interpretational approach" or an approach which is applied in the interpretation of the Holy Koran. But a question may be raised here. Let us say that some interpreter put an accurate interpretation on the Holy Koran one hundred years ago. Does his interpretation really fulfill the needs of a person who is living in today's world? To answer this question, some important issues have to be clarified. It goes without saying that every particular period of history does possess its own particular age characteristics which include social, cultural, political, religious and economic factors. There is no doubt that

these factors exert inevitable influences over the people who live in that particular period as well as the interpreter himself or herself. Thus, the orientation that an interpreter develops in a particular period of history towards interpreting the Holy Koran is deeply affected by the various factors just mentioned above. Consequently, over the course of history, we face the fact that there are different orientations towards interpreting the Holy Koran on the part of different Koranic interpreters. In actual fact, in addition to the above – mentioned factors, a Koranic interpreter may interpret the Holy Koran on the basis of his or her own personal beliefs, personal attitudes, personal qualities and personal talents.

The most important factor in creating different interpretational trends towards the Holy Koran is, itself, affected by three other factors. The three factors which, indeed, are involved in creating different interpretational trends towards the Holy Koran are as follows: 1) The specialized body of knowledge of the interpreter; 2) The spirit and the taste of the interpreter himself or herself; and 3) The interpreter's preoccupations towards various and current issues existing in his or her own society. What is intended by the phrase "the interpretive trend" would be the personal, subjective orientations which have formed in the mind of the interpreter, the orientations which are rooted in the interactions of the interpreter himself or herself with various, current and contemporary issues and problems of his or her own time at which he or she is living. As an example, an interpreter's preoccupations may be the spiritual teaching and education of the people who are living with him or her in the same society, hence the interpreter commits his or her interpretation of the Holy Koran to writing in order that the people who live in his or her society will read it and become spiritually educated. As my respected professor Seyyedah Fatima Husseini Mir Seifi has, over

and over again, stated in her university classes:"since the interpreter's main occupation in the Sufi interpretation of the Holy Koran would be to acquaint people with Islamic ethics and to educate them spiritually, the Sufi interpretation of the Holy Koran is considered as being a kind of "interpretational" trend.

### **The Sufi Interpretation of the Holy Koran**

Before anything else, it should be clarified that what we exactly mean when we speak of the Sufi interpretation of the Holy Koran. Is the phrase "the Sufi interpretation of the Holy Koran" similar" the to the interpretation which is on the basis of " the narration" (the narrative interpretation) or is it comparable with the interpretation which is on the basis of "the ethics" (the ethical interpretation)? In other words, is the Sufi interpretation of the Holy Koran merely an interpretational approach or an interpretive method or beyond, say, an interpretational school?

Generally speaking, the "interpretational" approach is defined as: "the interpreter's own orientations which arise from three different factors: 1) the interpreter's own intellectual and spiritual preoccupations; 2) the interpreter's own information, skills, and understanding that he or she has gained through learning or experience; and 3) the reader's needs. The "interpretive" approach to the Holy Koran includes the way the interpreter makes an attempt to represent and define the concepts of Koranic verses, trying to provide the reader with the exact meaning (s) as exactly intended by Allah. The interpreter's attempts to achieve this goal is closely and specifically related to the facts and documents as well as the reliable sources of interpretation. In other words, the interpreter's attempts in interpreting the Holy Koran will not bear fruit, unless he or she makes the accurate use of the most solid and sound facts and

documents as well as the most reliable sources of interpretation in order to provide the reader with the most vivid and understandable Koranic concepts interpreted by him or her. For example, the Koran by the Koran interpretation or the interpretation of the Holy Koran by Islamic traditions (hadiths), or the interpretation of the Holy Koran by the reason (the rational interpretation of the Holy Koran) are all considered as being typical examples of the "interpretational" approach to the Holy Koran. On the other hand, the "interpretive" school in, interpreting the Holy Koran, includes systematic thoughts including a series of Islamic rules and principles which are used in the interpretation of the Holy Koran.

Concerning the Sufi interpretation of the Holy Koran, it should be mentioned here that every issue – in the Sufi interpretation of the Holy Koran – is dependent upon the interpreter's own attitude towards the concept of "Islamic mysticism" or Sufism" itself. If the interpreter looks at the Islamic mysticism (Sufism) as being a way of life which has been chosen by some people to be followed, the Sufi mystics are, therefore, considered as being a social group of people who live with a specific way of life in the society. In this case, the Sufi mystic's relations with the Holy Koran and its interpretations are only limited to confirming and justifying their specific way of living. On the other hand, if the interpreter considers the Islamic mysticism (Sufism) as being something which necessitates the absolute "intuition"; in this case, the picture of the Sufi interpretation of the Holy Koran will be changed and will manifest itself as "the narrative interpretation" or "the rational interpretation" or "the Koran by the Koran interpretation". But if the interpreter considers the Islamic mysticism (Sufism) as being an "intellectual and religious school of thought", the picture of the Sufi interpretation of the Holy Koran will go far beyond. In the latter case, the Holy Koran – considered

as being the words of Allah – will be interpreted in accordance with the rules and principles which are regarded as being true in that school of thought.

Therefore, according to what we discussed above, there different attitudes towards the Sufi interpretation of the Holy Koran may be inferred: in the first attitude, and considering the discussion above, the Sufi interpretation of the Holy Koran is considered as being an interpretation merely based on an "interpretive approach", that is to say, the Sufi mystic interpreter interprets Koranic verses in his or her own way, according to his or her own attitude towards life, making use of Koranic verses in order to confirm and justify his or her own manner of life. For example, if a Sufi mystic interpreter thinks that any Muslim person must always fear Allah and have Allah in their mind all the time, and remove from all worldly concerns, then, they may naturally give their attention to Koranic chapters and verses in which the concepts of "fearing Allah" and "removal from all worldly concerns" are found and they interpret Koranic verses accordingly. This approach, that is to say, the absolute interpretive approach, is similar to putting interpretation on merely the psychological or sociological aspects and dimensions of the Holy Koran. So long as this approach does not neglect other aspects or dimensions of the Holy Koran, it will not be detrimental to the Holy Koran in its totality. Moreover, taking a look at the Holy Koran from different angles, the Sufi mystic interpreter will lead on to the discovery and revelation of subtle, fine Koranic points, subtle, fine Koranic points which might have been unnoticed before on the part of other Koranic interpreters. This approach to the interpretation of the Holy Koran will surely cause the Sufi concepts to be noticed by the reader, the Sufi concepts which have always played a key role in Sufi mystic interpreter's

life. Accordingly, taking a careful look at the Sufi interpretations of the Holy Koran, one may understand that how far the absolute interpretive approach has been diverted from the correct path of Koranic interpretations. Furthermore, considering this approach, we will understand that how far the Holy Koran itself has underwent and suffered from Sufi mystic interpreter's one – sidedness and distortion. Having a Sufi look at Koranic verses may result in the neglect of other koranic aspects on the part of the Sufi mystic interpreter, hence life issues may undergo the Sufi mystic interpreter's one – sidedness and one – sidedness, in turn, may throw the reader's life into disarray.

In the second attitude, which, indeed, includes interpreting Koranic verses according to absolute "intuition" and religious visions, the Sufi interpretation of the Holy Koran is viewed as an interpretive method. From this point of view, the Sufi interpretation of the Holy Koran is considered as being a kind of interpretation, exactly as much as the "traditional" interpretation of the Holy Koran. In the traditional interpretation of the Holy Koran, the Koranic interpreter holds the belief that the words stated by the Prophet of Islam and the Innocent Shiite Imams may be understood as the words of Allah Himself, which have been stated in the Holy Koran. Similarly, in the Sufi interpretation of the Holy koran, the Sufi mystic interpreter holds the belief that his or her own religious visions and intuitions are indicative of Allah's purposes and intentions, which have been stated in the Holy koran. Therefore, taking a careful look at this second attitude towards the interpretation of the Holy Koran, one will surely notices that how far incorrect personal points have been stated by different Sufi mystic interpreters of the Holy Koran in the course of history, incorrect personal points which have been usually arisen out of Sufi mystic interpreters' intuitions and religious

visions. This is also seen in the "traditional" interpretations of the Holy Koran, in which many wrong and baseless Islamic traditions (hadiths) have been quoted from the prophet of Islam, His Holiness Muhammed (Peace be to him and his family) as well as wrong and baseless quotations even from Allah Himself.

A careful critical mind will naturally reject these baseless and, so to speak, "Sufi" interpretations of the Holy Koran, in spite of the fact that there exist a large number of these false Sufi interpretations of the Holy Koran in the world of Shiite Islam.

In the third attitude towards the interpretation of the Holy Koran and considering Sufism (Islamic mysticism) as being an "intellectual religious school of thought", Sufism is viewed as a comprehensive and all – inclusive religious school of thought that has sought to interpret Man and his world, hence seeking to interpret and give a picture of the Holy Koran in the framework of the devised rules and principles as well as its intellectual presuppositions. A critical look at the Sufi interpretation of the Holy Koran on the basis of this attitude, that is to say, viewing Sufism as an intellectual and religious school of thought, will help us to know Koranic concepts and principles to what extent upon which Sufi interpretations of the Holy Koran are put and show us how much Koranic verses have been distorted and manipulated.

Referring back to the idea that was mentioned earlier in this survey, the Sufi interpretation of the Holy Koran is based upon the idea that the Holy Koran, in addition to its formal and superficial aspects, it also includes hidden and deep aspects which can only be discovered by Sufi intuitions and religious visions. Nevertheless, Koranic interpreters and researcher's points of view on giving an exact definition of Sufi interpretation of the Holy Koran extremely differ from one another.

There is no doubt that the Sufi mystic interpreter of the Holy Koran commits him or herself to only deciphering the Holy Koran's outer forms according to his or her conscientious muse and inspiration arisen from his or her inward intuition. There exist two points in the Sufi interpretation of the Holy Koran, which make this kind of interpretation differ from other interpretive approaches to the Holy Koran: first, the application of a special kind of language named "allusive language" as well as an extreme use of specific terms which the Sufi experience requires are needed. Second, the use of intuition on the part of the Sufi mystic interpreter, which is not at all seen in other interpretative approaches to the Holy Koran, is required.

Basically, the Sufi interpreters of the Holy Koran disregard the ways of reasoning, argumentation and discussion in their interpretations, although they do not deny these factors, in order to perceive and understand the truths including Koranic ones, and they turn to the inward ways of inspiration and sudden exciting thoughts to interpret and decipher the verses of the Holy Koran. The Sufi mystic interpreters of the Holy Koran do not usually make an effort to prove their inspired thoughts and views, referring their inspired thoughts and views to their own inspired perceptions. For instance, Abou Bakr Mohyoddin Muhammed, Known as Ibn – e Arabi, states: "As the coming down on high of the Holy Koran itself to the Holy Prophet of Islam, His Holiness Muhammed (peace be to him and his family) has been accomplished on the part of Allah, the coming down on high of perceiving the Holy Koran by the faithful Innocent Muslims through their sensational inspirations and intuitions is accomplished by Allah, too. For this reason, the Sufi mystic interpreter's emphasis, in their Sufi interpretations of the Holy Koran, would be on deciphering the outer, superficial meanings and

concepts of Koranic words and phrases, hence they interpret the Holy Koran on the basis of their personal and sensational inspirations and intuitions. Furthermore, some Islamic thinkers and scholars have defined the Sufi interpretation of the Holy Koran as the following way: "The Sufi interpretation of the Holy Koran encompasses a series of inward and personal perceptions perceived by the Sufi mystic interpreter as well as his or her own personal and inward reflections, contemplations, meditations and comprehensions which all arise out of and originate from their own personal tastes as well as their Sufi experiences and visions.

According to some other Islamic thinkers and scholars, the Sufi interpretation of the Holy Koran is considered as being the metaphorical, figurative, and imaginary ideas, notions, and perceptions defined from reading the Holy Koran. It is noteworthy to mention here that Islamic jurists who pre-eminently draw literal, lexical and verbal inferences from verses of the Holy Koran do disacknowledge the Sufi interpretations of the Holy Koran, and believe that the Sufi interpretation of the Holy Koran would be the result of the Sufi mystic interpreter's illusions and erroneous perceptions of reality.

### **The Historical Background of the Sufi interpretations of the Holy Koran**

The historical background of the Sufi interpretations of the Holy Koran dates back to the times of the Holy Prophet of Islam, His Holiness Muhammed (peace be to him and his family), when the religion of Islam had started to rise. Some Koranic chapters such as the eighth verse of the fourth chapter of "Nisa", the twenty – fourth verse of the forty – seventh chapter of "Muhammed", and the thirty – fifth verse of the twenty –

fourth chapter of "Nour", which were all considered as being more appropriate Koranic verses than other Koranic verses by Sufi mystic interpreters to support their Sufi ideas, thoughts and perceptions, had been repeatedly referred to and used by Sufi mystic interpreters in order to interpret the Holy Koran. What really did accelerate the inclination to repeatedly refer to and use these specific Koranic chapters and verses among Sufi mystic interpreters at the time had been the existence and presence of figurative words and phrases in the Holy Koran itself. According to Jalaloddin Abdul – Rahman Siouti (849-911 A.H.), a Muslim Egyptian scholar, the abundant presence of figurative words and phrases in the Holy Koran is undeniable. He, further, adds that half of the distinction, excellence, merit, and grace of the Holy Koran would have been destroyed if these figurative words and phrases did not exist in the Holy Koran. Furthermore, there is a statement attributed to some companions of the Holy Prophet of Islam, His Holiness Muhammed (Peace be to him and his family) according to which in interpreting the Holy Koran, no interpreter must merely rely on the formal, outer (denotative) meaning(s) of the verses of the Holy Koran. Moreover, long before Sufi mystic interpreters attempted to interpret the Holy Koran, Abdullah Ibn-e Abbass (647 A.D.), the cousin and a famous companion of His Holiness Muhammed (Peace be to him and his family) from whom a member of Islamic traditions (hadiths) have been quoted, about the twelfth verse of the Koranic chapter "Talaq" had said to the people of his time: "You, people, will surely stoned me to death if I told you the true meaning of this verse, or if you did not stone me to death, you would surely call me an irreligious pagan". This statement became very well – known at the time and was much testified at that time. It is also noteworthy to mention that during the time of "Tabe'een"(=those who

had seen the companions of His Holiness Muhammed (Peace be to him and his family) and spoken to him), some Sufi mystic interpreters "Such as Abou Sa'eed Hassan – e Basri (642-728 A.D.), one of the pioneers in Sufism, used to interpret the Holy Koran in the "intuitive" and "figurative" manner.

### **The Prototypes of the Sufi Interpretations of the Holy Koran**

Paul Noya believes that the prototypes of the Sufi interpretations of the Holy Koran are seen in and attributed to the teachings of Imam Ja'far Sadiq (Peace be upon him) (80-148 A.H.), the Sixth Imam of Shiite Muslims, specially in his "Elm – ol Ja'far" (The Knowledge of Ja'far), an ancient science through which the future incidents were anticipated, as well as in the domain of his Sufi experiences which have been mentioned in the book "Haqayeq Al-Tafsir (The Truths on Interpretation) written by Abou Abdul Rahman Sollami (325-412 A.H.), a Persian Sufi and Gnostic. Of course, there are questions about the veracity of these attributions. According to Paul Noya, the imaginative and figurative dimensions of the book "Al – Tafsir-e Kabir (The Great Interpretation) written by Moqatel Ibn – e Soleyman – e Marvazi (dead in 729 A.D.), a Persian Muslim interpreter from Balkh district in Present – day Afghanistan, had provided inspiration for Sufi mystics such as Muhammed Ibn-e Ali Termezi (c.a 285 A.H.), a Persian Hakim and Sufi mystic.

### **The Shiite Approach to the Sufi Interpretations of the Holy Koran**

In terms of the "interpretive" method or approach, the Sufi interpretation of the Holy Koran shares common characteristics with

some philosophical and scholastic approaches or methods such as the "Shiite" approach.

## **The Viewpoints of Koranic Researchers on the Sufi Interpretations of the Holy Koran**

There has not been a general consensus among Koranic researchers on the permissibility or non – permissibility of the application of the Sufi interpretation of the Holy Koran. Some Koranic researchers consider the Sufi interpretation of the Holy Koran as being impermissible, even as a kind of heresy. On the other hand, some other Koranic researchers hold the belief that the Sufi interpretation of the Holy Koran will not cause any problems, on condition that all the rules and principles of interpretation as well as both the outer, superficial and the inner, deep meaning(s) of Koranic words and phrases, which are indicative of the ideal of an absolute faithfulness and insight of the Sufi mystic interpreter, are fully observed and preserved.

According to Abdul Vahhab Ibn-e Ahmad Sha'rani (Sha'ravi) (1493-1565 A.D.) an Egyptian Sufi mystic scholar, since Sufi mystic Muslims and Scholars are able to find out meanings and understandings in Koranic words and phrases, which are not at all accessible to ordinary scholars and interpreters, the Sufi manner in interpreting the Holy Koran will not be forbidden and indecent.

## **Why Does the Sufi Interpretation of the Holy Koran Differ from other Koranic Interpretations?**

A crucial difference between the Sufi approach and other interpretive approaches in interpreting the Holy Koran would be that in the Sufi interpretation of the Holy Koran, the Sufi mystic interpreter makes a great use of the "allusive" language as well as specific Sufi terms which the nature of Sufi experiences necessitates. For these reasons, the Sufi interpretation of the Holy Koran is called the "allusive" interpretation by

some Muslim scholars as well. It should be mentioned that Sufi mystic interpreter's allusions are sometimes inextricably interwoven with the outer, superficial or denotative meanings of Koranic words and Phrases. For example, Abou Bakr Mohyoddin Muhammed, Known as Ibn-e Arabi (879-975 A.D.) states: "Just as Allah willed to send down koranic verses to the Prophet of Islam, His Holiness Muhammed (Peace be to him and his family) and had him directly and immediately perceive them, the direct and immediate perception of Koranic verses on the part of Sufi mystics is, thus, caused by Allah's will as well. "Furthermore, he holds the belief that each Koranic verse possesses two substantial aspects: 1) an outer, superficial aspect (denotative meaning (s) of Koranic words and phrases), that is to say, the very Koranic words and phrases which exist beyond the limits of the spirit of the truly faithful Maslms; 2) an inner, deep aspect (connotative meaning(s) of Koranic words and phrases) which lie inside the spirit of the truly faithful Maslms. This is an aspect which is felt and perceived by their spirit.

Likewise, Abou Nasr Abdullah Ibn-e Ali Sarradj Tousi (583 A.D.), known as "Tavous Al- Foqara" (The Poor's Peacock), a Sufi Muslim jurisprudent, in one of his own books titled "Mostanbatat" (The Concepts Perceived) deals with the subjects and issues of the "outer" (superficial) and the "inner" (deep) aspects of koranic concepts as appearing in the Holy Koran, and concludes by stating that the Holy book of Koran as well as "Sunnah" possess both outer (Superficial) and inner (deep) conceptual meanings.

In addition, Muhammed Ibn-e Ali Atiyyeh (996 A.D.), known as Abou Talib Makki, a famous Sufi mystic and Gnostic, in one of his own books acknowledges that the Holy book of Koran possesses both outer as well as inner conceptual meanings, emphasizing on the superiority of the

"inner" "knowledge and insight of the truly faithful Muslims over their outer (superficial) understanding. It is interesting to know that in order to prove the above acknowledgement, he provides the readers with vivid and clear examples and quotations presented by the Holy Koran itself.

### **The Sufi Mystic's Specific Way in Interpreting the Holy Koran (Isharat)**

In Sufism (Islamic mysticism), the word "Isharat" is defined as: "Notifying others of Allah and His words without uttering a word on the part of the Sufi mystic Muslim." Also, the Sufi mystics' specific way to explain and clarify the Divine Revelation's purposes and meanings in the holy book of Koran would be called "Isharat".

On the other hand, those Islamic thinkers and scholars who truly believe in discovering the divine truth mentioning in the Holy Koran, consider the Sufi term "Isharat" as: "The true meanings which are inferred from Koranic verses. "This definition would be considered as being a kind of prevarication, that is to say, to hide one's true beliefs from shallow and prejudiced Islamic jurisperit who have a one – track mind, for fear that they may be killed by them. According to Baha Al-Din Seyyed Heidar Ibn-e Ali Ibn – e Heidar (719-786 A.D.), Known as Seyyed Heidar Amoli, a Persian Shiite Gnostic, Sufi mystic and interpreter of the Holy Koran: "The interpretation of the Holy Koran by the Sufi mystic interpreter would be a kind of interpretation which is arisen from the spirit as well as from the personal views and beliefs of the Sufi mystic interpreter, the views and beliefs which are caused by the Sufi mystic interpreter's deep contemplations and reflections. In other words, what the Sufi mystic interpreter does while interpreting the Holy Koran would be adapting "the outer world"(microcosm) (Afaq) to his or

her "inner world"(microcosm) (Anfos), that is to say, interpreting the outer world of existence in accordance with his or her own inner moods, and feelings and beliefs. At the time of interpreting the Holy Koran. This adaptation is indeed a conclusion drawn by the Sufi mystic interpreter from the verse fifty – three of the Koranic chapter of "Fosselat" which says:

«سنريهم آياتنا فى الافاق و فى انفسهم حتى يتبين لهم انه الحق اولم يكف بربك انه على

كل شىء شهيد»

(Soon, we will reveal our secrets to them, and show them our indications and signs in many diverse ways both in this [material] world and in their own spirit, in the hope that they clearly understand that He [Allah] Himself is the one and only Truth. Will it not suffice that your Creator Himself witness everything?)

Therefore, a kind of adaptation is made between the Sufi mystic interpreter's inner world, that is to say, "Takvin" (the Creation) and the Holy Koran (the composed book), which is resulted from and conducted by the Sufi mystic interpreter's personal views, feelings, and beliefs. This particular approach to interpreting the Holy Koran is in actual fact resulted from combining the specific rules and principles of "Ontology" with the specific rules and principles of "epistemology" on the part of the Sufi mystic interpreter while interpreting the Holy Koran.

Doctor Muhammad Hussein Zahabi (1915-1977 A.D.), a former Egyptian professor at Al – Azhar University in Cairo, in his own book "Al – Tafsir val Mofasseroun (The Interpretation and the Interpreters) states: "Although the allusive interpretation of the Holy Koran is not considered as being a new approach to convey Koranic concepts and meanings, it has been a well – known and well – accepted way of interpreting the Holy Koran since its coming down from on high to the

prophet of Islam, His Holiness Muhammed (Peace be to him and his family). In actual fact, the Holy Koran itself really indicates this specific approach, that is to say, the allusive approach; and the prophet of Islam, His Holiness Muhammed (Peace be to him and his family) himself had notified the truly faithful Muslims of his own time of this allusive approach, teaching it to his faithful companions."

Elswhere in his book, Doctor Zahabi supports his opinion as well as his argument with recorded facts and Islamic traditions (hadiths) to prove that according to his own opinion and recorded facts as well as Islamic traditions (hadiths), the Holy Koran indeed possesses an inner, deep, and hidden aspect.

Furthermore, Sheikh Khalid Abul Rahman Al'ak states: "The allusive interpretation of the Holy Koran refers to the hidden concepts and meanings which truly exist in the Holy Koran. The allusive interpretation of the Holy Koran requires that the Sufi mystic interpreter moves beyond the superficial concepts and meanings of Koranic verses, contemplating the deep, hidden, as of yet undiscovered Koranic concepts and meanings."

