



The Philosophical Interpretation Of Ibn Qasi Through His Book The Removal Of The Two Sandals “The World Of The Leg: The Divine Manifestation That Grasps And Abides In Existence” - Ibn Qasi, The Removal Of The Two Sandals (P.59)

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Abstract:

Ibn Qasi is one of the prominent figures in philosophical Sufism. In his book entitled “The Removal of the Sandals,” he collected many issues that require in-depth research, through which he expressed a profound philosophical content, through which he sought to highlight...

Keywords: Ibn Qasi, Sufism, Philosophy.

1. Introduction

The Qur’an is considered the supreme word of heaven among the heavenly books, whose fountain never runs dry and whose miracles never cease. Therefore, Muslims have embraced it in understanding, practice, speech and action. The result of this embrace was the establishment of many sciences that serve this sacred divine text, especially after the expansion of the Islamic Caliphate and the accession to Islam of all nations of every race and region. Our scholars have contributed to the composition of different interpretations, some of which have based their interpretive approach on the prophetic traditions, while others have tended to grasp the metaphysical meanings, seeking perfection in understanding and depth of vision in the acquisition of Qur’anic knowledge. Among the approaches to which our topic aspires is the method of philosophical interpretation, which has manifested itself in the works of some scholars, both ancient and modern, such as Ibn Sina in the past and Abu Yaarub el marzouki in the modern era, in the series of philosophical interpretations of the Qur’an.

Among the books and writings that this research attempts to explore is the book (The Removal of the Two Sandals) by Ibn Qasi, in which he skilfully incorporated the essence of his

philosophical approach tinged with Sufism, despite the obscurity that surrounds the researcher in the process of analysis.

He has tried to discuss the novel philosophical ideas about the Divine Self, the Muhammadan reality and the cosmic phenomena, deriving these meanings from those rich verses whose source never runs dry.

2. The Problem:

In view of the above, we are entitled to ask: What are the main philosophical contents of the book of Ibn Qasi? And how does the impact of the philosophical teaching manifest itself in the interpretation of the Qur'anic text? And to what extent was Ibn Qasi successful in his philosophical approach, which he presented as a model in his book?

3. Objectives of the research:

The aim I am seeking through this research is:

First, to examine the philosophical opinions interpreting the Quranic verses and to know the extent of their accuracy and suitability to the principles of Quranic interpretation.

Secondly, to publish this scientific book and introduce it to the academic and cultural circles.

In order to answer the problem, we have decided to divide the research into three parts:

The first section: Introduction to "Ibn Qasi" and his book "The Removal of the Sandals".

The second section: Introduction to philosophical interpretation and its influence on the interpretation of the Qur'an.

The third section: Philosophical interpretation and its contents in the book "The Removal of the Sandals"

The first section:

Introduction to Ibn Qasi and his book "The Removal of the Sandals"

Abu al-Qasim Ahmad ibn al-Husayn ibn Qasi, the Shaykh of the Murīdīn sect in western Andalusia and the leader of their revolution against the Almoravids when their state was disrupted, and against the Almohads in some stages before the matter was finally settled for 'Abd al-Muamin ibn Ali al-Koumi (d. 588 AH), established a link with the village of Jalla near Shilb. 588 AH)¹, in the village of Jalla in the suburb of Shilb, his birthplace, where he gathered his disciples after donating his wealth. He was interested in asceticism and founded the Murīdīn community. He died in 546 AH.

As for the title of his book, he meant by "The Removal of Sandals" that "the servant must remove the sandals of his worldly life, and strip himself of the garments of his desires and passions, and

¹ - Author of the article: Abd El Djalil ben Salem, Assistant Professor, Faculty B, Abu Bakr Belkaid University, Tlemcen.

expose himself to the breath of his Lord, perhaps God will take him by the hand, or bring victory or a matter from Him by His power and generosity”¹.

