

Intuitional Insight in Islamic Mysticism

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Abstract

Intuitional insight or mystical cognition is a different insight from common, concrete and intellectual insights. This kind of insight is not achieved by visionary contemplation but by recitation of God, self-purification and mystical life. In this insight there is no distance or medium between subject of cognition and its object and they have a sort of unification, unison and incorporation. As a result, knowledgeable consider this insight as direct, immediate and personal. the goal of this insight is God, cosmos' creatures and generally inner and hidden aspect of world that is nothing except God's manifestations in the view of mystics. AS our common cognitions have diversity and stages, intuitional insight also has diversity and levels. As our senses are divided to concrete and rational, mystical discovery is divided to superficial discovery and spiritual one. Based on Islamic mystics, the preferable way in knowing God and belief to him is intuitional insight. There are two important criteria for evaluating mystical intuition especially for beginner mystics of intellect and revelation. Indeed, conclusion and brief evaluation of Islamic mystics' viewpoint is the main subject of this paper.

Keywords: Intuition, discovery, mystical insight, personal knowledge, superficial discovery, spiritual discovery

Introduction

Humanistic cognitions are several types: Concrete, tentative, mere rational, narrator, situational, and arbitrary. Totally, all cited types have roots in sense or intellect or are the product of cooperation between sense and intellect. Another variety of cognition is internal perception that is known as internal sense or personal knowledge. This kind of perception is not sensual or inductive and rational. Two questions are discussed here: whether can we be aware of spiritual facts personally and by immediacy? Whether is another kind of perception possible for human to achieve? Followers of Divine religions believe to a kind of perception named as revelation that prophets became conscious of spiritual and supernatural facts in this way and they received religious knowledge. Religious knowledge has been reflected in heavenly books like holy Quran. This type of consciousness is not absolutely sensual, common or rational which is reachable for all but is special for prophets. Thus, we can say that revelation is a kind of personal knowledge or another variety of perception which is not recognizable for us. Furthermore, another group of people which are known as mystic and Sufi in different cultures are claimant of non-sensual and non-rational perception that they call it mystical insight. Perhaps this perception is different from personal perception or non-rational perception or a distinguished one from common perceptions. The essence, possibility, and validity of mystical insight are the argument subject of mystical negotiations.

Basic questions relevant to the subjects are: what is mystical insight? What is its subject? How can we achieve to it? Is mystical insight reliable? What is the evaluation criterion of mystical insight? Whether are uncommon or internal cognitions identical or different?

Essence of Intuition

This cognition is interpreted by titles like intuition, discovery, mystical experiment, internal sense, inner insight, hearty, mysterious, internal inspection, and victory. Since the most common words in Islamic mysticism about this subject are <<discovery>>and<<intuition>>, we use these words more than before in this argument. The most important feature of this insight is not achieved by general and common, sensual and intellectual ways. At least some types of this insight are types of personal, immediate knowledge. Undoubtedly, different cultures believe to such perceptions and this belief has deep influence on human's life. William James says: Among all of my obtained results, one thing has proved to me that there is no doubt in it: common perception and understanding that we call it as intellectual perception is a particular perception which has been separated from a group of senses by a very thin veil. These internal logics are always expected to manifest in appropriate occasions. Perhaps, we spend our lifetime without noticing the presence of any of them. But when there is a stimulator for them they show a very real and actual manifestation of themselves.

It's impossible to assume cosmos as united system unless we get help from these internal logics. The important matter is that how we should examine this reality, since there is no relevance and relation between them and superficial logic and perception. Although we can arrange them in a specific order or rule, they define our actions and deeds, they direct our life in an ocean which is not known for us at all (James 1378:70-71) Perhaps, we cannot consider all mentioned perceptions of James as mystical perception at least mystical perception is a part of them and all of them are different from common and sensual perceptions. This kind of perception is not attained by theoretical thought or tangible experiment but mystical insight is a pertaining to aptitude insight that is gained by direct observation and experiment of facts. In mystical insight the veil and barrier between human and fact is removed which is interpreted as <<discovery>>. <<Discovery>> means removing veil. In mystical discovery humans inside enters to the inside of cosmos (Telemsani, 1371 second volume:517-577).

