

Comparative study of Hadrat-e khams in viewpoints of Gheisari & Imam Khomeini

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Abstract

One of the crucial concepts that was nurtured and coined as a mystical expression in the Ibn Arabi's school of thought is the Five Realms of Existence (Hazarat-e Khams). These realms are general levels of existence, referring to levels and ranks of Absolute Existence, wherein these levels are manifest. These levels are: 1. Lahoot (Realm of Divinity), 2. Jabaroot (Realm of Omnipotency), 3. Malakoot (Angelic Realm), 4. Nasoot (Realm of Humans), which is also called Molk, and 5. Perfect man. The present study comprehensively examines the essential dimensions of this concept and its characteristics in Islamic mysticism, following a comparative approach on the views of two of the most prominent mystics of Islam, namely Davood Gheisari and Imam Khomeini.

Like Ibn Arabi and Sadr al-Din al-Qunawi whose status in explaining the Five Realms is undeniable, Davood Gheisari plays a key role in explanation and delineation of this concept. As the most famous and prominent exegete of Ibn Arabi's writings, he has authored many books and papers, so good that later commentaries are a mere repetition of Gheisari's interpretations. Thus, studying Ibn Arabi's thought based on the interpretations of Gheisari has made our job easier. In the case of the Quintuple Realms too, Gheisari, more than others, has talked about this subject, expanding Ibn Arabi's thought while staying faithful to him. Therefore, the works of Gheisari about these Realms provides the most comprehensive discussion on the subject. One of the more recent mystic theorist talking extensively about the Quintuple Realms in his works is Imam Khomeini. Although he sees himself following the Ibn Arabi's school of thought, sometimes he introduces new theories around mystical matters, including the Quintuple Realms. This is further corroborated by examining his thoughts in relation to stages of the essence of divinity, divine names, Feiz-e Aghdas (the holier grace), Feiz-e Moghaddas (the holy grace), and etc.

All described so far regarding the Quintuple Realms are famous stories among mystics, which were initially recorded by Sadr al-Din al-Qunawi. Many Islamic mystics, including Gheisari, Imam Khomeini, and many others, have accepted this narrative, explaining the Quintuple Realms in the same manner. The first Realm i.e. the Absolute Hidden (Gheybe Motlagh), which is also called Lahoot among mystics, is concerned with the stage of the essence and unity that is the second manifestation of God Almighty, the place of His names and attributes, and the place of Permanent Archetypes (A'yan-e Sa'beteh). Many other mystics agree on this. Thus, the first manifestation and the Unity Essence (Zat-e Ahadiyat) are not a part of the Realms. The reason behind this is clear: this level of essence (Zaat) is characterized by the

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lack of absolute Divine Manifestation. The names and objects in the Unity Essence are not part of a conceptual and applicable Essence, rather they are, existentially and conceptually, the selfsame Essence.

The second Realm is the Added Hidden (Gheyb-e Mozaf), which is close to the Absolute Hidden, and is called Jabaroot in mysticism. It is the inside of the Realm of Nasoot (also, Shahadat) and the purgatory between the bottom Lahoot Realm and top of the realm of Malakoot, which cannot be touched or felt. The third Realm is Malakoot. Malakoot, which is also called the world of Mesal or example, is the Realm of the Added Hidden close to Absolute Hidden and is the place of unseen (Gheibi) examples and meanings. Contrary to the views of some of the mystics, Gheisari believes that this world is not Arazi (i.e. it does not need an object in order to exist, like color), rather it is of essence. The same idea can be found in Imam Khomeini's remarks that Malakoot (Angelic Realm) is devoid of matter and yet belongs to it. All creatures have a Malakoti or Angelic life and Malakoot is life and knowledge all over. The next in line of external worlds is the world of Molk or Shahadat and is called Nasoot (Realm of Humans) in mysticism, which encompasses all planetariums and earth is in its center. Regarding the world of Molk, Gheisari gives special attention to the human world. Describing the stages of Quintuple Realms, Imam Khomeini introduces the world of Molk as the shadow of the Absolute Shahadat Realm.

The Perfect Man is the fifth and last of these Realms. In theoretical mysticism, mankind holds an outstanding status, so much so that Gheisari contends Man is the reason for the creation of this world. Imam Khomeini too believes human to be a creature of infinite nature that cannot fit in one description and yet it can take any form. This is what is meant by the saying that a human being is devoid of any specific matter. Explaining the special position of perfect man, he believes that all divine perfections are present and fixed in mankind and all qualities attributed to God can be attributed to a perfect man too. In Islamic mysticism perfect man is usually equated with the Mohammadian Truth. Mohammadian Truth is, in a sense, the Mohammadian Soul, which is the first issuance from the blessings of God Almighty that philosophers call it the First Intelligible, as mentioned by Gheisari. Imam Khomeini follows his master, Imam Shahabadi, when he introduces another truth called the Oloviyeh Truth, which is not inherently different from the Mohammadian Truth.

The results of the study can be outlined accordingly:

1. The idea of Quintuple Realms was initially introduced and nurtured by Ibn Arabi's mystical school.
2. There are many similarities and distinctions between mystical interpretations of Gheisari and Imam Khomeini regarding these Realms. It should be taken into account that Imam Khomeini's mysticism is derived from Shia mysticism
3. Keywords used by Gheisari include: the stages of divine essence, absolute hidden, external levels, the world of multiplicity, divine names and attributes, permanent archetypes, worlds of Mesali (the likes or examples), perfect man, Mohammadian truth.
4. Keywords used by Imam Khomeini include: stages of essence, external stages, Feiz-e Aghdas (the holier grace), Feiz-e Moghaddas (the holy grace), world of multiplicity, divine names and attributes, perfect man, Mohammadian truth, Oloviyeh truth, Velayat (guardianship), and Adam Al-oliya.
5. Both Imam Khomeini and Gheisari did not stop at explaining and critiquing mystical paradigms of Ibn Arabi, rather they introduced new concepts that were absent from Ibn Arabi's writings.
6. The reflections of Imam Khomeini of the Quintuple Realms complements the interpretations of Gheisari.

Keywords: Islamic mysticism, Shi'aite mysticism, Hadarat-e khams, Gheisari, Imam Khomeini

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