He explained his intention of this book by saying: “The citation was according to what the conditions of wisdom require, and the descents of satisfaction and mercy give it, not according to a human system, nor according to a transmitted order, but according to the wise determination and the decreed will”².

With this in mind, Ibn Qasi divided his book into four scrolls: The Malakutiyat (Celestial), The Paradisiacal, The Muhammadan and The Rahmaniyyat (Merciful).

The second theme: Philosophical interpretation, its concept, its justifications and its effects.

The First Requirement: Its Concept

We can define it as a renewed interpretation that aims to delve into the depths of issues and to arrive at rational truths, since it faces the challenges of reality and the propositions and problems that arise from it.

The Second Requirement: The Justifications for Philosophical Interpretation

1. The principle of striving: Based on the Quranic verse: “And strive for Him as one should strive for Him.” (22:78) This verse explains the intellectual and cognitive³ striving and the exertion of effort in conveying the Quran, striving with it and confronting it. The exegetical works tend to clarify this meaning⁴, i.e. striving with the Quran.

2. The principle of universality: Based on the Quranic verse: “And We have not sent thee, [O Muhammad], but as a mercy to the worlds.” (21:107) Al-Nursi says: “Then reflect⁵ on how the thoughts of man have followed one another and have been derived from thousands of eloquent arts, each with its own characteristics, attributes and names of a type of being, until man became a manifestation and knowledge of all the names of Adam”⁶.

3. The principle of inexhaustibility: Based on the Qur’anic verse: “And if all the trees of the earth were pens, and the sea [ink], and then it were replenished by seven [more] seas, the words of Allah would not be exhausted. For Allah is Exalted in Power and Wisdom. (31:27) The People of the Book had asked, saying that they had been given but a little of knowledge, and that they

¹- Ahmad ibn Qasi, Taking off the Sandals and Deriving the Light from the Place of the Feet, edited by Muhammad al-Amrani, Qadi Iyad University, Marrakech, 1st edition, 1997, p. 22.

²- Ahmad ibn Qasi, previous source, p. 162.

³- The same source, p. 162.

⁴- Surah Al-Furqan, verse 52.

⁵- Abu Ja’far al-Nahhas, Meanings of the Qur’an, edited by Muhammad Ali al-Sabuni, Umm Al-Qura University, Makkah, 1st edition, 1409 AH, vol. 5, p. 36.

⁶- Surah Al-Baqarah, verse 31.

had been given the Torah¹, which is Wisdom. Then were revealed the words of the Almighty: "And if all the trees of the earth were pens, and the sea were ink..."² This indicates the inexhaustibility of His words, the inexhaustibility of the sciences and approaches that accompany the Qur'an, which seek the meanings that confront the problems of every age and provide the proof against every unbeliever who does not see with a discerning eye the paths of knowledge and their ways that the words of the Almighty have embodied. And if all the trees of the earth were pens and the sea [were] ink... "³.

The Third Requirement: The Impact of Philosophical Interpretation on the Quran.

First: The positive effects.

1. The attempt to arrive at new deep meanings worthy of presentation and explanation.
2. Considering the problems that arise and trying to respond to them in a way that appeals to reason and human nature.
3. Renewal of the interpretation that revives the realism of the Qur'an and its confrontation with the questions raised against it.

Second: The negative effects.

1. The exaggeration of the rationalisation of the interpretation in order to adapt it to the demands of the time or to interpret it in a far-fetched way.
2. The scientific slips that suggest liberation from obligations and legal questions.
3. The uncontrolled vision in the nature of philosophical interpretation, which may be the subject of debate between philosophers and others.