Every creature has external and internal aspects. Exterior part is the mirror of inside and in other words is its ceil. Discovery is traversing from surface to bottom, from surface of cosmos to its heart and removing veil from it. Based on mystics' outlook, reality of cosmos is God. Therefore, real insight is observation of God. But there are stages among human and God that veil between human and God is an obstacle for observation. Removing these veils is named as discovery. By removing every veil, a stage of cosmos is revealed.

Possibility and Object of Intuition

Whether is mystical experiment and internal intuition possible or not? The best reason for possibility of something is its occurrence. As we said, numerous people of different nations and cultures testified to the evidence of mystical experiment in different occasions and times. Prophets and religious leaders of diverse religions spoke about internal connection and correlation with spiritual worlds. If we have a relative trust to mystics and religious leaders, we wouldn't have any doubt to the originality of realization of such a phenomenon.

There are lots of texts and articles about intuition and observation of God in Islamic courses. Imam Ali in response to Zaalab that he asked: have you ever observed your God? Imam Ali answered: whether I worship a God that I didn't see? Then Zaalab asked: how do you see him? Imam Ali replied: of course, we cannot see God by sensual eye; the eye of faithful hearts can see and feel God. And in another occasion, Imam Ali said: I never see anything unless I see God in it. God's favors natural talent, spiritual conduct (consciousness, love to God, quitting worldly belongings, contemplation, performing God's commands, or quitting guilt and living in the light of religion guidance) and benefiting from help of a sage are all factors that provide the ground for opening the gates of internal and spiritual knowledge.

The object of intuition is internal, hidden and spiritual facts that in mystical view are God and his manifestation. Since God is not material and doesn't have any shape or color, he doesn't come to sensual senses. Thus, when Israel nation asked Moses to show God to them, God became angry to them and he descended torture to them and it was inspired to Moses that you never can see God. Therefore, observing God in hereafter is not a kind of real and tangible observation but we can see God by internal eye; as we quoted a narrative from Imam Ali.

Holy Quran informs about hereafter world. The intention is that people who have achieved to the certainty stage, they can perceive some facts of hereafter world before death but in resurrection day all people can see facts not only mystics.

In the narrative of Zeyd Ibn Hareth, it is mentioned that once our prophet Mohammad asked him that how did you spend night? He replied: I spent night as I'm sure about my faith. Then our prophet asked him the sign of his certainty. Hareth said: I'm in a mood that I can observe Heaven, hell and their inhabitants. In most of religious sources, there are instances of observation of angels by prophets.

Ibrahim saw angels that were coming toward him and they enunciated birth of his child. Our prophet was receiving God's inspiration by Gabriel. Even Imam Ali who was his participant and follower could see Gabriel in the absence of prophet and heard revelation messages. It is mentioned in holy Quran that God showed heaven of skies to Ibrahim. Saint Maryam met emissary of God and heard Gospel of Jesus Christ. Our holy prophet ascended in Asra night and observed divine verses and facts of spiritual world. Saints can observe inside and heart of everything and become aware of inside of this material world. They can see inside of people and become conscious of their secrets.

An excellent stage of faith is the result of a kind of observation of reality as it blocks way to every doubt and uncertainty. Imam Ali interprets this stage as <<observation of God>>. He sees spiritual matters obviously and his faith is based on this observation. Perhaps, this kind of intuition and insight achieves to a stage which is not imaginable, as Imam Ali said: if this veil is removed, my certainty would not increase. Observation of God and reality secures human from guilt, as Josef's narrative is mentioned in holy Quran that if he didn't see God he may have made mistakes in his life. Of course, this is God that shows favor to his special believers and reveals reality to them. Imam Ali mentions that since reality has been shown to me, I never doubt to it.