It should be mentioned that the Sufi interpretations of the Holy Koran have been also called "allegorical" as well as "symbolic" interpretations. In this respect, that is to say, if Koranic verses are considered as being "allegories" and "symbols", the Sufi interpretation of the Holy Koran would be deeply dependent upon the Koran's text itself and is indeed on the basis of it.

## **The Appearance and the Essence of the Material World in Relation to Koranic Verses**

Islamic Gnostics and Sufi mystics believe that the world of existence possesses an appearance as well as an essence, that is to say, a material, visible dimension as well as a spiritual, invisible one. They also contend that the universe, with all its spaces, stars, and planets, continuously advances from its womb and withdraws again to where it has been before. This never – ending advancement (expansion) and withdrawal (contraction) may be compared with the beating of the heart which is continually expanded and contracted. Therefore, according to Islamic Gnostics and Sufi mystics, the human beings, just like the universe, are a combination of "Body" (Matter) and "Spirit" (Essence). In other words, Man's body is their very appearance and their spirit, his very essence or hidden meaning. It should be mentioned that the similarity between Man and the Holy Koran, in terms of the appearance and the essence, is indeed seen in some religious works written by Islamic thinkers and Scholars.

"Mohkamat" (those Koranic verses whose meaning(s) are clear and do not require any interpretation(s)) as well as those Koranic verses which are related to Islamic orders which concern the incumbency, the recommendation, the prohibitiveness, the disapprobation, or the permissibility of an action, are not included in the Sufi interpretations of the Holy Koran. Only "Moteshabehat" (those Koranic verses whose meanings are not clear) as well as those Koranic verses which are related to Man and the mysteries of the universe are paid attention and justified by the Sufi mystic interpreter.

## **The Methodical Way of Interpreting the Holy Koran**

As it was stated before, we have to note that when the Sufi mystic interpreter claims that they are in their Sufi specific mental condition or state or when they are in the specific state of stating the inner truth about Koranic verses, this Sufi specific state of mind may not symbolize the correct interpretation of Koranic verse on the part of the Sufi mystic interpreter. Thus, to prevent any Koranic verses from being interpreted wrongly, a specific method of interpretation is required to help the Sufi mystic interpreter present an acceptable interpretation of Koranic verses.

On the significance of observing the methodical way of interpreting the Holy Koran, Seyyed Muhammed Hussein Tabatabaee (1903-1983 A.D.), known as Allameh (Polymath) Tabatabaee", a famous contemporary Iranian interpreter of the Holy Koran, states: "If the interpreter pays attention to both the outer and the inner concepts and meanings of Koranic verses simultaneously in such a way that the interpreter's attention is not taken away from the outer concept(s) and meaning(s) of koranic verses and if the interpreter does not claim that they have interpreted Koranic verses on the basis of only the allusive approach, the methodical way of interpretation of the Holy Koran has really been observed, accordingly. Moreover, on observing the methodical way of the interpretation of the Holy Koran, Ayatollah Muhammed Hadi Ma'refat (1931-2006 A.D.), a contemporary Iranian Shiite researcher of Koranic sciences, adds two other necessary conditions which the interpreter should possess in addition to the previously stated definition of the methodical way of the interpretation of the Holy Koran. He states: "In order that the methodical way of the interpretation of the Holy Koran takes place, two other conditions must exist and be observed: first, the interpretation put on a Koranic verse

must at least possess a rational reason or a narrative source; second, the interpretation inferred from a Koranic verse must be made in a way which conforms to the primary (denotative) meaning of the Koranic verse itself." In this regard, Ayatollah Rouh Allah Khomeini (1903-1989A.D.), the founder and the first founder of the Islamic Republic of Iran, Known as Imam Khomeini, states: "Those Koranic interpreters who are versed in the religious law pay their attention to only the outer, superficial meaning(s) of Koranic verses, but the Sufi mystic interpreters, although accepting the interpretation of the outer, superficial aspect of the Holy Koran and consider it as a basic principle in the Koranic interpretations, they do not believe that it is the ultimate interpretation of the Holy Koran, because the Sufi mystic interpreters believe that the superficial interpretation of Koranic verses results in limitations to the words of God Almighty in the Holy Koran, which are themselves unlimited in terms of concept and meaning."

Therefore, if the Sufi mystic interpreter of the Holy Koran really observes the above – mentioned points in their interpretation, their interpretation would definitely be considered as being a "methodical" interpretation of the Holy Koran, otherwise their interpretation conforms to only their personal thoughts and beliefs. Indeed, a number of false and incorrect Sufi interpretations are seen in the book "Fotouhat-e Makkyeh" written by Mohyoddin Muhammed Ibn-e Arabi on Sufism.

### **Identifying the Principle – Based Weaknesses in the Sufi Interpretations of the Holy Koran**

By definition, the term "principles" is attributed to a group of rules, bases and foundations upon which the structure of a science or body of knowledge is built. The "interpretive" principles are those

presuppositions and established rules as well as generally agreed upon theories which have determinant effects on the interpretation of a text on the part of the interpreter. In other words, the interpretive principles which are applied to the interpretation of the Holy Koran are those presuppositions, established rules and ideological or scientific beliefs which a Koranic interpreter by accepting them, embarks upon the interpretation of the Holy Koran.

Furthermore, the "principle – based weaknesses" are attributed to those defects and faults that may really exist on the part of the Sufi mystic interpreter of the Holy Koran.

Sufi mystic interpreters of the Holy Koran generally hold varying beliefs and opinions concerning the principles of ontology, epistemology, and theosophy in their interpretations of the Holy Koran, each of which may be researched or investigated in its own place. Nevertheless, at this point, we will deal with the most significant principle – based weaknesses which have already formed the Sufi mystic interpreters' thoughts, beliefs, and attitudes when they commit to interpret the Holy Koran.

### **The Experience – Based Sufi Attitudes towards Divine Revelation Itself and the Verbal Problems Found in the Sufi Interpretations of the Holy Koran**

According to some Sufi principles and ideas which may be more or less found among different Sufi mystic interpreters, there would be no logical principles or connections between the prophet of Islam's Sufi (mystical) experiences and revelatory insights when dealing with the issue of Divine Revelation (God's message) and between the religious text and God's words. In other words, according to some Sufi mystic

interpreters, there would be no connections between the religious text – in this case the Holy Koran itself – and God's messages – or , to put it another way, between the lexical and conceptual meaning(s) of Koranic verses and the real words of God, as appeared in the Holy Koran. Sufi mystics generally insist that the Sufi experiences or revelatory insights cannot essentially take the form of concepts. On the basis of the above – mentioned theory, the Sufi experience or revelatory insight comes directly upon the Sufi mystic interpreter and is suddenly perceived by them.

On the other hand, this came upon and perceived Sufi experience or revelatory insight cannot be experienced or perceived in a real life and cannot take the form of a concept. And since the Sufi mystic interpreters argue that each word in any language symbolizes a specific and definite concept, there will be no concept or word for it to be uttered when there is no concept at all. Therefore, since the Sufi mystic interpreter's mental mood or state of mind does not take the form of a concept, that mental mood or state of mind cannot also be turned into words. Accordingly, the unutterability of the Sufi experience or the revelatory insight has no connection to the intenseness or weakness, the deepness or shallowness of the Sufi experience. The unutterability of the Sufi mystic interpreter's experience or revelatory insight is a matter of the unlimitedness, absoluteness and inevitable. On this basis, not only there are no logical and verbal relationships between Koranic concepts and Allah Himself, but the Holy Koran is considered as being just a talk (words of Allah) which were uttered by the prophet of Islam, His Holiness Muhammed (peace be to him and his family) who, for the purpose of spiritual guidance of, guiding people spiritually, people, had already made his spiritual journey, that is to say, the journey from serving the needs and

interests of people to reaching the point where Allah was, hence being deserved of Allah's messenger. This attitude towards the Divine Revelation (Allah's message) may be closely interwoven with mystical – philosophical points of view existing in the west, which says the Divine Revelation (God's message) is a kind of mystical experience itself. Astis states: "Almost in all the history of mysticism in the west, the theory of the unintelligibility of mystical experiences and revelatory insights dominates other related theories." Likewise, Eckhart states: "All the Holy prophets have always moved in the direction of an enlightening guidance ... Moving in this direction, they sometimes become so impatient and restless that they want to return to their normal, peaceful, material world in order to speak with ordinary people about what they have spiritually experienced, perceived, and received from God Almighty, so that they may teach ordinary people the way they can know God Almighty. But, sometimes, no sooner have the Holy prophets start speaking to people about God Almighty than they unconsciously become silent and are unable to speak.

There are usually three different reasons for this state of unconsciousness and silence: first, the Divine Grace and Attention that the Holy prophets feel inside, as well as the Divine Attention and Grace that they have received from God Almighty are so great and particularly excellent and mysterious that they feel that they are not able to transfer this special feeling of mystery to ordinary people verbally; therefore, they have not a choice but holding their peace; second, what the Holy prophets have found in and imagined of God Almighty is so great and particularly excellent and mysterious that they feel that they are not able to express it in words, the greatness and excellence that only matches God Almighty's divine position and status; and finally, the Holy prophets

keep their peace because they have found out and perceived the untold secrets and mysteries of God Almighty, the divine untold secrets and mysteries which will always remain secrets and mysteries.

This attitude towards Divine Revelation (God's Message) has itself resulted in the appearance of two kinds of divine texts: 1) the Metaphorical Divine Texts; 2) the Symbolic DivineT. Rudolph Otto (1896-1937 A.D.), an eminent German Lutheran theologian, philosopher, and comparative religionist, in his book "The Idea of the Holy", builds up the theory of the metaphoricality of the divine texts on the very basis of the "unintelligibility" of Divine Message. In other words, Otto holds that the Divine Message, including the holy religious books, may not be conceptualized at all. Furthermore, he believes that the religious (mystic) experience of the Divine World would be totally unintelligible, hence it cannot take the form of any concept. Nevertheless, he believes that a religious, faithful man may see a similarity – even a weak one – between a religious experience (spiritual) feature and some non – religious (material) features in Nature, hence they metaphorically or symbolically give a material name or concept to that religious (mystical) experience feature. One of the aspects of such religious (mystical) experience, Otto adds, would be a feeling of "awe" (an emotion variously combining dread, veneration, and wonder that are inspired by the sacred Sublime) which comes upon the Sufi mystic interpreter who is experiencing the religious (mystical) state. Therefore, it is not surprising that the Sufi mystic interpreter who is experiencing such a mystical state may conceptualize God Almighty as something awesome, appalling, direful, and such like. Nevertheless, it should be noted that the above – mentioned characteristics which may be attributed to God Almighty are considered as being "non – religious" features

which are usually attributed to natural beings and creatures, and none of these features does truly apply to God Almighty who is a supernatural being. The Sufi mystic interpreter's heavenly experience, which Sufi mystics usually make an effort to explain and express it, cannot in deed be verbalized, this heavenly experience would per se be unexpressive and not be verbalized actually. On the other hand, the feeling of "awe" and such like, which come upon the Sufi mystic interpreter have a kind of similarity to the feelings that really provoke the Sufi mystic interpreter experiences in their state of wildness. Hence, at the time of experiencing such a state, the Sufi mystic interpreter, who is really unable to express his feelings, usually makes use of "metaphors" to express them the hope that they either might imply a weak conception of his or her wild experiences or they may create such a conception in the mind of those who have not yet had such experiences. Looking at this wild experience from a specific point of view, Friedrich Daniel Ernst Schleier (died on February 12, 1834), a German theologian, philosopher, and biblical scholar, in his book "On Religion", states: "The essence of religion is neither of knowledge nor of practice, but of intuition, a feeling [of deep bond]; therefore, what have been presented as religious interpretations and practices cannot at all be considered as being pure, absolute, and perfect religion.

The religious interpretations and practices are of secondary consideration and significance, that is to say, they are considered as being reflections of the feelings and intuitions that have already come upon some pious, religious, and devout men." Schleier would always put emphasis on the following point: "The religion may never appear itself as something pure, absolute, and perfect." William James (1842- 1910 A.D.), an American philosopher and psychologist, also, believes that all

the religions and religious creeds as well as all the religious texts and books are nothing but limited and restricted reflections of some special people's experiences of the divine "transcendence." And that the diversity and multiplicity which exist among religious beliefs arise from the fact that each religious interpreter has presented a different religious interpretation which has been totally in conformance with his or her own states of mind or religious intuitions. Consequently, it is observed that how much some Sufi (mystical) principles, which are sometimes emphasized by Islamic Gnostics and Sufi mystic interpreters, detach from the relationships and connections between the religious interpreted text and God Almighty's real words. Because of this detachment or disconnection, it is observed that the Sufi interpretations of the Holy Koran or the Holy divine books are turned into figurative or symbolic texts which merely represent some imaginary or visionary concepts and meanings rather than genuine, natural and heartfelt ones.

### **The Multiplicity in Perceiving and the Hermeneutical Problems in the Sufi Interpretations of the Holy Koran**

Some other interpretive principles of the Holy Koran Stress that sometimes it happens that the reader of the Holy Koran, him or herself, begins to infer their own derived concepts and meanings from the Koranic interpreted texts while they are reading them. According to some Sufi points of view, each reader of the Holy Koran, depending on his or her own mental and emotional states at the time of reading the Holy Koran, forms his or her own personal and private perception and understanding of the Holy Koran, a personal and private perception and understanding which may differ from another reader's perception and understanding, or may even differ from his or her own perception and

understanding compared to the time when he or she is in a different mental and emotional state.

According to the above – mentioned interpretive principle, for each word existing in the Holy Koran there are different specific hidden concepts and meanings which cannot be related at all, and every reader, depending on his or her own intelligence and understanding, start to perceive and understand the Koranic concepts, hence each reader makes his or her own interpretation of the Holy Koran. Therefore, depending on his or her own mental and emotional state as well as their own present situation and circumstance, the reader, him or herself, is reflected in the mirror of the Holy Koran while reading it, a reflection which may be far and away different from the reflections experienced by other readers. It is interesting to know that different Koranic concepts and meanings may occur to the reader of the Holy Koran in different mental and emotional states as well as different situations and circumstances. According to Abou Bakr Mohyoddin Muhammed (1139-1217 A.D.), known as Ibn-e Arabi, "It was God Almighty Who created both the utterance and the utterer. It was also Allah Who sent the Prophet of Islam, His Holiness Muhammed (Peace be to him and his family) to his people, together with the same language by which his people were able to speak, so any person of that people who knows that God – sent language well, had no presuppositions, and did deliberate on the Holy book of Koran, would perceive and understand the concept or meaning which had been intended by God Almighty." Further, Ibn-e Arabi adds: "Any God – Sent verse in the Old Testament, in the New Testament as well as in the Holy Koran precisely means what God Almighty has really intended of that verse, no matter from which point of view the Sufi mystic interpreter looks at the Koranic verse, for God Almighty is the only One Who has a

complete and unblemished knowledge of all [points of view]. And, He, Himself, is the one and only infinitely dimensioned Being. Hence, when a Koranic interpreter claims that he or she has found out one or two of God Almighty's intentions from a Koranic verse, [be sure that] he or she is totally in the wrong ... So, the Sufi mystic interpreter cannot be faulted on his or her own interpretation, for this is the single Koranic word that may contain a wide range of different concepts and meanings intended by the infinite God. Also, the Sufi mystic interpreter, being a finite creature him or herself, as well as a created being who has a finite mind may not be able to represent the whole infinite concepts and meanings of that single Koranic word. How an infinite Being, that is to say, God Almighty, Who is formed of infinite concepts and meanings, could be interpreted by a finite being, that is to say, the Sufi mystic interpreter, who only possesses a limited range of knowledge and understanding? What the Sufi mystic interpreter could represent is only to give a finite concept or meaning of that Koranic word. Therefore, a person who makes a criticism on the Sufi mystic interpreter is, him or herself, in the wrong as well. Nevertheless, the criticizer of the Koranic interpreter does not necessarily need to accept the concept or meaning represented by the Koranic interpreter or act upon it, The Sufi interpretations of the Holy Koran are only considered as being acceptable and applicable to the Sufi mystic interpreter him or herself as well as their devoted readers and followers." Elsewhere, Ibn – e Arabi states: "Any concept or meaning of a Koranic verse which is revealed to any Sufi mystic interpreter or to any kind of Koranic interpreter is the very concept or meaning which God Almighty Himself has intended for them." What the Sufi mystic interpreter could represent is only to give a finite concept or meaning of that Koranic word. Therefore, a person who

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Elsewhere, Ibn-e Arabi states: "Any concept or meaning of a Koranic verse which is revealed to any Sufi mystic interpreter or to any kind of koranic interpreter is the very concept or meaning which god Almighty Himself has intended for them."

On the basis of Ibn – e Arabi's statements, it is observed that the Sufi mystic interpreter often mentions his or her own "intuitive" themes of Koranic verses while reading them, feeling that they are the most ultimate koranic themes which could be inferred from them, even though he or she is far removed from the verse's atmosphere. A Koranic interpretation of the Koranic chapter of "Fajr" attributed to Ibn – e Arabi says: "I swear to the Fajr (the Dawn), that is to say, I swear to the very time when the life – giving of the Spirit began to pass into the dark matter of the Body; and I swear to "Layal – e Ashr" (the Ten Nights), that is to say, to the placement of the ten senses of Emergence (the outer part) and to the Essence (the inner part) [i.e, the five natural bodily senses as well as the five essential spiritual senses] which is created at the very time when the Spirit begins to pass into the Body; I swear to the Shaf (the Duality), that is to say, to the union of the Spirit and the Body; and I swear to the "Vatr" (the Singularity), that is to say, to the very time when the Spirit abandons the Body."

What relationships do indeed exist between "the Ten Nights" and "the Ten Senses" of Emergence and Essence? There would be no reasonable justification for this bizarre and far – fetched comparison, unless a bizarre and far – fetched feeling may have come upon the Sufi mystic interpreter, causing such a bizarre comparison to dawn on him. The question is: "Is it deservedly correct that Koranic concepts and

meanings be defined and interpreted by the Sufi mystic interpreter's religious visions? Can the Sufi mystic interpreter's religious visions, which do not at all involve and concern any reasonable, rational, or logical thoughts, be indeed trusted or accepted? The fact remains that any person's mentality, with all their acquired knowledge, memories, preoccupations as well as their cultural, social, and intellectual conditions in which they are living, is capable of producing and creating various, heterogeneous, and even contradicting thoughts, ideas, images, and visions.

### **The Wisdom Deviation in Some Principle – Based Sufi Interpretations of the Holy Koran**

In Islamic cultures, Man's nobleness, elevation, and high – mindedness are caused by their intellect, reason, wisdom, and rationality. With the assistance of their intellect, reason, wisdom, and rationality, Man would be able to think, choose, and eventually evolve in the course of time. On the other hand, in Sufi cultures, not only are human thoughts and Man's products of intellect and wisdom usually less valued and esteemed, but also the Sufi culture continually emphasizes on the weakness, infirmity, and inefficiency of the rational thought for the clarification, explanation, and expression of the Divine Truth.

It is to be mentioned that the in recent centuries, the leaning and inclination of some Muhammed Shirazi (1557-1628 D.A.), a Persian philosopher and theosophist, known as Mullah Sadra, towards Sufism and the Sufi interpretations of the Holy Koran separated the wisdom – reducing Sufism from the wisdom – supporting Sufism. For this reason, Islamic philosophers such as Mullah Sadra are not at all placed and classified in the category of Sufi mystics.

In putting an interpretation on the thirty – first verse of the Koranic chapter of "Al-e Imran" from the Holy Koran, which says:

«قل ان كنتم تحبسون الله فاتبعونى يحبكم الله و يغفر لك ذنوبكم والله غفور رحيم»

(Say, [O Muhammed] if you should love Allah, then follow me, [so] Allah will love you and forgive you your sins. And Allah is Forgiving and Merciful.), Abou Al-Fazl Rashid Al-Din Meibodi (1098 A.D.), a Persian Koranic interpreter, states: "Do not make your Heart a slave of your Wisdom, for the Wisdom is the guard, not the guide to put a harness on your thoughts. "Further, he adds: "Do not ask the Wisdom what you are searching for; rather, ask the prophethood [the prophet of Islam] about them. In other words, Meibodi emphasizes that "rational thinking" on the Divine Truth will result in "darkness", and the evil of darkness arises from the rational thinking."

He, then, advises Koranic interpreters to refer to the prophetic traditions (hadiths told by the Prophet Islam, His Holiness Muhammed (peace be to him and his family), those Islamic Prophetic traditions (hadiths) which have been transferred from the prophet of Islam.

But do the very Islamic and prophetic traditins (hadiths) suffice by themselves and lead Koramic interpreters in their search of the Divine Truth? Do the following of theses Islamic prophetic radiations (hadiths) in deed indicate the Wisdom's dignity and high status on the part of the Koranic interpreters in their search of the Divine Truth? It has to be mentioned here in Islamic traditions, the Wisdom (rational thinking) and the Islamic traditions (hadiths) attributed to the prophet of Islam, His Holiness Muhammed (Peace be to him and his family) are considered as being the same thing. In other words, following and acting upon the Islamic prophetic traditions (hadiths) is the way of Wisdom (rational thinking) and the Islamic traditions (hadiths) attributed to the prophet of

Islam, His Holiness Muhammed (Peace be to him and his family) are considered as being the same thing. In other words, following and acting upon the Islamic prophetic traditions (hadiths) is the way of Wisdom (rational thinking) itself. In Islamic traditions and cultures, it has been repeatedly stated that there are two messengers for God Almighty: one is the "superficial messenger" or the divine prophets themselves; the other is the "deep messenger" which is the Man's own wisdom itself. Here, an important and thought – provoking question is raised, and the question is: "Is the religion itself, indeed, something that old superstitious and uneducated men and women believe in, or is it something that learned and literate people have faith in? In the Holy Koran, in chapter "Faatir", verse twenty – eight, Allah says:

«انما يخشى الله من عباده العلماء ان الله عزيز غفور»

(Only those people who have knowledge, fear Allah, and these people are among His servants. Indeed, Allah is Exalted in Might and Forgiveness).

Furthermore, the Holy Koran itself as well as the "Sunnah" have repeatedly invited people to learn and gain knowledge as well as wisdom.

It is also to be mentioned, here, that Abou Bakr Mohyoddin Muhammed (1139-1217A.D), an Andalusian Muslim, poet, man of letters and Sufi Mystic, known as Ibn-e Arabi, strongly rejects "Mo'tazeles" (=a Muslim cult which existed in 581 A.D, the followers of which emphasized on human wisdom, autonomy, and argumentation as well as the Occurrence of the universe) rationalized interpretations of the abstract Koranic verses whose meanings are on the basis of the seeming and outward concepts of comparison and embodiment, holding the belief that they, following rational rules and principles as well as Islamic

orders, have been deviated from the correct path of Koranic interpretation.

### **Methodological Defects in the Sufi Interpretations of the Holy Koran**

Generally speaking, the understanding, perceiving, and methodical interpretation of the Holy Koran on the part of any Koranic interpreter necessitate the observation and application of the interpretive rules and principles of the Holy Koran. From the methodological point of view, there are some weaknesses and shortcomings in the Sufi interpretations of the Holy Koran, which may be considered as being serious defects in the Sufi interpretations of the Holy Koran. Among these defects, the most important ones are: 1) the irregularities in the semantic values of Koranic words; 2) disregarding the "precise, explicit" Koranic Verses consider as being a principle of reference in "ambiguous, implicit" Koranic verses; and 3) relying on a non – innocent, that is to say, personal intuition on the part of the Sufi mystic interpreter. We will deal with each of these defects one by one below.