The third topic: Philosophical Interpretation and Its Implications in the Book (The Removal of the Sandals)

It should be noted at the outset that Ibn Qasi is considered one of the Sufis who mixed Sufism with philosophy, and therefore we need to explain the characteristics of Ibn Qasi's philosophical interpretation, which he used in theological-philosophical terms. Among these characteristics is the transformation of divine love into the paths of gnosis and wisdom, and the acquisition of new meanings for paradise and hell that take them out of religious meanings and into moral symbols⁴, as evidenced by Rabi'a's statement: "My God, if I worship You out of fear of the Fire, then burn

¹- Bedia elzzaman Said Nursi, Symbols of Miraculousness in the Sources of Conciseness, edited by Ihsan Qasim al-Salihi, Sozler Publishing House, Cairo, Egypt, 3rd edition, 2002, vol. 1, p. 239.

²- Surah Al-Kahf, verse 109.

³- Shihab el-Din el-Alousi, The Spirit of Meanings, edited by Ali Abdul Bari, Dar al-Kutub al-Ilmiyya, Beirut, 1st edition, 1415 AH, vol. 11, p. 99.

⁴- Surah Al-Baqarah, verse 31.

me with it, and if I worship You out of desire for Paradise, then deprive me of it, but if I worship You out of love for You, then do not deprive me, my God, of Your eternal beauty”¹.

Ibn Khaldun² mentions the philosophical trends that have influenced Sufism in its methodology, taste and interpretation of the Qur’an. He sees that the themes and trends that have characterised their writings are:

First: The spiritual struggles and the resulting ecstasies.

Second: The revelation and realised truth from the unseen world and the order of the cosmos.

Third: The actions in the world and the cosmos.

Fourth: The utterance of misleading utterances in appearance, known as ecstatic utterances.

Among the characteristics is the discussion of the thingness of existence, which means the existence of things in the fixed entities after their transition from the scientific fixedness, and the thingness of fixedness is the quiddities of things in the knowledge of the world with them before adding existence to them by the act of bringing into existence.

The fixed entities, the reality of the thing in the scientific presence, are not characterised by existence, but they are non-existent, and they are eternal, uncreated realities, because they are expressions of the specifications of the things in the knowledge of truth, and this term refers to the existence of an intelligible world that represents the absolute realities in the divine knowledge, and the scientific entity is a metaphysical mediator between the world of absolute truth and the entities, and it is the key of the invisible or the mediator between God and the world, and it is the rank of the most sacred emanation which represents the appearance of truth to itself in the forms of the fixed entities³.

Thus, the philosophical and Sufi interpretation is characterised by its own terms and theories, which make it distinct and different from the previous stages based on the apparent, and perhaps al-Tusi sums it up by saying: “All the certain sciences are based on standing on the realities of the intelligible, which are their concepts, until the affirmations built on them come”⁴.

One of the most important issues⁵ and themes presented in Ibn Qasi’s book are:

First: The question of existence, divinity and cosmology.

¹- Ibrahim Mohammad Yasin, Introduction to Philosophical Sufism, a Psycho-Metaphysical Study, 2nd edition, Faculty of Arts, Mansoura, Egypt, p. 20.

²- Abu al-Qasim al-Qushayri, al-Risala al-Qushayriyya, p. 147.

³- Abd el-Rahman ibn Khaldun, Diwan al-Mubtadaa waal-Khabar fi Tarikh al-Arab wa’l-Barbar wa-man ‘Asarahum min Dhawial-Shaan al-Akbar, 2nd edition, 1408 AH, 1988 CE, Dar al-Fikr, Beirut, Lebanon, vol. 1, p. 623.

⁴- Ibrahim Mohammad Yasin, Introduction to Philosophical Sufism, op. cit., pp. 27-28.

⁵- Nasir el-Din alel-Tousi, Majmuaat al-Rasa’il, quoted in Ibrahim Muhammad Yasin, Introduction to Philosophical Sufism, op. cit. p. 28.

Second: The question of knowledge, its source and methodology.