Some Features of mystical Intuition

Islamic philosophers know mystical intuition as personal knowledge; hence personal knowledge has some features that we mention some of them in the following:

- 1- It is immediate; it means that there is no medium between subject and object.
- 2- In intuitional knowledge, there is no mental medium between subject and object.
- 3- mystical intuition is apt to mental interpretation.

4-mystical intuition is a very personal affair and because of this same experiment does not transfer to others; however this interpretation is possible for others. Thus the experiment itself cannot be expressed but we can represent interpretation of it in the form of words. However, most of mystics consider these interpretations unexpressive.

5-mystical intuition has types and stages that we indicate some of them as it follow.

6-perhaps intuition is pure and original.

Types and stages of Intuition

As humans' common senses are divided to sensual and intellectual, in Islamic mysticism discovery is divided to superficial and spiritual. In superficial discovery, the appearance and figuration of sense is discussed as vision, audition smell, palate, and touch; as in dream and imagination all these senses exist. Based on Forghani's point of view, a type of superficial discovery refers to nature. In this kind of discovery, natural barriers are removed like walls and mountains and second type of discovery is related to figurative visions like observation of heaven and hell. Whether it is a religious matter like figuration of Gabriel or a spiritual affair like figuration of knowledge as milk to holy prophet Mohammad or not is a question. Therefore, discovery of this type is both superficial and spiritual.

Types of superficial Discovery

Based on viewpoint of mystics, human also has five internal senses like five external senses. Exterior senses are windows of internal senses. They are tools or strength of discovering internal senses. In internal observation human can observe spiritual facts which have figuration like our prophet that saw Gabriel.

In internal audition, he hears internal facts that are figurative as our prophet heard revelation in the form of words or as mystics can hear words of other creatures and animals. In internal smell the person can smell divine breath: In internal touch two lights or two figurative bodies are touched. Perhaps mystic can feel breeze of God's mercy and warmth of spiritual light.

In pertaining to taste discovery, an internal reality is tasted like nutrition as holy prophet drank knowledge as milk in dream. Superficial discovery is manifestation of God's names and mystics consider every kind of superficial discovery relevant to manifestation of a name of Gods names. For instance, by emersion of name "great" visual discovery and by emersion of name "hearing" auditory discovery appeared. In superficial discovery, discoverer often is passive and receiver. But perfect men can perceive realities by owning spiritual strength via figurative visions (Forghani 1379:669-677).

Spiritual Discovery

Spiritual discovery is rational and non-superficial and it doesn't have any allegory and realizes by manifestation of God's name. Spiritual discovery belongs to the realities of world of wisdom and something beyond it. In this stage, soul by its celibacy attends to spiritual world and reveals spiritual vision to the mystic but not by natural allegory. Therefore this intuition is called as general intuition. Spiritual discovery has diverse stages. A stage of spiritual discovery is perfect certainty (Einalyaghin). In this stage mystic achieves to the closure and visage of God and observes God obviously without any medium. The superior stage of doom is perpetuity and after doom is the stage of unification.

Mystics mentioned diverse stages for spiritual discovery: emersion of concepts in mind without usage of other things is called guess, emersion of concepts in wisdom makes human to think, emersion of spiritual concepts in heart which are known as inspiration, emersion of abstract souls or Aayan Sabeteh in heart which is known as hearty observation, emersion of realities in soul that perfect men gain it without medium and others join to it by medium or heavenly souls that wayfarer is under their guidance, emersion of realities in conscience that mystics become aware of mysteries of fate and fortuity, emersion of realities in wrap that mystic achieves to the manifestation of some qualities, emersion of realities in wrap stage that mystic achieves to intuitive manifestation and this level is beyond expression and is special for holy prophet and saints (Gheisari, *Bitā*:107-177:Ashtiyani 1365:544-560).