#### **The Irregularities in the Semantic Values of Koranic Words**

As Abou Bakr Mohyoddin Muhammed (1139-1217A,D.), an Andalusian Muslim man of letters, poet, and Sufi mystic, Known as Ibn –e Arabi, has stated in his well – known book "Fosous Al – Hikam" (The Fundamental Principles of Theosophy), in the chapter "Fass – e Ayoubi" (Job's Theosophical Principle): "What is meant by the word "Satan", in the Koranic verse forty – one of Koranic chapter of "Saad", which says:

«واذكر عبدناايوب اذنادى ربه انى مسنى الشيطان بنصب و عذاب»

(And remember Our Servant Job, when he called to his Lord, "Indeed, Satan has touched me with hardship and torment), is Job's very sense of separation and detachment from divine Truth, his very sense of being veiled in ignorance and an awareness towards God Almighty. What Job, himself, was really feeling was not indeed the affection God Almighty had afflicted him, but rather it was the feeling of the divorce between him (Job) and his own God. Elsewhere in this book, that is to say, in "Fass-e Mousavi" (Moses's Theosophical Principle), Ibn-e Arabi states: "When Pharaoh (as mentioned in Koranic chapter of "Sho'ara", verse thirty) says to Moses (peace be upon him):

«قال لئن اتخذت الها غيرى لاجعلنك من المسجونين»

(He [Pharaoh] said [to Moses]: "If you take some other person to be as your god except me, I will [Surely] put you among the prisoners). By the word "مسجون" (Masjoun) (the prisoner), it is meant that Moses (Peace be upon him) will be kept out of sight (concealment) by Pharaoh if he, i.e, (Moses) disobeys him, i.e, (Pharaoh). Elsewhere in this book, that is to say, in "Fass-e Mousavi" (Moses's Theosophical Principle), Ibn-e Arabi states: "... And in Koranic chapter twenty – six, verse twenty – seven:

«قال ان رسولكم الذى ارسل الكيم لمجنون»

([Pharaoh] said, "Indeed, your messenger who has been sent to you is mad"). By the word "مجنون" (Majnoun) (Mad), it is meant "ignorance" and "concealment", that is to say, Pharaoh, by stating the above – mentioned sentence, wishes to indirectly say to the people who are present in his court that Moses (peace be upon him) does not know the answer the question he has raised. And Moses's not Knowing the answer indicates his [Moses] ignorance, that is to say, knowledge is concealed from him [Moses] and his God. Elsewhere in this book, that is to say, in

"Fass-e Eliasi" (Elijah's Theosophical principle), in putting his own interpretation on the Koranic chapter of "An'am", verse one – hundred and twenty – four which says:

«وإذا جاءتهم آية قالوا لن نؤمن حتى نؤتى مثل ما أوتى رسل الله اعلم حيث يجعل رسالته سيصيب الذين اجرموا صغار عند الله و عذاب شديد يماكانوايمكرون»

(And when a [divine] sign comes to them, they say, "Never will we believe until we are given [divine] signs like the ones which were given to the messengers of Allah"; Allah is most knowing of where He places His message. There will be soon afflictions of the part of Allah for those who committed crimes, and We surely will debase them before Us, and severe punishment will be for what they used to conspire.), Ibn-e Arabi states: "In the phrase "رسل الله" (messengers of Allah), the two words may be taken as the subject, and the second "الله" (God as being the subject complement). Taking it as given, we can define the above – mentioned Koranic verse in the following way: "... they say, "Never will we believe until we are given a sign like that which was given to the messengers of Allah. Allah's messengers are indeed His (Allah's) exemplifications. Allah is most knowing of where He (Allah) places His message."

Both Abou Bakr Mohyoddin Muhammed (1139-1217A.D.) and Davoud Ibn – e Mahmoud Qaisari (dead in 1330 A.D.), a Turkish Sufi mystic and Muslim philosopher, in his book "The Elucidation of Ibn-e Arabi's Fosous Al – Hikam", known as "Qaisari's Elucidation", in "Fass-e Nouhi" (Noah's Theosophical Principle), and in the Koranic chapter "Noah", verse twenty – eight which says:

«رب اغفرلى و لوالدى و لمن دخل بيتى مؤمنا و للمؤمنين و المؤمنات»

(My lord, forgive me and my parents as well as anyone who enters my house as a believer, in addition to believing men and women! Do not increase the tyrannical men in anything except destruction), consider the

last sentence of this verse, that is to say, "Do not increase the tyrannical men in anything except destruction" – which indeed is a curse by Noah put on the tyrannical men of his own tribe, and which God Almighty quotes from him [Noah] in this Koranic verse – as being a "well – intentioned Prayer", that is to say, "O God, do not increase those who, by oppressing and denying their self, that is to say, by giving up carnal desires and worldly pleasures, lost their human characteristics and have connected to your (God's) qualities, that is to say, "Fana Fi Allah" (a Sufi phase and step in which the Sufi mystic is completely engrossed in Allah, hence absorbing Allah's characteristic), in any thing except insight, perception and knowledge, for all of these cause these perfect human beings to be bewildered by your (God's) Greatness, helping them to observe and comprehend you (God) in terms of our (God's) divine Essence and your (God's) indwelling qualities which truly exist in everything in this world, and also, causing these perfect men to observe and comprehend the oneness" as being "Multiplicity", and multiplicity as oneness; "the Beginning" as "the End", and the end as the beginning, and "Appearance" as "Nature", and Nature as appearance. As the prophet of Islam, His Holiness Muhammed (Peace be to him and his family) has stated: "O God, more and more, increase my sense of bewilderment and mystification towards You (Allah)."

Both Ibn- e Arabi and Qaisari have compared the above –mentioned Koranic verse with the Koranic chapter of "Faatir" (Chapter thirty – five), verse two, which says:

«ثم اورثنا الكتب الذين اصطفينا من عبادنا فمنهم ظالم لنفسه و منهم مقتصد و منهم سابق بالخيرت باذن اللهذلك هو الفضل الكبير»

(And thereafter, this book [of Allah] (the Holy Koran) bestowed on Our chosen men as a legacy by Us, but some of Our chosen men

tyrannize over their self, some [of them] have middle – of – the – road beliefs, and some [ of them] are precursors in doing good deeds to which Allah, Himself, has ordered, and this indeed is a great achievement).

According to the above – mentioned Koranic verse, there are some chosen men [by Allah] who "tyrannize over themselves". Comparing this Koranic verse with the Koranic chapter of "Noah", verse twenty eight, which was stated earlier, Ibn-e Arabi and Qaisari put their interpretations on the Koranic phrase "the tyrannical men" as being a "Commitment", that is to say, those chosen men [by Allah], who tyrannize over themselves, have committed themselves to giving up their carnal desires and worldly pleasures, stating that because the clause "... tyrannize over their self ... ", in the above Koranic verse, has preceded the Koranic phrase" ... Middle – of – the – road ... " and the Koranic clause" ... precursors in doing good deeds .. ", thus, by the Koranic sentence" ... men tyrannize over their SELVES ... ", it is meant those chosen men [by Allah] who, by giving up carnal desires and worldly pleasures, have reached the Sufi phase of "Fana Fi Allah" (a Sufi step in which the Sufi mystic is completely engrossed in Allah, hence absorbs God's qualities), hence shall achieve their goal of being honored with "excellences" and are, thus, called "perfect men". And by "middle – of – the – road" men, they state, it is meant those men who are moderate, modest, and reasonable in their "Solouk" (the mental and spiritual Sufi steps through which the Sufi mystic tries to purify his or her spirit); these Sufi mystics are not able and do not deserve to reach the Sufi step of "Fana Fi Allah" (a Sufi step in which the Sufi mystic is totally engrossed in Allah, hence having the same characteristics as Allah Himself and seed nothing except Allah). These middle – of – the – road men have reached a Sufi phase in which they are only engrossed in Allah's qualities and attributes.

And by "...precursors in doing good deeds ...", it is meant those men, that is to say, those Sufi mystics, who, like the pious, the praisers of Allah, and the abstinent, have still remained in the Sufi step of only "doing good deeds", which, itself, causes the Sufi mystic to be rejected by and separated from Allah.

In the chapter named "Fass-e Isavi" (Jesus' Theosophical Principle) of the book "Fosous Al – Hikam," Ibn – e Arabi holds the belief that Christians have usually tended to conceal the abstract Divinity in the concrete and human form of Jesus (Peace be upon him), thereby formalizing the Divinity as being a Christian form. Then, Ibn-e Arabi adds: "This formalization of God by Christians is explained by Allah in the Holy Koran in the fifth Koranic chapter of "Ma'ede", verse seventy – two, where Allah Says:

«لقد كفر الذين قالوا ان الله هو المسيح ابن مريم و قال المسيح يا بنى اسرائيل اعبدوا الله ربي و ربكم انه من يشرك بالله فقد حرم الله عليه الجنة و ماواه النار و ما للظالمين من انصار»

(Surely, those who said: "Indeed, God is the very person of the Messiah", have become heretic. The Messiah, himself, would say: "O Children of Israel, only worship God who is my creator as well as yours, for the truth of the matter is that any person who associated with God, God, will surely forbid them to enter Heaven; the place of such a person will surely be Hell. And [be aware that] the tyrannical people will certainly have no supporters to save them from the fire of Hell). In the above – mentioned Koranic verse, the word "كفر" (heretic or herecy) has been applied in its literal meaning, that is to say, "concealment" [of the Truth], and not applied in its usual meaning which means someone who is guilty of heresy. Those who believed that God Almighty had embodied His metaphysical, divine being in the physical form and in the

person of the Messiah had undoubtedly been in the wrong. Of course, Christians were completely right to consider the Messiah as being a prophet sent by God Almighty, for the Messiah had been truly sent by God Almighty, just as the other true, divine prophets had been sent by Him. But the point is that the only mistake Christians made was to hold the belief that the Messiah (Jesus Christ) is the only embodiment and manifestation of God Almighty, while, as we all know, the whole world of existence is considered to be as a hugely vast scene in which God Almighty has embodied, manifested, and materialized Himself".

If the obvious and clear questions of the Holy Koran are to be defined and made more explicit personally, depending only on their lexical weight and force in such a way that it is observed in the above – mentioned Koranic verse, then all Koranic interpretations will be in chaos and confusion, hence all Koranic verses will be turned in to "Moteshabehat" (those Koranic verses whose definit and explicit meanings and definitions are not truly clear) and there will consequently be no systematic and methodical way or approach to interpret them.

In this regard, there is a correct and precise statement by Nour Al – Din Abdul Rahman Ibn – e Nizam Al – Din Ahmad Ibn – e Muhammed (793-817 A.H.), a Persian poet, man of letters, and Sufi mystic, known as "Jami", when, in the book "Naqd – Al Nosous" (The Critique of Explicitly Koranic Verses), he quotes from a Persian Muslim scholar (from the city of Jondi Shapour): "Undoubtedly, Koranic verses, religious laws and traditions have all been come down from on high, that is to say, by God Almighty in addition to the level of addressees' (the common men's) understanding and comprehension. It is not at all rightful and reasonable to believe that God Almighty has addressed His servants in an incomprehensible and unfathomable manner; therefore,

since God Almighty has ordered us not to speak with common men beyond their understanding and comprehension, He Himself will logically speak with His servants in no other manner, but within their understanding and comprehension. If we assume that common men are devoid of understanding and comprehension, then the public understanding and comprehension will surely be invalidated, hence all Koranic verses, religious laws and traditions will be come down from on high – by God Almighty – in the form of incomprehensible and unintelligible codes and secret messages, and this will be nothing but a falsehood and deception from God Almighty, but it is an indisputable certitude that God Almighty is, in truth, exonerated from such an assumption.

Putting a weird interpretation on the sixthth and seventh Koranic verses of the holy chapter of "Baqarah" (chapter two of the Holy Koran), Ibn- e Arabi implicitly considers a specific group of people as being outside the scope of religious laws and the prophet of Islam's orders; those people, who, in Ibn – e Arabi's opinion, are the very persons who are called "Vasilan " (those Sufi mystics who have already reached the highest Sufi stage of "Qurb", that is to say, a stage at which the Sufi mystic feels Allah without any material means, is engrossed in the pure Essence of the sublime God, and is completely cleansed of their human attributes and qualities). In his well – know book "Fotouhat – e Makkyieh", Ibn – e Arabi puts a weird interpretation, as it was mentioned earlier, on the sixth and seventh Koranic verses of the chapter "Baqarah", writing: "O Muhammed! Those who concealed My love in their hearts [and did not utter a word of of my love to others] are nothing but a group of detached and uninvolved people; they shall not become believers in your words, whether you frighten and threaten them or not, for they see

nothing but Me [ in their hearts] whilst you constantly frighten them into and threaten them with my [variously strange] creatures [on the Earth], the creatures they could never imagine or understand. How could they become believers in your words whilst I have sealed up their hearts? So, there shall be no room for others [ but Me]; and [whilst] I have sealed up their ears, so they shall not hear anyone's words [but Mine], and [whilst] I have covered their eyes with a cover of My own Grandness and Value, so they never see others [but Me]. They shall be suffering form grief and misery if I destroy all traces of their attentiveness and concentration on Me, and direct their attentiveness and concentration towards you [that is to say, Muhammed], whilst they have submerged in My Greatness and Love to such an extent that they are not able to notice anyone or anything else. So how could I agitate and disturb them by destroying all traces of their attentiveness and concentration on Me, and direct their attention towards your [Muhammad's] frightful threats and promises?" Furthermore, Ibn – e Arabi adds; "This group of people [ that is to say, "Vasilan"] concealed their love for Allah, in the same way as "Shebli" (a Persian Sufi mystic (247 A.D) did, out of their zeal, passion, and humbleness, in order that they will not be known for their knowledge and understanding of Allah. "Elsewhere in this book, Ibn-e Arabi states his own opinion about "Vasilan" in the following way: "They are a group of people who concealed divine secrets and mysteries which had been emerged to them as "Visal" (the highest stage in Sufism, at which the Sufi mystic is connected with Allah and reaches the status of "Fana Fi Allah"). Furthermore, Ibn-e Arabi adds: "Allah the Greatest reminded the prophet of Islam, His Holiness Muhammed (peace be to him and his family) of this group of people (Vasilan), saying to him: Why have they kept silence and become speechless whilst you are inviting them to

believe in Me?' ". Moreover, Allah the Greatest, in the Holy Koran, chapter two (Baqarah), verse seven, addresses the prophet of Islam, His Holiness Muhammed (Peace be to him and his family) in the following way:

«ختم الله على قلوبهم...»

(They are not able to focus their attention to and concentration on anything or anyone else [but Me]; there is no place for anything or anyone in their threats [but Me]...). Then God adds:

«ختم الله على سمعهم...»

(They are not able to listen and act upon your advice [,that is to say, Muhammed's invitation towards Allah], and they are not able to hear anything but My Essential Divine Speech). Likewise,;

«ختم الله على ابصرهم غشاوه...»

(... An envelope of My shining Light [the Divine Truth] as well as My gleaming Greatness have enfolded them, submerging them in the Sea of divine observation and attention [,that is to say, in My Holiest Essence]. Regarding "Vasilan's" retribution, Ibn-e Arabi adds: "Degrading them, Allah the Greatest placed them in the lower position of the Throne of Heaven, in order that they should feel pain and grief whilst they had been formerly hidden in invisible and hidden Treasure, i.e, – Houses of Allah. On seeing their ravishing countenances, the divine angels prostrated themselves".

The truth is that such Sufi interpretative statements are considered as being only personal and grounds could be discovered for their correctness or truth. In actual fact, by presenting these Sufi interpretations of the Holy Koran, Ibn-e Arabi seeks to impose his own thoughts and ideas such as the Sufi thoughts and ideas of "Fana". (the destruction of the Sufi mystic's human attributes and qualities, and their

unity with Allah), "Holoul" (the transmigration of spirits), "Ettehad" (observing the whole of the universe in its entirety as being a single entity), and then "Vahdat- i Vojoud" (an idea which says all beings including the Supreme Being creatures as well as all created things have single origin, that is to say, the Being itself and its superficial dissimilarities are arisen out of its existential stages on the Holy Koran, trying to imbue the readers that it was the Holy Koran which had introduced such thoughts and ideas. But the fact is that such Sufi thoughts and ideas were developed among Sufi mystics centuries after the Holy Koran itself came down from on high by Allah the Greatest. In other words, it has to be mentioned that, at first, these false and incorrect thoughts and ideas were formed in the mind of Sufi mystics, causing them to think that they are able to reach a position to see nothing but Allah, and to hear nothing except Allah's voice; hence the Sufi mystic has no religious duty and commitment to the prophet of Islam's teachings. Therefore, from then on, some Sufi mystic interpreters of the Holy Koran such as Ibn- Arabi have attempted and sought to attribute their false and incorrect Sufi thoughts and ideas to the Holy Koran itself.

Another point which has to be mentioned is that the Koranic interpreter, in putting their own interpretation on the Holy Koran, cannot invoke the superficial or literal meaning (s) of a single Koranic word, ignoring other factors which build up that specific, superficial meaning of that single Koranic word. In the above Koranic verse that we mentioned earlier, that is to say, verse seven of the chapter "Baqarah", Ibn-e Arabi has indeed invoked the superficial or literal meaning of the Arabic word "كفروا", that is to say, "ستروا" (who concealed) and has ignored other interpretive factors including the context.

Any person who has at least reviewed the Holy Koran a few times, can definitely understand that the Koranic clause "الذين كفروا..." which really means "those [pagans] who denied [Allah] ...", logically appears in the Holy Koran in contrast with the Koranic clause "الذين آمنوا" which really means: "those who accepted Allah [and became believers of Him]. It is noteworthy to mention that in the Holy Koran itself, Allah has always reproached and constigated these persons.

### **The Non – Observance of Applying the "Precise" Koranic Verses as Being the Principle of Reference in the "Ambiguous" Koranic Verses in Some Sufi Interpretations of the Holy Koran**

According to clear and flawless Koranic and Islamic, and traditional evidence, some "ambiguous" Koranic verses may cause to create inaccurate and erroneous thoughts and ideas in the mind of the reader. In contrast to ambiguous Koranic verses, there are "precise" and accurate Koranic verses which may be used as the reference to remove any ambiguity and misunderstanding from the ambiguous Koranic verses. In fact, there are some inaccurate and erroneous thoughts and ideas in the mind of the reader. In contrast to ambiguous Koranic verses, there are "precise" and accurate Koranic verses which may be used as the reference to remove any ambiguity and misunderstanding from the ambiguous Koranic verses. In fact, there are some inaccurate and erroneous points in the Koranic interpretations of some of Sufi mystics such as Ibn-e Arabi's Safi interpretations of the Holy Koran, which are in direct contradiction to the Precise and and accurate Koranic verses. In actual tact, when inaccurate and erroneous thoughts and ideas – arisen from ambiguous Koranic verses , given by some Sufi mystic interpreters, are given careful consideration, it becomes clear that those causes,

mentioned above, have laid their foundations on the ambiguous Koranic verses, and those Sufi mystics who have claimed these inaccurate and erroneous causes to be true, have indeed put their causes or interpretations on the ambiguous and imprecise foundations, that is to say, on the "ambiguous" Koranic verses, rather than on "precise" and accurate Koranic verses. In other words, since some Koranic verses are ambiguous in themselves, they have been interpreted by some Sufi mystic interpreters in the way they, themselves, thought to be right, that is to say, in the way which is on the basis of their own intuitive visions which are completely personal and they do not interpret them at all on the basis of "precise" and accurate Koranic verses. Regarding the Sufi thoughts and ideas of Ibn-e Arabi, Mullah Mohsen –e Feiz (1007-1091 A.D.), known as "Feiz-e Kashani", states: "In Ibn-e Arabi's Sufi interpretations of the Holy Koran, there exist disgraceful and disreputable oppositions to divine laws as well as direct contradictions to rationalism, which are so odd and queer that even make children laugh. Still, in spite of some of Ibn-e Arabi's correct, accurate, and rigorous statements, there are some statements in his interpretations of the Holy Koran, which are even looser than the spider's web."

Nevertheless, what is really meant by "Mohkamat" (Precise Koranic Verses)? By "Mohkamat" or precise Koranic verses, we mean those Koranic verses whose meanings are completely clear, and they do not require any interpretation (s). In other words, these Precise Koranic verses are indeed considered as being the Koran's axioms or postulates. As the division of Koranic verses into "Mohkanat" (Precise) and "Moteshabehat" (ambiguous) verses is considered as being an undeniably judged actuality, the division of men into "believers of Allah" and "non – believers of Allah" is, likewise, an incontrovertible

fact. Nevertheless, as in some Sufi interpretations of the Holy koran have appeared, how could one possibly consider any thing as the source of Goodness and the Satan as the friend of Allah or the real believer of Him? How could one possibly imagine Moses (peace be upon him) and Pharaoh as one in Goodness, and Pharaoh's war against Moses (peace be upon him) as the war of one Moses – a good man – against another Moses – another good man?

In his book "Al- Tavasim", Hussein Ibn- e Mansour Hallaj (244-309 A.D.), a very well – known Sufi pundit, states: "Allah said to Ahmad (the prophet of Islam): 'Behold!', and said to Satan: 'Prostrate yourself!'. Satan refused to prostrate himself, and Ahmad (the prophet of Islam) did not behold anything but what Allah had ordered him to behold. As Allah says in the Koranic chapter of "Najm" (Star), verse seventeen: "The sight [of the prophet of Islam] did not swerve, nor did it transgress [its limit]. "Then, Hallaj adds: "There is no devout creature and believer of Allah in Heaven as Satan himself. "Likewise, Abou Al – Fotouh Ahmad Ghazali (452-520 A.D.), a well – known Sufi mystic, vindicates satan in his statements. In actual fact, the exculpation of Satan does become prevalent among other Sufi mystics after Mansour Hallaj's mind is developed by some well – known Sufi mystics such as Abo Al-Ma'ali Abdullah Mianji Hamadani (492-525A.D.), known as Ein Al-Qozat, Abou Al-Majd Majdoud Ibn-e Adam (465-535A.D.), known as Sana'ee Qaznavi, Sheikh Farid Al-Din Muhammed Neishabouri (540-618A.D), known as Attar Neishabouri and others.

What these Sufi mystics and the others attempt to keep drumming into the reader's head is that Satan has been a real believer of Allah. According to these Sufi mystics, Satan's being as a real believer of Allah

arises from the fact that Satan did not wish to prostrate himself before anyone else but Allah the greatest, his creator.