Regarding the question of existence, Ibn Qasi addressed two points:

First: A specific theory about the divine names, the essence of which can be derived from the Qur'anic verse: "And [all] the most beautiful names belong to Allah, so call upon Him by them". (7:180). According to Ibn Qasi¹, this verse means that it is equally valid to call upon Allah by the name of Allah, the Merciful, or by any other divine name, since what is being invoked in all cases is the same essence to which these names refer.

Secondly, the existential and cosmic aspect; some researchers mention that he relied on the theory of emanation and the hierarchical existence of created beings, where he conceived of existence as a series of six links². However, a close examination of Ibn Qasi's book reveals the difference between emanation and manifestation.

Ibn Qasi approached the relationship between Allah and the world from a circular perspective, which differed from the linear hierarchical conception known to philosophers such as Al-Farabi (d. 339 AH), in the theory of emanation, where existing beings did not emanate from Allah all at once, but rather flowed from Him according to a hierarchical sequence and mathematical order. He also differed from the separatist view of Allah and the world known among theologians, which is based primarily on Allah's creation of the world from nothing³.

The origin of this question lies in the disagreement among philosophers about the origin of the world. There is no doubt that the doctrines of scholars on this matter can be classified as follows:

First: Those who say that the world is eternal, without a God or a director, and this is the materialistic doctrine.

Second, those who say that the world exists and that there is a non-material spiritual power that created it, and this is the spiritual doctrine, which is further divided into

1. Those who say that God is the Creator of the world, i.e. that He created the forms of things from ancient matter, including Plato.
2. Those who say that the world is eternal in its matter, form and time, but that God is the ultimate cause, moving it through love, and the most prominent representatives of this view are Aristotle and Ibn Rushd.
3. Those who say that God created the world by emanation, and that this emanation is eternal, so that the world is old in time but new in essence. This is held by Plotinus, al-Farabi and Ibn Sina⁴.

¹- Mohammad al-Adlouni el-Idrisi, article entitled "The Sufi Philosophy of Ibn Qasi and Its Influence on Later Sufism in the Islamic West", from the website www.aljabriabed.net/n17_09adluni.htm, accessed on Saturday, 15 May 2021, at 09:14.

²- Surah al-Israa, verse 110.

³- Mohammad al-Adlouni al-Idrisi, op. cit.

⁴- Ahmad ibn Qasi, Khala al-Naalayn, op. cit., p. 130.

Ibn Qasi, however, did not adopt all these views, but rather he started from a circular conception, from God Almighty to the manifestations of existence, and therefore the relationship between God and the world is a relationship of manifestation, as the world of the invisible and the visible are manifestations of the divine names, attributes and actions¹.

Ibn Qasi calls all existing things 'words' and associates the word with the life of the will and the will with divine life. He asserts that the divine life is manifested in all existing things and that the name of the living or the sphere of life dominates and encompasses all other names. He then relates these existing things to the Qur'anic verse: "And We have not sent thee, [O Muhammad], but as a mercy to the worlds," meaning the mercy of Grace to His creation by giving it existence. Thus, the name "mercy" or the sphere of mercy is the bearer² of existence³.

In the Quranic verse:

"Nun .By the pen and what it inscribes⁴, the "nun" is a symbolic reference to the First Whole that carries all meanings and existences, from whose manifestation the lights are derived, and from the surface of its embrace the pages and lines. Since Ibn Qasi symbolizes life in its unity, totality, and summation through ink, he used the concept of the pen to signify the detailed explanation of what has been summarized, for the pen is the true distinction that distinguishes the worlds⁵.

In the Muhammadiyat, Ibn Qasi stands in the second part with the carpet of intimacy and tranquillity of the soul, which he deduced from the Qur'anic verse:

"And We have not sent you, O Muhammad, except as a mercy to the worlds. So ask forgiveness for your sins and for the sins of the believing men and the believing women. And when the Unbelievers see you, O Muhammad, they do not receive you but in mockery, saying: Is this the one who mentions your gods? And they are unbelievers at the mention of the Most Gracious. From these two verses he deduces:⁶

First: The divine creation of Adam and the importance of his substitution and the concept of covenant.

