THE CONCEPT OF WILAYAH IN SHI'ISM AND SUFI'SM: SOME COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS

SAIDA DARIEVA[1]

ABSTRACT

It's discussed in the following article the notion of wilāya in Shi'ism and Sufi'sm among the Shiʿi and the Sufi circles within the early period of Islam. The aim of this research is to uncover the shared understanding of wilāya. The concern is not to compare Sufism and Shiʿism but to show how wilāya develops within these two religious and spiritual realities with clear yet unacknowledged influence upon each other.

Key word: Shi'ism and Sufi'sm, wilāya, imām, sufi, comparative analysis.

ŞİİLİK VE TASAVVUFTA VELAYET KAVRAMI: BAZI MUKAYASELİ TAHLİLLLER

ÖZET

Bu makalede velayet kavramının esas gayesinin Şiilik ve Tasavvufta İslam'ın ilk dönemlerinden itibaren Şii ve Sûfî zümreler arasında nasıl geliştiği bahsedilmiştir. Araştırmanın esas amacı bu kavramla ilgili düşünceyi ortaya koymaktır. Hedefimiz Sufilik ve Tasavvufu bir biriyle mukayase etmek değil, velayetin bu iki dini ve manevi akım içinde nasıl gelişip rivaç ettiğini ve hala yeterince açıklanmamış olduğu etkisini beyan etmektir.

Anahtar kelimeler; Şiilik ve Tasavvuf, velayet, imam, sûfî, mukayaseli analize.

---

[1] Doctorate student of Uludag University, Faculty of Theology, Department of Basic Islamic Studies.

1.1. Ibn Khaldun and Ibn Arabi about wilāya

Noting the influence, similarities and differences between Shiʿism and Sufism is not just the provenance of the academia in our times. Comparison between these two, based on the concept of wilāya has been made in the past. Ibn Khaldūn[2] (d. 784/1382)1 was the first to notice the close affinity between the concept of wilāya in Sufism and the Shiʿi concept of the infallible imam. Ibn Khaldūn looked at the early history of both Shiʿism and Sufism to conclude that Sufism is virtually saturated with Shiʿi ideas.[3] What sources did Ibn Khaldūn include in his study of the early history of Islam, we do not know exactly. Yet, he noticed the Shiʿi influence in the Sufi doctrine of the hierarchy of the "Friends of God" (awliyāʾ) who are presented, just like the Shiʿi imāms, as the continuation of the prophetic mission on a new historic stage. Just as the prophet Muḥammad was the "seal" (khātam) of prophethood (nubuwwa), the highest of the awliyāʾ is considered the seal of sainthood[4] -khātam al-awliyā.[5]

---

[2] Ibn Khaldūn is regarded as the greatest historian, sociologist and philosopher of the 14th century. His work "Muqaddima", as the name suggests is a prolegomena to the science of history and epistemology. See M. Talbi, "Ibn Khaldūn" in Encyclopaedia of Islam, 2nd ed., vol. iii, p. 826.

[3] Alexander D. Knysh, Ibn ʿArabī in the Later Islamic Tradition: The Making of a Polemical Image in Medieval Islam (Albany: University of New York Press, 1999), pp. 192-193.

[4] The role of the awliyāʾ in Islam does not the same as a "saint" in Christianity. According to Annemarie Schimmel, "wali is closely connected with the mystery of initiation and progress on the spiritual path and leads through a well-established hierarchy, the members of which surpass each other according to the degree of their love or gnosis." For this reason, the word "saint" is not an appropriate translation of the term wali or for that matter "sainthood" for wilaya. See Annemarie Schimmel, Mystical Dimensions of Islam ,Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1975, p. 204.

[5] The expression khātam al-awliyāʾ first appears in the writing of al-Tirmidhī (d. ca. 298/910) in which the position of the highest "awliyāʾ" is placed in parallel to the prophet Muḥammad, who is declared as the seal of the prophets