These Sufi mystics argue that Satan's refusal to prostrate himself before Man originates from the fact that Satan did believe that Allah wanted to put him to test. As Abou Al- Fotouh Ahmad Ghazali relates: "Once Moses (Peace be upon him) came seeing Satan, Moses (Peace be upon him) Said to him: 'why did you not prostrate yourself before Man?'. Satan Answered: 'God forbid that I should ever prostrate myself before anyone but God Almighty; otherwise, I will not be a believer of Him. But, Moses, you are the one who asked God to See Him, then God ordered you to behold the mountain in order to see Him in the tree on the mountain, and you behold the tree in order to see Him; you obeyed His order! That is the difference between you and I. So, I am more faithful to God than you are. My action ,i.e, my disobedience, is, thus, purer than yours. I did not prostrate myself before anyone but God Almighty, but you are the one who obeyed God and beheld the tree on the mountain to see Him. [This is indeed a kind of sophistry made by Satan in order to justify his own insubordination and disobedience of not prostrating himself before Man. In fact, Satan is making a comparison of incommensurables]. Abou Al – Ma'ali Abdullah Mianji Hamadani, known as Ein- Al – Qozat Hamadani, has put an interpretation on the above – mentioned Koranic story in an allegorical way, stating. "If Sultan Mahmoud Qaznavi had ordered Ayaz (his beloved servant) to leave him and serve another person, and if Ayaz had obeyed his Sultan's order, he would have been considered as being a disobedient servant of the Sultan, for a faithful servant would, in any circumstance, be loyal to his lord or Sultan, even though he, the servant, disobeys his lord or Sultan".

Indeed, Abou Al – Fotouh Ahmad Ghazali has praised Satan very much for his well – known disobedience and insubordination. Ein Al-Qozat Hamadani is quoted to have said: "O virtuous men, if the Koranic sentence" ... And Allah spoke to Moses [in the Mountain Tour] with [direct] speech" (in the koranic chapter of "Nisa", verse 164) is a sign of divine perfection and excellence which was bestowed on Moses (Peace be upon him) on the part of Allah, so Satan, too, does enjoy the same divine perfection and excellence, that is to say, Allah spoke to Satan with direct speech." [It is noteworthy to mention, here, that Divine Revelation had come down from on high to divine prophets in different ways. Sometimes, it came down from on high through a revelatory divine angel; sometimes, it came down from on high to the heart of divine prophets, that is to say, as an inspiration from God Almighty to His prophets; sometimes, the Revelation came down from on high to divine prophets through vibrating wave motions which could be heard only by divine prophets in the manner in which God Almighty was creating waves (messages) in the air and objects in order to speak with His prophets. Of divine prophets who enjoyed and had the ability of hearing God's speech through sound waves was the prophet Moses (peace be upon him). Indeed, Moses had the ability to receive divine sound messages sometimes from one particular tree called "Shajar-e Vadi-e Imen" (The Tree of the Safe Desert) and sometimes he could hear them from the Mountain Tour. That is why Moses (peace be upon him) had been titled "Kalim Allah" (The one whom God speaks with)). O Virtuous men, do you ever know who Satan is? Satan is indeed the sentry of the world, who was wounded and anguished 124000 divine prophets throughout the history ... The angel Gabriel should deserve to have a quality to behold the charming beauty of Satan. I heard from

Ahmad Ghazali Say: "I never heard Sheikh Abou Al – Qasim Gorgami utter the word "Satan". Instead of uttering the word Satan, he used to address Satan as "the most gracious of all", and "the lord of the estranged". On my saying the above sentences to him, Sheikh Abou AL-Qasim Gorgami said to me: "The lord of the estranged" is far better attribute by which Satan can be called".

One of the other Sufi interpretive violations, that is to say, non – observance of applying the precise Koranic verses as being the principle of reference in the Sufi interpretations of the Holy Koran is on "Pharaoh" as being a "faithful" man to God Almighty, while in precise Koranic verses, Pharaoh is considered to be as a pagan who deserves to be put in the fire of Hell. God Almighty in the Koranic chapter of "Qisas", verse nine, quotes form Pharaoh's wife, saying:

«وقالت امرأت فرعون قرت عين لي و لك لا تقتلوه عسى ان ينفعنا او نتخذه ولداً و هم لا يشعرون»

(And the wife of Pharaoh – who, in deed, had become a faithful follower of Moses (Peace be upon him) – said, "He [Moses] will be a comfort of the eye for me and for you [Pharaoh]. Do not kill him; Perhaps he [Moses] may be benefit us, therefore we may adopt him as a son". And they perceived not). Documenting and referring to the above – mentioned koranic verse and Pharaoh's wife's speech about Moses the infant, Ibn-e Arabi says: "When Pharaoh's wife was drowning in a river and was on the verge of her death, God Almighty bestowed her a "divine faith" which was indeed a divine comfort and gift sent by God Almighty. By giving her this divine faith, God Almighty did indeed purify her spirit from all evils and her past committed sins. And at the time of her death, there were no sins in her spirit, and she died without carrying any sins; she died like a completely faithful servant of God Almighty. In this way,

God Almighty mentioned her faith in Him in the Koranic chapter of "Qisas", verse nine as a clear example for anyone who might learn from, so that no one will be disappointed and dissatisfied by God Almighty's Mercy and Forgiveness, for only the pagans are disappointed and dissatisfied by God Almighty's Mercy and Forgiveness. Likewise, If Pharaoh was disappointed by God Almighty's mercy and Forgiveness; he would not become a believer of Him.

Such Sufi interpretations are indeed in contrast to some precise and exact koranic verses. These precise and exact koranic verses are as follows: in the Koranic chapter of "Jonah", verse ninety-one, addressing Pharaoh, Allah says:

«الآن و قد عصيت قبل و كنت من المفسدين»

(And now [that you are on the verge of your death, you are repenting of your sins], whilst, formerly you had disobeyed Us and were of the Corrupters). In this regard, God Almighty, in the Koranic chapter of "Nisa", verse eighteen, says:

«وليس التوبه للذين يعملون السيئات حتى اذا حضر احدهم الموت قال انى تبت الان و لا الذين يموتون و هم كفار اولئك اعتدنا لهم عذابا اليما»

(And repentance is not appropriate to those who continue doing evil deeds; until when death comes to one of them, they say, " Surely now I repent", nor to those who die while they are still unbelievers. These are they for whom We have prepared a painful chastisement).

In the Koranic chapter of "Houd", verse 97-99, Allah has directly addressed Pharaoh as a pagan who really deserves to be put in the fire of Hell:

«الى فرعون و ملئه فاتبعوا امر فرعون و ما امر فرعون برشيد\* يقدم قومه يوم القيامة فأوردتهم النار و بسس الورد المورود\* واتبعوا فى هذه لعنه ويوم القيامة بسس الرفل المفرد\*»

([... And We indeed sent Moses with Our evidence and clear proofs] to pharaoh and his aristocratic leaders [of his tribe], but they followed Pharaoh's orders [in order to reserve their own power, wealth, and status; while Pharaoh's orders did not indeed lead them to blessedness and salvation\* On the day of judgment, Pharaoh walks ahead of his tribe, and leads his tribesmen to the fire of Hell; and the fire of Hell will be an evil fortune and portion into which they will enter\* And Pharaoh as well as his tribesmen were damned and accompanied by God's damnation in this world and on the day of judgment, [and that damnation] was indeed an evil punishment which was granted to them\*).

Another example of resorting to the "ambiguous" Koranic verses and ignoring the "precise" Koranic verses in most Sufi interpretations of the Holy Koran is seen in putting interpretation on Koranic verses which relate to the story of "the Sumerian Calf", a golden idol in the shape of a calf, which was built on the order of the first king of the Israelites, who, in the absence of Moses (Peace be upon him), called upon his people to worship the calf as their god. Regarding this story, the Holy Koran says: "Upon his return from the Mountain Tour, Moses (Peace be upon him) observed that his tribesmen and tribeswomen had started to worship a golden calf. On seeing this, Moses (peace be upon him) grasped Aaron's (the elder brother of Moses in the book of Exodus) hair and beard, saying to him, "Why did not you call upon these people to follow my orders when you saw they have gone astray and started to worship this golden calf statue?" Aaron replied, "I dreaded stopping them from worshipping the golden calf statue, lest you say I have created a division among the Israelites."

Nevertheless, documenting this koranic story, Ibn-e Arabi states; "Moses [Peace be upon him], himself, had been well aware that,

according to the koranic chapter of "Esra", verse twenty – three which says:

«وقضى ربك الاتعبدوا الاياه...»

(And your lord has decreed that you not worship except Him ...), the calf – worshippers did see their own god in the shape of a golden calf statue, hence they worshipped the golden calf statue, and, hence they must have worshipped it. Therefore, Moses's flaw was indeed to deny and to condemn calf – worshipping per se. For this reason, the Sufi mystic interpreter not only sees the Divine Truth (God) in everything – even in a golden calf statue but also does consider everything – including calf – worshipping – as God Himself. In other words, the calf – worshippers were definitely well aware that what they were worshipping was indeed a golden calf statue, but what they really sought was the worship of the Divine Truth or God Almighty per se; as though one may find God in every single particle in this world. Therefore, what Moses (Peace be upon him) was trying to do was indeed to educate Aaron and make his mind and spirit refined.

Then, Ibn-e Arabi adds: "Surely, all the divine prophets are sent on duty and are ordered [by God Almighty] to direct people and (turn them into believers of God through visible, perceivable things and objects – not through invisible, impalpable ones -, and if it is indeed their divine duty and commitment to deny and contradict the things which really violate the visible and perceivable evidence, hence all of the divine prophets have always and outwardly denied and contradicted idol-worship. Therefore, Moses (peace be upon him) did direct Aaron in this way, for he, Aaron, had not been able to observe God Almighty in the golden calf statue. Then, Moses (peace be upon him) came and burned the golden calf statue out of his zeal, and poured its ashes into a river and

said to Aaron: "Now, observe your god! Look what became of it!". And in this way, Moses (Peace be upon him) educated and refined the mind of Aaron, making him aware that the ashes of the golden calf statue was another representation and transformation of God Almighty".

Further, Ibn-e Arabi adds: "That Aaron could not prevent people from worshipping the golden calf statue had been of divine providence, ordaining that He, God Almighty, be worshipped in the shape of a golden calf statue. And that Moses, (Peace be upon him) burning the golden calf statue proved that God Almighty might be worshipped in the form of a golden calf statue as well, for it was God's providence that He, God Almighty, might be worshipped in any form or shape, either in an abstract, transcendent way or in a real, concrete one. Therefore, the divine prophet's prevention of idol – worship in the remote past had in deed the implication that people at that time had no right to worship God Almighty in one specific configurative pattern.

### **Reliance on Non- Innocent Intuition in Some Sufi Interpretations of the Holy Koran**

One of the important sources which is widely invoked by Sufi mystic interpreters in their Sufi interpretations of the Holy Koran is the pointed references they repeatedly make to their own visionary intuitions and insights.

Invoking the Koranic chapter of "Fosselat" (chapter forty – one), verse fifty – three which says:

«سنريهم آياتنا فى الافاق و فى انفسهم حتى يتبين لهم انه الحق اولم يكف بربك انه على كل شىء شهيد»

(We will show them Our signs in the horizons and within themselves until it becomes clear to them that they are indeed the Truth. But is it not

sufficient concerning your Lord that He is, over all things, a Witness?), and presuming that the above – mentioned Koranic verse had been come down from on high, Ibn-e Arabi states: "For each koranic verse, there are two dimensions: an "internal" dimension which maybe perceived by visionary intuitions and insights arising from the Sufi mystic interpreter him or herself. Also, each Koranic verse possesses an "external" dimension which may be understood and perceived by superficial interpretations. Indeed, the first dimension of koranic verses , that is to say, the internal dimension, is considered as being a kind of interpretation in itself as well, although Sufi mystic interpreters, for fear of being blamed or reproached by other Koranic interpreters or Islamic thinkers and scholars who interpret according to the latter dimension of Koranic verses, that is to say, the external dimension, would call their intuitive interpretation "Isharat" or visionary intuitions, that is to say, the reporting of God Almighty without applying utterances and statements."

Most of these Sufi intuitive interpretations of the Holy Koran have been represented with reference to visionary intuitions and insights on the part of Sufi mystic interpreters.

At this point, two significant questions may be raised. The first question is: "Do these intuitive Sufi mystic interpreters of the Holy Koran obtain all their interpretive themes and subject matters entirely from their own visionary intuitions and insights?" And the second question would be that "Is every Koranic interpretation, which is solely on the basis of the Sufi mystic interpreter's visionary intuition and insight, valid, authentic, and trustworthy?" The answer that may be given to both questions is a big "No". In other words, neither all the themes and subject matters presented by Sufi mystic interpreters possess intuitive motifs nor every Sufi intuition and insight can be considered as

being valid, authentic, and trustworthy. In fact, many interpretive themes and subject matters presented in the Sufi interpretations of the Holy Koran originate from some ancient ontological and cosmological viewpoints and theories which had been accepted as being presuppositions made by Sufi mystics in general. The above – mentioned Sufi mystics would regard the ontological and cosmological viewpoints and theories of their own time as definite and absolute matters, interpreting some Koranic verses within the framework of those ontological and cosmological viewpoints and theories. Furthermore, although many interpretations which appear in some Sufi interpretations of the Holy Koran are simply quotations from the Sufi mystic interpreters of the past, they are stated in such a manner that the reader presumes that they have been stated by recent Sufi mystic interpreters.

Moreover, as we stated above, not every visionary intuition or in sight is valid, authentic, and trust worthy. In fact, not all visionary intuitions and insights originate from the Divine Truth. According to Morteza Motahhari (1921-1980 A.D.), a well – known Iranian Mullah and scholar: "Sometimes, some people are religiously inspired and have visionary intuitions without knowing the reason(s), that is to say, sometimes, it happens that someone, all of a sudden, feels something in their heart, a kind of inspiration or intuition or insight, and they do not know the reason FORIT. This is a kind of individual and personal instillation that occurs within the individual themselves, a kind of personal inspiration. The difference between "inspiration" and "revelation" would be that in the inspiration.

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«ان للملك الله و للشيطان لمه»

(The religious intuition may appear itself in two ways: either from a divine inspiration from God Almighty or from a satanic temptation from Satan). Therefore, according to the above – mentioned Islamic tradition (hadith), the inspiration may have a divine as well as a satanic, or even a carnal source or origin. And so do many visionary intuitions and insights. Religious visionary intuitions may be considered as being dreams seen by the Sufi mystic in the state of his or her wakefulness. Sometimes, it may happen that the Sufi mystic interpreter who has had the knowledge or conviction gained by their visionary intuition does not know whether his or her intuitive observations have occurred in a dream or in the state of their wakefulness. In actual fact, the five human senses are disabled and deactivated in the state of dreaming, and what one feels through their five human senses in the state of dreaming are solely perceived by only their spirit or inner part sense. Therefore, those Sufi mystic interpreters who have the knowledge or conviction gained by

religious intuitions do feel and observe material things through a sense other than their five human senses, for if these intuitive religious observations were to be felt with the five human senses, they must have been felt by those who were in close proximity to them. Although the Sufi mystic interpreter may claim and may even be sure that he or she has observed or heard their religious intuitions in reality, the truth of the matter is something different, that is to say, as most people who are in the state of dreaming are not at all aware that they are dreaming, and feel that what they are dreaming is really happening in real life, that is to say, in their state of wakefulness, and finally, when they wake up, they realize that what they had seen, heard or felt have been a dream, so most Sufi mystic interpreters experience the same thing. In this regard, His Holiness Ali, the first Innocent Imam of Shiites, (Peace be upon him), states:

«لمتان: لمة من الشيطان و لمة من الملك، فلمة الملك الرقة والفهم، و لمة الشيطان السهو والقسوة».

(There are two kinds of "Ilqa" (the divine inspiration by which the Sufi mystic will become aware of the invisible world (occult), and perceives the divine Truth or satanic inculcations: the satanic inculcation and the angelic intuition. The angelic intuition makes the person inspired to gain tenderheartedness and increase their understanding, while the satanic inculcation creates hardheartedness and oversight in them). As regards the word "لمة" (Lammah) (inspiration), Arab philologists state:

« اللمام الالقاء اليسير و احدثها لمة»

([Satanic]) inculcations are easy temptations, in contrast to which "the divine inspiration" is a kind).

"Lammah" literally means inculcating an idea into somebody gradually. Although to distinguish between the words "inspiration" and

"temptation" would not be easy, philologists have suggested some norms to distinguish between them. For example, if it is stated that on being inspired, one feels happiness and joy in their heart, the inspiration is considered as being "divine".

In contrast, if one receives the state of sadness and grief in their heart, the inspiration would be regarded as being "satanic", hence it will be a temptation. In other words, if the sensation one is feeling inside them, invites them to God's mercy, forgiveness, and peace, the inspiration would be of "divine" kind. On the other hand, if the sensation invites them to fear, helplessness and such like, it would be of "temptation" kind, hence it is considered as being satanic temptation. Similarly, both the divine inspiration and the satanic temptation have repeatedly been referred to in some Islamic traditions (hadiths). As a good example, His Holiness Muhammed (peace be to him and his family) is quoted to have said:

«قال رسول الله (صل الله عليه و آله و سلم): اللشيطان الله باين آدم و للملك لمه فاملمه شيطان فايعاد با لشرو تكذيب بالحق و لمه الملك فايعاد بالخير و تصديق بالحق.»

(His Holiness Muhammed (Peace be to him and his family) said: "Between every child of Adam and Satan, there would be a communication and between every child of Adam and angels, there would be communication [too]. Satan's communication with the child of Adam invites them to the evil mischief as well as the denial of the right things [the Lord], and the angles' communication with the child of Adam harbingers the Good and the acknowledgement of the right things [the lord]). Furthermore, His Holiness Ja'far Sadiq (peace be upon him), the Sixth Innocent Iman of Shiites, says:

«قال من قلب الاوله اذنان على احدهما ملك مرشد و على الاخرى شيطان مفتن هذا يامرہ و هذا يزجره الشيطان يامرہ بالمعاصى و الملك يزجره عنها»

(For every heart [of the human being] there are two ears; on one of them, there sits angel which guides the person towards the Good, and on the other [ear], there sits Satan who propels the Person to the Evil. [In fact,] the angel orders the person to do good deeds, while Satan orders them to do evil things, [in other words,] Satan orders them to commit sins, while the angel prevents them from committing sins). Consequently, the nature of both the "intuition" and the "dream" would be the same, and in both the intuition and the dream, the natural five senses of the dreamer as well as the one inspired are deactivated. Instead, the unconscious in the person who is dreaming, and the inner sense or the sixth sense in the Sufi mystic interpreter who is in the state of intuition become active. In fact, when a Sufi mystic is in the state of intuition, he or she is able to see, hear or touch something which is beyond their natural senses. These have nothing to do with their natural five senses, otherwise, those who are sitting or standing near the Sufi mystic must see, hear or touch the same thing and experience the same thing as them. Therefore, the natural five senses are disabled in the state of intuition while the inner sense or the sixth sense is activated.

The only difference between the intuition and the dream would be that at the time of intuition, the Sufi mystic is not necessarily sleeping, while the dreamer is necessarily asleep. Now, according to this presupposition, we may start to evaluate and assess the value and genuineness of the Sufi mystic's visionary intuitions and inspirations. Since the dreams of an ordinary person are not at all true and veracious, the visionary intuitions and inspirations of the Sufi mystic interpreter can be both true or false. All of us may have experienced different kinds of dreams in our sleep; some dreams may be related to past events, events which really occurred in our life. On the other hand, some dreams may

be related to the future, events which will happen in the future exactly as seen in the dream. Some dreams may be seen in the form of symbols which represent the present reality of the dreamer's life, and finally, some dreams may be devoid of any reality representations. It has also been mentioned in the Holy Koran as well as in some Islamic traditions (hadiths) that a dream may be true or false. The dreams of the prophet Abraham (Peace be upon him) and His Holiness Muhammed, the prophet of Islam (Peace be to him and his family) have been reported to be true dreams in the Holy Koran. Also, the famous dream of the prophet Joseph (Peace be upon him) which he had in his childhood would be considered as being both true and symbolic: in his childhood dream, the prophet Joseph (Peace be upon him) saw his father, his mother and his eleven brothers in the form of the Sun, the Moon and eleven stars, respectively. As we all know, years after this dream, the dream came true, as it has been mentioned in the story of Joseph in the Koranic chapter of Joseph, verses four, five, and one – hundred. Nevertheless, some dreams, as it has been mentioned in the Holy Koran itself, are considered as being chaotic dreams, dreams which do not express and represent anything, hence they are meaningless. As it was mentioned earlier in this chapter, visionary intuitions and inspirations are, by their very nature, the same as ordinary dreams. In fact, when someone is experiencing an intuition or inspiration, it is their spirit or soul which, without the involvement of the five natural senses, experiences the visionary intuition or inspiration. These visionary intuitions may be arisen from the very creative and productive power of the person's spirit itself or may be caused by their creative imagination which may seem very real to those experiencing the visionary intuition, or they they may be produced by a satanic force. In fact, any person who has studied and

contemplated the published visionary intuitions and inspirations of Sufi mystics will reach to the same conclusion as stated above. In other words, as there exist true visionary intuitions and inspirations which may arise from the Sufi mystic's real faith in God, their acts of piety, and certainty about God struggles against carnal desires, and the toleration of physical hardships in order to reach and gain great, divine, spiritual status, there may also exist many false and imaginary intuitions and inspirations which may be created by repetitive inculcations and deviations from divine thoughts and satanic temptations. To give an example, Ibn- e Arabi has stated: "For" Rajabioun" (those Muslims who believed that the Arabic month of "Rajab", the seven month of Hejira, was a holy and blessed month, because it begins with the birthday of His Holiness Imam Baqer (Peace be upon him), and also because in the middle of this month, the birth of His Holiness Imam Ali (Peace be upon him) takes place, and it ends with the birthday of His Holiness Muhammed (Peace be to him and his family), the prophet of Islam, hence they respect this month – the Arabic month of "Rajab" – so much and always perform maximum prayers which are not religiously incumbent, and commit themselves to pay specific whispered prayers as well as telling their beads, there is an asceticism in which they have been reported to see "Rafezan "(the Shiite Muslims) as pigs!". Of course, some have attempted to find some justifications for the last statement. For example, it is said that Ibn-e Arabi might have added this last statement to his book "Fotouhat-e Makkyeh" on his own initiative. Others say that by "Rafezan", it is meant "Khavarij" (a cult of Muslims who, in the first century A.H, breached their promise to follow His Holiness Imam Ali (Peace be upon him)). In spite of the fact that we have just mentioned, some Islamic researchers have revealed these

justifications as being insufficient and inadequate. Not considering the above- mentioned justifications, ayatollah Seyyed Rouh Allah Khomeini (1903-1990 A.D.), Known as Imam Khaomeini (May he rest in peace), has explained and clarified these false visionary intuitions and inspirations, stating: "Sometimes, the Sufi mystic sees both his spiritual representation, that is to say, his own spirit – as well as his own bodily form [his body] in the mirror of his own heart, that is to say, in his vision or inspiration. This is because of the good faith of the Sufi mystic as exactly some ordinary Sufi mystics would see "Rafezan" in the form of pigs in their visions. This was not precisely what they saw in their visions. Their vision did originate from the fact that "Rafezan" had good faith in Allah, and they themselves, that is to say, the ordinary Sufi mystics who did not have good faith in Allah, saw themselves as pigs which represent their insufficient good faith in Allah, and in their visions, they themselves, that is to say, the ordinary Sufi mystics who did not have good faith in Allah, Saw themselves as pigs which represent their insufficient good faith in Allah, and in their visions, they imagined that the pigs were "Rafezan".

