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Reading Akbarī Scriptural Hermeneutics in Light of *Waḥdat al-Wujūd*

Numerous studies have explored the concepts emphasized by the School of Ibn al-‘Arabī, with a particular focus on *Waḥdat al-wujūd* as the central ontological theory of the School. However, only a small number have delved into the analysis of the scriptural hermeneutics within the School. This paper seeks to contribute to scholarly discussions by elucidating Akbarī hermeneutics in relation to the foundational concept of *Waḥdat al-wujūd*.

Through an examination of key writings, including Ibn al-‘Arabī’s *al-Futuḥāt*, Ṣadr al-Dīn al-Qūnawī’s *Ijāz al-bayān*, and Shams al-Dīn al-Fanārī’s *‘Ayn al-a’yān*, this paper traces the evolution of Ibn al-‘Arabī’s exegetical and ontological ideas within subsequent Akbarī writers. This evolution culminates in a comprehensive hermeneutical theory that integrates Akbarian ontology, epistemology, and spirituality. The argument suggests that upon close investigation, Akbarī exegesis harmonizes seamlessly with the concept of *Waḥdat al-wujūd*, not only justifying this concept through Qur’anic interpretation but also establishing a synthesis of ontology, epistemology, and spirituality. The paper not only sheds light on the ontological and exegetical ideas of the School of Ibn al-‘Arabī but also addresses Akbarī prophetology. Akbarī scriptural hermeneutics and prophetology, which emphasise the dynamic role of the Muslim community in the interpretative process, are presented as potential solutions to contemporary challenges faced by modern Muslims.



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Dr. Halim Calis completed his Ph.D. at the University of Chicago, Divinity School, in 2018, with his doctoral dissertation focusing on Shams al-Dīn al-Fanārī (d. 1431), the first Ottoman Shaykh al-Islam who integrated Akbarī hermeneutics into his Qur’an commentary. In addition to his formal education, he has actively engaged in scholarly discussions, contributing to numerous book chapters and articles published in Turkish and English journals, and entries in encyclopedias. Dr. Calis’s research spans across Qur’anic Studies, Sufism, and History of Islam. Having served as the founding Academic Dean at Respect Graduate School in Pennsylvania, USA, Dr. Calis is currently teaching Islamic Studies at the same institution.