Much attention has been paid to the line of thought concerning wilāya beginning from al-Tirmidhī in the 4th/10th century to the thought of Ibn ʿArabī (d. 638/1240) where wilāya is linked to the notion of the "perfect Man" (insān al-kāmil). Within the study of Shiʿism the study of wilāya/walāya has been confined mainly to the study of imāma and in particular to the discussion of the legal and theological concerns embodied in the notion of "wilāyat al-faqīh" (provenance of the jurist).[6] The question, what happened before wilāya became explicitly linked with "imāma" and "insān al-kāmil" has not been explored to a sufficient extent within the academia. This research will thus be a small step towards redressing the balance by focusing on the sources earlier than the 4th/10th century to see how the notion of wilāya/walāya came about and what were the doctrinal aspects that gave initial shape to the form of wilāya/walāya within Shiʿism and Sufism, thereby, exploring the identity, function, appointment and the description of those considered as "walī".[7]

1.2. Wilāya in Shiʿism

Within Shiʿism, it has been pointed out that only after the Iranian Islamic revolution the Shiʿi studies as an academic discipline gained significant attention in Western universities.[8]

(khātam al-nabīyyīn) in the Qur'an. Q 33:40, 'Muḥammad is not the father of any man among you, but he is the messenger of Allah and the Seal of the Prophets; and Allah is ever aware of all things.

[6] On the development of the notion of "wilāyat al-faqīh", see, Hamid Dabashi, "Early Propagation of Wilāyat-i Faqīh", in Expectation of the Millennium: Shiʿism in History, ed. Seyyed Hossein Nasr, Hamid Dabashi, Seyyed Vali Reza Nasr (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1989), pp. 287- 300.
[7] Ahmet T. Karamustafa, "Wilāya according to al-Junayd", Reason and Inspiration in Islam: Theology, Philosophy and Mysticism in Muslim Thought, edited by Todd Lawson,I. B. Tauris, 2005, p. 64.
[8] A. Newman, Formative Period, p. 17.

Many academic studies concerning the concept of walī within Shiʿism are, as a result of the initial political interest, concerned with the nature of clerical authority in general and wilāyat-i faqīh in particular. Analysis of the contents of such studies is out of scope of this thesis. Also left out of scope is the analysis of scholarship concerned with the study of wilāya from primarily within Twelver imāmī Shiʿi theology, law, or philosophy.[9]Most of the scholarly works dealing with the history of early Shiʿism in general and the subject of wilāya in particular, focus on developments in the 3rd and 4th centuries of Islam, when the Shiʿi imāmī and Ismaʿili doctrine already became formalized to some extent.

The amazing work of Maria Massi Dakake "The Charismatic Community: Shiʿite Identity in Early Islam" (2007), is one of rare scholarly works that makes an important contribution to the understanding of the early Shiʿism through the analysis of the concept of wilāya[10] within the early Shiʿi sources, particularly the period in between the event of Ghadīr Khumm

---

[9] As highlighted in the Introduction, the primary sources from Shiʿism and Sufism based on which this thesis is developed are from the formative period of Islam. None of these sources can strictly be labelled under theology, law or philosophy. The Shiʿi sources are compendiums of sayings and narratives, including the commentary of the authors. In case of Sufi sources, the works are also compendium of sayings and narratives, ethical in nature, which for instance, teach the path a wayfarer must take. Therefore, only the scholarship concerned with wilāya in the early Islamic period has been considered in this chapter. Wilfred Madelung, Joseph Eliash and Eaton Kohlberg are among the early scholars to deal with the subject of wilāya, albeit from the later period. For more information, refer to Wilfred Madelung, Religious and Ethnic Movements in Medieval Islam (Aldershot: Variorum, 1992) and Eaton Kohlberg, Belief and Law in Imāmī Shiʿism, (Aldershot: Gower, 1991) and Joseph Eliash, "ʿAlī b. Abī Ṭālib in Ithna-ʿasharī Shiʿi belief" (PhD Thesis, University of London, School of Oriental and African Studies, 1966).

[10] Dakake chooses the vocalization of walāya over wilāya.

and the First Civil War and its aftermath. This is the time in which wilāya may not have carried much theological import up to the time during which wilāya serves as the basis of the notion of a community's identity, defined by Dakake as "a charismatic community".[11]