Considering the above – mentioned explanation and clarification by Imam Khomeini, it may be said that even if the Sufi mystic interpreters of the Holy koran are truthful and sincere in their reporting their visionary intuitions and inspirations, they have still insisted on the truth and veracity of their visions. This will not at all justify or rationalize the rightfulness and legitimacy of their claims and assertions. Therefore, what has been recounted or written by Sufi mystic interpreters of the Holy Koran as being the "intuitive interpretation" may not at all be regarded as being true or real in its entirety. The divine intuitions and inspirations which are not criticizable at all by Koranic critics may have

very likely been created by the Sufi mystic interpreter's mind and imagination. Therefore, these visionary intuitions and inspirations have no real existence. On this basis, these so – called intuitive interpretations of the Holy Koran do not differ from the "deductive" interpretations of the Holy Koran, which are normally made by Islamic clergymen. Therefore, these visionary intuitions or so – called intuitive interpretations of the Holy Koran must be assessed, evaluated, and criticized by sound and well – founded evaluative interpretive criterions in order to distinguish between what is right and what is wrong in them.

The best and most convincing evidence for the above – mentioned claim would be that koranic interpreters themselves who are known as intuitive interpreters and even the most eminent intuitive interpreters of the Holy Koran are documentarily reported to have frequently faulted on one another's intuitive interpretations of the Holy Koran, announcing some of their intuitive interpretations of the Holy Koran as being wrong, mistaken, and unsound. Baha Al- Din Seyyed Heidar Ibn-e Ali Ibn – e Heidar (720A.H), a Sufi mystic and a shiute interpreter of the Holy Koran, generally known as Seyyed Heidar Amoli, in the introduction to his own interpretation of the Holy Koran, and in relation to Najm Al- Din Abdulah Ibn-e Muhammed Ibn- e Shahavar Al-Asadi Al- Razi's, a thirteenth century Persian Sufi mystic, decipherments of the Holy Koran, states: "I will not quote Daye's decipherments of the holy Koran here in detail, but, to a small degree, and this is because of the difference which exists between my statements and his statements, between my intuitions and his intuitions".

Another point to be mentioned here is that in confirming their divine intuitions and inspirations, Sufi mystic interpreters of the Holy Koran may refer to some evidence existing in Islmaic traditions (hadiths) or in

the Holy Koran itself. In these references, the evidence existing in Islamic traditions (hadiths) or in the Holy Koran itself is more pervasive and general than the visionary intuitions inspired to the Sufi mystic interpreters of the Holy Koran, hence there will be no need to confirm or prove it. These pieces of evidence merely give reasons for the visionary intuitions inspired to Sufi mystic interpreters, but they do not specify at all that Allah Himself has inspired the Sufi mystic interpreters to perceive a specific meaning other than the meaning intended by Him, for Allah has sent down form on high of Koranic verses for the public not for special individuals. Similarly, although some Islamic traditions (hadiths) denote both superficial as well as deep meanings of koranic verses, they do not at all specify that the deep meanings will be obtained and perceived by asceticism, visionary intuitions and inspirations. In order to interpret these specific Islamic traditions (hadiths), the Islamic researcher or the interpreter has to refer to Islamic traditions (hadiths) themselves, those meanings which are not beyond the scope of their average meanings.

### **Irregular and Non – Standard References to Some Islamic Traditions (Hadiths) in Some Sufi Interpretations of the Holy Koran**

In the Sufi interpretations of the Holy Koran, there are some examples which show that "Sahabeh" (the companions of His Holiness Muhammed (Peace be to him and his family), the prophet of Islam, who had always been with him and perceived his religious teachings), "Tab'e'en" (those people who had seen the companions of the prophet of Islam, Muhammed, and spoken to them personally), and even the Innocent Imams of Shiite Muslims had frequently applied the interpretive approaches, which were prevalent among Sufi mystics, in

their interpretations of the Holy Koran. For example, Ibn-e Abbass(68A.H), the prophet of Islam's cousin and his faithful follower, is quoted to have interpreted the Holy Koran using the numerical value of Koranic letters. An example of the intuitive, inward (Anfosi) interpretation of the Holy Koran is attributed to Ubbay Ibn-e Ka'b (649 A.D), a companion of the prophet of Islam, Muhammed (Peace be to him and his family) and a man of high esteem in the early Muslim community. Also, many Islamic traditions (hadiths) have been attributed to Iamam Ja'far Sadiq (Peace be upon him), the sixth imam of Shiite Muslims, in which the Holy Koran has been interpreted in the manner Sufi mystics interpreted it. But for these religious traditions (hadiths) and Koranic in therpretations, there are no valid extant documents. Furthermore, when these Islamic traditions (hadiths) and Koranic interpretations are explained and evaluated textually, researchers face with some special Sufi words or phrases such as "Morid" (the Disciple), "enniyyat" (the Being) which have been applied instead of "ذات" (Zat) (the Nature), "ماهيت" (Mahyyat) (the Nature), which have been applied instead of "حقيقت" (Haqiqat) (the Truth) or "كيفيت" (Keyfytyat) (the Quality) used instead of "haal" (the Mood), which have been entered into the realm of Sufism from the third century A.D onwards.

The sources of a great deal of Islamic traditions (hadiths), which had been applied in the Sufi interpretations of the Holy Koran, have actually been in doubt, In the Sufi interpretations of the Holy Koran, those Islamic traditions (hadiths) which had been attributed to Holy Innocent Imams of Shiite Muslims, and which had no documentary evidence, had been commonly and inaccurately regarded by Sufi mystic interpreters as being invocable Islamic traditions (hadiths).

In his introduction to the interpretation of the Koranic chapter of "Joseph", interpreted by Mullah Abdul Razzaq (attributed to Ibn-e Arabi), one of the proponents of Ibn-e Arabi's Sufi school of thought – a school which was very well known and its principles were widely used in the interpretation of the Holy Koran – writes: "This book contains a great deal of prophetic and Islamic traditions (hadiths) which may be shaky, unbelievable, and religiously impermissible; or that (these prophetic Islamic traditions (hadiths)) may not be found in "Sehah" (the Six – volume books of Sunnis, which contain Islamic traditions (hadiths)); or that they may not be found in "Masanid" (well – documented evidence), or in "Sunan" (what the prophet of Islam, His Holiness Muhammed (peace be to him and his family) and his companions acted upon. Nevertheless, these Kinds of prophetic traditions are actually found in Ibn- e Arabi's traditions are actually found in Ibn-e Arabi's as well as other Sufi mystic's books and writings. It has to be mentioned that Sufi mystics have their own specific way in ascribing Islamic traditions (hadiths) to well Known people of their time. Sufi mystics commonly recognized Islamic traditions (hadiths) their own intuitions and inspirations, hence they might regard a single Islamic tradition (hadith), which had been recognized as being correct and accurate by other Islamic scholars and thinkers, as being shaky and incorrect. Or, on the contrary, an Islamic tradition (hadith) which had been recognized as being shaky and incorrect by other Islamic scholars and thinkers, could be regarded by Sufi mystics as being correct and accurate. Also, Sufi mystics might, in the past, quote or state Islamic traditions (hadiths) which no one else had quoted or stated earlier. As it has been stated in different passages of the book "Fotouhat-e Makkyeh", written by Ibn-e Arabi, he himself has NOT at all valued for

quoting Islamic traditions (hadiths) in a systematic and methodic way. Indeed, the only criterion through which quotations may be assessed and valued would be that these traditions (hadiths) must have undoubtedly been originated from Ibn-e Arabi's own private or personal visionary intuitions and inspirations. In his book "Fotouhat-e Makkyeh", Ibn-e Arabi, quoting from Abou yazid Bastami (161-261 A.H), a great Sufi mystic, stresses that the only truth and source for the interpretation of Islamic traditions (hadiths) as well as of Koranic verses are placed upon the basis of visionary intuitions and inspirations on the part of the Sufi mystic interpreter.

As we mentioned earlier, not any religious intuition or inspiration suggests the reality or the actuality. Also, as we mentioned before, religious intuitions and inspirations, like the dream, are themselves divided into "correct" and "false" intuitions. On this basis, it should be accepted that one of the methodological defects which seems to have entered into most of the Sufi interpretations or the Holy Koran would be some Sufi mystic interpreter's reliance upon fictitious, baseless Islamic traditions (hadiths). These Sufi mystic interpreters put their own interpretations on the Islamic traditions (hadiths) in a way which seems they do not basically make any effort to document any of the Islamic traditions (hadiths). For example, in his book "Al- Arba'een" (a period of forty days), Seyyed Nizam Ahmed has attributed the following Islamic tradition (hadith), known as "The Divine Wine", to His Holiness Imam Ali (peace be upon him) without providing the reader with any documentation:

«ان الله شرابا اذا شربوا سكروا و اذا سكروا طابوا و اذا طابوا ذابوا و اذا ذابوا خلصوا و اذا خلصوا طلبوا و اذا طلبوا وجدوا و اذا وجدوا وصلوا و اذا وصلوا اتصلوا و اذا اتصلوا لافرق بينهم و بين حبيبيهم»

(There is a divine wine for God's holy people; as soon as they imbibe it, they will become inebriated; and as soon as they become inebriated, they will become ecstatic; and as soon as they become ecstatic, their whole being will become clear from impurities; and as soon as their whole being becomes clear from impurities, they will be melted into the divine love; and as soon as they are melted into the divine love, they will become purified; and as soon as they become purified, they will desire to have His Sublime Essence, and as soon as they desire to have His Sublime Essence, they will desire to discover Him, and as soon as they discover Him, they will desire to come together into a united whole with Him; and as soon as they come together into a united whole with Him, they will be acclimatized to and conjoin Him; and afterwards there will be no difference and distance between them and their Beloved God.) The above – mentioned Islamic tradition (hadith) has also, in some other books, been attributed to Ba yazid Bastami. Also, Seyyed Heydar Amoli has attributed the above – mentioned Islamic tradition (hadith) to His Holiness Imam Ali (Peace be upon him), His Holiness Imam Ja'far Sadiq (Peace be upon him), and His Holiness Imam Reza (Peace be upon him).

### **The Ultimate Outcomes Caused by Some Sufi Interpretations of the Holy Koran**

By "the ultimate outcomes caused by Some Sufi interpretations of the Holy Koran", we mean either those negative or unfavorable defects and outcomes which have been caused by Some Sufi interpretations of the Holy Koran, or those unfavorable outcomes which are more likely to occur and are caused by the Sufi trend of thought in the Sufi interpretations of the Holy Koran. Below, we are going to deal with and discuss some of the most significant and "ultimate" defects and

unfavorable outcomes of the Sufi trend of thought in the interpretation of the Holy Koran.

### **Determinism and Its Outcomes**

It Should be mentioned here that one of the ultimate and unfavorable outcomes which are caused by some Sufi interpretations of the Holy Koran would be considered as being the popularization of believing in "determinism", which itself has caused to break out other ideological and social defects. Basically, Sufism is accompanied by "Ash'ari" (one of the Sunni cults in which its followers, known as "Asha'ere", highly believed in divine determinism and securely rejected Man's free will). Therefore, it is observed that Sufi mystics have a less tendency towards "E'tezal" (an Islamic cult, appeared in the second century A.H, which emphasized on "reason", "reasoning", Man's free will, and the creation of the universe. Its followers were called "Mo'tazele"). This very point may well display the difference between the Shiite Sufism and the Sunnism itself.

In his book, "Haqay Al- Tafsir" (Truths about the Interpretation), one of the oldest Sufi interpretations of the Holy Koran, Abdul Rahman Sollami (330-412 A.H), mentions the Koranic chapter of "Showra", verse seven. At the end of this Koranic verse, God Almighty says:

«فريق في الجنة و فريق في السعير»

(... A group of people are in Heaven and a group of people are in Hell). Putting his own interpretation on this Koranic verse, Sollami states: "... There are some people for whom God Almighty has ordained blessedness from eternity, and there are some people for whom God Almighty has destined misery from eternity. Rouzbehan Abou Muhammed Ibn-e Nasr Ibn- e Rouzbehan Baqali Fasaee Shirazi (526-

606 A.H), generally known as Sheikh Shattah, a Persian Sufi mystic of the sixth century A.H, mentions the Koranic chapter of "Baqara", verse 213 which says:

«كان الناس امة واحده...»

(The people [of Saudi Arabia] used to be a single, united followers of a single custom ...) Putting his own interpretation on the above – mentioned Koranic verse, Rouzbehan states: "In divine destinies and on the Day of Judgment, Man has already obtained both his faith [in God Almighty] and his blasphemy [his meanness], for God Almighty has indeed bestowed Man free will to overtake others through his good deeds or to fall behind them through his evil deeds". In other words, Rouzbehan strong believes in Man's free will rather than the divine determinism. Also, Abou Bakr Muhammed Ibn-e Mousa Vaseti, a Sufi mystic of the fourth century A.H, Known as "Ibn –e Farqane" in his own putting interpretation on the Koranic chapter of "Jonah", verse one – hundred which says:

«ولو شاء ربك الأمن من في الارض كلهم جميعاً افانت تكره الناس حتى يكونوا مؤمنين»

(If your God had the will to make all the People of the world become believers of Him, they would become believers [of Him]. Why are you compelling people to believe in Him [God Almighty(?), states: "With this Koranic verse, God Almighty has just excluded both the praise and the reproach from Man's behavior, ignoring both the stonehearted and the kindhearted, both the excused and the non – excused people, regardless of what they have done, evil or good. In fact, these people have just acted upon God's eternity will or the so – called destiny". Furthermore, concerning the Koranic verse of "Fatir", verse fifteen, which says:

«يا ايها الناس انتم الفقرا الى الله و الله هو الغنى الحميد»

(O people, you are all considered as being poor beings by Allah, and are in need of Him, but it is only He Who is free from want and is self-contained, a God Who indeed deserves to be praised and worshipped for His own specific and praiseworthy natures), Rouzbehan states: "Having faith in God does not make Man closer to Him, nor does unbelief in God make them separate from Him. Every single thing [in the world of existence] has already been ordained by God from eternity. Man's misfortune and good fortune, his belief in God and unbelief in Him are all signs and indications; they are not divine Truth themselves. Indeed, the truth of God Almighty's destiny truly lies in God's most preceding non – human knowledge which has always existed from eternity. Those who think that God's Truth is provided and displayed by Him through happiness and good fortune in this world are on the wrong track. The divine Truth of God has already been ordained by Him from eternity. This divine Truth may not be put on display on the Earth. And if some people who live on the Earth have the honor to be closer to God through their faith or whatever, their honor to be closer to Him has also been ordained by Him from eternity. In fact, the disbelief in God, blasphemy and the like are nothing but ornament. Through which God Himself has dressed the unbelievers. Indeed, having faith in God is the very display of His honor of presentation through which Man may be closer to Him; it the very indication of the divine tranquility, the divine comfort, and the divine closeness to Him.

On the other hand, the disbelief in God Almighty will result in tribulation, torment, and remoteness as well as separation from Him".

As some Islamic researchers have stated, the Sufi way of thinking and attitude has, thus, led Muslims to the laxity and slackness about social issues to such an extent that they would not object and submit to

any social order, hence their not objecting and submitting to anything [in this world] have paved the way for the decay and corruption within their own society.

### **Ideological Laxity and Negligence Related to the Religious Pluralism as Seen in the Sufi Interpretations of the Holy Koran**

The religious pluralism, that is to say, not obliging to Islam's unique legitimacy and rightfulness as being the last divine religion occurred on the Earth may be traced and pursued in Sufi thoughts and attitudes as well as in the Sufi interpretations of the Holy Koran. For instance, in his last written work, Ibn-e Arabi states: "Until this very day, I was opposing any faithful person's thoughts and attitudes which were against my thoughts and attitudes, and I was avoiding keeping company with those whose thoughts and attitudes were different from mine, but, today, both my heart and mind have tended to accept and receive all faithful thoughts and attitude from any faithful man of different belief, faith, or religion. Now, both my heart and mind have turned into a grassland where deers and gazelles may graze; now, both my heart and mind have turned into an idol temple where idol – worshippers may worship their idols freely; now, both my heart and mind have turned into an abbey where monks may pray their Lord; now, both my heart and mind have turned into the Ka'ba where Muslims may circle round it; now both my heart and mind have turned into a synagogue where Jews may place their Torah there; now, both my heart and mind have turned into a mosque where Muslims may place their Korans there; now, both my heart and mind have turned into a church where Christians may place their holy book". What, in deed, Ibn-e Arabi tries to convey would be that he has really reached a specific attitude or way of thinking in which he is ready

to receive and accept different beliefs, faiths , and religious thoughts as being rightful ones, obliging himself to consider them, hence he is not at all influence by Islamic prejudices against other beliefs, faiths, and religions thoughts. He, further, Adds: "My own faith and religion follow the path on which the "Divine Love" travels".

Furthermore, Seyyed Heidar Amoli, like Ibn-e Arabi, believes in the ideological laxity, holding the belief that all universal religions are indeed one and muted, and that religious prejudices are something which he calls as bing basically wrong. At the beginning as well as the end of the book "Jame'ol Asrar va Manba'ol Anvar" (Comprehensive Mysteries and the Source of Lights), Amoli mentions Ibn-e Arabi's own poem which begins as follows:

"But, today, [both] my heart and mind have tended to accept and receive all faithful thought and attitudes from all faithful men of different faiths, beliefs, and religions". It is also to be mentioned that Abou Al – Ma'ali Abdullah Mianji Hamadani, Known as "Ein Al – Quzat", a Persian Sufi mystic and Muslim thinker – who was anathematized and finally gibbeted -, had had the same thoughts and attitudes, that is to say, he did believe in ideological laxity and negligence.

### **Practical Laxity in Observing the Religious Orders in the Sufi Interpretations of the Holy Koran**

Although Sufi mystic interpreters of the Holy Koran have generally emphasized that the "outer" part of the Holy Koran, that is to say, the Koranic verses themselves, as well as the "inner" part of the Holy Koran, that is to say, the exact, real meaning(s) of Koranic verses, are indeed inseparable, and although Ibn-e Arabi has been quoted as saying that everyone who loses the scale of the religious law – even for a short

moment – will be ruined, the interpretations of Koranic verses, which are related to Islamic rules and principles to which Koranic interpreters have applied a conventional language to interpret them, have caused some people to consider the Sufi interpretations of the Holy Koran as being sufficient interpretations, hence they usually tend not to particularly observe Islamic rules, principles, and orders stated by the Holy Koran itself, and even do ignore these Islamic rules, principles, and orders. Putting interpretation on the Koranic chapter of "Towbah", verse ninety – one, which says:

«ليس على الضعفا و لا على مرضى و لا على المرضى و لا على الذين لا يجدون ما ينفقون  
حرج اذا نصحوا الله و رسوله ما على المحسنين من سبيل الله غفور رحيم»

(There is nothing [no burden or pressure] upon the weak or the ill upon those who do not find anything to spend any discomfort as long as they are sincere to Allah and His Messenger [the prophet of Islam, His Holiness Muhammed] (peace be to him and his family)) There is nothing [no burden or pressure] upon the doer of good [deeds] and there is no cause to blame them. And Allah is Forgiving and Merciful). Abou Muhammed Rouzbehan, a Persian Sufi mystic of the sixth century A. H, states: "Those who practice asceticism and those who are accustomed to practicing asceticism are exempted from performing religious tasks, commitments, and duties.

There is no doubt that such Sufi interpretations of Koranic verses provide from not performing or not observing religious tasks and duties. It may be argued that when the Holy Koran tells a tale like the tale of "Moses and Pharaoh", the reader may ask him or herself, "Is there a message in the story at all?" It may also argued that the Moses and the Pharaoh in this Koranic tale are not at all limited to the real Moses and Pharaoh who had indeed been related to history. It may be said that some

people, like Moses and Pharaoh, may be found in history. Furthermore There may exist a Moses and a Pharaoh inside every human being, who are always having a fight with one another. On the other hand, when some Koranic verses address Muslims directly and clearly, asking them to perform some actions and to abandon some others, it will be wrong and inaccurate to interpret these Koranic verses in a different manner which would be far from reality and truth. That is why some Koranic interpreters such as Abou Al – Fazl Abdul Razzaq Kashani, known as kamal Al- Din Kashani, a Persian Sufi mystic of the seventh century A. H, has stated:

"These kinds of Koranic verses may not be interpreted at all except for their literal" meanings (interpretations)". Of course, those Koranic verses which are related to Islamic rules, principles, and orders may be interpreted and clarified in terms of the philosophical or spiritual concepts which are closely interwoven with them."

Basically, the deep and abstruse interpretation of Koranic verses on the part of Sufi mystic interpreters and their more emphasis on these deep and abstruse interpretations against superficial and literal interpretation of the Holy Koran on the part of other interpreters have caused some simple – minded and ignorant people to abandon their real, previously – accepted religion and These simple – minded and ignorant people tend to perform clear and unimpeded as well as corrupted actions after they have read some Sufi interpretations of the Holy Koran, clear, unimpeded as well as corrupted actions which are in deed far from Islamic rules, principles, and orders. It has been quoted that after reading Sheikh Badr Al- Din Mahmoud Simavi's Sufi interpretations of the Holy Koran, some simple- minded and ignorant people gathered together and started drinking wine, saying: "Kowsar spring [a spring in Heaven, according to

the Holy Koran and some Islamic traditions] is indeed the very lip of our beloved who lives in this world; and the heavenly wine is the very wine which we are now drinking; and the heavenly "houris" [beautify heavenly women, according to the Holy Koran and some Islamic traditions] is this very world of being, from which we, people, are earning our bread; and afterlife is surely different from the one that religious scholars and jurists have already told us".

It is of course an undeniable fact that the "inward" approach or the so – called intuitive approach to the interpretation of the Holy Koran has been a reaction against the too much attention paid by some religious scholars, Islamic clergymen and jurists to the only visible and the superficial aspects and dimensions of Islam as well as their inattention and carelessness towards the invisible, deep or spiritual aspects and dimensions of Islam. In this regard, Jalal Al-Din Muhammed Mowlavi, a Sufi mystic and a famous poet of the seventh century A.H, in his own book "Fih – e Mafih" (page 17), states: "In the present time and age, too, our contemporary Islamic jurists and scholars are pondering Islamic jurists and scholars are pondering over various sciences and bodies of knowledge as well as other things which do not indeed relate to them, the things which are placed out of the area and scope of their religious qualifications. [What seems to be strange and surprising is that] they have become wholly proficient in these contemporary sciences and bodies of knowledge; [and it seems that] to these contemporary Islamic jurists, there is nothing more important, more cherished, and more precious than their religious egotism and prejudice, hence they consider themselves in the right, justified and deserved path to intervene in any contemporary science and body of knowledge, on the basis of their[old] religious knowledge and background and dictate to the readers

[of their own books] that this religiously permissible to do and that is religiously forbidden to do; whereas, they do not know and understand at all whether their intervention in various [contemporary] bodies of knowledge and sciences in their own old – fashioned manner along with their religions egotism and prejudice are religiously permissible or forbidden.

In addition to what was mentioned above and earlier, some of Sufi theories, thoughts, and attitudes specifically have paved the way for the appearance and rise of the "practical laxity and negligence" and the consideration of religiously forbidden matters as being "permissible" ones. In regard to some of the deficiencies and imperfections which are originated from the belief in the theory of "Pantheism" [a doctrine that equates God with the forces and laws of the universe], one of the contemporary figures, who is now a claimant of being a Sufi mystic, writes: "The mere belief in theoretical pantheism brings no spiritual and otherworldly messages for Men at all, but rather the mere belief in such a theory does lead men astray socially and morally, for some of those who believe in this kind of philosophy may commit any sort of crime or corruption. And when they are asked to justify their wrong actions, they decisively respond that since they believe in pantheism, any action –right or wrong – will be permissible. Therefore, therational submission to the theory of pantheism would be doubted, for the strict and slavish adherence to such a theory may result in moral degradation among its believers, and may devalue them from the sublime status and place of humanity."

