

Corbin The Creative Imagination of Ibn Arabi: *"The God Created in the Faiths" two views of heart*

Corbin discusses the view of theophany and the presence of God in us as "the God created in the Faiths." Each being is an epiphany of the Divine, each being is an "instance" of God. As such, each being is invested with a divine ray or mark of intelligence, called a divine Name. This name is at once the Lord of our inner being, and the form of our beloved. This presence is recognized in the heart, and by the heart, when the heart is awakened. Thus "faith" is the aptitude of the heart, invested by God to receive God in a certain modality.

Here then we encounter the notion of the heart, whose importance as the "subtile organ" of theophanic visions will become apparent to us in a little while. The gnostic's heart is said to be encompassed by Divine Compassion; in other words, it is said to be one of the things to which the Divine Compassion lends existence, because Divine Compassion (Rahma) is the equivalent of existention (ijād). And yet, vast as is this Compassion which embraces all things, the gnostic's heart is still greater, since it is said: "Neither my Heaven nor my Earth contains me, but the heart of my faithful believer contains me," this because the heart is a mirror in which the manifested "Form of God" is at each moment reflected in the scale of the microcosm.

Here we encounter two inverse and complementary explanations. Many Sufis maintain that *the Divine Being is epiphanized in the heart of every faithful believer in accordance with the aptitude of their heart, or in other words, that it always takes a Form corresponding to the exigence and receptivity constituting this aptitude.* In speaking of the *gnostic* (*ārif*), Ibn Arabi seems to prefer an inverse explanation of this "mystic kathenotheism." It is not the heart that gives its "color" to the Form it receives, but on the contrary, the gnostic's heart "is colored" in every instant by the color, that is, the modality of the Form in which the Divine Being is epiphanized to the gnostic. The gnostic then resembles a pure "spiritual matter" (receptivity) informed by the faiths, or a mirror receiving the forms and colors reflected in it, but expanding and contracting to their measure. And the gnostic reveals their heart to the Divine Being in the same form which the Divine Being has chosen to disclose Itself to them. No doubt because the revelation or knowledge the gnostic has of God is the same as that which God has of the gnostic and because the gnostic's heart is predisposed to the reception of all forms of theophany. P.196

[[Again, notice the filtering down to the gnostic of the slogan of Plotinus: Each idea is a unique form of the whole Nous. No one saw the sun who did not become sunlike.]