Dakake's main concern is that, within the writings related to the struggle for political authority of the Shiʿi imams, the notion of wilāya provides an element of religiosity in terms of providing a ground for the recognition and a genuine justification for the leadership for ʿAlī and the imāms in his bloodline. Thus wilāya has been used to claim that ʿAlī received due recognition from the Prophet, emphasized in the tradition of Ghadīr Khumm. Consequently, ʿAlī's heirs must inherit from him the spiritual authority (wilāya) that he possessed. Another of her concern is the existence of the dimension of charisma in the concept of wilāya. Dakake states that this charismatic potential inherent in wilāya expands not only towards ʿAlī and the imāms of his bloodline, but also exists as a shared mark of the spiritual distinction of the Shiʿi community in comparison to the non-Shiʿi Muslims. The concept of wilāya constituted a avourable background for the Shiʿis to see themselves as an elite community and hence stimulated development of a distinct sectarian identity reflected also in the distinction between "islām" and "imān" by which, the Shiʿi elite (khawāṣ) were considered true believers (muʾminūn) as opposed to the rest of the community (ʿawām/ʿāmma) within the Muslim umma.[12] Current study has

---

[11] Dakake, Charismatic community, p. 7.
[12] For a detailed discussion on this, see Dakake, Charismatic community, pp. 191-211.

benefited largely from Dakake's writing in understanding wilāya within Shiʿism.

Another scholar whose scholarship on Shiʿi doctrines and their origin throws light on the understanding of the concepts of wilāya within Shiʿism is Muhammad Amir-Moezzi. 18 In both his major works, "The Spirituality of Shiʿi Islam: Beliefs and Practices (2011)" and "The Divine Guide in Early Shiʿism: The Sources of Esotericism in Islam (1994)",[13] Amir-Moezzi touches upon the concept of wilāya as the most important element encapsulating the essential nature of the imām as well as the Shiʿi community. For AmirMoezzi, the early core of the Shiʿi belief grew out of a combination of ancient Arab beliefs combined with Jewish, Christian and Qurʾanic concepts pertaining to the cult of kinship and the family of the Prophet. The early Shiʿism, according to Amir-Moezzi, was deeply esoteric and accordingly, wilāya, which is a major concept in Shiʿism, became endowed with deeply esoteric meaning as well. Wilāya which is defined as the 'mission of the imāms', is meant to have the 'capacity of the esoteric dimension of the Truth.[14] Amir Moezzi analyses the 'charisma of the imām', the 'very nature of his person', by focusing on the concept of wilāya and the ways in which the term has been interpreted within Shiʿism.

According to Amir-Moezzi, wilāya, in the context of early Shiʿism, has a quite simple translation with two independent and complementary meanings: 1) applied to the imāms referring to

---

[13] Mohammad Ali Amir-Moezzi, The Divine Guide in Early Shiʿism: the Sources of Esotericism in Islam ,Albany: State University of New York Press, 1994.

[14] Amir-Moezzi, Divine Guide, p. 29.

their ontological status or their sacred initiatory mission, in which indicates that imām/walī is the "chief", the "master" of believers par excellence. In this acceptation, walī is a synonym of waṣī (the inheritor, the heir), 2) applied to the faithful of the imāms, in which wilāya denotes love, faith and submission of the believers to their imām, wilāya becomes the equivalent of tawallī, being faithful friend or the obedient protégé of someone.

Amir-Moezzi also devoted one small chapter entitled "Notes on walāya" in The Spirituality of Shiʿi Islam, to the understanding of the notion of wilāya within Shiʿism. He presents a twofold classification of the concept of wilāya. The "vertical axis", or the "wilāya in relation to the imām", brings about the esoteric nature of the wilāya, a bāṭin aspect of the zāhir prophethood (nubuwwa) - and as such encapsulating the essential nature of the imām in the cosmic, archetypal and metaphysical sense.[15] The cosmological aspect of the wilāya has a significant importance for the Shiʿi community. With the notion of mithāq, the pre-temporal covenant resulted in a pact with God with regards to the wilāya of the imāms. The "horizontal axis" of wilāya, or "wilāya in relation to the followers of the imāms" is concerned with the aspect of knowledge, love and redemption, which are equally central to the notion of wilāya. It is not just about the knowledge and the recognition of the imāms, but the fundamental role of knowledge in the Shiʿi vision of the world. Wilāya in this sense reveals the dualist vision of the world in Shiʿism which is illustrated by Amir-Moezzi within the dialectic of Good and Evil, Knowledge and Ignorance, Light and Darkness as themes woven into the fabric of wilāya. By referring to the

---

[15] Amir-Moezzi, "Notes on Imami Walāya", in Spirituality, p. 270.