The above – mentioned writer, further, adds: "Jalal Al- Din Rouni, known as Mowlavi, too, had already found out the deficiency and imperfectness of the theory of pantheism. Rouni retells the tale of a

stealer who enters a fruit garden and starts stealing some apricots from the trees. All of a sudden, the owner of the fruit garden approaches the stealer and catches him, saying: "What are you doing? Are you not afraid of God? "The stealer replies:" Why should I be afraid of God? This apricot tree and its fruits belong to God, and I am a servant of God, so I am picking and eating these apricots which belong to God . I am just picking and eating my share of God."

On hearing this, the owner of the fruit garden orders his servants to bring a thick rope and tie the stealer tightly to the tree. Beating the stealer with a thick stick hard, the owner of the fruit garden says to the stealer: "This is my response to what you just said to me and your stealing from my fruit garden." The stealer, being beaten hard by the owner of the fruit garden, cries out: "Why are you beating me? Are you not afraid of God? With a smile on his face, the owner of the fruit garden replies: "Why Should I be afraid of God? This is the stick of God, so is this his thick rope; and you are the servant of God, so I am beating a servant of God with the stick of God!"

### **Converting the Divine Truth in Some Sufi Interpretations of the Holy Koran**

Basically, the purpose and the objective of any interpretation would be to remove any ambiguity, equivocalness, and indefiniteness from the original text, representing the clear and real purpose and objective of the original text's writer as much as possible.

Likewise, those who refer to the interpretations of the Holy Koran seek the same purpose and objective, that is to say, they seek to obtain a crystal clear definition and interpretation of Koranic verses which finally make their religious needs satisfied. But this is not always true for a

majority of Koranic interpretations, that is to say, in most interpretations of the Holy Koran, the reader faces a great deal of religious points and arguments points and arguments which do possess a non – interpretive nature. This non – interpretive nature [ of Koranic verses] are for the most part seen in most Sufi interpretations of the Holy Koran. Indeed, in most Sufi interpretations of the Holy Koran, a great majority of interpretive Points and arguments are the associations of ideas on the part of the Sufi mystic interpreter, which are arisen from his or her own specific mood. At the time of interpretation the Holy Koran. Some of these association of ideas which to Sufi mystic interpreters at the time of interpreting the Holy Koran are in deed artistic, literary creation of their mind. Literary adaptations of the Holy Koran made by Mohyoddin Ibn-e Arabi and Abdul Razzaq, which are for the most part on the basis of their desires and carnal forces, as well as the transformation. of Koranic historical stories into private, personal and carnal stories are good examples of Sufi mystic interpreter's association of ideas.

There is no doubt that each of these transformed stories is in itself a valuable and thought – provoking issue, but they may be harmful, irrelevant, and inapplicable when considered as the interpretation.

### **Negative Social Outcomes Caused by Some Sufi Interpretations of the Holy Koran**

The use of some special ideas, thought. And beliefs which for the most part are of interest to the public seen in most Sufi interpretations of the Holy Koran have caused the Sufi interpretations of the Holy Koran to be accepted and received with agreement by ordinary people. For example, to give special praise as well as to have high respect for His Holiness Imam Ali (Peace be upon him), the first Imam of Shiite

Muslims, Sufi mystic interpreters, in their interpretations of the Holy Koran have caused Sufi mystics to gain a special, holy status among Shiite Muslims. This example may be one of the justifications for the unconditional acceptance and reception of the Sufi interpretations of the Holy Koran on the part of ordinary people.

The radical approach of quitting the carnal desires and material pleasures of this world on the part of Sufi mystics would be another negative social outcome caused by most Sufi interpretations of the Holy Koran. At this Point, it will be appropriate to tell a story about His Holiness Imam Ali (Peace be upon him) and Rabi' Ibn-e Ziad Haresi: One time, His Holiness Imam Ali (Peace be upon him) came to visit Rabi' Ibn-e Ziad Haresi who was sick. When His Holiness Imam Ali came to Rabi's bed, Rabi' Ibn-e Ziad Haresi started complaining to Imam Ali about his own brother who had quitted the habit of following his carnal desires and material pleasures, saying that his brother had started wearing thick and coarse clothing and had made his family members depressed and annoyed by his strange behavior. On hearing this, His Holiness Imam Ali (Peace be upon him) sent some person to bring Rabi' Ibn-e Ziad Haresi's brother, Asim, to his own presence. When Asim came to Imam Ali's presence, Imam Ali said to him, "Are you not feeling ashamed of your family members? Did not you know that God Almighty Who has made good, profitable, and Pleasurable material things religiously permissible and usable to you, has the power to take all of these things from you? Did not you know that God Almighty has said:

«والارض وضعها للانام؛ فيها فكهه والنخل ذات الاكمام»

(And God Almighty did create the Earth for [the use of] people; the Earth on which there are [lots of different fruits] and palm trees on which

there are [lots of] blossoms; and on which there are [lots of] seeds as well as [lots of] stems and leaves) (the Koranic chapter of "Al- Rahman", verses ten and eleven).

On hearing this , Asim suddenly turned back and returned his home; took his thick and coarse clothes off and put his soft clothes on.

On the basis of the above – mentioned story, resorting to some Koranic verses which are about the piety of men and God- fearing people, one must not at all deny or negate other Koranic verses' themes and subjects.

The Koran is, indeed, an all – inclusive and comprehensive declaration for both proceeding worldly way of life as well as gaining other worldly salvation. So, it is not wise at all to resort to interpreting only some of the Koran's verses and ignoring others.

Regardless of the excessiveness which Sufi mystic interpreters have shown both in some Islamic issues and orders as well as in their own interpretations of the Holy Koran, some of the issues, which they themselves have considered as being of great value on the basis of koranic verses, have not at all been valuable to be considered. For example, to intentionally live in poverty and privation is a Sufi matter which has always been propagandized in Sufism throughout the history. Abou Al- Fazl Rashid Al- Dim Meibodi, a well – known Sufi mystic interpreter of the Holy Koran of the Sixth century A. H, putting an interpretation on the Koranic chapter of "Towbah", verse sixty which says:

«انما الصدقات الفقرا و المساكين و العالمين عليها و المؤلفه قلوبهم و فى الرقاب و الغارمين و فى سبيل الله و ابن سبيل فريضه من الله و الله عليم حكيم»

(Zakat's (money which each Muslim person has to pay from their own wealth to an imam or his representative in order to help poor

people) expenditures are only for the poor and for the needy [persons] and for those who are employed to collect Zakat; Zakat expenditures are for bringing people's hearts together [for the sake of Islam] and for setting captives [ or slaves] free, and for those who are in debt, and for the sake of Allah, and for the [stranded] travelers – It is an obligation [imposed] by Allah. Allah is [the most] knowing and wisest [of all]), states. "Those who have not at all experienced the feelings of poverty and privation, and have not been in the seclusion of the poor, feeling so sorrowful and woeful like Jacob, and those who have not sat in the cave of their exile and loneliness to submit to their beloved [God Almighty], and those who have not worn the garment of austerity, will not at all reach, along with the faithful poor men as well as the men of God, the sublime statue of salvation. These faithful, sorrowful, poor men are a thousand times more in love with their poverty and privation than you are with your Lordship, Superiority, and Power. Abdul Rahman Owf had been a great and well – to – do man and one of the companions of His Holiness Muhammed (Peace be to him and his family). Nevertheless, he had not all experienced the feelings of poverty and privation in his life. Once he came to the presence of Islam, His Holiness Muhammed (Peace be to him and his family). Sa'd-e Ma'az, a Muslim dervish, was present there. Abdul Rahman Owf uttered some coarse and indelicate words to Sa'd-e Ma'az, from which Sa'd-e Ma'az became very offended and insulted. After a while, being regretted saying those insulting words, Abdul Rahman Owf devoted half of his own wealth to Sa'd-e Ma'az in order to conciliate him, but, each time, Sa'd-e Ma'az rejected the devotion. Seeing his rejection of the devotion, the prophet of Islam, His Holiness Muhammed (Peace be to him and his family) said to Sa'd-e Ma'az: "Why do not you accept the wealth?" Sa'd-e Ma'az replied: "O Muhammed, the

jewel of poverty and privation is far more valuable and precious to me than all material and corporeal things of this world".

It is also noteworthy to mention here that some Islamic traditions (hadiths) have looked at poverty and privation in a positive and favorable way, as though living in poverty and privation has been one of the conditions and prerequisites for becoming faithful and devout! After a great deal of study on living in poverty and living in prosperity, Abou Al- Fotouh Ahmad Qazali, a well – known Sufi mystic of the sixth century A.H., and Mullah Mohsen Feiz-e Kashani, a Persian Sufi mystic, poet, and koranic interpreter of the eleventh century A.H., ultimately came to th conclusion that living in poverty and privation had been far betten than living in prosperity for the public.

Furthermore, the lack of political and social discussions and arguments in the Sufi interpretations of the Holy Koran prepared the ground for later occurrence of defects and inadequacies found in such interpretation The Sufi mystic interpreters of the Holy Koran did not either state about political and social issues of their time, which in reality appear in some of Koranic verses, or if they intended to state their own point of views about the political and social issues of the time, they would relate these issues to spiritual and otherworldly subject matters and would put their own interpretations on the related Koranic verses accordingly. As an example, Abou Mahammad Rouzbehan Baqali, a Sufi mystic interpreter of the sixth century A.H., has merely presented and in introduced a metaphysical interpretation of the Koranic chapter of "Al-e Imran", verse one – hundred and ten. Only the Sufi mystic interpreters of recent centuries such as Seyyed Muahammad hossein Tabatabaee, known as the polymath (1902-1981 B.C.), have made a judgement regarding the worth and credit of social issues mentioned in

Koranic verses. More importantly, in recent years, Seyyed Rouh Allah Khomeini (1902-1989 B.C.), known as Imam Khomeini, has, in his turn, made one of the greatest and most important changes in Iranian society, proving that Islamic mysticism has not at all been in conflict with political issues as well as social matters, and showed to the world that the Islamic mysticism which does not pay any attention to people, society, and the government may be a boring, dull, and monotonous one. Here, those Sufi mystic interpreters whose Sufi thoughts, ideas, and attitudes are completely devoid of political issues and social matters, must be asked a proper and appropriate question: "Do you all think that the prophet of Islam, His Holiness Muhammed (peace be to him and his family) had not reached the highest position, rank, and stage in Islamic mysticism?". The answer would be as follows: "Of course, he had". Indeed, by reaching the highest position, rank, and stage in Islamic mysticism as well as enjoying the divine insight, the prophet of Islam (Peace be to him and his family) did revolt against paganism, blasphemy, and oppression of his own time. And with an overall fight and struggle against them, he finally succeeded to establish an internationally powerful Islamic state. Furthermore, enjoying an indescribable and exemplary spirit and braveness which were in reality showed in his struggles and fights, the prophet of Islam His Holiness Muhammed (peace be to him and his family) did succeed to train and educate faithful Muslim men and women through his unending, tireless efforts and hard struggles, jihad, the religion of Islam rose, developed, and evolved throughout the world. There would be no doubt that the religion of Islam would not have existed or would not have been considered as an internationally redeeming religion if the prophet of Islam, His Holiness Mahammed (peace be to him and his family) as well as his faithful

companions had acted upon the seclusive and isolating rules and principles of Sufism. In his volume written on Hussein Ibn-e Mansour Hallaj, a well – known Persian Sufi mystic of the third century A.H., Mahmoud Al-Hindi, the researcher and author of "مجموعه التفسير الصوفى" (A Set of Volumes on the Interpretation of Sufism), states: "Since Bani Abbass rulers (121-656 A.H.) would not at all tolerate the reviving activities and teachings of Sufi mystics of the time, they decided to oppose and oppress those Sufi mystics of the time, they decided to oppose and oppress those Sufi mystics. They also decided to detach from society those Sufi mystics who would not oppose the government or who would be indifferent to the government.

### **A List of Some Authentic Sufi Interpretation of the Holy Koran**

Ayatollah Muhammed Hadi Ma'refat (1930-2006 B.C.) has made a list of some Sufi interpretations of the Holy Koran which have been less deviated from the correct and methodical way of interpreting the Holy Koran on the basis of the Sufi approach. This list is as follows:

- 1) Sahl-e Tostari's Sufi Interpretation of the Holy Koran (200-283 A.H.);
- 2) Abou Abdul Ralman Sollami's Sufi interpretation of the Holy Koran (325-412 A.H.);
- 3) Abou Al – Qasim Qoshairi's "Lata'if Al- Isharat'if Al- Isharat" (376-465 A.H.);
- 4) Abou Al- Fazl Rashid Al-Din Meibodi (520 A.H.) and Khadje Abdullah Ansari's (396-481 A.H.) "Kashf Al – Asrar Va Oddat Al- Abrar".

The following chart will present some of the authentic Sufi interpretations of the Holy Koran:

Row	Name of the Book	Author	Century (A.H.)	Language	Notes
1	"Tostari Shoushtari's Interpretation" "تفسير التسرى" "شوشتری"	Abou Muhammed Sahl Ibn-e Abdullah Ibn-e younis	Third	Arabic	*The leader of the Sufi cult of "Sahlis". * Contains the interpretation of some of Koranic verses. *According to researchers' introduction, this interpretation is probably a collection of interpretations about some of Koranic verses gathered earlier by Abou Bakr Al- Baladi.
2	"Haqayeq Al-Tafsir" "حقایق التفسیر" "The Truths on Interpretation"	Muhammed Ibn-e Hussein Sollami	Fourth	Arabic	*This interpretation is known for "Imam Ja'far Sadiq's Interpretation". *The ascription of this interpretation to Imam Ja'far Sadiq is highly in doubt. *It contains the interpretation of some of Koranic verses.
3	"Latayef Al-Isharat" "لطایف الإشارات" "Subtleties in Intuitions"	Abdul – Karin Ibn – e Havazen Qushairi	Fifth	Arabic	*In contrast to Sunni beliefs which do not consider "بسم الله " (In the name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful) as being a part of a Koranic chapter, Shiites, as well as Qushairi, believe that "بسم الله " is a Koranic verse itself, hence it must be considered as a

					separate Koranic verse, except in the Koranic chapter of "Towbah". *In this interpretation, the interpreter has referred to many unreliable Islamic traditions (hadiths).
4	"Kashf- Al Asrar va Oddat Al- Abrar" "كشف الاسرار وعده الابرار" "Decoding of Mysteries for Some of the Good Men"	Ahmad Ibn-e Abi Sa'd Rashid Al-Din Meibodi	Sixth	Old farsi	*This interpretation has been written on the basis of khadje Abdullah Ansari's interpretation of the Holy Koran. * It recounts numerous virtues about the prophet of Islam and his innocent dynasty. * It has been written in the manner of Shiite thinkers as well as Shiite interpretations of the Holy Koran.
5	"Ijaz Al – Bayan fi Tafsir – e Om Al- Qur'an" "اعجاز البيان فى تفسير القرآن" "The Miracle of Expression in the Interpretation of the Koran"	Sadr Al – Din Muhammed Qounavi	Seventh	Arabic	*It deals with the miraculous aspects and mysteries of the Koranic chepter of "Fatiha" (Mother of the Koran). * It was translated into Farsi language by Muhammed khadjavi in the 15 th century A.H.
6	"Ibn-e Arabi's Interpretation" "تفسير ابن عربى"	Abou Abdullah Mohyoddin Muhammed Ibn-e Arabi	Seventh	Arabic	*According to researchers, this interpretation has not been written by Ibn-e Arabi himself, but rather by his student, Abdul Razzaq Kashani. *Some, but not all, of the selected Koranic verses have been interpreted.
7	"Tafsir Al-Mohit Al- A'zam va Al	Seyyed Haidar Amoli	Eighth	Arabic	*In this interpretation, the

	– Bahr Al-Khazam" " تفسير "المحيط" ("Mohit's Interpretation")				interpreter has stated his own Sufi as well as Koranic attitudes. * The interpreter has benefited greatly from Kashani's interpretation which is wrongly known as Ibn-e Arabi's interpretation.
8	"Al-Favatih Al-Ilahiah va Al-Mafatih Al – Qaibieh" " الفوائج الالهيه و المفاتيح الغيبية " "The Divine Beginnings and the Hidden Keys"	Ni'mat Allah Ibn-e Mahmoud Nakhjavani	Tenth	Arabic	* The complete name of this interpretive book is "Al- Favatih Al-Ilahiah va Al – Mafatih Al – Qaibieh "Al – Mowzehatol Le – Kalemal Qur'aniah va Al – Hikamol Forqai". * In some cases, the interpreter deals with recounting the virtues of the prophet of Islam and his innocent dynasty.
9	"Tafsir Al – Qur'an Al – karim" (Sadra) " تفسير القرآن " (صدرا) "الكريم" "The Interpretation of the Bountiful Koran" (Sadra)	Muhammed Ibn-e Ibrahim, Sadr Al – Mote'allehin	Eleventh	Arabic	*This interpretation is considered as being one of the Philosophical and Sufi interpretations of the Holy Koran. * It contains the interpretation of the Koranic chapter of "Al – Hamd", "Baqara" (up to verse 65), "Nour", "Sajdeh", "ya – Sin", "Vaqi'ah", "Hadid", "Jom'ah", "Tariq", "A'la", and "Zilzal".
10	"Tafsir – e Rouh Al – Bayan" " تفسير روح البيان " "The Interpretation of the Spirit's Expressions"	Isma'eel Haqqi Brousvavi	Twelfth	Arabic	*This interpretation is one of the intuitive (inspirational) interpretations of the Holy Koran. *It is a literal – expressive as well as

					<p>Sufi interpretation.</p> <p>* It has been influenced by Qazali's manner of interpretation in ethics. It also contains a great deal of subject matters written earlier by Razi, in his own book "Mafatih Al – Qaib".</p> <p>*It also contains a great number of poems written by different poets.</p>
11	<p>"Bavariq Al – Qahr fi Tafsir-e Sourat Al – Dahr" " بوارق القهر فى تفسير سورہ الدهر " "Shining Victories in the Interpretation of the koranic chapter of "Dahr"</p>	<p>Mullah Habib Allah Sharif Kashani</p>	Thirteenth	Arabic	<p>*It only contains the interpretation of the Koranic chapter of "Al – Dahr".</p>
12	<p>"Tafsir-e Sovar –e Sab'eh" " تفسير سور سبعه " "The Interpretation of Seven Koranic chapters"</p>	<p>Mullah Habib Allah Sharif Kashani</p>	Thirteenth	Arabic	<p>*It contains the interpretation of the Koranic chapters of "Al-Hamd", "Towhid", "Jum'ah", "Al-Fath", "Kow sar", and "Malak".</p>
13	<p>"Al – Bahr al – Madid Fi Tafsir Al – Quri'ar Al – Majid" " البحر المديد فى تفسير القرآن المجيد " "The Extended See in Interpreting the Respectable Koran"</p>	<p>Ibn-e Ojabibeh Ahmah Ibn – e Muhammed</p>	Thirteenth	Arabic	<p>*It contains the interpretation of the Koranic chapters of "Al – Hamd" up ot "Al – Qamar".</p>
14	<p>"Morah Al-Beyad Le Kashf –e Ma'ni –e Al – Qur'an Al – Majid" " مراح البيد لكشف معنى القرآن المجيد "</p>	<p>Muhammed Ibn-e Omar Nouri Javi</p>	Fourteenth	Arabic	<p>*Despite other Sufi interpretations of the Holy Koran, this interpretation has not been written by intuitive (inspirational) approach.</p>

					<p>*The author has fully remained faithful to the literal meaning of all Koranic words and phrases. * "Israeliat" exists in if.</p>
15	<p>"Anvar-e Derakhshan" "انوار درخشان" "The Shining Lights"</p>	<p>Seyyed Muhammed Hussein Husseini Hamadani</p>	Fourteenth	Farsi	<p>*It is considered as being one of the phibsophical – Sufi interpretations of the Holy Koran.</p>
16	<p>"Tafsir-e Bayan Al- Sa'adah fi Maqamat Al Ibadah " تفسير بيان السعاده فى مقامات العباده" "The Interpretation of the Expression of Salvation in the Stages of Praying for God Almighty"</p>	<p>Sultan Muhammed Gonabadi</p>	Fourteenth	Arabic	<p>*It is the only extant Sufi interpretation of the Holy Koran, which is most popular among Shiites. *In addition to its Sufi aspects, this interpretation has narrative, jurisprudential, philosophical, scholastic, and literary facets. *It centers around the Sufi concept of "Velayat" and its different aspects. *It has benefitted from Feiz-e Kashani's Sufi interpretation and Bahrani's Borhan interpretation in narration. *In addition to its Sufi aspects, it has narrative, jurisprudential, Philosophical, scholastic, and literary facets. *Its author and interpreter is Haj Mullah Sultan Muhammed Gonabadi, known as "Sultan Ali Shah". *It was translated</p>

					into Farsi language by Muhammed Reza khani and Hishmat Allah Riazi in the fifteenth centurg A.H.
17	"Tafsir-e Safi" "تفسیر صفی" "Safi's Interpretation"	Hassan Ibn-e Muhammed Baqir Safi Ali Shah	Four teenth	Farsi (written in verse)	*It is the only Sufi interpretation of the Holy Koran written in verse.
18	"Makhzan Al – Erfan dar Tafsir –e Qur'an" "مخزن العرفان در "تفسیر قرآن" "The Treasury of Sufism in Interpreting the Koran"	Hajreh Seyyedeh Nusrat Beigom Amin, know as Lady Amin (Lady Mujtahedeh)	Fourteenth	Farsi	*Paying special attention to the ethical and educational aspects is the specific quality of this Sufi interpretation of the Holy Koran.

### **The Most Significant Kinds of the Sufi Interpretations of the Holy Koran**

The most well – known Sufi interpretations of the Holy Koran are divided into two important classes:

- 1) The Sufi – Theoretical Interpretations of the Holy Koran
- 2) The Implicit – Intuitive Interpretations of the Holy Koran.

All the Sufi interpretations of the Holy Koran, which have up to this time presented, have a feature in common and that would be the Koranic interpreter's focus and concentration on the non – superficial or the so - called "intuitive" interpretation of the Holy Koran. Nevertheless, the so – called intuitive interpretations of the Holy Koran undoubtedly do not follow a single manner or model. Of course, some Koranic researchers have indeed attempted to classify the Sufi interpretations of the Holy Koran under different groups and classes. Nevertheless, the classification of Sufi interpretations of the Holy Koran into different groups and classes seems to be a difficult undertaking. Here, in this section, we will briefly explain the most important sorts of the Sufi interpretations of the

Holy Koran. Basically, the Sufi interpretations of the Holy Koran may be classified into two classes:

- 1) The Sufi – Theoretical Interpretations of the Holy Koran
- 2) The Implicit – Intuitive Interpretations of the Holy Koran

Of course, some Koranic researchers have strongly objected to the above – mentioned binary classification, stating that there would be no difference at all between these two classes, except for the Sufi mystic interpreter's strong or weak points presented in their Sufi interpretations of the Holy Koran.

