



Sufism and Philosophy

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The word Philosophy is derived from the Greek word Philosophi'a, Phlieo = search, Sophia = knowledge. Thus, philosophy emerged as a discipline showing the intellectual activities carried out to investigate knowledge. Adhering to this meaning, all kinds of scientific researchers were initially called "philosophers". Accordingly, the philosopher is the person who seeks information and produces new definitions and systems for this purpose.

The first person who established philosophy was Plato (427 BC-347 BC). Later, by his student Aristotle (384 BC - 322 BC), philosophy became a systematic thinking structure. Metaphysics forms the basis of Plato's philosophy. His

philosophy is influenced by metaphysical considerations. Some consider these ideas as wisdom. However, it is doubtful whether this wisdom is in a Sufi sense. Because Plato is not a prophet. Nor is he the spokesman of a religion of monotheism. Therefore, it is not possible to accept that he was directly exposed to divine inspirations. However, it can be thought that the announcements of the prophets who lived in this region before Plato were forgotten in time, and the remaining parts became a source of thought for Plato. However, there is no such information in the historical records. But philosophers insist on carrying the belief that Plato, who took the first step in the philosophy has divine wisdom. However, the word wisdom they use does not coincide with the word wisdom used in Sufism. Because there are fundamentally distinct differences between Sufism and philosophy.

Sufism is a science that emerges with divine inspirations. This science emerged, for the first time with the first human being and the first prophet Adam. The prophets taught divine knowledge to the people around them. With this knowledge, people who have the ability to Sufism have acquired the knowledge of revelation as well as the discovery information. This science has been largely kept secret and a little part has been explained. This process has continued until today and will continue until the Doomsday.

The information obtained in Sufism does not contradict each other. Because they all come from the same source. Sufis have no influence on this information. This information is simple and unchangeable. This is called divine wisdom, and it is the true equivalent of the word wisdom. The word wisdom in philosophy is not in this sense. Their understanding of wisdom is that one tries to understand the cause of events with his own reason and senses. The philosophical wisdom is obtained as a mind system and the divine wisdom we have described above are not on the same level and in the same nature. Because it is not possible to reach divine secrets with reason. In this respect, the method used by philosophers to obtain real and absolute information is useless. Indeed, many contradictory mental systems have been proposed throughout the history of philosophy. But there is nothing contradictory to divine wisdom in Sufism. These wisdom have always expressed the same truth.

Many philosophers have come from the first age to the present. Various information has been obtained from the systems established by these philosophers in their own minds. Thus, a lot of information obtained by reason and five senses was appeared. People have partially benefited from this information. Some of these were later abandoned, seeing that they were wrong. But today, philosophy is no longer rooted in the foundations of reason and natural sciences. Scientists have separated the ways of philosophy and science since the 20th century. Some have even argued that philosophy can be harmful to science. Today, many natural scientists and educated people think that the whole philosophy from Plato to Hegel is a big mistake. However, they also accept that the steps of traditional philosophy have been a stepping stone for today's intellect and natural sciences. This is a natural process. Consequently, traditional philosophy served for the present scientific level.

Sufi Criticism of Philosophy

1) Today, sufism and philosophy are attempted to be portrayed as two disciplines that are similar in terms of the point of departure and may even be considered the same. But this determination is wrong. Because the starting points of Sufism and philosophy are not common. According to philosophers, Sufism and philosophy are based on human deprivation, and for both, this journey has no end. This comparison is not a valid approach either. Because in philosophy, the human being does not receive any information that is absolutely correct along the way. Examining the history of philosophy, it is seen that the interior is full of contradictory information. But there is no such contradictory information in Sufism. The knowledge of the revelations brought by the prophets and the knowledge obtained by the Sufis through discovery do not contradict each other. New incoming information verifies the old information. The reason for this is that while Sufism consists entirely of divine knowledge but , philosophy is formed by human thought.

2) In traditional philosophy, it is tried to obtain metaphysical knowledge in great deal. Individuals seeking metaphysical information are divided into two groups.