early Shiʿi ḥadīth and exegesis literature, particularly the proclamation of the wilāya of ʿAlī by Muḥammad in the ḥadīth of Ghadīr Khumm, Amir-Moezzi shows the development of wilāya to become one of the pillars of Islam in Shiʿism. As a whole, a technique that Amir-Moezzi has used to elaborate the concept of wilāya is not much different from the current study. Amir-Moezzi is not concerned with the history of how wilāya became a central notion in Shiʿism. His main concern is to elaborate the depth of the concept of wilāya by showing what he calls the semantic levels of wilāya and thereby opens up the theological and eschatological implications of this concept. Amir-Moezzi performs this task by identifying a broad range of resources both from the early and later periods in the Shiʿi history. The early Shiʿi writers, such as, Sulaym b. Qays, Faḍl Ibn Shādhān, al-Barqī and al-Kulaynī do appear in his chapter; however, being a cursory analysis, they are only used to convey the overall import and extent of the concept of wilāya. His task is not to trace the development of the concept of wilāya throughout the history of Shiʿism.

1.3. Wilāya in Sufism

Western Scholarship on the concept of wilāya in the field of Sufism has largely focused on the thoughts of Ibn al-ʿArabī and his theory of the hierarchy of awliyāʾ Allāh. There is a wide range of studies on the concept of wilāya within the field of Sufi hermeneutics with scholars, such as, Paul Nwyia,[16]Gerhard

---

[16]Paul Nwyia, Exegese coranique et langage mystique: nouvel essai sur le lexique technique des mystiques musulmans ,Beirut: Dar el-Machreq editeurs, 1970.

Böwering,[17] Pierre Lory[18] and Annabel Keeler[19] writing on the Sufi commentaries of the Qurʾan. For the earlier period, which is the main concern of this study, the concept of wilāya is treated to some extent within the writings of Ḥakīm al-Tirmidhī. Less attention has been paid to the writers in the formative period, such as, al-Tustarī and al-Kharrāz. On the whole there are only a handful of studies focusing exclusively on the subject of wilāya within the formative period of Sufism.

Regarding wilāya in Sufism, Gerhard Böwering, is among the few scholars who contributed significantly to a deeper understanding of early Sufi aspects of wilāya, by providing a detailed study of Sahl Tustarī's ideas in his Tafsīr. In his book, The Mystical Vision of Existence in Classical Islam (1980), after the study of al-Tustarī's life, his associates, and disciples, Böwering focuses on the analysis of al-Tustarī's Tafsīr, the hermeneutics of its method and the structure of its thought by examining subjects ranging from 'God in His Events', 'Day of Covenant' and 'Day of Resurrection' to the nature of man and the spiritual warfare in which the Sufi is engaged. Examining the content of alTustarī's Tafsīr, Böwering shows how in al-Tustarī's Tafsīr, the theme of "God as light", is seen in the primordial light of Muḥammad, the primal man and archetypal mystic or walī. According to Böwering, al-Tustarī envisions man's origin as an infinitely small particle of light and his destiny is to become

---

[17]Gerhard Böwering, The Mystical Vision of Existence in Classical Islam: The Qurʾanic Hermeneutics of the Ṣufī Sahl at-Tustarī (d. 283/896) ,Berlin and New York, 1980

[18]Pierre Lory, Les commentaires ésotériques du Coran: d'après ʿAbd ar-Razzāq al-Qāshānī ,Paris: Les Deux océans, 1980.

[19]Shal b. ʿAbd Allāh Tustarī, Tafsīr al-Tustarī, trans. Annabel Keeler and Ali Keeler ,Jordan-Ammān: Royal Aal al-Bayt Institute for Islamic Thought, 2011.

engulfed by the divine light. A walī, in his phenomenal existence, realizes his pre-eternal past and anticipates the post-eternal future. In al-Tustarī's mystical experience man perceives his soul as the play of struggle between a God-oriented force and a self-centred tendency within himself. The task of the mystic, therefore, is to overcome the carnal and egoistic drives of his lower self which militate against the impulses of the heart directing man totally to God.