### **The "Sufi – Theoretical Interpretation" as Opposed to the "Implicit – Intuitive" Interpretation of the Holy Koran**

According to Dr. Muhammed Hussein Zahabi (1915-1977 B.C.), an Egyptian university professor, the Sufi interpretations of the Holy Koran are divided into two groups: 1) The Sufi – Theoretical interpretations; and 2) The Implicit – Intuitive interpretations. Although this classification has been objected by some contemporary Koranic researchers, it does seem that most Sufi interpretations of the Holy Koran may be classified under this binary classification, regardless of the classification's basis which indeed divides Islamic mysticism (Sufism) into "theoretical" as well as "practical" ones.

## **The Explicit – Theoretical Sufi Interpretation of the Holy Koran**

In the Explicit – Theoretical Sufi interpretation of the Holy Koran, the Sufi mystic interpreter puts interpretation on the Holy Koran on the basis of the rules and principles of his own Sufi school of thought. Among Sufi mystic interpreters, no one, except for Ibn – e Arabi, has ever put interpretation on the Holy Koran based on the explicit – theoretical interpretation. Therefore, not only is Ibn- e Arabi considered as being the father of "theoretical Sufism" in the religion of Islam, but also he is regarded as being the founder of theoretical Sufism in Islam. In this specific approach to th interpretation of the Holy Koran, Ibn-e Arabi makes use of all the devices available for putting interpretation on the Holy Koran based on his own fundamental beliefs, thoughts, and assumptions which exist in the Sufi world view. The most fundamental theory in Ibn-e Arabi's Sufi world view is the theory of "pantheism". In interpreting the Koranic chapter of "Al-Zomar" verse ten which says:

«قل يا عباد الذين آمنوا اتقوا ربكم للذين احسنوا في هذه الدنيا حسنه و ارض الله واسعه انما

يوفى الصابرون اجرهم بغير حساب»

(Say [to My faithful servants]: O My servants who have become believers! Do fear Allah; there will be good things [in the afterlife] for those who were good to people; and Allah's Earth is so vast; and undoubtedly patient people will be given rewards infinitely and completely); and with regard to the Koranic sentence"

«اتقوا ربكم»

(Do fear Allah) in the above – mentiond Koranic chapter, Ibn-e Arabi puts the following interpretation:

"Protect your appearance [from evil] for righteousness; and protect your inner being, that is to say, your inner God, [form evil] for your own self, that is to say, for your own conscience".

In the above interpretation, Ibn-e Arabi has not considered and interpreted the Koranic sentence "اتقوا الله" (Do fear Allah) in the usual, literal sense of the word, but rather he has interpreted the sentence as the word "protection", hence, in his view, both Allah and those who believe in Him, are, according to Ibn-e Arabi's interpretation, considered as being one another's protectors and guardians. In the same way, other Koranic verses such as:

«... ان تتقوا الله يجعل لكم فرقانا ..»

Which literally means: "If you fear Allah, He will give you a criterion [to distinguish between righteousness and untruth]... "(the Koranic chapter of "Infal", verse twenty – nine) have been interpreted by him. Further, he states: "As Allah Himself has said in the Koranic chapter of "Al-An'am", verse thirty – eight:

«ما فرطنا في الكتاب من شيء...»

(and We did not overlook anything in this book [the Koran]; this book [the Koran] has indeed included both realities and unrealities, and no one will perceive the difference between them unless their inner self has been completely engrossed in the Koran [the realities as well as unrealities compiled in it], for those who keep and protect Allah in their heart, Allah will provide them with a clear distinction between what is right and what is wrong, and the Holy Koran is indeed the highest of distinctions".

Furthermore, Ibn-e Arabi's followers such as Abdul – Razzaq Kashani, Jaili, and Seyyed Haidar Amoli have put similar interpretations – as the interpretations mentioned above, on the Holy Koran, the interpretations which have been on the basis of their own Sufi beliefs, thoughts, and ideas about God Almighty, about the world of existence, and about Man .

Moreover, Sadr Al- Din Qounavi (died in 673 A.H.), Ibn-e Arabi's student and adopted son, has conformed to Ibn- Arabi's model of Sufi interpretation of the Holy Koran. Also, Seyyed Heidar Amoli's "Tafsir Al-Mohit Al – A'zam", which is on the basis of Ibn-e Arabi's teachings, is considered as being one of the most significant Sufi interpretations of the Holy Koran in which "Shiism" and "Sufism" are compared with one another. According to Seyyed Heidar Amoli, this interpretation of the Holy Koran has gathered together both the decipherment as well as the interpretation of the Holy Koran, that is to say, it is an all – inclusive and comprehensive interpretation of the Holy Koran, which includes the religions law, the religious way, and the religious truth.

Some other important interpretations of the Holy Koran, which are on the basis of the "explicit – theoretical" approach are as follows:

- "I'jaz Al – Bayan fi Kashf-e Ba'z-e Asrar-e Om Al – Qur'an", written by: Sadr Al – Din Qounavi, who has put his own Sufi interpretation on the Koranic chapter of "Al – Hamd",

- "Tafsir Al – Qur'an, the Bountiful", written by: Abdul – Razzaq Kashani;

- a treatise on the decipherment of the Koranic verse "Bism Allah", written by: Davoud Qaisari, an explicator of the book "Fosous Al – Hikam".

## **The Implicit – Intuitive Interpretation of the Holy Koran**

The Implicit – Intuitive (Sufi) interpretation of the Holy Koran is deciphering Koranic verses on the basis of Koranic verses' implicit and impractical meanings.

This kind of Sufi interpretation is usually put by the Sufi mystic interpreter on the basis of their own covert and obscured intuitions and religious visions which appear to them.

Intuitions and religious visions appear to the Sufi mystic interpreter in such a way that they may be conformed to or corresponded with the literal meaning(s) of Koranic verses. With regard to distinguishing between the Explicit – Theoretical and the Implicit – Intuitive interpretations of the Holy Koran, Muhammed Ibn-e Ahmad Ibn-e Osman Ibn-e Qaimaz Turkamani Dameshqi Shafe'i (673-748 A.H.), generally known as "Shams Al – Din Zahabi", in his book "Al-Tafsir-e va Al – Mofasseroun" states:"

These two kinds of Sufi interpretations of the Holy Koran differ in two ways: firstly, in the Explicit – Theoretical interpretation of the Holy Koran, the Sufi mystic interpreter regards any Sufi theory as a presupposition, and afterwards, he or she starts putting their interpretation on Koranic verses on the basis of their previously – presupposed Sufi theory. But in the Implicit – Intuitive interpretation (Sufi) of the Holy Koran, the Sufi mystic interpreter does not have any presupposed Sufi theory in mind, but rather a religious vision or intuition appears to them through a spiritual asceticism and contemplation on Koranic verses do agree with and conform to the Sufi mystic's religious vision or intuition; secondly, in the Explicit – Theoretical interpretation of the Holy Koran, the Sufi mystic interpreter not only rejects any other possible meaning of the Koranic verses, but also he or she considers the

literal meaning(s) of the Koranic verses as the one and only meaning intended by them, while in the Implicit – Intuitive interpretation of the Holy Koran, the Sufi mystic interpreter is bound to believe in the literal meaning (s) of the Koranic verse before they start accepting the intuitive meaning (s) appearing to them. Sufi mystic interpreters who apply the Implicit – Intuitive approach to the interpretation of the Holy Koran hold that there are several aspects of "implicit" meaning beyond the Koranic verses' literal meaning. Nevertheless, the Implicit – Intuitive approach to the interpretation of the Holy Koran may not be regarded as being "inward" interpretations which usually violate and break the literal meaning of Koranic verses. This is because in the Implicit – Intuitive approach there exist disharmonies and discrepancies between this kind of approach and the rules and principles of the generally accepted science of Koranic interpretation, so, the Implicit – Intuitive approach to the interpretation of the Holy Koran often entails baseless and unwarranted claims and pretences on the part of Sufi mystic interpreters. Furthermore, the rules and principles of practical Sufism in the Implicit – Intuitive approach to the relation to Koranic verses themselves by Sufi mystic interpreters.

According to some Sufi mystic interpreters, the decipherment of the Holy Koran must not be considered as a justification for discarding the literal meaning(s) of Koranic verses. Therefore, the decipherments of Koranic verses carried out in this way, that is to say, in a way which the literal meaning(s) of Koranic verses are discarded by Sufi mystic interpreters, are considered as being different from the decipherments carried out by some Islamic philosophers, theosophists, and "Batenian" (those Shiite Muslims who believe in the cult of 'Batenyyeh' which considers only seven innocent Imams for Shiites Muslims, and which

says that there are connotative meanings for Koranic verses, and that the deepest meaning(s) of Koranic verses is only known by the innocent Imam; so, to decipher Koranic verses, the followers of this cult refer to the Innocent Imam).

The Implicit – Intuitive approach to the interpretation of the Holy Koran is a manner or approach through which Koranic verses are deciphered or decoded in a way which is in complete contrast to deciphering Koranic verses literally. This approach is carried out on the basis of the mysterious and hidden and implicit intuitions and religious visions of the Sufi mystic interpreter.

The Implicit – Intuitive approach to the interpretation of the Holy Koran is not at all on the basis of "theoretical Sufism", and in most cases, it includes the literal meaning(s) of Koranic verses, too. This Sufi approach has indeed been an attempt made by Sufi mystic interpreters to combine and connect "the religious law" and "the religious truth". Since the Implicit – Intuitive approach is considered as a kind of decipherment itself, it is regarded as an acceptable decipherment because through this approach, Sufi mystic decipherers. make an attempt to decipher and decode any specific Koranic verse in a manner whose meaning conforms to the meaning of the words which come after or before the deciphered Koranic word or phrase, and which is not at all different from the literal meaning of Koranic words or phrases as well as from Islamic traditions (hadiths) themselves.

The basis of the Implicit – Intuitive approach to the interpretation of the Holy Koran would be on asceticism and a continued struggle against carnal desires through which the Sufi mystic reaches the status of and experience the intuition, the insight, and the sixth sense.

"Sahl-e Tostari's Interpretation" of the Holy Koran is considered as one of the most significant as well as the most ancient Implicit – Intuitive interpretations in the world of Islam. Tostari's Sufi interpretation of the Holy Koran has indeed influenced highly on later Sufi mystic interpreters of the Holy Koran such as Abou Abdul Rahaman Sollami who has very much made good use of Torstar's interpretation when writing his Sufi interpretive book "Haqayeq Al – Tafsir".

The Sufi interpretive book "Haqayeq Al – Tafsir", written by Abou Abdul Rahman Sollami, is considered as one of the important Implicit – Intuitive interpretations of the Holy Koran, which has had a very much influence on later Sufi interpretations of the Holy Koran such as Qushairi's Sufi interpretation of the Holy Koran is a compilation of several Koranic interpretations attributed to Imam Ja'far Sadiq (Peace be upon him), and the Koranic interpretations written by Abou Al – Hussein Nouri (295 A.H.), the Koranic interpretations written by Mansour Ibn-e Hallaj (309 A.H.) as well as the Koranic interpretations written by Ibn-e Ata (309 A.H.).

Besides, Qushairi's Sufi interpretive book is considered as one of the Implicit – Intuitive interpretations of the Holy Koran. In their books "Al – Tafsir-e Va Al – Mofasseroun" and "Al- Tafsir-e va Al – Mofasseroun fi Sowbat – e Al – Qashib", both Muhammed Hussein Zahabi and Muhammed Hadi Ma'refat have introduced and presented the most significant Sufi interpretations of the Holy Koran. Furthermore, Rashid Ahmad yousof Louzianovi (1932-2000 B.C.), an Indian Mushim researcher and scholar versed in the religion of Islam, has regarded Qushairi's Sufi interpretive book "Latayef Al-Isharat" as the first Sufi interpretation of the Holy Koran, a book which, according to this Indian researcher, has for the first time in history been written by a Sufi

theosophist. Rashid Ahmad does not at all consider Sahl –e Tostari's and Solami's interpretations of the Holy Koran as Sufi interpretations.

Furthermore, Abou Muhammad Rouzbehan Baqali Shirazi (606 A.H.), in his book "Ara'esol Bayan Fi Haqayeqol Koran", has introduced Qushairi's Sufi interpretation of the Holy Koran as one of his own references. Also , Muhammad Ibn-e yousof Husseini (825 A.H.), an Indian Sufi mystic, known as "Gisoo Deraz" (the Long – haired), in his book "Tafsir-e Al – Moltaqat", has, without mentioning Qushairi's name, referred to Qushairi's interpretation of the Holy Koran.

The book "Bayan Al – Sa'adat" written by Haj Mullah Sultan Muhammed Gonabadi (1327 A.H.), known as "Sultan Ali Shah", is considered as one of the Implicit – Intuitive interpretations of the Holy Koran. The book "Bayan Al – Sa'adat" is the only extant Sufi interpretation of the Holy Koran which has been found agreeable most by those Shiite Mushims who have a taste for Sufism. Among the Implicit – Intuitive interpretations of the Holy Koran, there exist Sufi interpretations in which only one single Koranic chapter or verse has been interpreted, such as the book "Meshkat Al- Anvar va Mosaffah Al – Asrar" written by Imam Muhammad Qazali (505 A.H.), which deals with the interpretation of the Koranic chapter of "Al-Nour", verse thirty – five.

### **The Decipherment of the Koranic Disjoined Letters (Letter Decipherment)**

One kind of the Sufi interpretations of the Holy Koran is the application of "Jafr" (Splitting) (the science of alphabetic letters). Indeed, "Jafr" is a science in which any letter of the Arabic alphabet is discussed individually when the interpreter is interpreting the Holy

Koran. There exist some mysterious, single, and split Arabic letters in the text of the Holy Koran. Some Sufi mystic interpreters of the Holy Koran such as Mansour Ibn-e Hallaj have attempted to interpret the split letters of the Holy Koran, hence his own book "Tavassin" has been written on the basis of the science of Jafr. Also, Abou Ali Hussein Ibn-e Abdullah Ibn-e Sina (370-428 A.H.), known as "Sheikh Al – Ra'ees", a well – known Persian scientist and physician, has attempted to interpret the mysterious, split letters of the Holy Koran in one of his own treatises.

Presupposing that there exists a connection between the mysterious, split letters of the Holy Koran and the created world (the world outside), Ibn-e Sina has made an attempt to interpret some of these strange, split, Koranic letters. Throughout the centuries, the manner by which these queer, split, Koranic letters are interpreted by Sufi mystic interpreters have changed and developed. In his book "Fotouhat-e Makkyeh", Ibn-e Arabi has allocated many pages for discussing in detail on the valuation, connotation, and signification of these mysterious, split, Koranic letters. Many Sufi mystic interpreters such as Ibn-e Arabi has put a numerical valuation of Arabic "Abjad" letters and used this system in his own Sufi interpretation of the Holy Koran. Ibn-e Arabi, in his own book "Fotouhat-e Makkyeh", has ascribed the eastern Koufi script of the Holy Koran to "Ahl Al – Anvar" (the prophet of Islam as well as his dynasty including the twelve Innocent Shiite Imam), and the western Koufi script to "Ahl Al – Asrar" (those Sufi mystics who have perceived the truth of "Ahl AL – Asrar"(those Sufi mystics who have pereceived the truth of "Ahl Al – Anvar"). In actual fact, the above – mentioned interpretation of the split letters of the Holy Koran on the part of Ibn-e Arabi has not at all been peculiar to his own time and age. The Koranic interpretations attributed to Imam Ja'far Sadiq (Peace be upon him),

which have been reported by Muhammed Ibn-e Hussein Neishabouri, known as Abou Abdul Rahman Sollami (325-412 A.H.) in his own book "Haqayeq Al – Tafsir", also contain the use of the science of "Jafr" (interpreting the mysterious, Imam Ja'far Sadiq (peace beupon him) has been reported to interpret and define the mysterious, split, Koranic letters.

According to Sadr Al- Din Muhammed Shirazi (979-1050 A.H.), known as Mullah Sadra, for any single mysterious, coded, and split letter of the Holy Koran, there exist thousands of mysterious concepts and meanings. Mullah Sadra believes that as different alphabetic letters are connected to one another to build up a meaningful word, and as words are connected to one another to build up a meaningful sentence, thus, any single mysterious, coded, and split letter of the Holy Koran may have numerous meaningful concepts and meanings in itself. In Mullah Sadra's view, since the mysterious, split, Koranic letters have coded meanings and concepts, Sufi mystic interpreters, that is to say, those who have already abandoned the material way of thinking and living, and are accustomed to think spiritually, see the whole text of the Hholy Koran as split letters, hence attempt to discover meaningful concepts and meanings for every single Koranic letter. For instance, Sufi mystic interpreters see the Koranic "....." As the split letters "س", "ح", "ب", "ه", "م", ...

Those Sufi mystics who have reached a higher Sufi, spiritual position in their life, see the mysterious, coded, split, Koranic letters as real tiny spots. Those Sufi mystics who have reached a higher Sufi, spiritual position in their life, see the whole written or printed text of the Holy Koran as visions or religious mental images in their mind. In explaining two positions of "joining" (Vasl) and "detailing" (fasl) the letters of the

Holy Koran, Mullah Sadra invokes the koranic chapter of "Qisas", verse fifty – one as well as the Koranic chapter of "An'am", verse ninety – eight. The former Koranic verse says:

«و قد وصلنا لهم القول لعلمهم يتذكرون»

(And for them, We did join the letters together; Our hope is that they may take Our pieces of advice).

While, the latter Koranic verse, mentioned above, says:

«قد فصلنا الايات لقوم يفقهون»

(We have detailed the signs for people who understand).

Mullah Sadra emphasizes that those who have indeed reached the spiritual position of purgatorial life may discover and decode the mysteries of coded, split letters of the Holy Koran. According to Mullah Sadra, all Koranic words, which consist of connected letters, will all turn into split letters in afterlife. According to Mullah Sadra, in afterlife, where everything is hidden and secret, the mysterious, coded, and split letters of the Holy Koran are called "حروف مجمل" (abbreviated letters).

One of the cases which is applied as a well – documented example to the "letter – interpretation" of the Holy Koran by Sufi mystic interpreters would be the following Islamic tradition (hadith) quoted from the prophet of Islam, His Holiness Muhammed (Peace be to him and his family):

«كل ما فى الكتب المنزله فهو فى القرآن و كل ما فى القرآن فهو فى الفاتحه و كل ما فى الفاتحه فهو فى «بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم» و ورد كل ما فى «بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم» فهو فى الباء و كل ما فى الباء فهو فى النقطة التهى تحت الباء»

(All the things which have been come down from on high by Allah as the religion, contain in the [holy] Koran, and all the things which exist in the [holy] Koran, contain in the [Koranic] chapter of "Al – Fatihah" (Al-Hamd), and all the things which contain in this Koranic chapter,

contain in "بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ" (In the name of Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful), and all the things which contain in , "بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ" contain in the [Koranic] letter of "ب", and all the things which contain in the [Koranic] letter of "ب", contain in the "point" of the [Koranic] letter of "ب". Similarly, the prophet of Islam, His Holiness Muhammed (Peace be to him and his family) is quoted to have said:

«ظهرت الموجودات من باء بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم»

(All [Allah's] creatures have [indeed] appeared [came into existence] from the Koranic letter of "ب" in "بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ").

In his own book "Al – Kahf va Al – Raqim", Abdul Karim Jeili has discussed and argued in detail about "the points" [of Koranic letters], the alphabetical letters themselves, as well as their qualities as applied in the Holy Koran, putting interpretation on the Koranic verse of "Basmalah" (بِسْمِ اللَّهِ) – the first Koranic chapter – which itself is the abbreviated form of "بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ" (In the name of Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful). For instance, Jeili states: " 'The point' is actually the most fundamental part of Koranic letters, and all the [holy] chapters of the Koran begin with a point, and that 'the point' itself signifies the holiest essence of God Almighty". Discussing and arguing about the significance of "the point" itself, the alphabetical letters as well as their characteristics applied in the Holy Koran in detail, Jeili, in putting his own interpretation on the Koranic letter of "ب", states: "This Koranic letter, "ب" (B), belongs to a class of alphabetical letters called "gloomy (dark) letters".

Further, he adds: "The reason why Allah placed the letter "ب" (B) at the beginning of every Koranic chapter would be that He, Allah, meant to imply that the first veil of separation or disunion between Man and his God is originated from his own darkness of being, that is to say, his dark

ignorance of his own self, which, in the end, actually leads him to know his own God heartily, the darkness which is shown by a "point" under the alphabetical letter of "ب". On the other hand, if Man, through his own continuous struggles of body and soul, reaches the status of "Fana" (a Sufi stage in which the Sufi follower loses all his human qualities and then joins Allah, and is completely engrossed in Him), all other Allah's holy names and qualities are revealed in Man, hence all the alphabetical letters applied in this Koranic chapter, that is to say, "بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ", are considered as "gleaming (bright) letters" except for the letter "ب" (B) itself. Jeili, further, adds: "the Koranic letter of "ب" (B), which represents the material dimension of Man, is in deed similar to a piece of clothing, say a cover or veil, hence the Koranic letter "ب" (B) represents a veil which itself has hidden or covered the 'point' in it. In other words, the point in the Koranic letter of "ب" (B) represents the holiest essence of God Almighty, a and which is itself hidden or separated by the "pointless" "ب" which actually represents the material dimension or being of Man (his veil of body), which indeed acts as a veil of separation and disunion between Man's spirit and its creator, that is to say, Allah.

Abdul Razzaq Kashani, a fifth century A.H. Persian Sufi mystic, Known as "Kamal Al – Din Kashani", has decoded and interpreted the Koranic letter of "ب" in a different way. According to kashani's own interpretation, the Koranic letter of "ب" (B), as appeared in the phrase "بِسْمِ اللَّهِ" (In the name of Allah), symbolizes "the First Wisdom", that is to say, the first Being which is able to rationalize itself as Allah. Further, Kashani adds: "All God's creatures have indeed come into existence from the Koranic letter of "ب" (B), for the letter "ب" (B) is a letter which, in Arabic alphabet, comes immediately after the letter "ا" (Alif) (A).

According to Kashani, the Koranic letter of "الف" (Alif) is in complete accord with the essence and substance of Allah. Kashani, further, adds: "After creating the First Wisdom, Allah addressed in this way: 'Nothing I created more beloved and dearer than you; I bestow through you; I take back through you; I reward because of you; and I punish for the sake of you'. In his book "آراء اهل المدينة الفاضله" (The Viewpoints of Utopian People), Abou Nasr Muhammed Ibn-e Muhammed Farabi (Ca. 259-339 A.H.), known as "the Second Teacher", states: "From God Almighty [the first Supreme Being], appeared "the First Wisdom "which possessed a non – material and non – Corporeal substance and essence, that is to say, the Heavenly Angels".