The first of these is those who travel in the Truth with their own ideas and minds. The only guide to which they will accept as guidance is their own thoughts. Therefore, they inevitably deviate from the right path and propose different views. The reason for this is that mental sciences derived from contemplation (thinking) carry an element of variability. He only considers things that can be fallen in his imagination. Therefore, they are his proof. However, their temperament is different and their theories about the same thing differ due to their own upbringing. Or the same philosopher explains different results on the same subject at different time. Their expression therefore changes with respect to the basic principles they have built. They are the philosophers and follow the same method.

The other group who traveled to metaphysics were elite wise people such as Ibn Arabi, Imam Rabbani, al-Bistami, al-Junayd and al-Basri. They are not the ones who tell some sentences of philosophers. They express the data of the discovery and the information revealed by God. They do not aim to present the relationships established by speculative thought. On the contrary, their subjects are granted and discovered sciences. There is no rational proofs in their explanations and their books are based on the results of sharia, discovery and direct witnessing. These are things that the mind cannot succeed in achieving.

3) The concept of wisdom in Sufism is defined as a system in which God regulates the realm and the function of everything within it. In this context, wisdom can be used for wise people. The word sagesness means the sum of metaphysics, physics, mathematics and logic. For the sage there are only these four sciences. These issues belong to philosophy. Most of the intellectual sciences and crafts were discovered by spirits of sages with a strong mind and thought. However, “true and absolute wisdom” came as the knowledge of God. This information is prophetic. There is no way to reach this information through reason and philosophy.

4) Because of the limits of the mind, philosophers are those who deny divine acts. For example, neither the philosopher nor the person who uses the rational proofs believe in the interpretation of the following verse:

"Then you didn't kill them, but Allah did. And when you threw, you didn't throw, but Allah threw. This is to give the believers a nice test. Allah is Hearer, Knower." (al-Anfal, verse17)

However, the Sufi people believe in this verse. This is one of the differences between Sufism and philosophy. The Sufis are unanimous about Allah and His Messenger thanks to the prophecy given to them by Allah.

5) Idea is considered as an obstacle in Sufism. Because the idea can consider the Self of Allah as subject neither through the reason nor through the religion. Because Sharia has forbidden to think about Allah's Self. The verse *"Allah will keep you from Yourself"* (Al 'Imran, verse 191) points to this.

If the person who wants to get the true information in his thought about Allah, he should take into consideration all the verses in the Qur'an where contemplation and warning are mentioned. The reason that God places contemplation in certain verses is that He allows the person to access the knowledge of what He wills. This is the information that the Sufis found in their discoveries. If you move contemplation into verses about hearing or knowing or believing, and attempt to use the idea in those verses, you will not be hit in general. So you must use this contemplation power in the verses where the statement *"for the people who reflect on"* (al-Rad, verse 3) is placed. If you examine every verse in which warning and contemplation are mentioned, you could be happy with the permission of God.

Ibn Arabi interprets ideas and contemplation in a poem in his book Fütûhât-ı Mekkiye as follows:

Contemplation is warnings and verses.

There is no contemplation in sageness and fate.

Contemplation is a state I am not inexperienced.

He placed it in verses and suras.

The idea is a state that it does not provide protection. Therefore it is dangerous. Because it is not known whether the owner has hit or made a mistake. Because the idea may be right or wrong. Those who abandon the idea are the men who want to rise confusion about what they want to know. Thus, they aim to be heirs to the man who does not speak according to his desire.

In the book above Ibn Arabi expressed the following poem:

The abandonment of contemplation is to leave it to the Creator.

Don't think anymore, because contemplation is disabled.

If you don't think, you will be a clean soul.

You sit with truth, you are created on dhikr.

If you don't contemplate

you become a clean soul.

Like angels, the detailed explanation doesn't curtain you.

It is God, who enjoys serving things to His slaves.

He is who generously reveals.

6) Discovery has a definite superiority over the mind. Mind is a tool given from God to the human being. God puts the mind into the soul of man for moral purposes and therefore must always be used. However, it is true that the features of the mind are numerous and clear. Discovery can destroy what the mind has built. Ibn Arabi (ks) has a poem on this subject:

My people! Results of discovery

Has superiority over heart sciences

Because the mind has no power to travel

At the square of observation and unseen

How many mistakes and deficiencies in thinking!