In 1996, it was Bernard Radtke who took another major step in understanding of the awliyāʾ in early Sufi context, namely within the writings of al-Tirmidhī. It should be noted that for Radtke, the coherent history of the term wilāya in Sufism starts with the work of al-Kharrāz and Ḥakīm al-Tirmidhī in the 3rd/9th century. Bernard Radtke and John O'kane's main study on wilāya, "The Concept of Sainthood in Early Islamic Mysticism: Two works by Al-Ḥakīm al-Tirmidhī",[20] is an annotated translation of two works by Ḥakīm al-Tirmidhī: the first is al-Tirimdhī's autobiography and second is the annotated translation of al-Tirmidhī's Sīrat al-Awlīyaʾ (The Way of Life the Friends of God). In the introduction of this book, Radtke points out that the Qurʾan and the ḥadīth, did not originally recognize the existence of an elite group of men who were considered to have special privileges and close relationship to God, i.e. the awliyāʾ Allāh. There is only oneverse of the Qurʾan which has been repeatedly quoted by the Sufis that by 'stretch of imagination might appear

---

[20] Bernard Radtke and John O' Kane, The Concept of Sainthood in Early Islamic Mysticism: Two works by Al-Ḥakīm al-Tirmidhī ,Richmond, Curzon Press 1996.

to express such an idea' which is found in Q 10:62.[21] Radtke refutes the common view that the rise of the awliyāʾ and the origins of Islamic teachings concerning the concept of the awliyāʾ Allāh is 'an outgrowth of a so-called folk Islam'. To have a better historical account of such development, Radtke categorizes three periods or phases in the emergence of Islamic sources that deal with the early Sufism. The first phase consists in the production of collections containing the list of the name of pious personalities as well as anecdotes about their life. The second phase includes separate dicta and personal views classified according to particular themes, for instance, the writings of Ibn Abī Dunyā (d. 281/894). According to Radtke, Ibn Abī Dunyā put together the earliest surviving compilation which deals with the subject of awliyāʾ Allāh in his Kitāb al-Awlīyāʾ. This process, went on through the 3rd/9th centur . Compilations such as the one of Ibn Abī Dunyā's Kitāb al-Awlīyāʾ were incorporated into extensive collections such as the Ḥilyat al-Awlīya (Ornaments of the Saints) of Abu Nuʿaym during the 4th/10th and 5th/11th centuries. Radtke explains that the early compilations of this kind do not appear to employ a structured discourse or clear principle for ordering the materials they present and do not project a coherent picture.[22] The situation changes with the preserved texts of al-Kharrāz and al-Tirmidhī by the second half of the 3rd/9th century.

---

[21] "Lo! verily the awliyāʾ Allāh are (those) on whom fear (cometh) not, nor do they grieve?"
[22] Bernard Radtke, "The Concept of Wilāya in Early Sufism", in Classical Persian Sufism: From its Origins to Rumi, ed. Leonard Lewisohn, London, Oneworld 1999, p. 483.

Recently, Ahmet Karamustafa provides a comprehensive historical overview of the formative period of Sufism, from the 3rd/9th to 6th/12th centuries. In his "Sufism: the Formative Period",[23] Karamustafa claims to follow a historical approach which positions the Sufi movement in its social and cultural contexts with reference to the development within theology and jurisprudence.[24] The work provides an understanding of the environment in which the authors, such as al-Kharrāz, al-Tustarī and al-Tirmidhī spent their lives and wrote the works which are of central concern for this research. For instance, it provides the historical background to al-Tustarī's claim as the "proof of God" which brought al-Tustarī under severe suspicion. This was the time not just central in the formative period of Sufism but also in the formation of legal schools along with the prominence of the legal interpreters of Islam.[25] Similarly, it provides the historical and cultural background of the spiritual journey of al-Tirmidhī. The work in this sense is not directly relevant to wilāya, but the material history of the time in which ideas such as wilāya took shape within Sufism.

2.1. Comparative Analysis of wilāya in Shiʿism and Sufism

It may be irrelevant to question whether it was Shiʿism or Sufism that first appropriated the concept of wilāya, or whether it was Sufism that took the concept from Shiʿism or vice-versa. The Arabic root w-l-y and its related cognates with their complex

---

[23] Ahmet T. Karamustafa, Sufism: the Formative Period, Berkeley, University of California Press, 2007.
[24] Karamustafa, Sufism, pp. 6-7.
[25] Karamustafa, Sufism, p. 39.

usage in pre-Islamic Arabia as well as the variety of meaning in the Qurʾan provided both Sufism and Shiʿism with a concept that could easily lend itself towards articulation of the idea of authority in Shiʿism and sanctity and proximity to God in Sufism. The word wilāya is quite unique in the sense that in its most basic understanding it designates a type of relationship between persons of equal or unequal stature. The Qurʾan added a dimension of "nuṣra" (mutual aid and support), bringing together within the concept of wilāya the idea of attachment, loyalty and devotion with social as well as spiritual significance for breaking such bonds of attachment. Shiʿism appropriated the concept of wilāya to express their understanding of the role of the imām as well as the role of the Shiʿi community with respect to the imām, whereas, the Sufis appropriated the same concept to express the role of the awliyāʾ and their spiritual distinctions.