Stages of discovery which are introduced as seven Love cities are proportionate to seven senses of human's soul and stages of Quran's seven hearts. As sensational perception of God is impossible, imaginary and figurative observation of God is not possible. He is not contained in dream, as a whole figuration of God and superficial discovery is not possible, since God is away from material and quantity. The only way for personal perception of God is hearty intuition and such a presence is for real believer that reality of faith is fitted in his heart (javadi Amoli 1385:45). Understanding what reality of hearty observation is needs a wide research and contemplation. The intuition which is achieved by God is spiritual discovery and cannot be superficial discovery. Mystic who is in search of God is in the status of names and qualities. Even prophets also cannot enter to the status of nature. Heart as matrix of Intuition in Islamic sources in tuition of internal realities is attributed to heart. Heart is the center of knowledge and emotions. In Islamic culture people attribute observation of heart's eye as they speak about ear of heart or ear of soul. Holy prophet received revelation by heart. Heart is the place of receiving inspiration. Also in narratives they consider heart as matrix of knowledge. Stand of real faith is in heart. In some Hadith it is said that believers' heart is heaven of God. As heart can be center of knowledge light and purity it can be dark foul and polluted. Quran speaks about blindness of heart. Quran speaks about people who are blind in this world and hereafter and don't recognize reality, as Quran informs about internal deafness. Blindness of heart is versus to perception of heart. Thus, more than superficial blindness and vision, there is another blindness and vision. In other words, five internal senses may disrupt because of being away from God. Sometimes, internal senses become disable for commitment to guilt. Based on Quran interpretation, God blocks heart, ear, and eye of some people as torment.

Intuitional Value and Criteria of Good and Bad in Intuition

As it was mentioned before mystical intuition is not in the sort of conceptual knowledge. As it is said that personal and intuitional knowledge is non-predicate and appearance and concept are not discussed in it. As a result, we cannot speak about compatibility and incompatibility in it. Thus, there is no fault in personal knowledge and cannot be liar. Therefore intuitional and personal knowledge are completely true and it's essential to have a more contemplation over it. Since as lie is incompatibility, truth is compatibility and as we cannot speak about truth as well, sensual perception and intuitional experiment are exposed to impressibility form different factors that are related to its validity and value. Perhaps in tuition is dark gloomy or lucid. Something may show itself as something else and it conceives as. This matter that what is obvious and what concept or message it has is not always clear. Insight is not only that kind of mood or experiment that event is transient or temporary. Knowledge is the belief which is arisen from that mood and experiment that is true. Hence we cannot say that every religious or mystical experiment that is personal and intuitional is unthinkable without analysis and examination. According to the outlook of Islamic mystics type of discovery and intuition is passive to existence.

Contrary to superficial intuitive perception that is value is just dependent on the health of sensational member and intellectual perception which depends to the knowledge and accuracy of person relates to his purity in internal intuition. Internal inspiration is divided to spiritual heavenly sinister and cardinal (Ibn Arabi, *Bitā*, first volume: 881). Definitely, sinister and cardinal inspiration is invalid and don't have any value. Based on Shi'ite belief devil cannot enter to the soul of perfect men. They dominated on cardinal desires. Imagination or dream doesn't shape in their mind. A weak and little soul are attacked as a weak and sick body is exposed to the attack of types of viruses and it is vulnerable. According to the idea of Islamic mystics in intuition has levels and in some of them fault and mistake can take place but in some of them never. Based on Gheisari belief imagination can register dream too their visions (Gheisari *Bitā*: 605).