Secondly, the preference of some messengers over others and the question of cosmic time⁷.

In the Malakutiyat, Ibn Qasi introduces them with the Qur'anic verse: "And He it is Who created the heavens and the earth in six days, and His Throne was upon the water, that He might test you as to which of you is best in deed". From this he derives the content of the Malakutiyat:

¹- Hisham al-Alousi, Dialogue between Philosophers and Theologians, 1st edition, 1967 C.E., al-Zahra' Press, Baghdad, pp. 10-11.

²- Ahmad ibn Qasi, Khala al-Naalayn, op. cit., p. 130.

³- Surah al-A'raf, verses 156-157.

⁴- The same source, p. 137.

⁵- Surah al-Qalam, verse 1.

⁶- The same source, p. 140.

⁷- Surah al-Aaraf, verse 172.

First: The broad paths, where he stands in the relationship of the Word of Creation “Be” with the Will of Creation.

Second: The Passing of Confusion and Silence, and here he rationally confirms the appearance of the portents of the Hour by linking the relationship of time to movement, place, emptiness and fullness.

Third: The Rule of Foundation and the Pearl of Transcendence and Sanctification, in which he addresses the question of the Divine Names, mentioning that each Name is the embrace of the Divine Names.

In the statement of the Almighty: “In the creation of the heavens and the earth and the alternation of the night and the day are signs for those who understand” [3:190], the author analyses the experience of death to conclude that the human suffering¹ of death differs, for the creation also differs in its sensations according to its ranks and ways².

Ibn Qasi stands by the statement of the Almighty: “Take off your sandals. Indeed, you are in the holy valley of Tuwa” [20:12]³; the meaning of this verse is to demolish the axioms and perceptions of common sense knowledge and to speak with the eye of wisdom: remove the veils to reach the divine presence. If the Mosaic verse inspired Ibn Qasi in naming his book, then the Josephine verse is seen as a probe through which we plumb the wisdom that we should not deny, lest we be among those who break promises or sell it for a paltry price and be among the despised⁴.

Conclusion:

At the end of this paper, we can say that this book, in which Ibn Qasī relied on the cumulative result of the philosophical approach corresponding to the science of Sufism, opened a new path in the trajectory of studies concerned with the interpretation, understanding, and attempted revival of the Holy Quran with awareness and diligence. With his amazing insight and profound mastery of the world of Sufism and wisdom, he was able to apply it without neglecting it, and this book contributed to the discovery of the deep, evocative meanings that renew the interpretation. This type of interpretive approach was characterised by the expansion of philosophical and theological craftsmanship, which indicates Ibn Qasī’s ability to bring the meaning of interpretation to the pinnacle of certainty, in the manner of the one who said: “A little philosophy leads to heresy, and a lot of it leads to certainty.” In this, he was a renewer of the philosophical view of the creation of the world, contradicting the theologians and revealing a mystery of the divine secrets that ordained the manifestation of His power, dominion and names in this universe that He expanded and endowed with His kindness and providence. However, what is criticised

¹- Surah al-Anaam, verse 76.

²- Surah Al-i ‘Imran, verse 185.

³- Ahmad ibn Qasi, *The Removal of the Two Sandals* op. cit., p. 168.

⁴- Surah Ta-Ha, verse 12.

Ahmad ibn Qasi, op. cit., p. 159.

about Ibn Qasī is his deep immersion in the use of illumination and some of the esoteric philosophies influenced by the Ikhwan al-Safa' and others, and the many conflicting visions in his apparent or perhaps inward inclination towards the Ismailis and others who were once a stumbling block in the way of spreading the Muhammadan law. This opinion may remain obscure and in need of clarification in an age that lacks knowledge due to the tyranny of ideology as a judge of ideas without discussion and dialogue.

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