From the beginning of the history of the usage of the term wilāya in Shiʿism and Sufism, advocating wilāya for the imām or the Sufi walī, has required an acceptable justification. In the formative Shiʿism, Kitāb Sulaym justifies the wilāya of ʿAlī based not purely on ʿAlī's excellence in personal virtues, but mainly on his being the sole holder of the Prophetic waṣīyya, as Prophet's direct heir and kin and also the trustee and holder of the Prophet's will. Hence, wilāya needed to be justified, not just by recourse of the moral worth of a person, for that would not leave the contender for wilāya in a unique position. The justification through waṣīyya, although included in Sulaym with considerable force, is not a unique one, for there can be other contenders within the larger family of the Prophet to make a similar claim of being the Prophet's waṣī. Perhaps, the authors after Sulaym understood

this dependency of wilāya on a unique justification. Faḍl initiates a more tenable justification by invoking the aspect of knowledge. That is, the mark of walī is his unique access to the divine knowledge. This is indeed a strong justification provided that walī's access to the divine knowledge is given a strong foundation. Thus, after Faḍl, authors, such as al-Barqī and al-Kulaynī, focused on providing a strong metaphysical foundation to the process by which the imām/walī gets access to the divine knowledge for which he is the sole receiving agent. This metaphysical process was elaborated in al-Barqī and al-Kulaynī through the aspects of primordial covenant and emanation where the position of the imām/walī is firmly established in pre-eternity. The argument is logically a circular one - the walī has access to the divine knowledge and it is his access to the divine knowledge that makes him a walī - which held sway in formative Shiʿism until the position of the imām is so thoroughly established as a divine guide that the concept of wilāya is taken over by the concept of imāma. A similar but not the same development of wilāya can be noticed in the formative Sufism. From the very beginning, since al-Kharrāz, the hierarchy or the stages which the wayfarer must traverse in order to reach the status of a walī, is the hierarchy of knowledge. Sufism develops a hierarchy of love initially in the writings of al-Makkī and later much more developed in Persian Sufism of the 12th century onwards.[26] However, in the formative period of Sufism, it is the hierarchy of knowledge which is mentioned as the sufficient criteria and justification for the attainment of wilāya. Just as in Shiʿism, the Sufi authors, al-Tustarī and al-Tirmidhī posit the realm of wilāya

---

[26] Schimmel, Mystical Dimensions, p. 57

in pre-eternity. It is wilāya linked with the aspects of knowledge, spiritual hierarchy and spiritual election which is shared between Shiʿism and Sufism, as it is shown in the table below.

	Duty	Political Authority	Love and Faith	Knowledge	Emanation	Covenant	Hierarchy
Shiʿism							
Sulaym Ibn Qays	√	√	-	-	-	-	-
Fadl Ibn Shadhan	-	√	-	√	-	-	-
Ahmad al-Barqi	-	-	-	√	√	√	-
Abu Jafar Muhammad al-Kulayni	-	√	√	√	√	√	-
Sufism							
Aḥmad b. ʿĪsā al-Kharrāz	-	-	-	√	-	-	√
Sahl al-Tustarī	-	-	-	√	√	√	√
Ḥakīm al-Tirimidhī	-	-	-	√	√	√	√

Conclusion

The aim of this research was to uncover the shared understanding of wilāya in the formative period of Shiʿism and Sufism. As indicated in the Introduction, Ibn Khaldūn (d. 784/1382) was the first to identify the notion of wilāya as providing the way forward to understand the close affinity between Shiʿism and Sufism. This research has shown that wilāya is indeed a key concept which sheds light on the religious and spiritual realities of both Shiʿism and Sufism and shows the unacknowledged influence that they have had on each other. This

research has focused only on the sources until the 4th/10th century to see what happened prior to the time when wilāya became explicitly linked with the notion of imāma in Shiʿism and insān-i kāmil in Sufism. This research thus fills the gap in the academia towards understanding the development of the concept of wilāya in the formative period of Islam. Furthermore, the studies on wilāya thus far, either within Shiʿism or Sufism have not considered to look at the chronological development of the concept of wilāya. A thematic view without a chronological perspective obscures the gradual development of the concept of wilāya. This thesis has shown that the concept of wilāya has gone through several stages of development in its history within Shiʿism and Sufism.