But the eye that understands has the right look!

No clear evidence if the eye was not

Would not manifest itself in the mind of heart man.

7) Sufism is the science of states that can be obtained through pleasure. This science is among the science of secrets. The science of secrets is the exalted science that connects between the knowledge of the mind which give rise to partly correct and partly false results and the knowledge of the states. Ibn Arabi expresses this fact in his book "Divan" as follows

There is no method of pleasure sciences

Evidence is brought for minds

To work according to the information of Shari'ah is outside of this.

Therefore, in Sufism rather than examining the proofs, the data of the divine discovery are discussed. Scholars who have direct discovery, find divine guidance through the Qur'an. Thus, through the discovery, they can worship Allah both in terms of being commanded and essential in Islam. However, the owner of thinking is divided into many different groups. According to their results, they have their own knowledge of God. Therefore their doctrines about God vary greatly. However, although one thinks differently from the other, they continue to be harmonious in their particular groups. On the other hand, it has not been observed that the prophets, the exalted people, and the owners of discovery have different opinions about the main principles, and they have no doubts about the belief in God. In short, the method of discovery and conscience does not allow debate, but philosophy never does without debate.

8) Ibn Arabi in a treatise he addressed to Fahreddin al-Razi states:

"The wise person must study the sciences that will help him to reach perfection in his essence and accompany him wherever he goes. This unique knowledge obtained by means of donation and observation is the knowledge of Allah. A wise person should only obtain the sciences that he will necessarily need. These are the sciences that he will obtain in order to secure his livelihood in the world and

which are not contrary to Islam. In addition, he should make efforts to obtain the science that will come with him after death. This is especially composed of two sciences, which are the knowledge of Allah and the knowledge of the mansions in the Hereafter.”

Ibn Arabi consented the logic, philosophical issues, mathematics, physics and metaphysics. But he saw them all subject to metaphysics, and he thought that it was only God's knowledge, not arithmetic, geometry or astronomy, that would give happiness.

It is compulsory to learn the terminology of a science from its experienced experts. This applies to grammar, mathematics and philosophy. However, the faithful disciple in a dervish order does not need to educate the technical terminology of his science. He knows this terminology through discovery.

9) Some philosophers say: Since we have our knowledge and mind, why should we follow a prophet? Only the ignorant and the less wise need the prophets. They did not know that beyond the mind there were tools like the heartfelt truth, the secret, the soul and the hidden, which were thousands of times more honorable for a man than the mind. Reason cannot comprehend these tools and their disciplining cannot be realized with reason. First of all, the mind is incapable of realizing itself, it is defective and diseased. Because the environmental and self-directed effects that lead the mind can lead to some wrongs and contradictions in it. Therefore it is said “the patient's opinion is also diseased”. All these people need a doctor who knows and applies Sharia to treat them with Sharia law and to show them the truth. Since the eyes of the people who fell into wrong thinking are bound by evil action, they are deprived of the properties of the Sharia and the secret of the sending of the prophets. For this reason, they liked the view of their minds and became proud with their idleness and they look at the prophets mockingly and despisingly. Indeed, in response to their thinking and opinion, God answers:

“God will requite them for their mockery, and draw them on, for a while, to wander blindly in their insolence” (Al-Baqara, verse 15)

The prophethood is clearly present, but there is something that philosophers, of course, cannot comprehend in this regard, so the sufis recommend their readers “not to deal with the opinions in the philosophy books”. In this context, we can express the following poem of Ibn Arabi :

Knowing with Allah allows ornament and flourishing

Knowing with the idea gives rise to the simile and error

Knowing with the idea is summarize and error

Knowing with Allah is verification and detailed explanations

Knowing with the idea is mere reporting

Knowing with Allah gives rise to states and sainthood

Don't let the fancy words fool you!

Their indications are ignorance and distraction.

