

From Ricœur's Hermeneutic Arc to the Tripartite Interpretive Stages in Meybodi's *Kashf al-Asrar*

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According to Ricœur's concept of the 'hermeneutic arc', an interpreter follows three stages in interpreting a text: explanation, understanding, and appropriation. The 'explanation' stage is concerned with the analysis of the text's verbal structure; it is, indeed, a prologue to the 'understanding' stage which makes it possible to delve into the semantic depth of the text, i.e., into the (implied) author's intention. However, the ultimate goal of interpretation is 'appropriation', in which the interpreter, with a subjective viewpoint and by involving expectations, biases, presuppositions, and his interpretive position in the final reading of the text, appropriates it and makes it his own. In the Persian hermeneutic tradition, Meybodi's commentary on the *Quran*, *Kashf al-Asrar*, pivots around three stages called 'turns' or 'sessions'. In the first stage, Meybodi provides literal translations of the verses. Using *hadiths* and Islamic narrative traditions, he deals, in the second stage, with the occasions and causes of revelation of the verses so as to unveil the intention of the author (God); and, finally, in the third stage, notwithstanding the views of the author (God), Meybodi interprets the verses with reference to their context as well as mystical experience, and in accordance with Sufi traditions and heritage. Without attempting to establish a one-to-one relation between the stages in Ricœur's hermeneutic arc and Meybodi's tripartite stages, this paper analyzes the latter's interpretive methods in light of the former's hermeneutic arc.

Key words: Ricœur, Meybodi, Hermeneutic Arc, *Kashf al-Asrar*, Interpretation.

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