Perhaps; the person mistake between contiguous and disjoin imaginary it means that what happened in his contiguous imaginary he attributes to disjoin imaginary. Disjoin vision and thought is the world of figurative and purgation. But contiguous imaginary is in humans' soul and secured from every fancy or trickeries of mind. Based on professor Javadi interpretation most of faults and mistakes occur in the stage of interpretation and comparison. Although in intuition in disjoin dream is not with mistake perhaps fault is possible in interpretation. Now that error may occur in superficial discovery or in its interpretation what is the evaluation criteria and how we can distinguish pure and reliable discovery from in appropriate interpretation how we can differentiate between devilish and cardinal inculcations and Godly inculcation? On this purpose mystics in traduce two main criteria:

1) Compatibility with definite rules of wisdom (Gheisari *Bitā*: 471). If a discovery is discordant with definite rules of wisdom that claim is lie and its discovery is rejected. For example if a claim has internal paradox or is in conflict with definite principles of wisdom it's not acceptable. If a claim of discovery is compatible with intellect as we can represent an intellectual reason for its accuracy that claim is reliable and trustful: Now if intellect doesn't offer any suggestion and doesn't reject or prove anything the claim should be stopped immediately.

2) Compatibility with inspirational trainings Islamic mystics considers a claim which is in conflict with definite religious trainings that are mentioned in holy books in particular Quran as unreliable as compatibility with these trainings is the sign of trust and accuracy of this claim. But there is not cardinal or devilish discovery. It's noteworthy to remind that mentioned criteria are absolute in the stage of rejecting them despite of their importance it means that with these criteria we can perceive that claim is opposite to wisdom and religious law this disposition is not enough to consider it reliable and accurate. Such an experiment may be trustful or may not be reliable. For instance accuracy and reliability of knowledge about past or future or information about humans ego cannot be evaluated by these criteria. Perhaps something that person understands it as the experiment of Gods manifestation or visit to Gods saint is indeed a fantasy. Therefore, is there any way for proving reality of mystical, intuitional discoveries? This question is discussed both for the person who experience such a discovery and for others. In some instances, the person is in such a certainty that doesn't doubt totally and such a question is not meaningful for him. But in the instances that there is no certainty as this, the person can refer to some internal evidences in order to prove its validity. Positive and desirable behaviors like disconnection from worldly belongings, presence of heart in praying God, hope to God's mercy, desire for doing good acts and like it can be some evidences for accuracy and validity of that experiment to furthermore, viewpoint of a sage about this matter can be trustful. Other mystics who have mystical experiments in that stage or superior than it may can perceive accuracy of his experiment.

But non mystics may consider his experiment valid by observation of his behaviors and noticing passive results of mystical experiment in the behavior of person and generally by the trust that they have the person. Furthermore, they may trust on those experiments via observation of such experiments with a specific theme. But these ways are not logical.

It seems that a definite criterion in determining value of a mystical experiment is the viewpoint of a saint that unfortunately after absence period of Imam Mahdi is not accessible for all except a scarce number of people. We should remind this fact that any type of discovery or mystical intuition doesn't have any juridical augments and cannot be the basis of religious commandment. Thus, nobody is permitted to determine duties for others and forces others to do activity which needs religious rule or prevents him from quitting an act which needs religious prohibition.

According to mystics' outlook, spiritual discovery is superior than superficial discovery and is secured from harms and errors that may happen in superficial discovery. Believer observes intelligence, reality and conscience and can be inside and outside at the same time.

If we can say that spiritual discovery of mystics is secured from every fault and defect? For perfect men, there is no need for intuition. Reality is clear for them. Not devil, not soul, not error, or defect and dream enter to it. Inspirational wisdom is immune from every error or fault.

Conclusion

If we go beyond common perceptions and personal knowledge, there are five types of intuition: generic religious experiments, superficial discovery of mystics, spiritual discovery of mystics, and revelation to prophets. In generic religious experiments and superficial discovery, there is the possibility of error and fault, however; most of mystics emphasized on the possibility of occurrence of errors, but the claim of innocence is untrue. Only we can claim about inspiration of prophets and saints which are immune from fault and slide.

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