10) In fact, in the beginning, all the souls, including prophets and wise people , have the property of compelling (being subject to the desires of the soul). However, by disciplining with sharia, they reach the position of the calming down stage (satisfied self) which is the limit of the ability of human essence. Then they deserve to hear the speech “return”. It is impossible to occur the light of faith and righteous deeds for him unless he has the taste of the “return” speech. But the soul is unconscious of this address, since it can only know by feeling. For this reason, divine ecstasy reaches the secret of the soul in the form of a secret and protects the real self from the property of compelling and enables him to act with faith and with sharia.

When real self turned away from the abjectness with his “return” address and turned to his own place where he should return and he reaches the top stage of the superiority that is indicated in the verses: “*Join My servants. Enter My Paradise.*” (Al-Fajr, verses 29-30) This paradise has a superiority when it is attributed by the term “My Paradise” by Allah Almighty.

Necmeddinî Dâye in his book “Sufism Road”, says the following:

“Philosophers have made a big mistake in this matter. They thought that the *nefs-i emmâre* (the property of compelling) is one of the animal adjectives run down. For this reason, they have entered into great difficulties in improving the morality and changing the adjectives. They were in the hope of saving the real self from the run down adjectives and adorning them with praised adjectives, thus freeing him from compelling stage and reaching the calming down stage. But they did not know that the self could not escape from compelling stage just by dealing in this way without the orders of the Sharia. They thought that the Shariah came only to beautify the morality and said: Why do we need Sharia and the Prophet, since we have done our good morals in our own minds? ”The devil dragged them to hell in this evil. Since they could not have the true light of faith, they could not see the curtains of human nature and could not go beyond their nature.”

Theology and Philosophy

Theology in the Western Middle Ages has tried to understand all the facts under the principles of Christianity and is based on philosophy, the grasp of the universe through reason. Mainly through the philosophy of Eflâtun, theological syntheses were made. They saw the Celtic priests, the Brahmas, the Buddha, the Greek philosophers such as Socrates, as sages who received divine wisdom. Then there was a compromise between dogma and reason. Through the sensible perception, logic, and rational fictions knowing God and the efforts to understand His attributes were adopted as the official theology of the Church. With the influence of scientific developments in the 17th century, especially rationalists tried to explain the existence and attributes of God in a rational way. Later, in the Enlightenment philosophy, many different thoughts about religion were produced. In this way, a philosophy of religion emerged, represented by philosophers. In Islam, the science of Kalam is the equivalence of theology. However, there are differences between the science of Kalam and the philosophy of religion. While the philosophy of religion has to be objective, Kalam has to defend religion and sect and adopt its truth as a principle of faith in advance. Therefore, Kalam is a science which involves defending the beliefs of faith based on rational proofs and rejecting the wrong beliefs of people who

deviate from al-Sunnah. Kalam does not put a new foundation in religion, but explains and defends the existing principles. Kalam is based on the principles of existing religion. On the other hand, the philosopher who makes a philosophy of religion has difficulty in acting objectively.

Ibn Khaldun (1332-1406), in his work Mukaddeme compares the science of theology with philosophy as follows:

“In terms of their general status, the theologians reason about the universe and the situations that belong to him and the existence and attributes of Allah Almighty. Philosophers also examine the natural object, which is a part of the universe, with natural sciences. However, both view of the universe are differently. Although the philosopher investigates the object in terms of its movement and silence, the theologian first examines it for the evidence into God. Again, the philosopher's aim in dealing with divinity issues is to explore the absolute being (God) and the things that His Self requires, while the theologian's examines the existence in order to make it evidence into the creator. This means that the subject of the theology is the principles of faith, after assuming that it is true in terms of Shari'a (religion), it can be obtained with the evidence of the reason. The aim is to eliminate the errors that are subsequently joined to it even though it is not actually present in the religion and to eliminate the suspicions from the principles of faith. ”

While philosophers try to access the knowledge of God on the basis of the means of cause method, theologians accept that God has described and introduced Himself to us. Theology is based on the Qur'an and the Hadith, and extracts the necessary evidence, while philosophers are seeking to solve religious and non-religious issues with reason and reasoning. The difference in the methods is basically a problem. Therefore, various currents of thought in the Islamic world have rejected each other. For example, in his book “al-Munkizu mine'd-dalâl”, Gazzâlî accused Farabi and Ibn Sînâ of being an infidel.