Bibliography

1.   Amir-Moezzi, Mohammad Ali. The Divine Guide in Early Shiʿism: the Sources of Esotericism in Islam. Albany: State University of New York Press, 1994. The Spirituality of Shiʿi Islam: Beliefs and Practices. London: I. B. Tauris, 2011.

2.   Barqī. Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad ibn Khālid. Kitāb al-Maḥāsin. Ed. Sayyid Jalāl al-Dīn al-Ḥusaynī (Muḥaddath). Qum: Dār al-Kutub al-Islāmīyah, 1331 Sh/1952.

3.   Knysh, Alexander D. Ibn ʿArabī in the Later Islamic Tradition: The Making of a Polemical Image in Medieval Islam. Albany: University of New York Press, 1999

4.   Al-Kulaynī al-Rāzī, Abū Jaʿfar Muḥammad ibn Yaʿqūb ibn Isḥāq. al-Uṣūl min al-Kāfī. Ed. ʿAlī Akbar al-Ghaffārī. Tehran, 1375 Sh./1955.

5.   Lory, Pierre. Les commentaires ésotériques du Coran: d'après ʿAbd ar-Razzāq alQāshānī. Paris: Les Deux océans, 1980.

6.   Modarressi Tabatabai, Hossein.   "Crisis and Consolidation in the Formative Period of Shiʿite Islam: Abū Jaʿfar ibn Qiba al-Rāzī and His Contribution to Imāmite Shīʿite Thought. Princeton, N.J.: Darwin Press, 1993.

7.   Nasr, Sayyed Hossein. "Shiʿism and Sufism: Their Relationship in Essence and History". In Religious Studies, vol. 6, no. 3,September, 1970, pp. 229-242.

8.   Radtke, Bernard and O' Kane John. The Concept of Sainthood in Early Islamic Mysticism: Two works by Al-Ḥakīm al-Tirmidhī. Richmond, Curzon Press: 1996. "The Concept of Wilāya in Early Sufism". In The Heritage of Sufism (volume 1): Classical Persian Sufism: From its Origins to Rumi, pp. 483-496. Ed. Leonard Lewisohn. London:Oneworld, 1999.

9.   Schimmel, Annemarie. Mystical Dimensions of Islam. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1975.

10.   Karamustafa, Ahmet T. Sufism: the Formative Period. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2007.

11.   Al-Tustarī, Shal b. ʿAbd Allāh. Tafsīr al-Tustarī. Trans. Annabel Keeler and Ali Keeler. Jordan-Ammān: Royal Aal al-Bayt Institute for Islamic Thought, 2011.

12.   Nwyia, Paul. Exegese coranique et langage mystique: nouvel essai sur le lexique technique des mystiques musulmans. Beirut: Dar el-Machreq editeurs, 1970.

13.   Böwering Gerhard. The Mystical Vision of Existence in Classical Islam: The Qurʾanic Hermeneutics of the Ṣufī Sahl at-Tustarī (d. 283/896). Berlin and New York, 1980.

14.   Dakake, Maria Massi. The Charismatic Community: Shiʿite identity in early Islam. Albany: State University of New York Press, 2007.

15.   Dabashi, Hamid. "Early Propagation of Wilāyat-i Faqīh". In Expectation of the Millennium: Shiʿism in History. Ed. Seyyed Hossein Nasr, Hamid Dabashi, Seyyed Vali Reza Nasr, pp. 287-300. Albany: State University of New York Press, 1989.

16.   Newman, Andrew J. The Formative Period of Twelver Shiʿism: Ḥadīth as Discourse between Qum and Baghdad (Curzon Press: Richmond, Surrey, 2000).

17.   M. Talbi, "Ibn Khaldūn" in Encyclopaedia of Islam, 2nd ed., vol. iii, p. 826.

18.   Madelung W. Religious and Ethnic Movements in Medieval Islam. Aldershot: Variorum, 1992