In addition to what Abdul Razzaq Kashani stated above, he even goes further and introduces and discusses the appearance and disappearance of Koranic letters in the phrase "بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم" (In the name of Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful). With regard to the interpretation of the above Koranic phrase, Kashani states: "In the customary writing, indeed three letters of "الف" (Alif) are omitted in this Koranic Phrase, that is to say, in the Koranic word of "بسم" which has indeed been in the form of "باسم"; in the middle of the word "الله" which has indeed been in the form of "الله"; and in the middle of the word "رحمن" which has indeed been in the form of "رحمان". These three omitted "Alif"s respectively refer to Allah's actual [heavenly] world or kingdom, to the credibility of His own Essence, and finally, to Allah's qualities as well as His acts. Specifically speaking, there exist three worlds in Allah, the first Supreme Being, whereas, in actual fact, there exists only one [divine] world which is manifested in Man's being. In fact, these three "Alif"s which actually appear in these Koranic words as "الله", "الرحمن", and "الرحيم" refer to the manifestation and appearance of

these three divine worlds in the "supreme manifestation" of Allah, that is to say, the human being.

### **The Human – Based Interpretation of the Holy Koran**

Another significant kind of Sufi interpretation is the "Human – Based" interpretation of the Holy Koran. Concentration on Sufi, human – based attitudes. Outlooks and feelings as well as Sufi terms, and the various inward dimensions of Man's existence, which are all considered as major factors coming into play in the human – based interpretation of the Holy Koran, is required on the part of the Sufi mystic interpreter to present an appropriate human -based interpretation of the Holy Koran. For instance paying close attention to the spirit, human Heart (feelings), human selfhood as well as the connection and interaction between them are all considered as essential norms and criterions in the human based interpretation of the Holy Koran. The above – mentioued norms and criterions are so important in this kind of interpretation, without which the Sufi mystic interpreter will not be able to interpret the Holy Koran. Abou Abdul Rahman SoLlami's interpretation of the Holy Koran is a typical example of the human – based interpretation of the Holy Koran. In putting interpretation on the Koranic verse of "Al – Nahl", verse sixty – eight and sixty – nine which say:

«و اوحى ربك الى النحل ان اتخذى من الجبال بيوتا و من الشجر و مما يعرشون»

(And your Lord inspired to the bee, "Take for yourself what you need among the mountains, houses, and among the trees and [in] that which they construct); and:

«ثم كلى من كل الثمرات فاسلكى سبيل ربك ذللا يخرج من بطونها شراب مختلف الوانه

فيه شفاء للناس ان فى ذلك لآيه لقوم يتفكرون»

(Then eat from all the fruits and follow the ways of your Lord laid down [for you]. There emerges from their bellies a drink, varying in colors, in which there is healing for people. Indeed, in that is a sign for people who give thought), Sallami states: "These foods and drinks are made for men and women, not for their hearts. Therefore, any person who wants his heart purified, must perceive whatever enters them, and for their hearts. Therefore, any person who wants his heart purified, must perceive whatever enters them, and understands the status of his heart in any condition and circumstance, and must be aware of the mysteries of his heart at any time, and harmonize all these with his humility and seclusion, for these are the foods of his heart.

Indeed, the food of the spirit is of higher rank than these; of course, the food of the spirit is observing the Lord and hearing His joyful song as well as paying attention to nothing and no one but Him".

Furthermore, in the Human – Based approach to the interpretation of the Holy Koran, the historical stories mentioned in the Holy Koran are interpreted by the Sufi mystic interpreter as imaginative stories in which the heroes and superheroes are imagined as human internal forces. For example, according to Abdul – Razzaq Kashani's interpretation, Moses (peace be upon him) is the symbol of the Sufi mystic's "Heart", that is to say, Moses (peace be upon him) is considered as the Sufi mystic's "conscience" in which God Almighty is manifested and appears.

According to Kashani, Moses (peace be upon him) is put in a small box which itself is the symbol of human's "material body"; and then, he is placed on the "sea of divine insight", and afterwards, he is brought up in Pharaoh's court. Here, Pharaoh's court symbolizes the "worldly teachings and experiences". Afterwards, Moses (peace be upon him) experiences the "oppression", "the murder of an Egyptian person"; and

then, he experiences the "forgiveness". Afterwards, he leaves for a desert to be away from Pharaoh's court and its worldly luxuries and power for which Egypt was the symbol at the time. Afterwards Moses (peace be upon him) is taught specific spiritual teachings by Sho'aib. Indeed, these specific spiritual teachings prepared Moses (peace be upon him) to receive the Divine Revelation, that is to say, the famous Divine Revelation he received from God Almighty near the burning bush. Kashani's interpretations and human – based explanations are continued and applied in the same way in other Koranic stories on Moses (peace be upon him).

### **Other Sufi Interpretations of the Holy Koran**

The book "Ara'es Al-Bayan Fi Haquayeq Al – Qur'an" (The Most Beautiful Expressions in Stating the Truth of the Koran) is another kind of the Sufi interpretations of the Holy Koran. The above – mentioned interpretive book has been written by Abou Muhammed Rouzbehan Baqali. Acknowledging the superficial meaning(s) of the majority of Koranic verses, Baqali applies an "intuitive – literary" approach in his own interpretation of the Holy Koran. Abou Bakr Abdullah Ibn-e Muhammed Ibn-e Shahavar Ibn-e Anowshirvan Al- Razi, generally known as Najm Al- Din Daya, a Persian Sufi mystic of the 13<sup>th</sup> century A.H., has presented his own interpretation the Holy Koran in his own book "Bahr Al – Haqayeq Al – Ma'ani fi Tafsir Al – Saba Al – Masani". In this book, Razi has interpreted Koranic verses to the Koranic chapter of "Al – Zariat", verse eighteen. Razi's interpretation of the Holy Koran characterizes a combination of both the superficial well as the deep meaning(s) of Koranic verses.

Along with a combination of Sufi rules, principles, thoughts and ideas. It is to be mentioned that Sheikh Abou Al – Makarem Rokn Al – Din Ala' Al – Dowlah Ahmad Ibn-e Muhammed Ibn-e Ahmad Biabanaki Semnani, a Persian poet and writer of the seventh and eighth centuries A.H., continued to interpret the unfinished interpretive work of Najm Al-Dim Daya.

Similarly, the book "Masnavi Ma'navi" written by Jalal Al – Din Muhammed Mowlavi (604 – 672 A.H.), a well – known Persian Sufi mystic and poet, may be regarded itself as a Sufi interpretation of the Holy Koran because of its inclusion of the decipherment as well as the interpretations of most of Koranic verses.

Furthermore, Isma'eel Ibn-e Mostafa Haqqi, who has used the preceding Sufi interpretations of the Holy Koran such as "Bahr Al – Haqayeq va Al – Ma'ani Fi Tafsir – e Sab'al" Masani", as well as Abdul Razzaq Kashani's Sufi interpretations of the Holy Koran as well as the Sufi poems of "Mowlavi", "Hafiz", and "Sa'di" in his interpretive book "Tafsir –e Rouh Al – Bayan" (The Interpretation of the Spirit of Expression), has presented an "intuitive" approach to the interpretation of the Holy Koran.

### **The Exemplifications of Some of Sufi Interpretations of the Holy Koran**

#### **"Kashf Al – Asrar va Oddat Al – Abrar" (Discovering the Hidden Secrets at the Service of Good People)**

This interpretation of the Holy Koran applies the Sufi approach to the interpretation of the Holy Koran. In this interpretive book, the interpreter author has first put his own interpretation on the Koranic text itself and translations, and then, using his own literary along with his Sufi

thoughts, ideas, and attitude has attempted to interpret and decode Koranic verses. The interpreter author, in this interpretive book, also these use of some specific Sufi terms and names. Besides, he employs anecdotes told by prophets and religious learned men of the remote past to clarify explain Koranic verses. Also, to interpret and explain Koranic verses, the interpreter author brings into play some famous Islamic traditions (hadiths) as well as some other Koranic verses, providing some subtle, refined, and ethical points to explicate and clarify Koranic verses. The name of this interpretive book is "Kashf Al – Asrar va Oddat Al – Abrar" (Discovering the Hidden Secrets at the service of Good People). The book's interpreter author is Ahmad Ibn-e Abi Sa'd Abou Al- Fazl Rashid Al- Din Meibodi (520 A.H.). This well known interpretine book on the Holy Koran has been written on the basis of Khadje Abdullah Ansari's interpretation of the Holy Koran. It is to be worthy of mention, here, that the book "The Detailed and Comprehensive interpretation of the Holy Koran" has been published by the University of Tehran. This valuable book which has been published in ten volumes, has been interpreted on the basis of Khadje Abdullah Ansari's interpretation of the Holy Koran and its detaild interpretations belong to Imam Rashid Al – Din Ahmad Ibn-e Mahmoud Meibodi. This ten – volume book dates back to the sixth century A.H. and its authors have adhered to a Sufi approach which follows the Shiite interpretations of the Holy Koran.

**"The Literary – Sufi Interpretation of the Holy Koran" written by:  
khadje Abdullah Ansari**

This interpretation of the Holy Koran has repeatedly been translated and expounded by different translators and authors. In the present age, too, it has been abridged and rewritten as "khadje Abdullah Ansari's

Literary and Sufi Interpretation of the Holy Koran in Farsi Language written "by Habib Allah Amouzgar (1890-1980 B.C.), a contemporary Iranian author and senator. This one – volume book includes the literary as well as the Sufi interpretations of all verses of the Holy Koran.

### **Concluding Remarks**

According to what was mentioned in the present book, the following concluding remarks may be summed up and concluded:

1. What is called "Sufism" or Islamic mysticism today, was nothing but, in deed, "asceticism". It was in the second century A.H. that the name "asceticism" was changed into the specific term of "Sufism", and , afterwards, the term Sufism itself was replaced by the religious practice and was given the name [Islamic] "Mysticism". And, Finally, that religious practice changed its name to a philosophical doctrine termed "Pantheism". Therefore, the term "Sufism" or Islamic mysticism, which at first had been started off by a simple approach, that is to say, asceticism and mortification, gradually and in the course of time, was changed into complicated and intricate thoughts, beliefs, and ideas which, in the present time, are known as "Pantheism".

2. Parallel with the transformation in thoughts (theories and practices of Sufi mystics in the course of time, their intellectual principles as well as the practical manner in which they would interpret the Holy Koran, were totally changed and modified. For instance, Koranic interpretation attributed to Sufi mystics such as Abou Sa'eed Ibn-e Hassan yaser Al-Basri (21-110 A.H.), often known as "Hassan of Basra", an early Muslim preacher, ascetic, theologian, exegete, scholar, judge, and Sufi mystic, did not go beyond his preachy and ethical approach to koranic teachings , whereas at the time of Abou Bakr Mohyoddin Muhammed, known as

Ibn-e , an Andalusian poet and Sufi mystic, with his specific intellectual principles, the Sufi interpretations of the Holy Koran were transformed into an interpretive, religious school of thought.

3. The third and fourth centuries A.H. are specifically considered as "the golden age" in the history of Sufism. In this period, the interpretive book "Haqayeq AL – Tafsir" (Truths on the Interpretation) written by Abou Abdul Rahma Sollami (325-412 A.H.), commonly known as Muhammed Ibn-e Hussein Neishabouri, a Persian Sufi mystic, is regarded as being a very significant and influential interpretive book in the history of Sufism.

In Sollami's influential book, the interpreter author has compiled the Koranic interpretations of former Koranic interpreters of preceding centuries. The Koranic interpretations attributed to His Holiness Imam Ja'far Sadiq (peace be upon him), the Koranic interpretations written by Ibn-e Muhammed Ibn-e Ata (309 A.H.), the Koranic interpretations written by Hussein Ibn-e Mansour – e Hallaj (244-309 A.H.), and the Koranic interpretations written by Ahmad Ibn-e Muhammed Baqavi Heravi, known as Abou Al – Hussein Nouri, third century A.H. Sufi mystic of Persian origin, whose Koranic interpretations were used as a strong basis by later Sufi mystic interpreters, are all included in this book.

4. The term "Sufi interpretation", itself, may be classified into three different groups: 1) The Sufi approach to the interpretation of the Holy Koran; 2) The method of the Sufi interpretation of the Holy Koran; and 3) The school of the Sufi interpretation of the Holy Koran.

5. The approaches and theories which have played key roles in the history of Sufism (Islamic mysticism), and , thus, have themselves influenced on the Sufi interpretations of the Holy Koran, may be

chronologically divided into the four following groups: 1) An approach dealing with asceticism, which completely rejects worldly pleasures; 2) An approach which deals with the "Divine love", which, in its own turn, leads to "Fana Fi Allah" (being totally separated from all human qualities on the part of the Sufi mystic and being completely submerged in Allah's qualities; 3) Speaking with Allah and reaching the Status in which the Sufi mystics' inward, divine and heavenly truths as well as spiritual heavenly worlds appear and are revealed to themselves; and 4) The theory of "Pantheism" itself. It has to be mentioned, here, that in this process, the Sufi interpretation of the Holy Koran begins with "an interpretive approach" at the first stage and continues to a large extent up to the end of the second stage. At the third stage, the Sufi interpretation is transformed into a "method" in which Allah's words are wholly perceived and, thus, interpreted by the Sufi mystic interpreter. Finally, at the fourth stage, the Sufi interpretation is transformed into a fully – fledged interpretive school of thought. It is worthy of mention that all the factors mentioned at the last three stages may also be seen more or less at the last stage of this process.

6. All the issues and subjects which have been mentioned on the Sufi interpretations of the Holy Koran are not equal to the highest Sufi stage of "Fana Fi Allah" (being totally separated from all human qualities on the part of the Sufi mystic and being completely submerged in Allah's qualities) in which the Sufi mystic is always in a state of fear and hope for reaching this highest Sufi status.

Indeed, the form of language through which the Sufi interpretations of the Holy Koran are stated by the Sufi mystic interpreter would normally be a form which fluctuates between the "theological" and the "literary" languages. Often, in these two fluctuating languages, some

subtle, fine points are created by the Sufi mystic interpreter, which, indeed, are considered more as literary creations than stating the highest Sufi status of "Fana Fi Allah".

7. The Sufi interpretations of the Holy Koran are, for the most part, inspired by the holy Koran itself, that is to say, first, Koranic verses make the Sufi mystic interpreter have a particular feeling or react in a specific way. After having been inspired by Koranic verse, the Sufi mystic interpreter attempts to put his or her own interpretation on Koranic verses. For example, the "disjoined" (separately written)" letters in the Holy Koran do inspire a particular feeling or reaction in the Sufi mystic interpreter first, and then, having been inspired by them, the Sufi mystic interpreter attempts to put his or her own interpretation on them. Indeed, "the disjoined letters" in the Holy Koran have caused Sufi mystic interpreters to put their own specific interpretations on their message(s), meaning (s) as well as on the message(s), meaning (s), and the intent(s) of specific numbers which have more or less appeared in the Holy Koran. Furthermore, in the Holy Koran itself, there exist some verses such as:

«هو الاول و الاخر و اظهر و الباطن»

([And] He [Allah] is the Beginning, and the End, and the Appearance, as well as the Essence) or:

«كان عرشه على الماء»

([And] His throne [خf Heaven] is placed on the water), which, according to Sufi mystic interpreters, cannot be decoded or interpreted on the basis of their literal and superficial meaning(s). Besides, the Sufi interpretations of the Holy Koan themselves are influenced by some Islamic traditions (hadiths), specially those Islamic traditions (hadiths) which have been related to Koranic decipherments. Nevertheless, with

the rise and appearance of some philosophical thoughts and theories such as "pantheism", Sufi mystic interpreters were indeed gradually inspired by them, putting their own interpretations on Koranic verses accordingly. Some Sufi Mystic interpreters have even had illusions that such philosophical theories, like "pantheism", have themselves been originated from religious intuitions or visions.

8. Throughout different centuries, all the Sufi interpretations of the Holy Koran have had something in common, and that is neglecting the showy, flamboyant, and material aspect of life as well as paying close attention to otherworldly things, the spiritual aspect of this world, and a sort of insight into the actual truth of Man as well as the universe. Although the Sufi interpretations of the Holy Koran enjoy similar themes and subjects, they are different from one another if considered in different ages and periods. In the first period, that is to say, in the early centuries A.H., the Sufi mystics would gain benefit from Koranic teachings, and referred as testified to Koranic verses in order to confirm their own Sufi thoughts, beliefs, and ideas. In this period, the clarification and explanation of the Holy Koran would circle around the purification of Man's soul and observing moral virtues on the part of the Sufi mystic interpreters of the time.

In the second period, with the rise and appearance of the Sufi thought of "Divine Love" as well as the Sufi mystic's movement in the direction of approaching Allah, and finally, the Sufi idea of reaching the highest status of "Fan a Fi Allah", thus, the unification of the Sufi mystic and Allah, Koranic verses would be interpreted on the basis of "the Human-Based Approach". Even the Koranic verses which were related to worldly life as well as individual or social life, would be deciphered on the basis of the Human – Approach. Thus, the Sufi interpretations of the

holy Koran became different and were changed into the "human – based" interpretation in this period.

By purifying their self and soul, Sufi mystics of the time past would build up a burning desire inside them to attain God – like qualities. They would, in this way, observe and feel Allah in the mirror of their self and soul. In the third period, after the Sufi thought of "pantheism" had been introduced in the world of Sufism by Mohyoddin Ibn-e Arabi, the Sufi interpretations of the Holy Koran went in a new and different direction and were changed into "the God – based" approach, hence all Koranic concepts and qualities, whether appropriate and inappropriate, would be interpreted by Sufi mystic interpreters as the worldly manifestations of Allah as profuse and separated drops of water which, finally, were doomed to unite in the "sea of pantheism".

9. Not all the statements which had throughout centuries been made by Sufi mystics on Koranic verses were considered as Koranic interpretations, but rather a great deal of Sufi mystic interpreters' statements on Koranic verses had indeed been subtle and fine points which were pleasing to read and listen to. In actual fact, in many cases, Sufi mystic interpreters, in their interpretations of the Holy Koran, have not made their interpretive statements from the stance of the interpreter, but rather they have adopted a "didactic" stance, directing and guiding their readership according to the teaching of morality.

For example, Abou Al- Fazl Rashid Al- Din Meibodi unequivocally states that, while he was writing the third chapter of his own book "Kashf Al- Asrar va Oddat Al-Abrar", he had attempted to write subtle and fine points on divine prophets as well as holy persons.

10. Koranic decipherment is of two kinds: 1) the intellectual decipherment; and 2) the Sufi decipherment. Although Sufi mystic

interpreters put emphasis on the Sufi decipherment – which, according to Sufi mystic interpreters themselves, is attained only by the intuition or the religious vision by which the Sufi mystic interpreter decodes and discovers the hidden, inner Koranic concepts included in the explicitly stated outer concepts, that is to say, the literal meanings- they strongly object to the intellectual decipherment which is attempted by theosophists in intellectual Islamic schools of thought such as "Shiism " and "Mo'tazeleh". Besides, Sufi mystic interpreters had a belief that Koranic words and phrases must not be separated from their literal concepts and meanings.

11. There ruled differing thoughts and beliefs over the Sufi interpretations of the Holy Koran from the seventh century A. H. onwards, which were influenced by Mohyoddin Ibn-e Arabi's ideology as well as his specific Sufi- philosophical school of thought.

In this period, the human – based approach to the interpretation of the Holy Koran, which was considered as being a traditional approach by all Sufi mystic interpreters of the time, had, as previous times, kept its own place and significance. On the other hand, Sufi thoughts, ideas, and beliefs such as "Pantheism", "Perfect Man", and "Great Man", which were considered as all-inclusive and comprehensive Sufi thoughts and beliefs, did overshadow the Sufi interpretations of Koranic verses a great deal.

12. One of the prominent principles in viewing the Holy Koran from the seventh century A. H. onwards had been a comprehensive, all – inclusive, or unity- based approach to the interpretation of the Holy Koran. According to Sufi mystics, everything which exist in this world is originated from Allah's Supreme Wisdom, and that Man has been created by Allah to move and develop along Allah's Supreme Wisdom

until he reaches Allah's Supreme Wisdom. Furthermore, Sufi mystics introduced the idea of "the whole of the world of Being as one" , which , like Man, is the manifestation of all Allah's attributes and qualities in this world; thus, according to this view, the knowledge of the whole universe as well as of Man will culminate in the knowledge of Allah. In Sufi mystic's view, the Holy Koran is a holy book which has come down from on high to Man to act as a means by which Man will be able to know him or herself first, and then this self- knowledge will help him or herself to attain the Knowledge of Allah. Hence Sufi mystics, in their putting interpretation on Koranic verses, and despite the variety and vastness of Koranic verses actually view all Koranic issues and matters in the framework of "Knowledge".

13. Most interpretive and explanatory issues and points which have been stated by Sufi mystic interpreters in their Sufi interpretations of the Holy Koran or in other Sufi writings are not indeed considered as interpretations per se. Of course, some of these Sufi interpretations and explanations may be argued and classified in a framework which accords to the specific characteristics of the corresponding Koranic verses. Others are indeed mental creations on the part of Sufi mystic interpreters, which have really been created by the Sufi mystic's too much pondering over Koranic verses. These Sufi interpretations, explanations, or mental creations may not indeed be attributed to the Holy Koran's sublime issues themselves. Nor the role of the Holy Koran itself may be ignored in creating such Sufi interpretations, explanations, or mental creations. It is well – advised that such Sufi interpretations, explanations, and mental creations be studied and assessed one by one in its own place.

14. Generally Speaking, the Sufi interpretations of the Holy Koran have indeed played a positive and prominent role in viewing the Holy Koran in a Sufi manner.

The most significant achievements of the Sufi interpretations of the Holy Koran have been as follows:

- to help Man develop in their life;
- to help the religion of Islam become loftier;
- to cause Man to walk away from concupiscences;.
- to build up spirituality among people;
- to create a God – based life among people.

15. Regardless of their positive aspects, the Sufi interpretations of the Holy Koran do possess some defects. The negative points or defects of the Sufi interpretations of the Holy Koran may be classified into three groups: 1) the principled defects; 2) the methodical defects; and 3) the designed defects.

16. The religious experience of having knowledge of the divine revelation through reading holy books do reflect the spiritual matters inside the mind of divine prophets. Hence, each divine prophet as well as each interpreter of a divine book has presented to the public an explanation or interpretation which has been well proportional to his own feeling, hence his own knowledge of spiritual matters. This personal Knowledge dissociates the relationship between the revelatory text (the divine book) itself and God Almighty, hence it is not surprising that the text of the Holy Koran or the Bible changes into figurative, symbolic, or exemplary interpretations and explanations which do not indeed denote the real concept of God Almighty, but rather recount some real - life facts and events which may actually happen in this material world.

17. According to some principles which relate the interpretation of the Holy Koran to the interpreter's specific state of mind at the time he or she is interpreting, the text of the Holy Koran itself becomes like a fluid matter into which every mental, human concept may be put. In actual fact, considering their acquired knowledge, preoccupations, social, cultural, and intellectual conditions in which they are living, every person's mind may be the home of differing or even conflicting thoughts and memories. Therefore, all these differing as well as conflicting thoughts and memories may undoubtedly influence their interpretations.

18. Inattention toward the key role of the "explicit" Koranic verses when interpreting the "implicit" Koranic verses as well as relying upon personal religious intuitions and visions when interpreting Koranic verses on the part of the Sufi mystic interpreter have seriously harmed and damaged the process and the course of the Sufi interpretations of the Holy Koran.

19. "Determinism", "Religious Pluralism", "Negligence in Observing Religious Appearances", "Conversion in the Nature of Interpretive Works", and "the Appearance of Negative Social Outcomes" are considered as the most notable defects in terms of "design", which have been caused by some extreme trends in the Sufi thoughts and interpretations of the Holy Koran.

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