In the history of Islamic thought, a kind of philosophy of religion has emerged, which endeavors to reconcile the data of reason and the faith with revelation.

Sometimes the term Religion Philosophy is used for Kalam (the theology) and for the Mutakallim (the theologian), the term Philosopher of Religion is used. However, it is not possible to identify these two systems of thought since there are very important distinguishing features between Kalam and philosophy.

All the philosophical problems of the ancient world and discussed in medieval philosophy are also subject to Islamic thought. Those who talk about them are called the philosophers of the Meşşâî (Aristotle metaphysics) school. The most famous of the Meşşâî philosophers are Kindî, Fârâbî, Ibn Sînâ, Ibn Rushd. These philosophers are intellectual Muslims. In order to satisfy the mind, they discussed the distinction between philosophy and religion in terms of reconciliation of two views expressing the same truth. In doing so, they had to compromise some of the fundamental beliefs of Islam. This caused some of them to deviate from the Islamic religion. Fârâbî, who says that Allah can be understood by reason, has been recalled in this context.

The main contradiction in the beliefs of the members of this school emerged when the people of the Meşşâî school brought themselves closer to the understanding of God of Aristotle and Plato. Because while Islam is a religion of revelation, Greek and Hellenistic philosophies have a rationalized God imagination and divinity. They clearly contradict each other.

Even today the effects of this thought are seen on Muslims. As western affectation, those who want to reform Islam, modernists emerged as a result of this philosophy of religion. While they put philosophy into a religious pattern, they try to dress some important religious doctrines in philosophical guise. For this reason, it is thought that the philosophy of religion contributes to religion today. However, this is not true. These movements caused confusion in the religious beliefs of Muslims. Some people under the influences of these confusions were found to be deviated from the Islamic religion. This is a situation that will be very bad for these people in the Hereafter. Therefore, Muslims should be skeptical of their views and should never consider them.

There are many scholars of the Sunnah who will be read and considered. Choosing them would be a salvation for Muslims to fall into blasphemy.

Sufism and Philosophy of Religion

Today, there are people who consider Sufism as a kind of religious philosophy. This view is completely wrong. Because, as we mentioned above, the methods of Sufism and philosophy are completely different. Sufism never refers to reason. The information in Sufism is obtained through revelation and discovery. In this information, reason and idea are not involved in any way. Even in Sufism the idea is considered a curtain. On the other hand, philosophy is entirely based on reason and opinion.

Some people accept divine inspiration and intuition the same thing. There are great differences in meaning between these words. Divine inspiration is what is downloaded directly into the heart. Intuition, on the other hand, is something that comes to the mind of the thinking person. Intuition is limited to what one imagines and thinks. But there is no such limitation in divine inspiration. In order for a person to be the object of divine inspiration, one must live fully in accordance with the Islamic Sharia and also make some special dhikr and worship. Only then can the heart be opened to divine inspirations. But there is no such thing in intuition. Therefore, intuition is not divine knowledge.

Result

Regardless of their beliefs, intellectuals interested in philosophy want to know the secrets of the universe and the wisdom of creation. For this aim, this subject has been studied for centuries. However, the method they used was related to reason and reasoning and so they were not successful. Sufism is their rival in this regard. Sufism has clarified the issues that philosophers cannot answer, with the science of secrets. In this case, the philosophers claimed that they were in the same category as Sufism and tried to find a fair share of their thoughts. According to them, philosophers are wise people. But philosophers' understanding of wisdom and Sufism's understanding of wisdom never overlap. Therefore, no one has the right to keep them at the same level in terms of obtaining the secrets of the universe. There is no validity of the claims of both Muslim intellectuals and

non-Muslim intellectuals that sufism and philosophy are similar. There is no similarity between Sufism and philosophy in terms of both target and method.

Nowadays, there are various reports about this subject. Muslims should be careful about this. For this reason, they should not respect the judgments that philosophers make by their own methods of reasoning. The books of al-Sunnah scholars such as Ibn Arabi, Imam Rabbani, Mevlânâ, Necmeddinî Dâye should be read. Only in this way can they avoid falling into shirk and blasphemy.

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